

## June 19

*Light [Truth] is sown for the righteous, and gladness [the joys of the Truth] for the upright in heart. Psalm 97:11*

THE true children of God love the Truth because they have an affinity for it....When they have found the Truth they

### PSALMS 97:11 "LIGHT IS SOWN FOR THE RIGHTEOUS"

A20 "Those who will turn away from the mere speculations of men, and devote time to searching the Scriptures, not excluding reason, which God invites us to use (Isa. 1:18), will find that a blessed bow of promise spans the heavens. It is a mistake to suppose that those without faith, and consequent justification, should be able to apprehend clearly the truth: it is not for such. The Psalmist says, "Light [truth] is sown for the righteous." (Psa. 97:11) For the child of God a lamp is provided whose light dispels from his pathway much of the darkness. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psa. 119:105)"

### "GLADNESS FOR THE UPRIGHT IN HEART"

R3648 "Light is sown for the righteous" who faithfully and thankfully receive and disseminate it, "and gladness [the gladness which comes from a realization of the truth] for the upright in heart."—Psa. 97:11.

(Mat 5:6) "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

R3735 "There is in some a heart-hunger and thirst for that which is right, that which is true... There is a special blessing for those who have the soul-hunger to which our Lord refers. "They shall be filled"—they shall be satisfied..."

The majority of the world, careful for the meat that perishes, think little of the Truth and get little of it; the few hungering and thirsting for it are filled, refreshed, sanctified by it, and in word and in deed and in thought are being fitted and prepared for still further blessings in God's due time--participation with the Redeemer in the Kingdom and a share with him in the work of blessing and uplifting mankind."

recognize its value; they prize it, and meditate upon it....They say, It is just like God: it is the manifestation of His glorious goodness, the reflection of His loving, benevolent, wise and just character. And therefore they love the Truth and the God who gave it: they treasure it up in their hearts and con-

R2823 "Paul, like others of his countrymen, was zealous for the Law, and for the promises made to Israel. He was not a wicked man in any sense of the word, but, on the contrary, was moral, upright, religious, having a religious zeal..."

It was because Paul of Tarsus was not a bad man, but a good man, laboring under blindness and misapprehension, "an Israelite indeed," fighting the truth ignorantly, that our Lord favored him in the miraculous manner related in this lesson. Indeed, we may suppose that the Lord in some manner favored all "Israelites indeed," as we note, for instance, that he favored Nathanael, who at first was skeptical respecting his Messiahship, but was granted convincing evidence because of his sincerity...

The heart of Paul being in a right attitude,—of loyalty toward God, of zeal for God, he merely needed to be set right; and we see that immediately the same zeal and fervency of spirit which once persecuted the Church was enlisted on behalf of the Church;—that he gladly forsook all to follow Christ, as soon as he recognized his true character. These things being true, those who refer to the Apostle Paul's "*conversion*," and who compare it to the conversion of an ordinary evil-doer, show that they are laboring under a serious misapprehension of the facts. Had Saul of Tarsus been a wicked man we could not suppose that the Lord would have been interested in him in any such manner, nor that any such miraculous means would have been used to bring his attention to his wrong course of action.

God's time for dealing with the unbelieving world is not in this age—that work is left for the Millennial age. He is dealing now only with those who are "Israelites indeed," honest at heart; and it is for this class, and this class only, that the Lord's providence and drawing and convincing power is exercised. In other words, God never proposes to change a man's will, but where his will is right and his ideas, his conceptions of proprieties, are wrong, it is in accord with every principle of righteousness for the Lord to favor such, and to open

R945 (From Harvest Truth Database V10)

### LIGHT FOR THE RIGHTEOUS

*"Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."—Psa. 97:11.*

Light is a most beautiful and fitting symbol for truth; and not only do the Scriptures so use it, but it is a symbol in common use today. Men frequently speak of the "light of our day," and in contrast speak of the ages past as "the dark ages;" they speak of the light of civilization, the light of truth, etc.; and that remarkable statue recently erected in New York harbor is an apt illustration of this symbol in present use. It represents liberty enlightening the world—liberty as an aid to the finding of light, truth, and truly as men gain liberty, and make proper use of it, truth on various subjects begins to open up, and brings with it its train of blessings. But liberty and light abused are as sure to sink those who abuse them, in deeper darkness and greater evils.

In the above text reference is made particularly to one certain class of truth, nevertheless we recognize it as a principle in the di-

it over again and again; and as they look into it, and admire all its symmetry and beauty, they strive more and more to conform their own characters to the same lines of beauty and seek to commend it by word and conduct to others, that they also may be blessed by it. Z.'96-55R1950:1

the eyes of their understanding: and this same rule holds good now, as the Prophet has declared: "None of the wicked shall understand—but the wise shall understand"—the truly wise. If any of the wicked gain a partial knowledge of the truth we may be sure that they will lose it, for, as the Scriptures again declare, "Light is sown for the righteous: truth for the upright in heart." (Psa. 97:11.) God has abundant provisions for dealing with other classes in the future, "in due time"—such as will be best suited to their cases."

R3847 "We believe that without a love for *Truth* none will be favored with the light of "Present Truth." More than this, we hold that if sincere love for Truth—honesty of thought and deed—be yielded, sacrificed to pride, ambition, vain-glory, or any other thing, the result will be the loss of Present Truth. Let us ever keep in memory our Lord's message through the Apostle, that now in the end of this age he will send strong delusion that all may believe a lie who have pleasure in untruth—who received not the Truth in the love of it. (2 Thess. 2:10-12.) Let us guard our consciences, realizing that their perversion would surely work our injury, our alienation from the Lord, and our rejection from his service now and hereafter."

(Prov 23:23 KJV) "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding."

### TRUTH DOES NOT CHANGE

R46 "TRUE LIGHT is in harmony with all previous *light*, or truth.

We should scrutinize closely everything presented as *light* which shines only as it is able to extinguish previous *light*.

Remember, too, that now ("the evil day"), is not so much a time of attack and advance, as of watching and *withstanding* the attacks of error. "Take unto you the whole armor that you may be able to *withstand* in the *evil day*."

vine economy in dealing with mankind in general, that to the extent that men observe the principles of righteousness, they are correspondingly favored with truth and its attendant blessings.

The Scripture saith, "There is none righteous; no, not one." All mankind are unrighteous, they are under the penalty of death. But thank God, a redemption has been provided, and those who lay hold of it by faith, are justified, reckoned righteous in God's sight. And it is for these justified (reckoned righteous) ones, who by faith have accepted the righteousness of Christ, and who in gratitude and love to God for such favor are endeavoring to live lives of obedience and faithfulness, that light is specially sown.

It is not for those who once by faith accepted of justification through the ransom, and who, simply consoling themselves with this thought, straightway turned back to the world to revel with it and

stifle all thought of responsibility. Truth is not for such, but for the righteous who not only thankfully accept the righteousness of Christ, but who go further and consecrate themselves to the divine service, their rightful, reasonable service. Only such grow in grace and in knowledge.

It is in the Word of God that this light for this special, justified and consecrated class, is sown; and while the justified and sanctified of past ages enjoyed a measure of light, all that was then due, the justified and sanctified of this age have far greater privileges in this direction than any of former times; for in the ages past the light, the truth, was being sown for our special benefit. Unto the prophets, to whom so much truth was given, yet in such a way that but little of it was understood by them, it was revealed, in answer to their earnest searching, that not unto themselves, but unto *us* (the Gospel Church) they did minister (1 Pet. 1:12)—that the truth which God was sowing, through their instrumentality, was not then due, but was being sown for the righteous some centuries down the stream of time.

The faithful prophets were not left in darkness, however, to blindly grope their way along without special evidence of divine favor. They had their measure of light, and because faithful to it, great will be their advantage in the resurrection. And while it is true that a great store-house of divine truth was prepared for the Christian Church through the instrumentality of the prophets of past ages, and while much more was added to it by the Lord and the Apostles, yet it has only been revealed by degrees, as the age advanced toward its termination; consequently the early church did not enjoy as great light as it is our privilege to enjoy to-day. Occupying our present position on the stream of time, it is the privilege of the Christian Church to enjoy such views of God's plans and doings as none before our day could possibly have. Yet only this special class, the righteous, are so privileged; and their continuance of the privilege is conditioned upon their faithfulness, both in searching for and in using the light.

It is a very noticeable fact that those who have been greatly blessed with light and have made no use of it, have not been privileged to retain it. The truth always brings with it its measure of responsibility, and to the extent that we measure up to that responsibility, more light is given. And *vice versa*—to the extent that we ignore that responsibility, further increase of light is denied, and the light that is in us, begins to wane.

If we accept the truth, and begin to act from its standpoint, very soon we find ourselves marked as peculiar, very different from the world, and very different too, from merely nominal Christians. This is as it should be. If this be your experience, brother or sister, go on; you are on the right track. But if you find yourself very much like other people, then take heed. Quite likely you are looking and acting from the world's standpoint, and not from the divine standpoint in which the truth has placed you.

You have made a covenant with God, and have received favors from him, which alter your position and responsibility entirely. Think of this: Let your mind run back to your earliest experiences as a child of God. When you first realized that *you* were bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, that *you* were redeemed from death through faith in that blood, call to mind how your heart was filled with joy and praise to God for his loving favor toward a justly condemned sinner. And when you turned the sacred page on which you read your title clear to everlasting life, and read further the exhortation of our brother Paul—"This is the will of God, even your sanctification,"—"Present your body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (1 Thes. 4:3; Rom. 12:1), you said, Yes, surely all that I can do to express my love and gratitude for such favor is at best but a poor return; and then on bended knees you said in all sincerity and fervency, Here, Lord, I give myself away; 'tis all that I can do.

Then you joined a church—as you supposed, a company of people all justified and consecrated like yourself. Your own heart was full of warm, fresh zeal: you meant to do just what you had covenanted to do. Your heart's inquiry was very much like that of Brother Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Then the Lord began to show you what you should do, how you should make your life one worthy of imitation, how you should let the spirit of God rule in your heart, conforming every feature of your character to the principles of the gospel, how in eating, and drinking, and wearing of apparel, in manner and conversation, and home and business life, you should first of all be a living epistle known and read of all with

whom you come in contact. Then he began to point out fields of usefulness in his service, which would afford you the privilege of cross-bearing.

But do you remember how the love that was in your heart helped you to set a vigilant watch over yourself, and to bravely and cheerfully take up your cross and follow the Master? And as thus for a time you stepped along joyfully in the narrow way, you said, Yes, truly I am proving day by day that his yoke is easy and his burden light.

But by and by your first love began to cool a little, and turning your thoughts upon yourself you began to think, How weary I am! how much I have to suffer by conforming so strictly to these principles. No one thinks more of me for it. Why there is brother A. and sister B.; they don't seem to trouble themselves about cross-bearing; they do very much as others do; they look and talk and act very much as others do, except that they make long and seemingly very earnest prayers in public, and make themselves generally agreeable, particularly in the church. And they are considered the very cream of the church, and most devoted Christians. As you looked around a little further, you noticed that nearly all were doing just so, except perhaps a poor old saint very generally overlooked, or else considered an extremist or a fool, unworthy of respect and attention. And verily you began to feel that you also were losing ground in their estimation. Why, surely, you thought, these are good Christians, and you must have taken an extreme view of your obligation to God. As you thus looked more and more at the examples of those around you, and less and less at the Word of God and the noble example of the Lord and the apostles, your own zeal became cold and you concluded that your first impressions of the Christian life must have been erroneous.

But they were not erroneous; they were right, and were derived from the right source, the Word of God, and should have been followed regardless of consequences. You would have had plenty of cross-bearing, but your Christian character would to-day be much stronger and more symmetrical. But thank God, he considered your unfavorable surroundings, and that while you were still willing to follow him, your flesh was weak; and so he sent you a special message of meat in due season which wonderfully awakened and encouraged you. Wonderful love! Do you suppose the Lord would so tenderly call you by his grace, and encourage and help you, if he did not desire to make you his bride? Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, O favored one, to whom God has granted present light, and forget not that if thou wilt prove faithful unto death, faithful is he that hath called you, who also will exalt you in due time, according to his promise.—1 Thes. 5:24.

Take for your examples the noblest runners on this course. They looked not at the things behind, to pine and fret for those things they had covenanted to sacrifice, but walked according to the light they had. Consider, for instance, the daily life of Jesus after his consecration: While with his unequalled abilities as a man he might have had the esteem and honor of his fellow men, and while he might have had an honorable fame throughout the world, and while he might have spent time in accumulating wealth, and in the gratification of other legitimate earthly ambitions, he turned aside from all these and chose the life of continuous service of his Father esteeming it a privilege to preach the gospel to one or two or many, as opportunity might offer. With it came reproach, poverty, persecution, ingratitude from those he benefitted, and finally death by ignominious crucifixion.

Then look at our beloved brother Paul: With all his talents and advantages of birth and education, his worldly prospects were fair, but he resolutely curbed all ambitions in that direction. And when he inquired, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" he conferred not with flesh and blood, but set himself at once to doing what the Lord directed. And though the Lord said he would show him how he must suffer great things for his name's sake, Paul counted the sufferings as not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall follow, though as yet he only saw that glory by faith. Truly, Paul suffered great things, but mark how he rejoiced even in those sufferings. When he and Silas were publicly beaten and then cast into prison, did they complain and say, they had had about enough of this, that some of the other apostles up there at Jerusalem ought to come out now and take their turn, that he was getting old and it was about time for him to settle down and take care of number one, he couldn't stand this kind of thing much longer?

No, you never heard a word of that kind from Paul. He had no notion of giving up, or of resting on his oars; he had learned the valuable lesson of contentment in whatever condition duty required him to be in (Phil. 4:11). Nay, more! he had learned to rejoice always, and in every thing to give thanks; and so he rejoiced even in tribulation, and sung for joy even in prison. The light of God's truth received in unflinching confidence gave him a joy which the world could neither give nor take away. And no amount of persecution stopped Paul from rejoicing; for he remembered that all the sufferings endured for Christ's sake, work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

But he warns us, that if we would so run as to obtain the prize of our high calling, if we would receive the light of divine truth and walk accordingly, we must look, not at the things which are behind, which we have covenanted to sacrifice, but at the things which are before, and which are yet unseen, except by the eye of faith.

To look back is one step, and a long one, towards ignoring and breaking our covenant. It is the first step in unrighteousness, and if not quickly retraced, it will sooner or later lead to darkness and apostasy; and the joy and peace we once experienced in believing will be taken away. He that looketh back is unfit for the Kingdom.— Luke 9:26,62.

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R1949 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2008)  
TRIALS OF FAITH--WHY PERMITTED

MANY are perplexed as to why false doctrines are permitted to annoy and confuse God's people. On receiving the truth and rejoicing in it they seem to think they have at last come to the end of all controversy, and have entered the Beulah land of rest and peace, thenceforth never again to be disturbed. But this is quite a mistake: our great adversary, Satan, is not disposed to let the children of light walk on undisturbed into the heavenly kingdom. Against that kingdom and its establishment, and against all its prospective probationary heirs, he is an inveterate enemy, and his power is not yet bound. The children of light, the heirs of the kingdom, are, therefore, the special targets against which his fiery darts are aimed. As soon as they escape from the kingdom of darkness and begin to walk in the light, they may therefore expect to find snares spread for their feet and stumbling blocks placed in their way. The work is done with subtlety, too, that, if possible, the escaped bird may be deceived and caught unawares. And, as a matter of fact, thousands are so caught, and only a few escape the "strong delusions" of this "evil day" of Satanic wrath and power.

It is a fair and reasonable question therefore, Why does the Lord permit the strong delusions and trials of faith of this evil day, when they actually do overthrow the faith of many and severely test all? To this inquiry the Apostle Paul (2 Thes. 2:10-12) makes answer, saying, "For *this cause*, God, shall send them [Whom?--Those "who received not the love of the truth that they might be saved"] strong delusions, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be condemned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Thus plainly we are told that God not only permits, but that he also desires, that the faith of his professed people should be severely tried. And if the thousands fall by these fiery darts of the enemy, it is because they are unworthy of the truth, not having received it in the love of it. Many indeed receive the truth very much as a child receives a new toy. It is a curiosity, something new, to be enjoyed for a season and then laid aside to be superseded by something else that temporarily pleases the fancy. Or, it is valued as a cudgel wherewith to gain the honors of victory in argument with disputing opponents. Or, again, it affords relief to some from a long imposed bondage of fear of eternal torment, and for this alone it is chiefly valued. They never did enjoy such a prospect, and often feared they were not quite good enough to escape torment and get inside the door of heaven.

All who thus lightly esteem the truth, merely to minister to their selfishness, are unworthy of it; and it is the will of God that all such should lose it. Hence the divinely permitted and desired testing of faith--the strong delusions, which, "if it were possible, would deceive the very elect," --those who have received the truth in the love of it, and not in any mean, selfish spirit. The truth was never intended for the listless, nor for the wicked. The former are unworthy of it and the latter are better without it until taught to use and not

We cannot too strongly urge upon God's covenant people their duty and responsibility in view of the light they have received—the duty of living for the heavenly things, and using the earthly things only as necessary aids in the divine service; the duty of viewing every matter of an earthly character from the standpoint in which the truth has placed us, from God's standpoint; the duty of acting promptly upon our convictions, and thereby giving no advantage to the adversary; the duty of enduring toil and persecution in the Master's service with uncomplaining meekness and joyful thanksgiving for the privilege; the duty of preaching the truth at any cost and at any sacrifice.

Light was indeed carefully sown centuries ago for the righteous, and it is now being most gloriously revealed to those for whom it was sown; but take heed, ye that have received it; for if through unfaithfulness the light that is in thee be turned to darkness, how great is that darkness! The messengers of darkness were never so active as in this "evil day," to overthrow the faith of the consecrated children of God; and never were their methods so subtle and so deceptive. Truly, they are calculated to deceive *if it were possible the very elect*. But thank God, that is not possible. The elect are those who faithfully, carefully study to know the will of God and are very earnest and faithful in doing it. Take heed that you make your calling and election sure.

abuse the liberty it brings. "Light [truth] is sown for the righteous, and joy [the joys of the truth] for the upright in heart." It is just as well that others, especially the wicked, should remain under the bondage of errors which to some extent control them until the strong power of Christ's kingdom is due to take the control of the world. For this reason God has permitted the superstitions of the past to fetter men's minds, and only in the present close proximity to the kingdom is he allowing some of the shackles of error to be loosened; and in the great time of trouble this will be seen to be the unchaining of the tiger of human passions, which would be disastrous in the extreme, were it not for the strong rule of the iron rod which will shortly command order, and say to the warring elements, "Peace, be still!" To the listless and selfish who are not grossly wicked, the truth is only made to minister to pride and selfishness, and hence it is the will of God that all such should lose it, as they do in pursuance of their natural dispositions with reference to it. But <sup>{1}</sup>the true children of God love the truth because they have an affinity for it. They love righteousness, they love their fellow men, and desire to bless and help them. They have large benevolence and brotherly kindness. They are meek, too, and not anxious to make a show of self and to glory over their fellows in argument; nor are they mere curiosity-hunters. <sup>{2}</sup>When they have found the truth they recognize its value; they prize it and meditate upon it; they view it as a grand and systematic embodiment of the highest ideal of righteousness, love and benevolence. They rejoice not only in its gracious provisions for the elect joint-heirs with Christ, but also for all mankind, as well as in the merciful dealings of God with the finally incorrigibly wicked whom he will mercifully destroy, but not torment. <sup>{3}</sup>They say, It is just like God: it is the manifestation of his glorious goodness, the reflection of his loving, benevolent, wise and just character. And therefore they love the truth and the God who gave it: they treasure it up in their hearts and con it over again and again; and as they look into it, and admire all its symmetry and beauty, they strive more and more to conform their own characters to the same lines of beauty and seek to commend it by word and conduct to others, that they also may be blessed by it.

This is what it is to receive the truth into good and honest hearts. For such the truth was intended; and it is not possible for them to be deceived by the sophistries of error. They know a good thing when they have it, and therefore hold it fast. They cling to it just as steel filings cling to a magnet, because they have an affinity for it. If you run a magnet through a box of sawdust and steel filings it will come out covered with the steel filings. A little sawdust may rest lightly on it, too, just as some people associate themselves with

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{1} 1/3 Jun. 19 Manna, Psa. 97:11

{2} 1/3 Jun 19 Manna cont.

{3} 1/3 Jun 19 Manna cont.

the truth and with those who hold it very dear; but the sawdust is easily blown off, while the steel filings hold fast. Just so multitudes of those who associate themselves with the Lord's people are easily carried away with a little wind of new false doctrine. And though they do not all disappear with the first breeze, a few more breezes will carry them all away. But the true ones God will not permit to be tempted above what they are able to bear; for he has given his angels a charge concerning them, and in their hands they shall bear them up lest at any time they should dash their feet against a stone.

The angel or messenger thus commissioned may be some well-instructed brother who has studied to show himself a workman approved unto God, rightly dividing the Word of truth, and ever ready to feed the flock of God, or some faithful sister, ever watchful with motherly interest over the lambs of the flock. Albeit, the Lord will

always provide for his own elect, and they shall not stumble nor fall.

The one thing for all the called to look to first is that they have received, and that they still hold, the truth in the love of it. Freely imbibe its blessed spirit and live in its hallowed atmosphere; "for, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "Through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth" you are chosen to the great salvation now shortly to be revealed (2 Thes. 2:13.) But the belief of the truth will avail nothing if it be not permitted to produce its legitimate fruit in a good and honest heart--viz., sanctification of the spirit, a complete setting apart to the divine will and service. Let us lay this lesson well to heart, and so run as to obtain the prize of our high calling. "Buy the truth" at any cost of self-sacrifice, "and sell it not" for any paltry present advantage.

R1656 (From Harvest Truth Database V8.0 2014)

## BUYING AND SELLING

THE Scriptures instruct God's people to sell or dispose of what they have and to buy something else,—even though at a great cost. The inference is that what we possess naturally is not of lasting value, while that which we may obtain instead is of priceless value and everlasting.

"Buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding."—Prov. 23:23.

Sell that which thou hast, and give alms—dispose of your natural abilities and talents, wisely of course, for the benefit of yourself, your family, and all who have need of such service as you can render—and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. Thus should we take up our cross and follow Christ our Redeemer and Pattern.—Luke 12:23; Matt. 19:21.

The "foolish virgins" were instructed to go and buy "oil,"—the light, the spirit of the truth. But they were "foolish" in that they did not buy in the proper time to get the greatest blessing in return. Because of tardiness they failed to enter into the Marriage Feast, thus losing a great privilege and blessing.

The value of a share in the Kingdom of God is likened to a choice pearl, to purchase which the dealer who rightly estimates its value will *sell or trade* all of his other wares;—realizing that possessing it alone he would be wealthy indeed.—Matt. 13:45.

Again, the value of the Kingdom is likened to a mine of wealth discovered in a field. The real value of the mine is generally unappreciated, but the appreciative discoverer would hasten to purchase the field; and to do so would give all else that he possesses.—Matt. 13:44.

The Lord in symbol points out to the Church, in its present Laodicean period, its really naked and poor and miserable condition; that its own righteousness, in which it trusts, is filthy rags which cannot cover its shame; and that its boasted riches of knowledge is of a spurious sort. He says: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold [heavenly wisdom], tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment [the covering of Christ's righteousness—purity] that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear."

All who have learned that during the present Gospel age God is selecting the little flock, foreknown in his plan, and that all whom he predestinated must possess the characteristics of his firstborn,—must be copies of his only begotten Son, our Lord—have some conception of the great treasure of priceless value which their knowledge puts within their reach. Those who realize the value of the treasure most accurately are gladly selling off all that they have—time, influence, reputation, voice, strength, houses, lands, carriages, ease, comforts, luxuries,—and are investing the proceeds of all in the purchase of this field, which they know contains the treasure mine. Their conduct sometimes seems strange to those who do not know of the mine, or who, knowing something of it, have no real conception of its priceless value.

To one of these a king once said, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." But Paul answered, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." And again he declared, "What things were gain [valuable] to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of [the treasure hid in] Christ Jesus my Lord (Col. 1:26; 2:3), on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them as dung, that I may win

Christ, and be found in him [a member of his body, one of his joint-heirs in the promised Kingdom]; that I may know him and the power of his resurrection [a resurrection to immortal and spiritual condition] and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto *the [chief]* resurrection." (Phil. 3:7-11.) "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8:18.) "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at [and labor not for] the things that are seen, but the things which are not seen [the hidden treasure]: for the things which are seen [and which we are selling off] are temporal, but the things which are not seen [the treasures of God's gracious plan hid in Christ, which we are giving our little all to possess] are eternal."—2 Cor. 4:17,18.

Beloved, it is appropriate that each of us search his own doings, and his own heart's motives, and see whether we are fully awake to the value of the great wealth of God's love and favor and honor hidden in Christ, of which we are invited to become joint-heirs. God has given to us, and to all, a great *gift* in Christ, in that eternal life is secured for all of Adam's race who will accept it under the terms of the New Covenant, when fully enlightened; but in addition to that *gift* is the present offer to *sell* to us a share in the glorious Millennial Kingdom at a price "not worthy to be compared" to the glories and blessings which, as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, we may receive in exchange.

The *price* is small, but it is *all* that we each have to give—ourselves, our all. Whether our all be more or less than another's all, it is nevertheless our *all*, and God graciously proposes to accept the little all of each, whatever it may be, the sufficiency of Christ's *all* compensating for the deficiency of our *alls*. The chance to buy is now, and very "foolish" are those virgins (pure ones) who neglect or refuse to give the price.

To buy we must consecrate and *give*—time, energy, study, to gain even a *knowledge* of the mystery (the secret mine of wealth) hid in Christ. (1 Cor. 2:7.) Each day will bring to the consecrated opportunities for giving something to the Lord, either directly, or indirectly to his people or others in his name. Each day will bring opportunities for *giving up* something precious to the selfish, carnal nature.

All such gifts presented to God (by those who have already been reconciled to God, through faith in his precious blood) are acceptable in the Beloved, and are treasures laid up in heaven, of two sorts: (1) the service rendered to God which, although in itself imperfect, he accepts as perfect through Christ; (2) the character thereby developed in our own hearts is a heavenly treasure acceptable to God by Jesus Christ; for every time we *give* anything to the Lord's service or *give up* things highly esteemed among men for the sake of the Lord, or his Word, or his people, or even for humanity's sake, we to that extent overcome the fallen disposition or spirit of selfishness, and cultivate the spirit of love and benevolence, the spirit of God, the spirit of Christ, the holy spirit or disposition, without which none will be acceptable as joint-heirs with Christ in his Kingdom;—for "if any man have not the spirit [disposition] of Christ he is none of his."—Rom. 8:9.

Let us see to it that, having made the contract, we pay over the price in full.—Acts 5:1-11.