

July 16

Be ye filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18

THE measure of our filling will correspond with the measure of our emptying of the spirit of self-will, and filling with the spirit of faith and obedience. And although the obedience cannot do otherwise than manifest itself in the daily life, nevertheless

E222-225 "The Heavenly Father is pleased to have us desire and ask for more and more of the holy Spirit--a disposition more and more fully in harmony with his Spirit: and all who thus desire and ask and seek it shall obtain their good desires; the Father will be pleased to so order the affairs of such that hindrances to the Spirit, whether in them or in their environment, shall be overcome, that his loving Spirit may abound in them--that they may be filled with the Spirit. But in this there is no suggestion of necessity for fresh baptisms of the holy Spirit: the baptism came at the beginning, and now all there remains to do is to open the sluices in every direction, so as to let the holy Spirit of love and truth penetrate into and permeate every action, word and thought of our beings. We need divine aid, the operation of the Lord's wisdom and providence, to show us what clogs the sluices and to help us to remove the obstructions.

The Spirit of holiness in abundance can only be received by those who earnestly desire it and seek it by prayer and effort. The mind or spirit of the world must be driven out of our hearts, in proportion as we would have them filled with the holy Spirit, mind, influence. Self-will must also give place. And because it is in proportion as we are emptied of all things else that we are ready to receive of his fulness, therefore the Lord would have us come into this condition of earnest desire for filling with his

it is the obedience of the *intention*, of the *will*, of the *heart*, that the Lord regards in His consecrated people. Hence some whose hearts are thoroughly loyal to the Lord may be pleasing to Him, while not the most pleasing to some of those with whom they come in contact; while others, "highly esteemed among men" because of outward

Spirit of holiness, that we may be willing and anxious to displace and eradicate every other contrary influence and will.

This evidently is the thought of the Apostle, in his prayer for the Church at Ephesus, that "Christ [the Spirit of Christ] may dwell in your hearts by faith [that figuratively he may sit as king, ruler, director of every thought, word and deed]; that ye being rooted and grounded in love [the holy Spirit or disposition] may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth and height, and to appreciate the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with *all the fulness of God*." (Eph. 3:19) He who is filled with the Spirit of Christ, and with a full appreciation of the love which he manifested, will have the Father's Spirit in full measure...

As the earthly parent sets the food within the reach of his family, but does not force it upon them, so our heavenly Parent has set within the reach of his spiritual family the good provisions of his grace, but he does not force them upon us. We must hunger and thirst for them, we must seek for them, not doubtfully, but with faith respecting his willingness to give us good gifts. When, therefore, we pray for the holy Spirit, and to be filled with the Lord's Spirit, we are to look about us and find the provision which he has made for the answer to these

moralties, may be an "abomination" in the sight of God, because of coldness or dishonesty of heart. Nevertheless, he that hath the new hope in him, and the new spirit, will seek to purify himself, not only in his thoughts, but also in his words and deeds and all his affairs, inward and outward. Z. '99-92 R2456:2

prayers, which he has thus inspired and directed.

We find this provision in the Word of truth; but it is not enough to find *where* it is: if we desire to be filled we must eat; assuredly we must partake of the feast or we will not experience the satisfaction which the eating was designed to give. He who will not eat of a full table will be empty and starved, as truly as though there were no food. As the asking of a blessing upon the food will not fill us, but thereafter we must partake of it, so the possession of the Word of God, and the offering of our petition to be filled with the Spirit, will not suffice us; we must eat the Word of God, if we would derive his Spirit from it.

Our Master declared, "The *words* that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life" (John 6:63); and of all who are filled with the Spirit it is true, as spoken by the prophet, "Thy words were found and *I did eat them*." (Jer. 15:16; Rev. 10:9) It is absolutely useless for us to pray Lord, Lord, give us the Spirit, if we neglect the Word of truth which that Spirit has supplied for our fulfilling. If we merely pray for the Spirit and do not use the proper means to obtain the Spirit of truth, we will continue to be at most only "babes in Christ," seeking outward signs, in proof of relationship to the Lord, instead of the inward witness, through the Word of truth, which he has provided."

R5129 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2008)

"QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT"

--1 THESS. 5:19.--

IN THE SCRIPTURES light is used as a symbol of the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is symbolized, not only by the oil with which the priests were anointed and which represented the indwelling power of the Spirit, but also by the light of the golden candlestick which stood in the Holy. After we had been favored with the knowledge of the Truth and had consecrated ourselves, the Lord accepted our consecration and gave us the Holy Spirit, which became the illuminating power of our hearts. All down the Gospel Age the Church has been the light of the world. This our Lord intimated would be true when He said to His disciples on one occasion, "Ye are the light of the world."--Matt. 5:14.

As there are various ways by which a light may be extinguished, so there are different means by which this light of the Holy Spirit may be quenched in us. A light will go out if the supply of oil or gas which feeds it be cut off, or if the oxygen of the air be shut off from it, whether because the supply is exhausted or because something is placed over the light to extinguish it. So it is with us. The light of the Spirit may be permitted to die out for want of replenishing, or it may be quenched by contact with some outside force.

In order to have the Holy Spirit in large measure, we must keep near to the Lord; for if we get away from Him, the light will go out. If we neglect the privilege of prayer or of study of the Scriptures or of fellowship with the Lord through failure to think of Him, the illumination of the Spirit will grow dim. On the other hand, it will become brighter in proportion to our realization of our own imper-

fections and to the degree of our consecration to the Lord. This we manifest by the zeal with which we study His will as expressed in His Word, and with which we practice that will in the affairs of life. These are the means by which we may supply the oil to keep our light burning brightly. But while we are endeavoring to do this, we must see to it that we do not come into contact with anything which will tend to extinguish the flame of sacred love in our hearts.

The world, the flesh and the Devil are all in opposition to the light of the Holy Spirit. To whatever extent they are brought into contact with the light, to that extent they smother it. If the spirit of worldliness come into our hearts, it will extinguish the light of the Holy Spirit. If the spirit of selfishness or of thoughtlessness enter our hearts, it will cause the light to grow dim and finally to die out. Weariness in well-doing will produce the same result. If we indulge in pleasures of the flesh, these will tend to quench the Spirit. *Sinful pleasures* should, of course, be shunned by *everybody*. But there are pleasures which are *not sinful* and which are proper enough for the natural man. Yet to whatever extent the consecrated indulge in these and thus gratify the longings of the *flesh*, proportionately the *new nature* will suffer.

Christian fellowship is thought to be one of the very best aids to maintaining the light of the Spirit. Yet even in this there is a danger-line which is not always recognized and which, if crossed, will produce the opposite effect. A visit to the seashore and a bath in the ocean may in some cases be very profitable; but in others it may be carried to such an extent that it becomes dangerous to the new na-

ture. Those who become weary in well-doing are usually those who have found something attractive in another direction to take their attention away from the things of the Spirit.

ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE PLAN MOST ESSENTIAL

Amongst the various arrangements which God has made for the New Creatures in Christ is the assembling of themselves together in order to *maintain* their light and to *let it shine*. The Apostle Paul exhorts the Church not to forget the assembling together wherever it is possible to do so. (Heb. 10:25.) Where the assembling *is not possible*, the Lord makes up for the lack in some other way; and so we sometimes find a dear brother or sister who has not had the opportunity to meet with others in the Truth, but who seems to be very clear and to have a deep appreciation of the Lord's Plan. Not having the privilege of fellowship with others, such a one has done so much the more reading and studying.

Those who have this opportunity for fellowship and who do not appreciate it, seem to be in a very unsatisfactory condition. In such cases, the oil is not burning brightly, else that one would delight to be with fellow-pilgrims in the same way, marching toward the same goal. We should be as careful of our spiritual condition as of our physical. If we have a bad taste in our mouth and no appetite, we conclude that we are not well; and if we do not care to go to meetings, we may know that we are not in good spiritual health. When we find that we have not the desire to meet with others of "like precious faith," it is an indication that we should go to the Great Physician, that He may help us.

In some cases, however, the individual would do better not to go to meeting at first, but to read and study for awhile. Many have been hindered in their spiritual growth by getting a smattering of the Truth and then attending meetings. Such become stumbling-stones to themselves and to others. If they have not the time to read as well as to attend meetings, it would be better to read until they have become established, and then to assemble with others of like precious faith.

R5912 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2008)

"THEY GO FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH"

"Be ye filled with the Spirit."--Ephesians 5:18.

LET us consider together briefly these words of the Apostle Paul, addressed to the Church of Christ, the saints. They do not apply to those who are merely empty professors, having a form of godliness only, but to those who have fully accepted the terms of God's Call, who have made the full consecration which alone brings us into the position of sons of God. These are the only ones who have the Spirit of God. These only are begotten from Above. But St. Paul would have us remember that it is not sufficient that we receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit, which comes to us at the very entrance of the narrow way. We should see that the Holy Spirit of God abounds in us more and more as we go on in our Heavenward course. The little spark of the new mind should grow stronger and brighter day by day.

If this development does not take place, if we merely stand still, we shall soon begin to lose ground; but if we progress, the natural man will gradually perish and the new man will thrive. Christian development should be steady and continuous. We are to be more and more filled with the Spirit. Sometimes the Lord's children say, "I do desire to be filled with the Lord's Spirit, but it seems as if my capacity is so small. I wish to have His Spirit in large measure, but I am unable to be what I long to be. I am not satisfied with my attainments." But if we are striving earnestly and prayerfully to become like Christ, let us not be discouraged. Let us remember that if we keep filled to our present capacity, this very infilling will enlarge our capacity. Then our earthen vessel will hold more of the Holy Spirit. This, in turn, still further enlarges our capacity; and so the expanding and filling goes on. Thus it is possible for us to be filled continually.

If it were an impossibility for us to be filled with the Spirit of God, the inspired Apostle would not have so instructed us. To the truly consecrated child of God this is possible, and not only possible, but obligatory. But as there are ebbs and flows in the ocean tides, so with our sense of the Lord's presence with us and His smile upon us. We may not always realize His presence to a large degree, but the Lord's saints must learn to walk by faith, to trust Him and His abiding love and presence with us even though physical ill health or untoward outward circumstances or conditions may at times cause a

Many, even of those who are leading classes, are not so clear in the Truth as would be desirable. Some of these seem not to know what they are talking about, although they think that they do. There are various means by which one may redeem the time for study. One may take a book with him and read while on the car, going to and from his daily task. We know a dear brother who read the entire six volumes in this way.

The right course is to exercise the spirit of a sound mind on this subject, as well as on others. Our first thought should be for the glory of God; our second, for our own profit; our third, for the benefit of others. In this matter we owe it to ourselves to put ourselves first; for if we fit ourselves for service, we then have larger opportunity for helping others. Here *self* comes first, by *Divine command*--"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"; "This is the will of God [concerning you], even *your* sanctification."--Matt. 6:33; I Thess. 4:3.

As each one comes to know for himself after receiving the Holy Spirit, He is authorized to teach what he has learned for himself. So we may all be taught of God and be used in teaching others, in proportion as we learn the lessons and apply them to our own hearts. Each one's conscience should decide for him what is to the glory of God in respect to attending meetings.

A flame might be revived, even after having been wholly extinguished. Many of us have seen a candle extinguished, and yet there was a bright, warm core which a quick breath of air might rekindle. So with us. There might be something in our lives to extinguish the flame, but the light would not go entirely out; the breath of the Lord might rekindle it. We have seen people who apparently had been zealous for the Lord, but who seemed to lose their love and zeal; but later it has been rekindled. In other cases, the light has seemed to die out altogether. We should ever be on guard lest we allow anything to dim or to extinguish our love for the Lord, for the Truth or for holiness and Christ-likeness.

mental depression. We are to rejoice in the Lord even though there may be for a time more or less heaviness of spirit.

DAILY SELF-EXAMINATION NECESSARY

In speaking of the glorious salvation of the Church the Apostle Peter says, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations [trials], that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (1 Peter 1:6-8.) And we can thus rejoice even in the midst of severe trials that cause pain and tears. There may be times when it will seem as though we are more filled with the Spirit than at other times. But if we are striving earnestly to daily walk with God, this will not really be the case. It may be only a difference of surface feelings. The true child of the Lord should steadily progress.

The spirit, or disposition, of the world will seek to invade the dominion of the New Creature. But the New Creature must be on the alert to see that his mind and body are freed from everything that would not be in fullest harmony with God's Holy Spirit. Each one should seek to judge himself in this respect. We may not judge one another, but we should judge ourselves. We are to see to it that the Spirit of the Lord is manifest in our words, our thoughts and our conduct. We should be able to do this more and more successfully, more and more continually, as we go on in the good way and grow in grace and knowledge. This we shall do if we are watching, praying, striving, day by day.

The Spirit of the Lord dwelling in us in fulness, as it should be, will cause our entire being to be so absorbed by the principles of righteousness laid down in the Lord's Word, to be so in love with the Heavenly things, Heavenly hopes, Heavenly prospects, that everything else will be of no value to us. And this will be more and more our blessed experience if we continue faithfully in the narrow way, if we "follow on to know the Lord."

But if, on the contrary, we find ourselves making provision for

the flesh, making worldly plans; if we find ourselves inclined to lay up treasures on earth instead of in Heaven, we should take alarm, and should ask ourselves whether we are deficient, whether we are neglecting the means of grace--prayer alone with God, study of His Word, meditation upon the glorious things to which we have been called, watching ourselves as to our growth in the fruits of the Spirit. If we find that we are considerably controlled by the spirit of contention, we should ask ourselves, "Are we seeking to deal justly and equitably with others--to give them their rights and not to intrude upon them? Are we cultivating the love which is forbearing, forgiving and kind?"--2 Timothy 2:24; Ephesians 4:31,32.

If we find after close introspection that we are in full sympathy with the spirit of love, and can see that we are gradually developing this crowning fruit of the Spirit, let us rejoice; for we should greatly deplore the matter if it were otherwise. If we find that we are controlled by this spirit of love, we may know that we are filled with the Spirit. This spirit of love will enlarge our hearts and minds, making us broader and nobler day by day.

But we need to continually watch and pray; for there is constant danger otherwise that we may be tripped up or stumbled either by our own faults or those of others. We are never safe from being side-tracked unless we go often to the Throne of Grace; we cannot be filled unless we keep very close to the great Fountain from which our infilling comes. We must daily carry our earthen pitcher to this Heavenly Fountain to be replenished; for we are leaky vessels. We are not to feel discouraged if we do not find in ourselves the rapid growth that we desire to see. Strong, sturdy trees that can withstand the fiercest storms are not developed in a day. Their growth is a slow, steady process. We should show our loyalty to the Lord by renewed effort every time we fail. He is looking at us not to see if we are perfect in the flesh--for He knows that we are not and can never be--but to see whether or not we have the spirit of earnestness and loyalty which daily and hourly seeks to keep the body under and to cheerfully take up the cross.

BLESSED RESULTS OF SPIRIT'S INFILLING

The Christian is not to be like the worldling who seeks to drown his troubles and afflictions in drink or in pleasures, dissipations and frivolous diversions; but in every trouble he is to fly to the only true Source of solace and comfort and strength. This will drive

IMPORTANT NEW COVENANT CLARIFICATIONS

When considering below R2455, keep these clarifications & 6th Vol. Foreword in mind:

CHURCH NOT UNDER THE NEW COVENANT

Fii "Inadvertently, the name New Covenant, which belongs to God's dealings with the world during the Millennium, has been used in respect to the Covenant which is now in operation during this Gospel Age with the Church. Our Covenant, of course, is a new covenant in the sense that it is different

from the Jewish Covenant of Mt. Sinai, but it is not THE New Covenant. The Church's Covenant is referred to in the Bible as a "Covenant by Sacrifice."

NEW COVENANT WILL BE WITH NATION OF ISRAEL (JER. 31:31-32)

R4321 "As the old Law Covenant was with Israel only, so the New (Law) Covenant will be with Israel only. Other nations will share it by becoming Israelites, "Proselytes of the gate," not under the old but under the New Covenant. (Ezek. 16:60,61.) "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." [Isa 56:6-7]

R2455 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2008)

"HE SHALL GIVE YOU ANOTHER COMFORTER"

--APRIL 30.--JOHN 14:15-27--

CONTINUING his discourse to his troubled disciples at the time of his instituting the Memorial of his own death, our Lord not only promised to come again and receive them to himself in due time, but additionally he promised the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, during the interim of his absence. Since he was about to lay down the human nature he could no longer be with them as the man Christ Jesus--in his resurrection he would become again a spirit being like unto the Father, and could no more be seen by his disciples than the Father could be seen by them, until the time would come when the entire Church, complete, would be "changed," made "like him" (and like the Father) and see him, and be with him, and share his glory. His resurrection "change" made necessary either the leaving of his disciples alone, without any help or aid during the Gospel age, or else that help be granted them in some other manner. The few occasions on which our Lord appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, for a few moments each, were miraculous manifestations, simply for the purpose of assuring them that he was no longer dead, and that having risen from the dead he was no longer controlled by human conditions. Hence, as a part of the lesson, the flesh bodies in

away all anxiety and give him rest and peace even in the midst of trouble. Like the fabled halcyon, which built its nest and brought forth its birdlings in the midst of the sea, the true child of God can be at rest even amidst the billows and storms of life, and can prosper as a New Creature and accomplish all the good pleasure of God's will.

This unwavering trust in the Lord, this abiding rest of the soul, this zeal in God's service, is a matter of growth. "They go from strength to strength," the Psalmist declares of the inhabitants of Zion. "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear," said our Lord of this class. (Psalm 84:7; Mark 4:28.) Notwithstanding the difficulties of life, these can continue to make melody in their hearts unto the Lord. They rejoice no matter what may be the outward earthly conditions. They can smile even through their tears, knowing that, according to His promise, all things are working together for their good. To attain this development is to be filled with the Spirit; and each consecrated disciple of Christ should reach this plane.

Some Christian writer has well said: "Wherever there has been a faithful following of the Lord in a consecrated heart, several things have, sooner or later, inevitably followed. Meekness and quietness of spirit become in time the characteristics of the daily life. A submissive acceptance of the will of God, as it comes in the hourly events of each day, is manifested; pliability in the hands of God to do or to suffer all the good pleasure of His will; sweetness under provocation; calmness in the midst of turmoil and bustle; a yielding to the wishes of others [where there is no conflicting principle involved], and an insensibility to slights and affronts; absence of worry or anxiety; deliverance from care and fear--all these, and many other similar graces, are invariably found to be the natural outward development of that inward life which is 'hid with Christ in God.'"

"Jesus, my Lord, Thou art my life,
My rest in labor, strength in strife;
Thy love begets my love of Thee;
Thy fulness that which filleth me.

"Mine effort vain, my weakness learned,
Weary, from self to Christ I turned,
Content to let His fulness be
An unbought fulness unto me."

CHURCH HAS AN ADVOCATE NOT A MEDIATOR (1JN. 2:1)

SM720 "Our Lord Jesus is not the Church's Mediator before the Father, but the Church's Advocate. There is a sharp distinction to be drawn between the two thoughts. A mediator implies a hostility between two principals, requiring the intervention of a third party; and this is not the case with the Church. We are not rebels... There is no need of a Mediator between the Father who loves His children and the children who love their Father."

which he manifested himself appeared miraculously and disappeared likewise--he came and went as the wind.--John 3:8; Luke 24:26,31; Acts 1:3,4.

The holy spirit would be another Comforter, but the comfort would be of the same kind. Indeed, our word "comfort" does not properly represent the thought of the text, which rather is, to strengthen, to sustain: the holy spirit would not be merely a consoler of woes, a soother of fears, in the sense of our word comfort, but it would quicken their understandings, strengthen their zeal, and energize them for doing and enduring such things as divine providence might permit to come upon them for their correction in righteousness, and in order to make them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

The holy spirit or holy influence that should come to the Church and abide with it through the age, to supervise and direct in the interest of the faithful, was to be a representative of both the Father and the Son. Indeed, the thought that the holy spirit is the representative of the Lord Jesus with the Church is so strongly put that sometimes the Lord himself and his spirit or influence are spo-

ken of interchangeably; as for instance, when he said to them, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age." (Matt. 28:20.) And again, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you [through the holy spirit]." And again, "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I [through the holy spirit] in you, ...and I will manifest myself to him [through the holy spirit]....And we [the Father and the Son] will come unto him, and make our abode with him [through the holy spirit]." --Vss. 18,20,23.

Thus it is that those who receive the holy spirit, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love, the spirit of the Father, the spirit of Christ, are enabled to *see* Jesus, and have a new life begun in them. (Vs. 19.) They *see* with the eyes of their understanding, and do not walk in darkness. They *hear* the voice of the Lord, saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." They *taste* the good Word of God, and realize that he is very gracious. They *feel* the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, producing in them love for the brethren and all the good fruits of the spirit--meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love.--Isa. 30:21; 1 Pet. 2:3; Rom. 5:5; Col. 3:12,13.

These experiences, however, are promised conditionally --they are not promised to those who have never heard of the grace of God, but to those who have heard, to "as many as the Lord our God shall call," who, hearing his commandments, are moved by responsive love to do them. Such have the Father's love, such have the love of the Son, and such shall have the fellowship both of the Father and the Son through the medium or channel of the holy spirit. This is declared in the *15th and 16th verses*, and again in the *21st, 23d and 24th*. Not only are faith and obedience of the heart necessary, before any can come into the spirit-begotten condition, but a continuance and growth in faith and in obedience are necessary in order to a continuance and growth in the spirit of holiness, or the holy spirit, the spirit of fellowship with the Father and with the Son.

It is one thing to have a begetting of the spirit, and quite another matter to attain to that condition urged by the Apostle, saying, "Be ye *filled* with the spirit." (Eph. 5:18.) ⁽¹⁾The measure of our filling will correspond with the measure of our emptying of the spirit of selfwill, and filling with the spirit of faith and obedience. And altho the obedience cannot do otherwise than manifest itself in the daily life, nevertheless it is the obedience of the *intention*, of the *will*, of the *heart*, that the Lord regards in his consecrated people, and not merely the control of the earthen vessel. Hence, some whose hearts are thoroughly loyal to the Lord may be pleasing to him, while not the most pleasing to some of those with whom they come in contact; while others, "highly esteemed amongst men" because of outward moralities, may be an "abomination" in the sight of God, because of coldness or dishonesty of heart. (Luke 16:15.) Nevertheless, he that hath the new hope in him, and the new spirit, will seek to purify himself, not only in his thoughts, but also in his words and deeds and all his affairs, inward and outward.-- 1 John 3:3.

It should not be overlooked that, altho the holy spirit, like all other favors, is of the Father, it, like all others of his gifts, comes to us through the Son, and not by any direct relationship between the Father and us. As we saw in our previous lesson that our prayers addressed to the Father are to be answered by the Son, -- "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son: If ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it;"--so we see in this lesson that the gift of the holy spirit comes to us, not because of any direct relationship between the Father and us, but at the instance of our Lord Jesus. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter"--at my request and my account the Father will do this for you. (Vs. 16.) The same thought is again expressed in vs. 26, "The holy spirit whom the Father will send in my name."

The lesson to us here is, that our only standing before the Father as yet is a *reckoned one*--in Christ, as members of his body,--our Lord Jesus represents the Father to us and represents us to the Father. The comfort and strength of the holy spirit imparted to us is the Father's, the spirit of truth, all of which emanates from the Father: it reaches us not directly, but only through our Lord and Head, Jesus. In a word, we have no standing whatever with the Father, and will not have any, until by his grace, through our Lord Jesus, we shall have been "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in

light," and by the "change" of the first resurrection shall be perfected in his likeness, which is the divine likeness: then and thereafter, being actually perfect, and not merely reckonedly perfect, we may have an individual standing with the Father, but not before.

Hence it is that if any one lose his relationship to Christ through the loss of his faith in the precious blood, or through the loss of the holy spirit, through wilful sin, such an one falls out of the protection, the care, the covering of Jesus, the Mediator of the ⁽²⁾New Covenant,--and falls into the hands of the living God, -- which means a judgment according to facts and works; and to all imperfect creatures this means death. (Heb. 10:31.) Hence also the exhortation of the Scriptures, that we abide in him, that we remain under the blood of sprinkling, that we abide in his love.-- John 15:4,6,10; 1 John 2:24-29.

Our Lord pointedly declares that he who does not seek to please him by conforming to his instructions, thereby manifests that he does not love him. (Vss. 23,24.) Surely there can be no better test of love than devotion, and no better test of devotion than obedience. Our enlightened consciences render hearty assent to the Master's words, and with the Apostle we exclaim, "The love of Christ constraineth us, for we thus judge that, if one died for all, then all were dead, and that he died for all, that they who live [justified and begotten to newness of life] should henceforth not live unto themselves, but unto him who died for us, and rose again." --2 Cor. 5:14,15.

The Master pointed out to us distinctly that in keeping his sayings we are not merely pleasing and obeying him, but that he is in all this matter the mouthpiece of Jehovah, the Father, and consequently that in pleasing and obeying him we are pleasing and obeying the Father. This much he could tell them while still with them, but he had many things that he desired to make known to them, and that were necessary for them to know, but that they could not receive as yet, because the holy spirit had not yet come upon them, and could not until after the ransom sacrifice had been made at Calvary and offered in the Holy of Holies, after he ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us.--John 7:39; Heb. 9:24.

Our Lord's assurance is that this Comforter or strengthener, the holy spirit of the Father, sent on account of and at the instance of Jesus our Redeemer, Mediator and Head, will be our instructor--using various instrumentalities for bringing the instruction to us -- the Word of truth, the writings of the apostles, and the various helps and agencies which the Lord, through the holy spirit, has and shall from time to time, as needed, provide to his flock.

How beautiful, how consoling to their troubled hearts, and how refreshing to ours, is the legacy of love and peace left to us by our dear Redeemer, as expressed in the *27th verse*! "Peace I leave with you, *my peace* I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This peace and joy which surpasseth human understanding, was not given to the world, nor is it given to the nominal Christian professor, nor to the formalist and ritualist, however zealous they may be. It is intended for and can be had only by those who receive riches of grace through the holy spirit--those who by obedience to the truth and its spirit grow up into Christ their living Head in all things. Such have peace, deep and abiding, and ever increasing proportionately as they come to comprehend with all saints through faith and obedience the riches of divine grace--the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God.

⁽³⁾This is not worldly peace, not the peace of indifference and carelessness, not the peace of sloth, not the peace of self-indulgence, not the peace of fatalism; but it is the peace of Christ--"my peace." Looking back we can see that the Master preserved his peace with God under all conditions. It is a peace which implicitly trusts to the divine wisdom, love, justice and power, a peace which remembers the gracious promise made to the Lord's faithful--that nothing shall be any means hurt his faithful, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. This peace can accept by faith whatever divine providence permits, and can look through its tears with joyful expectancy for the ultimate blessings which the Master has promised, and of which the present peace and joy are merely foretastes.

⁽²⁾ Important: See previous section for clarification on New Covenant

⁽³⁾ Jul. 17 Manna, Isa. 26:3

⁽¹⁾ Jul. 16 Manna, Eph. 5:18