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The Necessity for Messiah's Kingdom

"Times of Refreshing shall come from the Presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you."—Acts 3:19-21.

RESPECTING two matters there can be no question:—

(1) That the early Church thoroughly believed in a Millennial Kingdom, hoped for it, prayed for it—"Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

(2) It is equally certain that today the doctrine of the Millennium is tabooed as "out of date"—out of harmony with the views of the Higher Critics and Evolutionists, who are filling practically all the chairs in our colleges and the majority of the pulpits of Christendom.

What has led to this radical change on the part of the religious wise men of all denominations? Have they taken a step in advance or are they departing from the path—from the teachings of the inspired Word of God? That they have left the Word of God, that they make light of it, that they profess far more wisdom and ability than the writers of the Bible and a higher intellectual inspiration than they, is indisputable. The question for us is, Will Christians in considerable numbers follow these leaders away from God, away from all Divine revelation? Will we put our trust in literary princes who claim the right to instruct the world, not by Divine appointment or authority, but by virtue of their large amount of self-esteem?

The present day concept of the Church of Christ is that God planted it amongst men as leaven in a batch of dough with the intent that it should propagate itself until the entire mass would be leavened. But the Bible, apostolic concept of the Church's message is the very reverse of this—that it is planted in the world, not with a view to converting the world, but on the contrary to keep itself separate from the world and to draw to itself "As many as the Lord your God shall call" of the pure in heart—to sacrifice earthly interests for Divine interests, unto death, and later, by the First Resurrection, to enter into the heavenly glory of the Redeemer as his "Bride," his "Wife," his "Joint-Heir" in the Kingdom glory and the Kingdom work. And the work of that Kingdom is set forth to be the "blessing of all the families of the earth."

The two views are so radically opposite that none should confuse them in their minds. If one is right, the other is wrong. If one is Scriptural, the other is unscriptural. The safe, the proper, the right course is to go back and take up afresh the doctrine of the Millennium—the doctrine that the faithful of the Church now being tried and tested will constitute the glorious Kingdom of God's dear Son after their change from earthly to spirit conditions in the "First Resurrection" (I Corinthians xv, 42-44).

The Laymen's Movement.

God bless the sincere-hearted connected with the Christian Endeavor and Epworth League and Students' Missionary League and the Laymen's Movement, all intent on "Storming the world for Jesus." We bear them witness that they have a zeal for God which we greatly admire and would encourage. But their zeal is "not according to knowledge," and is therefore considerably misdirected. To any one of logical mind, who will reason from statistics, the thought of converting the world by singing a few rousing hymns or holding a few enthusiastic

meetings for the collection of money! money!! money!!! would be childish. We do not despise childishness. We have all had our share. But we all should say with the Apostle, "When I was a child, I spake as a child and understood as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things" (I Corinthians xiii, 11).

"Christian people have been fooling themselves long enough!" Yes, it is as absolutely irrational to think of converting the world, as it is unscriptural to believe that God ever gave us that impossible commission. The United States Census reports show that there are twice as many heathen today as there were a century ago. The word heathen carries to many a very wrong impression. Many noble-hearted Christians have gone as missionaries to the heathen wholly unprepared for what they met—intelligent reasoning ability, etc. They found that the heathen were full of questions, logical questions, too, which they as Christians had never thought of, and which they were wholly unprepared to answer. Comparatively few of the missionaries are able to hold their own in argument with intelligent people in India, China and Japan. There is no hope of their converting those people. There is more danger of their losing their own faith in the Bible, because of their misapprehension of some of its teachings—respecting the mission of the Church, the hope of the Church and the hope of the world!

Missionaries are thus handicapped! Full of commendable zeal they leave our shores to tell the heathen that their forefathers have gone to eternal torment and that they are going there, too, unless they accept Christ. It is a rude awakening to be asked where hell is; and why God should have condemned them and their forefathers to such a horrible eternity; and how this could be true and yet he be a God of pity, compassion, Love; The heathen ask, Why the different denominations—the different theories of the terms of salvation—by Water, by Election, by Free Grace, by joining the Church, etc.? The missionary, wholly unable to answer the adult native, gathers children about him, starts a school and does all he is able, perhaps, to justify his presence in a foreign land—helping the sick and doing many other acts of kindness which are very commendable, whether from a religious or humanitarian standpoint.

Preach the Gospel to All Nations.

Our Lord's instruction was that his people should preach the Gospel in all the world for a witness—not to convert all the world, but for a "witness" to all the world. The mission of the Gospel is to select the Kingdom class, a "little flock." The first opportunity to become members of this Royal Priesthood was offered to the Jews and, after the gathering of a remnant from them, and after their national rejection, the message was to go to the whole world irrespective of national lines, boundaries or language—anybody, everybody having the "hearing ear," was to be instructed respecting Christ and the opportunity of becoming his disciples by a full consecration of mind and body, time and talent, even unto death. These were to be promised the reward of a share in the First Resurrection, to be members of the Royal Priesthood which, during the Millennial Kingdom of Messiah, will bless all the remaining

families of mankind—all the non-elect.

We are not complaining about the failure to convert the heathen! We are not faulting the missionaries! We are taking the Bible stand that all of God's purposes are being accomplished; that God's Word is accomplishing "that whereto it was sent" (Isaiah lv, 11); that it was not sent to convert the world, but to gather an "elect" sample or "first-fruits" from all nations (Revelation xiv, 4). Let civilizing influences continue in heathendom, as well as in Christendom. But let all Christians, missionaries and others, know assuredly that their labor is not in vain if they are seeking for the Lord's jewels to the best of their ability. I am in touch continually with laborers in India and Africa and well know that the pure Gospel of Christ is not greatly affecting their teeming millions. But the Gospel of the Kingdom is seeking out, blessing, sanctifying, happyifying, encouraging some, here and there; some, who have ears of faith to hear, eyes of faith to see, and obedient hearts to obey the "call" to suffer with Christ and by and by to reign with him for the effectual blessing of all the families of the earth, by uplifting the willing out of their present conditions of sin and degradation and death.

The Kingdom a Necessity.

We have shown the value and necessity for the doctrine of the Kingdom—that all Christians who would hold fast to their Bibles as a faith-anchor and who would make progress in their study of the Word and be co-laborers with God in the gathering of "the elect" need to see that the elect only are now called to be heirs of the Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come." They need to see that that Kingdom is God's provision for the future blessing of the non-elect. They need to see that the Bible does not teach, as many of them suppose, that the saints are called of God to sit in the heavenly balcony and look over at the non-elect in eternal anguish, and hear their cries.

Next let us note that the Kingdom itself is an absolute necessity for the world, according to the statistics of the worldly-wise. Many college professors and D. D.'s are inclined to speak glibly of the Second Coming of Christ being far in the future—"fifty thousand years yet," say some. But evidently these learned gentlemen have not used their educational advantages in connection with such statements. Any school boy can figure up what the population of the earth would be one thousand years from now, taking the present population as per the census at sixteen hundred millions and the ratio of increase as shown by the census reports at 8 per cent in ten years. The total would show 3,375,325,000,000 population for the year 2900 A. D.—more than 2,000 for each person now living.

What would humanity do if the earth were crowded to that extent? Where would the necessary food, fuel and clothing be found? Computing all the tillable portion of the earth at twenty-five million square miles or sixteen billion acres would give but one acre for the support of two hundred and ten people, or less than five square yards each. At the close of a second such period, 3900 A. D., at the same rate, there would be ten persons for each square foot of standing-room. In other words they would stand fifteen deep on each other's heads. What shall we think of the wisdom that tells us that the Millennium is fifty thousand years off? The answer is found in Isaiah's prophecy (xxix, 14).

Are we asked how the Millennium if at once introduced would avert the difficulties of the first statement, two hun-

dred and ten people for each acre of the habitable earth? We reply that the Scriptures clearly intimate that the rapid increase of our race is associated with man's fallen condition; as our Creator declared to mother Eve after her disobedience, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrows and they conception" (Genesis iii, 16).

The Earth Shall Yield Her Increase.

The Scriptures also intimate that with the return of humanity towards perfection the average increase will be less, and that eventually the human family will come to the condition where there will be neither marriage nor giving in marriage, and where sex conditions will be lost in a uniform standard of humanity embodying the qualities at present displayed in the two sexes. Further, God's promise for the Millennium is that under his blessing the earth will yield her increase and the waste places be reclaimed, springs breaking forth in deserts. Furthermore, recognizing the Divine power in connection with the matter we can readily see how vast continents can be raised in the Atlantic and in the Pacific Oceans. But aside from these miracles which properly enough could accompany the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, what can the world who ignore the Bible expect? In other words, what shall they expect who claim that the present order of things is to continue, saying, "All things continue as they were from the beginning of the world?" (II Peter iii, 4).

Some may inquire, What about the resurrection of the millions who have died? We reply that the world has been only gradually working up to its present dense population. The people living in the world for the past six thousand years, according to what we believe is reliable evidence, would number altogether about twenty thousand millions. But more than twice that number could be buried in the State of Texas in separate graves and more than eight times that number could find standing room in Texas, as a school-boy with his pencil could readily demonstrate.

But we need not look a thousand years ahead. The world will find itself in great trouble very shortly unless the Kingdom be ushered in. Already there is a shortage of timber. What would be the condition of things one hundred years from now? Already our capitalists are buying up the coal deposits on speculation, realizing that its rapid consumption is making it more valuable every year. Already geologists are calculating the number of tons of coal not yet mined and telling us that with the present average of increase in the consumption of coal the entire supply of the world will be exhausted in less than two hundred years. What will be the price of coal as the vanishing point is neared, and how will mankind do without it, and without wood for fuel unless the Millennium come promptly with its miraculous provisions?—the taking of fuel from our atmosphere, and from water, by methods which will, no doubt, be simple, when mankind come to understand them fully, but which at present are so expensive as to be of little service.

Other scientific men have been studying the increase of insanity and telling us that increase in this direction is terrific. Some have estimated that in less than two hundred years the entire world, at the present rate, will be insane. How opportune it would be for the Millennial Kingdom of the great Life-Giver to be ushered in with its uplifting influences, mental, moral and physical!

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Jonah in the Belly of Hell

"I cried by reason of my affliction unto the Lord and He heard me; out of the Belly of Hell cried I."—Jonah 14:2.

SOME, intent on disproving as much as possible of the Bible, have attempted to make light of Jonah's experiences, claiming that there was no fish in the world of such capacity as could swallow a man entirely. We are to remember, however, that the Scriptures do not say that it was an ordinary whale that swallowed Jonah, but rather they specifically declare that God "specially prepared" a great fish for the occasion. Nor is this all. We have our Lord's own testimony to the truthfulness of the matter, and whoever denies either his truthfulness or his intelligence is thereby denying also his Messiahship and repudiating him as a Savior, because neither a falsifier nor a dupe could possibly be recognized as the great Redeemer and Savior, the Sent of God, the Messiah.

Additionally our Lord informs us that the Jonah incident was in the nature of a type, especially designed of God to foreshadow the fact that Jesus himself would be dead for parts of three days and arise from the dead on the third day, even as Jonah was buried alive for parts of three days and on the third day the great fish vomited him upon dry land. There is nothing difficult about the narrative to one who has proper faith in God. To those who have not faith, nothing connected with Divine revelation is reasonable, commendable or satisfactory. Let us maintain our stand with those who hold fast to, and hold forth for others, the Word of Life.

The Belly of Hell Described.

But what have "the belly of hell" and the poor soul crying from it to do with the story of Jonah? Jonah was in the belly of hell and his cry unto the Lord from there constitutes our text. When a boy I heard this text, and my imagination conjured up what hell was like and especially what the belly of hell, or what I supposed the middle part of it, was like. I had the opportunity of looking into blast furnaces through what is called the glory-hole or peep-hole. There I noted that the center of the fire was at white heat. I tried to imagine people in such a condition in the very middle of belly of hell. I could not imagine how they could survive such an experience a single moment, let alone for all eternity. I sought theological expositions of the matter and learned that some theologians of the hoary past, admitting the destructive effect of fire, claimed that God would specially vitalize all the poor creatures consigned to this torment, so that they would never die, but would keep on suffering forever and forever and forever, untellable tortures. I found that other theologians explained that those consigned to such a fiery ordeal would gradually become adapted to it and assume an asbestos-like shell which would measurably protect them from the fire. But these theologians went on to explain that, wishing them to suffer horrible tortures, God would scale off the asbestos shell, causing them to suffer still more excruciatingly every time the operation was performed. As a child I tried to imagine that this was the just dessert of sinners, and that the Heavenly Father was really kind and loving—that he did not give them worse, though I could not think of anything worse that they could suffer.

"When I was a child, I spake as a

child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (I Corinthians xiii, 11). I asked for the proof that anybody could endure such sufferings and yet live. I asked for the proof that our God is as unsympathetic as any devil could be. My mind rejected as irrational the whole proposition. I said: The God whom I shall worship must be a greater being than myself—greater than any human being, not only in power to execute his will, but also in wisdom to make a wise arrangement for his creatures, and also perfect in justice to do to them as he would have them do to him, if he were the creature and they the God. He must also be perfect in love, the noblest feature of any character. I said to myself: Such must be the God who was the Creator of our race, for he has produced in humanity certain degrees of these various qualities and he could not give to man what he does not himself possess, nor can we suppose that he would create man with more justice, wisdom, love and power than he himself possesses. To that great God I bowed my heart and mind and every power that I possess. To him I still bow, and give thanks that by his grace I have come to see his character, his Plan and his Word more clearly than in the past. I thank him that now I can see in what way ultimately Jesus will be the "Light of the world"—not merely the Light of the Church (John viii, 12).

In abandoning the doctrine of eternal torment my disposition was to abandon the Bible also, because I believed that the Bible was the foundation of the irrational theory which had pictured God to my mind as a demon of the worst imaginable type. But, thank God, dear friends, the Lord heard my prayer for light, for knowledge respecting himself. After I had made a search of heathen creeds, as well as those of Christendom, and had found them all illogical, unreasonable, unsatisfactory, I turned to the Bible again, saying, Perhaps I have not done the Bible justice; perhaps I have unconsciously attributed to the Bible the teachings of the creeds. Perhaps I have read it through colored spectacles. Praying to God for guidance I took up Bible study in a very different way from previously. I began to study the Bible as I should have done at first—without reference to any of the creeds. I began to let God teach me. I ceased to say, It reads, "Thus," but it must mean otherwise. It says, "So and so," but cannot mean that, but the reverse. In other words, I ceased to try to teach God and endeavored to be taught of God through his Word, guided by his holy Spirit.

International Bible Studies.

That was thirty-eight years ago. Under the Lord's blessing I found the Key to the interpretation of the Scriptures—not because of ability, but, I believe, because it is now due time for the Bible to be understood—in the closing of this Gospel Age and the dawning of the Millennial Day. Having found the Key and used it myself I have spent my best endeavors since to put the Key into the hands of God's consecrated people the world over. I have nothing to boast of, dear friends, but have much to be glad for. First, I am glad on my own account with a joy unspeakable, that now I know my Heavenly Father and can have confidence in him and can have love for him as never before. I am thankful that, to some extent, I have been enabled to convey similar joys, similar blessings, to others of his dear people of all denominations in all parts of the world. The Lord has gradually enlarged my opportunities year by year. I am not building a sect—not making a new denomination—not founding a Church! We have had too

much of that sort of thing already. Not only have we Wesley's Church and Calvin's Church, etc., etc., but it has become the custom for each minister to be spoken of as the proprietor of the Church; as, for instance, The Reverend Dr. A.'s Church. It has become a custom, too, for the preachers to speak of the people as "My people," "My Church." This is all wrong. I wish to have neither part nor lot in it. I have no Church, and wish for none. There is but the one Church—the Church of Christ—"the Church of the Living God"—"the Church of the First-Borns, whose names are written in heaven." That Church includes in its membership every true saint of God who trusts in the merit of Christ and seeks to walk in his footsteps. Whatever earthly systems such may be identified with are without Divine authorization. Their standing in God's sight is merely because of their identification with Christ as "members of his Body."

In God's providence I was led to publish six volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures," or Bible Keys. These were taken up by the Bible and Tract Society, and published at cost price, to enable all of God's people everywhere to procure them. They are now published in ten of the most prominent languages. The first Volume, "The Plan of the Ages," has passed the three million mark. I have received not one cent of royalty. My life is a very simple one. My expenses are small. I accept no salary and take up no collections. Voluntary donations from those who have been blessed by my labors supply my needs and the surplus goes to the Bible and Tract Society for the general forwarding of its work—"The Promulgation of Christian Knowledge."

Each earnest Christian who obtains the assistance of these Bible Keys and enters into the treasures of God's Word and becomes rich himself in spiritual knowledge and in joy and peace of heart, is glad to call the attention of others to these Bible Keys. Thus the International classes of Bible Students of all denominations in all parts of the world are springing up and a blessed light, we believe, is going forth from these, assistful to all who love righteousness and hate iniquity. Although I am the regular Pastor of the Brooklyn Tabernacle congregation, there are several assistants and I am privileged to speak to thinking Christians of various parts of the world, especially in the United States. Only the Lord knows how I thank him for this privilege of service, and for the still larger opportunity afforded me through the columns of some of the principal newspapers of the United States.

My sermons are handled by a Syndicate, and I am advised that now they appear in over nine hundred newspapers, aggregating a circulation of eleven million copies, or, according to newspaper count, fifty-five million readers. All of these dear people of every denomination who do any thinking at all, I am sure have had similar difficulties to those which I experienced—difficulties in appreciating how our Heavenly Father could be a good Father, a good God, a loving Creator and yet provide for his human creatures such terrible destinies as all the creeds of the "dark ages" set forth. There is not a thinking Christian in the world who does not need the correct understanding of the Bible in order to be able to stand in the evil day that is upon us. All need to give heed to St. Paul's words, "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand" (Ephesians vi, 13). Our day is a blessed one in respect to its wonderful opportunities and privileges, but it is an evil one in the sense of being a time of great trial and testing of faith to Christendom.

Thinking minds are rejecting the doctrine of eternal torment and generally at the same time rejecting the Bible and denying that it is the inspired Word of God. These dear friends

are stumbling into infidelity and think that Higher Criticism and Darwin's Evolution theory are new light. What they need is to see that the true light is in the Bible and that, wearing our grandfathers' spectacles, we misread the Word of God and wrested it to our own injury and to the loss of our peace of mind and fellowship with the Father and with the Son.

The Key to the Scriptures.

Whoever gets the proper understanding of our text has in his possession the Key to the Bible. If he will, use it, passage after passage will open for him and the whole Word of God becomes a new and glorious revelation of Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power Divine. Jonah was in the fish's belly—he was buried alive. It is this that is referred to in our text. The words "belly" signify grave-belly or belly-grave. The context shows all this, telling us additionally that sea-weeds were wrapped about the Prophet's head and that God heard his prayer and delivered him from the hell-belly, or belly-grave, on the third day, by causing the fish to vomit him up. If you have a reference Bible note that in the margin there is a reference to the words of our text, saying, "Hebrew, the grave." Ah! says one, The translators merely made a mistake and translated it "hell" when they should have translated it "grave." Yes, I answer, and they made the same mistake in every case in which they used the same word "sheol" throughout the Old Testament. As it is, "sheol" is translated "grave" more times than it is translated "hell" in our Common Version; but it should be translated "grave" every time. There we have the Key to the Bible. The hell of the Bible, the penalty for sin, is death, the grave, the tomb. It is not an everlasting hell, for special Scriptures declare that "sheol" (hell) shall be destroyed. "I will ransom them from the power of the 'grave' (sheol); I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave (sheol, hell), I will be thy destruction" (Hosea xiii, 14). St. Paul quotes this prophecy in conjunction with his great discourse on the resurrection, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave (hades) where is thy victory?" (I Corinthians xv, 55).

Christ Died for Our Sins.

We see, dear friends, what our dear Redeemer suffered on our behalf to release us from the penalty for sin. He did not go to eternal torment for our sins. He did go into sheol, into hades, into the grave. "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures" (I Corinthians xv, 3). Thus God has provided for the resurrection of the dead—all mankind, "both of the just and of the unjust." The just are the Church, the saints. The unjust include all others. The blood of Jesus will avail for the release of every member of the race from the great penalty of death. Now it operates under a special call to the saintly few who are invited to become joint-heirs with the Redeemer in his great Kingdom which shortly is to bless all the families of the earth—not only those then living, but also all who have gone down to the tomb. The general resurrection will not be an instantaneous one, as in the case of the saints. It will be a gradual one in two senses:

(1) All will not come forth at once, but as the Apostle declares, "Every man in his own order," company or band (I Corinthians xv, 23).

(2) It will be gradual in the sense that the awakening from the tomb will be but the beginning of the resurrection of the world. During the thousand years of Christ's reign all who will give heed to his instructions and assistance may rise gradually—up, up, up—and by the close of the Millennium they will reach the full perfection and image of God lost by Father Adam through disobedience. The unwilling, those rebellious after the light has fully come upon them, will be destroyed in the Second Death, from which there will be no recovery. They will perish as the brute beasts.

Thieves in Paradise

Luke 23:43.—This greatly misunderstood text explained in Peoples Pulpit, Vol. I. No. 7.

Send post card for free sample.

"WHERE ARE THE DEAD?"

This sermon was published in PEOPLES PULPIT, Volume one, Number 3. The interest aroused, and the great demand for copies of this sermon has been remarkable. A sample copy will be mailed to any one free.

What God Requires of Us

"What doth thy God require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Micah 6:8.

ARE the words of this text true? Is it possible that the true religion of the Bible demands nothing more of us than is expressed in this text? What about the Jewish Law? What about its sin-offering, its burnt-offering, its thank-offerings? What about the ten commandments? What about the digest of those commandments approved by our Lord Jesus, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"? What about Church attendance? What about our responsibilities to our families? To the Church? To the poor? What about study of the Bible to know God's will? What about our responsibility for the heathen? What about baptism and the Lord's supper?

Indirectly, dear brethren, all the matters included in our questions and many more are included incidentally in the provisions of our text. Sometimes a whole sermon is preached in a few words. No one will dispute the reasonableness of the Divine requirement as stated in our text. Our Creator could not justly or with self-respect ask less than this of his creatures who would enjoy his favor. The interests of all demand that these principles should be required of every creature permitted the enjoyment of Divine favor to the extent of eternal life. Whoever fails to come up to these conditions would thus evidence his unworthiness of life eternal; his prolonged existence would merely be a prospering of sin and a menace to the happiness and righteousness of others.

But now let us see the scope of this Divine requirement, whose justice we have already acknowledged. We note the natural division of our text into three parts:

- (1) Doing justly;
- (2) Loving mercy;
- (3) Walking humbly.

The requirement of justice in all our dealings with our fellows, commends itself to every rational mind. It includes the whole Law of God. A brief statement of that Law which had our Lord's approval reads, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy mind, all thy being and all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two propositions hang all the Law and the Prophets. It is but just that we should recognize our Creator as first; that we should glorify the One who gave us our being and all the blessings that come therewith; that we should be obedient to his righteous requirements that make for our own happiness and that of others. It is also but right that we should recognize the rights of others, as we would have them recognize our rights. The Golden Rule is the barest of justice. Not a hair's breadth less would come within the requirements of our text, Do Justly. "Come, then, let us reason together": How many of us do justly in all of life's affairs—in our relationship to our God and to our neighbor?

Begin at home. Let each one criticize his words and his deeds toward his parents; toward his children; toward his brothers; toward his sisters; toward husband; toward wife. Do we in all of our relationships of life treat these who are so near and so dear to us according to the standards of justice, according to the Golden Rule? Do we do toward them as we would have them do toward us? If not, after making a beginning with the Lord, striving to render to him our homage and obedience, let us closely scrutinize every word, every act of the home life and see to what extent these can be improved upon and made more nearly just. The majority of people, we feel sure, will be surprised to know how unjust they have been toward those who are of the very nearest and dearest of fleshly relationships.

Follow the matter up and consider the justice or injustice of your words and deeds in daily life with your neighbors and daily associates. Do you invariably speak to them in the same words and with the same tone and

gesture that you would approve if they were in your place and you in theirs? In matters of business do you drive a closer bargain with them than you would think just for them to make with you? Or, on the other hand, do you ask of them higher prices for the services or materials you furnish them than you would consider just and right if you were the purchaser and they the vendors? Do you watch your chickens that they do not commit depredations upon your neighbor's garden as carefully as you would wish your neighbor to watch his chickens as respects your garden, if you had one? Do you blow no more tobacco smoke in the face of your neighbor than you would like to have him blow in your face? Are you as careful about wiping your feet when entering his house as you would like him to be when entering your house? Do you treat all men, women, children and animals as kindly, as gently, as properly every way as you think would be just and right if you were in their place and they in yours? Do you speak as kindly of your neighbors as you would have them speak of you? Or do you hold up their imperfections to ridicule, as you would not like to have them hold up yours? Do you guard your tongue so that you speak only things you would think proper for your neighbor to speak respecting you, if you changed places?

Simple Justice—Nothing More.

Do you not begin to see, dear friends, that what God requires of us is much beyond what the majority have been rendering? Do you stand appalled and tell me that it would be impossible to live fully up to that standard? I agree with you. And St. Paul agrees, saying, "We cannot do the things which we would." The Scriptures again agree and declare "There is none righteous, no, not one. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

What shall we do? Shall we say that because we are unable to live up to our own conceptions and standards of justice we will make no attempt to do so, but abandon those standards entirely? God forbid. We are weak enough and imperfect enough as it is. To ignore our best ideals of justice would be to take off all the brakes and permit the downward tendencies of our depraved natures to go rapidly from bad to worse—to carry us further and further from God and the standards of character which he approves.

What Would Be the Use?

Suppose we do our very best daily to measure up to our highest conceptions of our God-given ideals and standards, would God accept of this and count us worthy of his favor and of eternal life? Surely not. The Law of the Lord is perfect. Justice is Justice. Not the hearer of a law, not the well-wishing, receives the reward, but the doer, the obedient! Here, then, we find ourselves in difficulty. With our hearts, our minds, we approve God's Law and desire to be obedient to him, but find, as St. Paul says, that many things we wish to do we fail to accomplish; and many of the things we do not wish to do we cannot avoid. "We cannot do the things that we would." We approve the excellent demands of God's Law. We disapprove the imperfections of our own flesh. Like St. Paul, we cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this dead body?"—this body that is imperfect through inherited sin and weaknesses? With our minds we serve God's Law and approve it; but with our bodies we come short. What is our hope? How shall

The Hope of Immortality

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we be delivered? Can we prevail upon God to change the reasonable requirement of our text so that it shall read, What doth God require of me but to will justly and do imperfectly? We cannot hope for such a change in the Divine Law. Are we then hopeless as respects Divine approval and eternal life? (Romans vii, 17-24.)

The Gift of God Is Eternal Life.

In our moment of perplexity we hear God's message "speaking peace through Jesus Christ our Lord." The message of peace is that what we could not do for ourselves in the way of lifting ourselves up to Divine approval God has provided shall be done for us through our Lord Jesus Christ. Our failure to keep the Law marks us as unworthy of eternal life, and worthy of the wages of sin—not eternal torment, but death. God in mercy concluded to offer us eternal life as a gift—because of our not actually meriting it under his legal requirements. Thus we read, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans vi, 23). What we could not obtain legally under the Divine requirements God proffers to us as a gift. But the gift is a conditional one as expressed in the words, "through Jesus Christ our Lord." Only those who accept Jesus Christ as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" may have God's gift of eternal life. Hence it will be seen that it is wholly a mistake to suppose that the heathen at home or abroad can get eternal life, the gift of God, in ignorance of Christ. All the Scriptures confirm this and declare not only that we cannot save ourselves by obedience to the terms of God's Law, but that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"—through faith in his name—through faith in his blood (Acts iv, 12).

But how is this done justly? and, why does God so limit his gift of eternal life?

God's Law represents himself and cannot change. He cannot require less than perfection. To do so would be to fill the Universe to all eternity with depraved and imperfect beings. God has a higher plan than this and declares, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways" (Isaiah 55:9). He explains that his ultimate purpose is that there shall be no imperfect creature in all his Universe. All whose hearts are loyal to him and the principles of his government shall be perfected, and all others shall be destroyed in the Second Death. Thus, eventually, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God. Then every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as have been under the earth, shall be heard, saying, Blessing, and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever (Revelation v, 13).

You Are Bought With a Price.

Possibly God could have arranged some other way of dealing with sin and sinners which would not have required the death of Jesus as the Ransom price, the purchase price, the redemption price for sinners. But the fact that this method was adopted by our great Creator assures us that no other method would have been so wise, so just, so beneficial. No other method would have so fully demonstrated God's Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power.

In brief, then, God's arrangement is that all of his human creatures shall have opportunity of full return to harmony with himself, provided they wish to do so, provided their hearts, their wills, are fully responsive to the letter and spirit of his Law—the requirements set forth in our text. God has provided in Jesus for the satisfaction of Divine Justice as respects all of the condemned race who desire to return to his favor.

We agree with all the orthodox creeds of Christendom that only repentance from sin and an endeavor to put it away from our thoughts and words and deeds, combined with faith in the Redeemer's sacrifice and a full consecration of heart and life to do the Father's will—nothing short of this attainment will gain the salvation which God is now holding out to mankind. To such the Apostle explains that the righteousness, the full demands of the

Law of God, his full requirement, "is fulfilled in us who are walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans viii, 4). From the moment of our consecration and begetting of the holy Spirit God deals with this class as with sons. He trains them in the School of Christ, disciplining, chastening, proving them, testing the sincerity of their consecration vows and the loyalty of their hearts. To those who prove faithful the great reward is promised—glory, honor, immortality, joint-heirship with the Lord Jesus Christ in his Millennial Kingdom and its work of blessing all the families of the earth (Galatians iii, 29; Revelation iii, 21).

Our disagreement with all "orthodox creeds" is in respect to what shall be done with the unsaintly—with those who do not present themselves to God and who are not begotten again of the holy Spirit. Our creeds of the dark ages misrepresented the teachings of the Bible in respect to these and told us that they are all to be consigned for hundreds or thousands of years to Purgatory or for all eternity in hell torment. Not such is the teaching of God's Word, but the very reverse, as we have previously shown. The Scriptures do not declare, In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be damned; but the reverse of this—that they shall all be blessed. All the sin-blind eyes shall be opened. All the deaf ears of ignorance shall be unstopped. For the blessed thousand years of Christ's reign the world's uplifting or resurrection will proceed, while the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth. The angels on the plains of Bethlehem did not declare to the shepherds, Fear greatly! for behold, we bring you bad tidings of great misery which shall be unto all people. Thy message was the reverse of this: "Fear not; behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people" (Luke ii, 10). God who had a "due time" for calling natural Israel and who had also a "due time" for calling spiritual Israel, has a "due time" for making known the riches of his grace to the non-elect world of mankind. And the "elect" of spiritual Israel and of natural Israel are to be the channels of this Divine grace and mercy, which, during the Messianic Kingdom, will flow as a river of salvation to which all mankind will be invited to come and drink freely.

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Workmen That Need Not To Be Ashamed

"Study to Show Thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."—2 Tim. 2:15.

ALTHOUGH the world is full of denominations, each claiming to be the Church of Christ, we all admit that there is but the one "Church of the firstborns whose names are written in heaven" (Hebrews xii, 23). This conviction is being borne in upon us more and more as the days go by, and as the eyes of our understanding open more widely to the teachings of God's Word. We realize increasingly that our division means our shame in the eyes of the world, and that our Creedal contradictions imply that we are not all led in all things by the holy Spirit, the teachings of which cannot be Yea and Nay upon the same subject. It is this sentiment which is taking hold of the ministry of all denominations and making them anxious for an outward show of Unity in Church Federation, which will shortly be effected. The Christian public, however, and especially Bible Students, are not deeply sympathetic with the Federation idea. They realize that at most it would be a gloss of deception so far as doctrinal oneness is concerned; and that otherwise it is but a business or worldly combination.

Bible students are more and more coming to prefer the Lord's way—the Scriptural way. They are coming to realize that what God's people need is not more organization but less organization, not more explicit creeds but the one standard of fellowship which the Bible sets up. They are learning that this simple creed is:—a turning from sin and acceptance of the Lord Jesus as the Redeemer from sin and death and the full consecration of the believer; mind and body, to know and to do the Lord's will to the best of his ability, under the Lord's Providential guidance. We all see that this simple bond of fellowship is the only one laid down in God's Word, and that whatsoever is more than this is injurious—bondage to men and to systems. We all see that "the Church of the Living God whose names are written in heaven" is composed exclusively of such as conform to the terms of this simple creed—that these alone will constitute "the Church, which is his Body"—"the Bride, the Lamb's Wife," whom he will accept and unite to himself in the end of this age. We all see that this class alone is referred to in the Scriptures as "the elect," who are to be associated with the Savior in his glorious Spiritual Kingdom, which, invisible to men, is shortly to be established in power and great glory for the blessing of natural Israel and through her for the blessing of all the families of the earth—living and dead.

"Workmen Not Ashamed."

Let us consider the latter part of our text first: The Apostle's suggestion is that Timothy and all the ministers of the Gospel of Christ are professedly workmen, laboring under the guidance of God's Word. In the larger sense every Christian is a minister of the Gospel, or, as St. Peter declares of all the consecrated, "Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a Holy People, a Peculiar Treasure." In the end of the age will come a reckoning time, a showing of results, "Every man's work that he hath wrought shall be made manifest" (I Corinthians iii, 13).

Our text urges that Timothy, and every faithful servant of God, should be so loyal to God and his message that in the great time of examination in the end of this age preparatory to the introduction of the Kingdom the showing shall be one of which we need not be ashamed. Let us, then, as Christian Bible Students of all denominations anxious for Truth, ask ourselves, respecting our own work in the world, and how it must appear to God, to ourselves and to our fellowmen—yea, how it must shortly be made manifest to all!

Let us call the roll. Baptist brethren, What have you to show as workmen who need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth? Methodist brethren, what say you? Presbyterians, next. Congregationalists, Lutherans, Catholics—all!

The answer of one is practically the answer of all: "We have—so many hundred Churches. They cost—so

many millions of dollars. Their steepens are—so high. Their cost of maintenance is—so much. The number of ministers is—so many. The Church collections amount to—so much. The amount collected for foreign missions is—so much. The amount expended on fine choirs and elegant organs is—so much. The aggregated debts of all our churches is—so much. The unpaid interest on many of these debts is—so much. The time and energy expended in fairs, bazaars, etc., to help pay the expenditures is—so much. The number of Church membership is—so many. The number in Sunday Schools is—so many."

Many of our dear Christian friends say, What lack we yet? Have we not really attained the goal of our Church ambition? Should we build finer edifices or pay larger salaries? Are we not straining ourselves with collections at every turn? What more could God ask of us? "We are rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing" (Revelation iii, 16-19).

In reply we may suppose the Lord to ask, Where did I give you instruction respecting these things? Where in my Word did you find the suggestion that what I desired you to do in the world was to erect great church edifices, piles of stone and iron and mortar, polished woods and stained glass? You are not rightly reading my Word. However good in intention, you have failed to "rightly divide the Word of Truth!" The Temple respecting which I gave instruction is the spiritual one, the Temple of the holy Spirit—the Body of Christ which is the Church. I fear that you have forgotten the true temple of God while rearing so many temples of earthly materials. Concerning the true Temple I instructed you that "the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are"—"living stones," being shaped and polished "for the habitation of God through the Spirit." Show me what you have accomplished in this way. Show me to what extent you have rightly divided my Word, and properly instructed mankind respecting my glorious character and my great Divine Plan of the Ages! Show me fruitage of the glorious message!

Who Authorized the Creedal Fences?

How many in all the millions that you report are "New Creatures in Christ Jesus," who "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"? Let me hear the message of my love and grace in Christ as you are proclaiming it! What mean these sectarian divisions amongst you? Why are there so many Church edifices and so few saintly worshippers? Who authorized you to put these creedal fences between my people to divide the flock? Know ye not that I said, there is one flock and one Shepherd? Why have you so neglected the spiritual interests of my flock and their instruction in righteousness? Why are you so unable to rightly divide my Word?

Instead of coming together as one Church of the Living God whose names are written in heaven you have divided into hundreds of sects and parties! Instead of taking my Word as a whole and rightly dividing its teachings as between the different ages and dispensations of my work, you have divided my Word in a sectarian manner. One sect has made one selection from my Word and another sect has made another selection. Thus ye array one part of my Word against another part of it, and hence get into confusion and conflict. What have you to answer for these things?

With shame of face we must all acknowledge that "We have done those things which we ought not to have done and have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and there is no help in us." The proper thing for us to do, dear Christian friends, is to get down upon our knees before the Lord and in contrition of heart acknowledge that we have wrought no deliverance in the earth (Isaiah xxvi, 18); that our sectarian differences are our shame; that the ignorance that we have all been in respecting the Word of God is humiliating. Now that our eyes are open so that we can comprehend as never

before the harmony of God's message from Genesis to Revelation, it means a rich feast and blessing to our souls. The Word of God becomes more precious to us daily as we become able to comprehend it. Our duty is to fly to the assistance of our dear brethren and sisters in Christ, of all denominations, and to call upon them to join with us in a determined stand for righteousness, for Truth, for God and for his Word.

We must show them that ignorantly we and they have dishonored our God by misrepresentation of his character and misrepresentations of the real teachings of the Bible. We must point them to the fact that the Bible does not teach that all mankind except the "Elect" saints will be consigned to an eternity of torture at the hands of fire-proof demons. We must show them that the election of the Church during this age—a saintly little flock—does not mean injury to the non-elect. That, on the contrary, it is the Divine purpose that the elect saints with their great Redeemer in glory shall constitute God's Kingdom; that his Kingdom when established will bind Satan, put down sin, banish ignorance, error and superstition and uplift mankind by "restitution," by resurrection processes, up, up, up, to all that was lost in Eden by disobedience and to all secured for Adam and his race through the great transaction at Calvary (Acts iii, 19-21).

"Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth."

Alas, how many intelligent people have turned aside from following Christ and from hearing the voice of God through the Bible! Alas, how many are looking to Theosophy, to Spiritism, to Christian Science, to Higher Criticism, to Evolution—wandering farther and farther daily from the "faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude iii). We fault them no more than we fault ourselves. As a whole we have been workmen who need to be ashamed. We have dishonored God through misunderstanding and misrepresenting his Word and his Character. We have driven away from God and the Bible some of the most intelligent of our fellows, by reason of the contradictory nonsense of our creeds.

The Apostle urges, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." We are not to suppose, therefore, that the highest of all science, that which pertains to the Divine purpose and the Divine plan, can be acquired without study. We are not in this claiming that study alone would bring the desired results of proper knowledge. We heartily agree in the Scriptural proposition that "the world by wisdom knows not God." We are not therefore to study along the lines of worldly wisdom, but along the lines of "that wisdom that cometh from above"—along the lines of the inspired Scriptures. We must study! Whoever will not study will not know. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him." And reverencing him means the giving of our best thoughts and talents to the study of his Word, that we may "know the things freely given to us of God" (I Corinthians ii, 12).

We should note further as Bible students that we must not study to be approved of men, but to have the Divine approval. This will bring to us, as it did to the Master and his apostles, the disapprobation of the worldly-wise and nominally religious. It was the Chief Priests and Scribes and Pharisees, and not the common people of the Jews, nor the Roman soldiers who instigated the crucifixion of our Lord. And we must expect similar conditions, because, as the Apostle says, "As he was so are we in this world." The class who called the Master Beelzebub is the same class which will oppose his footstep followers.

It is those few, that "little flock" zealous for God, for his Word, for righteousness, that he is now marking out as the prospective joint-heirs with Jesus in his glorious Kingdom, which is to bless the world with full opportunities for earthly salvation—"restitution." The trials of the faith, the patience, the love, the devotion of this "little flock" are all designed and not accidental. Satan and his hosts may think to thwart the Divine Plan and may mislead and use humanity as their tools, but it shall yet be seen that all of the Divine purposes shall be accomplished.

St. Paul declared of earthly Israel, that they enjoyed "much advantage every way, because to them were committed the oracles of God." So now, dear friends, it seems to me that you and I and all sincere Christians the world around enjoy much advantage every way. Looking to the past we find great excuse for our dear forefathers who, with sincerity of heart, so misunderstood the Divine Word and so misinterpreted the spirit of the Master that they burned one another at the stake. We should not think so harshly of them for this—as though they lived today under the greater advantages which we possess. We should sympathize with them. We should consider them as blinded by the great Adversary, as was Saul of Tarsus, when he, as a member of the Sanhedrin, authorized the stoning of St. Stephen. We should think of them sympathetically—as St. Peter spoke of the Jews who crucified the Lord. He said, "I wot, brethren, that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." So also we should kindly, lovingly cast a mantle of benevolence over similar conduct on the part of John Calvin and others of our forefathers. But as we would not go to the Jewish rulers, nor to Saul of Tarsus for religious instruction, neither should we go to Brother Calvin or others of our forefathers who were blinded, as he was, respecting the true character of God and the true Spirit of his Word.

Only within the past century have the masses of God's people been able even to read the Bible, if they had possessed it. And only within the same time have they had the Bible to read. Our great hindrance has been that with Bibles in our hands and with ability to use them, we looked for instruction to our well-meaning fathers, instead of going to God's Word itself. Now by God's grace the eyes of our understanding are opened. The wonderful Bibles of our day with their marginal references, their concordances, etc., and other assistances in Bible study, are bringing us in touch with the whole message of God's Word: Now, one passage of Scripture throws light upon another and thus with increasing brightness the Word of the Lord as a lamp gives light upon the pathway of his Church.

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