

March 20

If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free. John 8:31,32

DIVINE truth is never found except in the divinely appointed channels; and those channels are the Lord and the apostles and

John 8:31-32 KJV "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; (32) And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

R5506 "THE REWARD OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP"

The Lord's expression, "Then are ye My disciples *indeed*," implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be Jesus' sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed." The hypocrisy of merely nominal discipleship is an abomination to the Lord...

The reward of continued discipleship is, "Ye shall *know* the Truth"—not, Ye shall be "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth." (2 Timothy 3:7.) Here is the mistake many make; failing to continue in the Word of the Lord, they delve into various human philosophies, which ignore or pervert the Word of the Lord and set up opposing theories. To those who seek for Truth among these human theories, there is no promise that they shall ever find it, and they never do...

Divine Truth is found only in the Divinely appointed channel—our Lord, the Apostles and the Prophets. To continue in the doctrines set forth in the inspired writings of the Prophets and the Apostles, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and to faithfully conform our characters to them, is what is implied in "continuing in the Word" of the Lord. And this is entirely compatible with the heeding of all the helps which the Lord raises up from among our brethren in the Body of Christ, as enumerated by the Apostle Paul. (Ephesians 4:11-15; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14.) The Lord always has raised up, and will to the end raise up, such helps for the edification of the Body of Christ; but it is the duty of every member carefully to prove their teaching by the infallible Word.

If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the Truth," be "established in the Present Truth" [the Truth due], and "be rooted and grounded in the Truth"; we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us"; to "earnestly contend for the Faith once delivered to the saints"; to "war a good warfare"; to "witness a good confession" and to firmly "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our conflict.

We do not come into the knowledge of the Truth at a single bound; but gradually, step by step, we are led into the Truth. Every step is one of sure and certain progress leading to a higher vantage ground for further attainments both in knowledge and in established character.

The Truth thus acquired, step by step, becomes a sanctifying power, bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Spirit, love, meekness, faith, patience and every virtue

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and every grace, which time and cultivation ripen to a glorious maturity.

Not only shall the true disciple thus know the Truth and be sanctified by it, but the Lord also said, "The Truth shall make you free." Those who have received the Truth know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of it is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance, superstition and fear. Its health-restoring beams penetrate the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorate the whole being; it quickens our mortal bodies...

"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORDS GIVETH LIGHT"

...We who have received the Truth have awakened from that horrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over us is broken. The Light has scattered our darkness.

We are made free, too, from the fear that we now see coming upon the whole world as the great civil and ecclesiastical systems that have so long ruled the world are being terribly shaken. All thinking people are in dread of the possible outcome of anarchy and terror; the alarm of all is increasing as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more apparent. Yet, in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God as to the terrors of the conflict through which the world will soon have to pass, the true disciples of Christ who abide in His Word are not afraid, but rejoice; for they know that God's object in permitting this mighty storm is to clear the moral atmosphere of the world, and that after the storm, there shall come, by His providence, an *abiding peace*. Instructed in the Truth, they realize the necessities of the situation, and have confidence in the Divine providence that can make even the wrath of man to praise Him, make all things work together for good.

Blessed promise!—"If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free." Dearly beloved, having received this wondrous favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines but bringing forth its blessed fruitage in our lives? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and bearing its reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of the glorious Light by our loyalty and faithfulness, working out our salvation with fear and trembling."

R310 "KNOWLEDGE IS LIBERTY"

When Luther discovered how fully Papacy filled the picture given by Paul, in 2 Thes. 2:3-8, and the symbols of Rev. 17, he felt justified by that knowledge, in publicly denouncing that system. The knowledge gave him the *liberty* to thunder the truth of God with all its power against the Vatican. God gave the liberty by giving the knowledge and Luther would have been

Truth;," we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us," to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," to "war a good warfare," to "witness a good confession," and firmly to "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our course. Z.'03-61 R3153:5

unworthy the knowledge and the honor of being the Lord's mouthpiece, had he been too cowardly to speak...

The *liberty* which we exercise is inspired by a knowledge of, and belief in the word of God. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you FREE." (John 8:32.) And as in Luther's and Paul's day, so now, those too indolent or too cowardly to express truth which they see, prove both by word and act that they are unworthy of the knowledge...(Mark 8:38.)"

R4003 "How many have been hindered, turned aside from the right path, by a misplaced faith! How many today are worshipping the creeds and theories of men and neglecting the Word of the Lord! How necessary to us that, while recognizing the fact that God has always used mouthpieces and leaders amongst his people, we should also recognize the fact that Satan has many mouthpieces and provides many leaders, and that our method of discrimination as between the true and the false prophets must be by their faithfulness to the Word of God, as it is written—"If they speak not according to this Word it is because there is no light in them." (Isa. 8:20.) Let us then not only resolve to cultivate faith, but that we make sure that it will have foundation in the Word of the Lord. And to thus make sure will imply such a love for truth, such an appreciation of the divine Word, as will lead us to spend time and energy, money, everything, that we may know the truth and be made free by it. Whoever, therefore, loves money, praise of men, honors of men, etc., more than he loves God or his Word, is not likely to obtain or to hold the proper knowledge of God, upon which alone the proper faith and obedience can be built."

Act 2:42 KJV "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine..."

R1421 "*VERSE 42.* Recognizing the Apostles' teachings as divinely inspired, the early Church had a grand unity of sentiment, and "all believed the same things" (1Cor. 1:10); they did not each try to rack his brain to make a new theory or a new kind of theology. How blessed it would be for the Church to-day if she were delivered from the confusion (Babel) of tongues—doctrines—which now prevails, and if, instead of studying and endeavoring to harmonize the inconsistent teachings of men, all would unite in discussing the teachings of the Lord and the apostles, with a view of learning just what they (God's mouthpieces) meant to teach. How soon would *the faith* once delivered to the saints" illuminate the hearts of all the humble."

R4187 "Whoever has not heard the Gospel, as in the case of the heathen, is not saved in ignorance, and whoever has heard the Gospel and does not keep it in memory and thus loses its power will miss the present salvation; or, if it should be kept in memory, still it might be useless because of failure to

allow the Gospel message to act properly upon the heart and life. These things being true we perceive how important it is for us to have a pure Gospel, to know the truth, for nothing but the truth can make us free."

R1530 "It is a mistake with some, to cultivate and appreciate only the intellectual side of God's grace, while others appreciate and cultivate chiefly the emotions aroused by God's grace and truth. And while we should realize that these extremes result often from a difference of temperaments, this should be no reason for neglecting to alter or modify our natural tendencies, to have them conform to the Lord's pleasure, as indicated to us in his Word.

Our Lord's prayer for his people clearly indicates what is the proper means for our sanctification. He prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth;" and then, making us doubly sure of his meaning, he added, "thy Word is truth." Those, therefore, who attempt to be sanctified by feelings or by errors or in any other way than by the truth are seeking a good thing in a wrong way; and results will surely be unsatisfactory until the Lord's method is adopted.

But that is no less serious a mistake which some others make, who, while devouring God's Word, get from it merely relief from fears and a satisfaction for their curiosity. Curiosity is insatiable; and if they fail to get what God designed to give them through the truth (Sanctification), they will ere long be devouring one error after another to feed their curiosity, and will delude themselves into supposing that they are continually feeding upon truth;—although they are well aware that each new thing devoured is soon abandoned as error, while their curiosity continues the devouring process, but never is satisfied. These the Apostle describes as "ever learning, but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth."—2 Tim. 3:7.

The proper course unites the head with the heart in the search for truth. The heart searches that it may know or prove what is that good and acceptable will of God, that it may please and serve him. The head, as the servant of the heart, searches to test or *prove* the truth, that the honest heart be not deceived into believing and serving amiss. But when the head undertakes to do all the truth-seeking and feeding, the real design of the truth—sanctification—is not attained. The result is merely a reasoning *about* the truth, and not a practicing of the truth;—the word of truth is handled and dissected, but the spirit of it is not received into good and honest hearts; because it is not a heart-hunger that is being fed, but a curiosity-hunger.

But where the heart hungers and thirsts after righteousness (after right views of God and of fellowmen and of the proper use of our time and influence and talents), and the head, as the *heart's servant*, engages in searching God's Word, the case is different; because then each morsel of truth received is at once applied in the life, and the sanctifying work begins and progresses. To this

true heart to know the Lord's will means to at once strive to do what is seen...

To enter into the spirit of the Lord's plan, as revealed in his Word, is to be sanctified by it; and this is impossible without some knowledge of it. And whoever catches the spirit of the truth will have some *emotions*, whether or not they are manifest to others. Sanctification is the truth acted upon—put into the affairs of life; and, under present-age conditions, always leads to self-denials, self-sacrificings in the service of God, and Truth, and fellow-men."

R2438 "YE SHALL BE FREE INDEED"...
JOHN 8:12,31-36.-- "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."--*John 8:36.*...

The incentive to enter the school of Christ is the heavenly Father's invitation... This school of Christ may be considered a school of self-denial, of self-sacrifice, prompted by love and maintained by devotion...

We are to remember that it is not the flesh that has entered the school of Christ, and is under his instructions and preparation for the Kingdom.--for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 15:50.) Our acceptance of the divine call to spirit nature meant the renouncement of the earthly nature in every sense of the word, and meant our begetting as new creatures--"sons of God." It is the "new creature," the new mind, the new will, that is in the school of Christ, and that is to be perfected--to be brought into full accord with the divine will--to become a copy or likeness of the Lord. We will never succeed in getting our flesh into absolute harmony with the divine law, because of its imperfections, inherited and otherwise. And he who is looking for perfection of his flesh, and who is resting his faith therein, must of necessity have a poor hope of ever attaining to the likeness of Christ--of ever becoming one of the predestinated class--"a copy of his Son."--Rom. 8:29.

It is unnecessary that we should point out that the new mind, in proportion as it develops in likeness to the mind of Christ, will relax no efforts to keep the body under, with its motions of sin--to keep the will of the flesh dead. Surely, no spirit-begotten son of God could allow sin to *reign* in his mortal body: should sin to any degree control him, it will not be willingly, and hence could be but momentarily--until the new mind, the new creature, seeing the uprising of the flesh, would conquer it, obtaining the promised grace and help in every time of need, from the heavenly store-house of grace.--Christ.

This thought, rightly entertained, will help true disciples to appreciate their own position, and not to be utterly cast down if overtaken in a fault of the flesh, so long as they realize that their *hearts* are not in sympathy with the sin and unrighteousness, but on the contrary in full sympathy with the principles and instructions of our Teacher, and longing to be pleasing and acceptable in his sight. And this correct thought will also

help all such to exercise fervency of love amongst themselves, toward the "brethren," who similarly are disciples, pupils in this school,--new creatures, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit of their minds. If, therefore, each shall see blemishes in the flesh of the "brethren," disappointed and striven against, each should remember that the evil which he sees is that of his brother's enemy and not the evils of the brother himself, the "new creature"...

"Disciples indeed" are those who will finish their course in this school of Christ and graduate... But joining the school does not bring these results necessarily; as our Lord indicated, it is only by *continuing* in the school, continuing under his direction, under the direction of his Word of truth... Nevertheless, at each step of the journey it may be our privilege to see that we are making progress--that we are coming to know more and more of the truth, and that it is more and more making us free. We are not to expect an instantaneous knowledge nor an instantaneous freedom.

The general effect of the light of the truth, of which the Word of God is the lamp, is to break the shackles of superstition and to make people independent, but these effects are of questionable profit to those who are not disciples in the school of Christ. To others, freedom and light of knowledge are apt to bring nearly as much bane as blessing, leading often to arrogance, self-conceit, unkindness, boastfulness, combativeness, dissatisfaction and general unhappiness. These evil results come upon those who are made free in some respects only, and left bound in other respects: and this is the general and growing condition of the civilized world to-day, including the majority in the nominal Church.

But the true disciples, heeding the Word of the great Teacher, and continuing in all things to be his pupils, are not only set free from superstitions and ignorance, but also from the service of Sin; and receive instead a correct appreciation of their own natural weaknesses and blemishes, and of the divine mind-- the truth. In consequence, their freedom is one which blesses instead of injuring them; one which brings humility instead of pride and boastfulness; one which brings patience instead of anger; one which brings generosity and benevolence instead of spitefulness and selfishness; one which brings joy and peace instead of discontent and bitterness of spirit. Truly, the Son alone can make us free indeed.

And yet, be it remembered, our freedom is not a freedom of the flesh, but a freedom of the heart, the mind, the will, the new nature. And this freedom is necessarily incomplete so long as we have this treasure in an earthen vessel--so long as the new creature must use the imperfect body of the flesh as its instrument and exponent. These "brethren" of Christ, "sons of the highest," will be free in the absolute sense only when they attain their share in the first resurrection, --"I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

R3153 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."--John 8:31,32.

OUR Lord's preaching always produced two opposite effects upon the promiscuous multitudes that heard him. It attracted one class and repelled another. Those who were full of pride and conceit, and who preferred darkness to light because their deeds were evil,

and because they realized that if they admitted the light of truth they must of necessity conform their characters to it.--all such were repelled by the teachings of Christ. And if the Lord had undertaken the work of the ministry according to the methods pursued today, depending for support on the good will and contributions of the people, that support would often have been very meager, or, at least, very fluctuating. On some occasions multitudes received his testimony, and later deserted him and walked no more with him, as he continued to enforce the lessons of divine truth. (Luke 4:14,15,22,28,29.) Sometimes the multitudes hung upon his words, wondering at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; and again and again they forsook him, while only a mere handful remained. (John 6:60,66-69.) What consternation would follow in the various churches of today, if the professed ministers of the gospel should follow the Master's example in similarly declaring the whole counsel of God. How quickly they would become unpopular, and be charged with breaking up the church. Why, the great congregations that now throng the temples of fashion dedicated to the service of God and the teachings of Christ would not stand it! They go there to be entertained with pleasing and eloquent discourses from titled gentlemen who, presumably, know their tastes and ideas, and who will preach to please them. They are quite willing to pay their money for what they want, but they do not want the truth.

Those who followed the Lord only for a little season and then forsook him, of course, ceased then to be his disciples and were no longer so recognized; nor did they presume longer to claim to be his disciples. A disciple is a pupil, a learner; and when any man ceases to be a student and pupil of Christ, the great Teacher, he is no longer a disciple of Christ. This was very manifest when the Lord was present, and when his name was one of reproach among men; but later, when his presence was withdrawn, and when his doctrines were unscrupulously mixed with human philosophies to such an extent as to divest them of their reproach, and to make them really void, then men began to claim to be his disciples--long after they had utterly repudiated his doctrines.

The Lord's expression--"disciples indeed"--implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be his real, sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: "If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed." The hypocrisy of merely nominal discipleship is an abomination to the Lord.

It is a blessed thing to take the first step in the Christian life--that of belief in and acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer and Lord; but the reward of this step depends entirely upon our *continuance* in his Word, in the attitude of true disciples. It is not difficult to do this, yet the disposition of human pride is to wander away from the simplicity of divine truth and to seek out new theories and philosophies of our own, or to pry into those of other men, who desire to be considered wise and great according to this world's estimate.

The reward of continued discipleship is, "Ye shall know the truth"--not that we shall be "ever seeking and never coming to a knowledge of the truth." (2 Tim. 3:7.) Here is the mistake that many make: failing to continue in the Word of the Lord, they delve into various human philosophies which ignore or pervert the Word of the Lord and set up opposing theories. There is no promise, to those who seek for truth among these, that they shall ever find it. And they never do. ⁽¹⁾Divine truth is never found except in the divinely appointed channels: and those channels are the Lord and the apostles and prophets. To continue in the doctrine set forth in their inspired writings, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and faithfully to conform our characters to them, is what is implied in continuing in the Word of the Lord.

But the idea is entirely compatible with that of heeding all the helps which the Lord from time to time raises up from among our brethren in the body of Christ, as enumerated by the Apostle Paul. (Eph. 4:11-15; 1 Cor. 12:13,14.) The Lord always has raised up, and

will to the end raise up, such helps for the edification of the body of Christ; but it is the duty of every member to prove carefully their teaching by the infallible Word.

⁽²⁾If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord, as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the truth," be "established in the present truth" (the truth due), and be "rooted and grounded in the truth;" we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us," to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," to "war a good warfare," to "witness a good confession," and firmly to "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our course. We will not come into the knowledge of the truth at a single bound; but gradually, step by step, we will be led into the truth. Every step will be one of sure and certain progress, and each one leading to a higher vantage ground for further attainments both in knowledge and in its blessed fruits of established character.

The truth thus acquired, step by step, becomes a sanctifying power bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the holy Spirit, love, meekness, faith, patience and every virtue and every grace, which time and cultivation will ripen to a glorious maturity.

And not only shall the true disciple thus know the truth and be sanctified by it, but the Lord also said, "The truth shall make you free." Those who have received the truth know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of it is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance and superstition, and of fear. It throws its health-restoring beams into the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorates the whole being. Sin cannot endure its light; and those who continue to live in sin when a sufficiency of light has been received to manifest its deformity must inevitably lose the light because they are unworthy of it.

Ignorance and superstition must vanish before the light of truth. And what a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! Millions are still under this galling yoke. Under its delusions they fear and reverence some of the basest tools of Satan for their oppression and degradation, because they hypocritically claim divine appointment; and they have been made to fear God as a vengeful tyrant consigning the vast majority of his creatures to an eternity of torment. Thank God, we who have received the truth have escaped that terrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over us is broken!

We are made free, too, from the fear that we now see coming upon the whole world, as the great civil and ecclesiastical systems that have so long ruled the world are being terribly shaken. All thinking people are in dread of the possible outcome of anarchy and terror. And the alarm of all will increase as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more visible. Yet, in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God of the terrors of the conflict through which the world will have to pass within a few years, the true disciples of Christ who abide in his Word are not afraid, but rejoice, because they know that God's object in permitting the storm is to clear the moral atmosphere of the world, and that, after the storm, there shall come, by his providence, an abiding peace. Instructed in the truth, they realize the necessities of the situation, and have confidence in the divine providence that can make even the wrath of man to praise him.

Blessed promise!--"If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Dearly beloved, having received this favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and with it bearing its reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of it by our loyalty and faithfulness to it.

⁽²⁾ ½ Mar. 20 Manna

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R4446 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

"MIND THE SAME THINGS"

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren,...that there are contentions among you."--1 Cor. 1:10,11.

SO accustomed have we become to differences of opinion that many of God's children have come to feel that if there is perfect unity of thought, of mind, it must surely betoken a wrong condition, a subserviency. In the words quoted above the Apostle Paul shows

that he is not in agreement with any such sentiments. He is criticizing such a sentiment. Doubtless there were "Independents" in the Church then, as there are today, some who set themselves up as teachers, and boast of their independent thinking, boast that they do

not agree with the "Dawns" and "Towers" on certain features of Truth, and by implication give the impression that they should be the more highly thought of on account of this independence.

It is not for us to judge of their motives and intentions, but we believe they are deceived, and working more injury to the cause of the Lord than they probably are aware. The Apostle's conception of Divine Truth as above set forth was that all who are speaking and teaching should *speak and teach the same things*; and elsewhere he says that we should all *mind the same things*. He goes into the subject in considerable detail, and shows wherein the differences have been fostered, and wherein is the error. He points out that these conditions are the result of a party spirit, a sectarian spirit, one claiming to be of Paul, another of Apollos, another of Peter, etc., whereas they all should have recognized the error of such a course--all should have recognized that Christ is not divided, and that his Gospel is not discordant, but that it is one glorious, harmonious message of Divine revelation.

Are we asked how it would be possible for "many men of many minds" to view Divine Truth in exactly the same light? And are we pointed to the various creeds of Christendom which contradict each other on so many points of doctrine? Our answer is, that these divisions of sectarianism are all evidences of the truth of the Apostle's words quoted at the head of this article. The sectarian spirit has torn the Word of God to pieces. The Spirit of Christ, which would have preserved the unity of the Body, the Church, in the bonds of peace, was neglected, and a spirit of "independence" was fostered until the result is--Babylon, confusion.

The remedy is the one which we have sought to present in all of the Society's publications, namely, the ascertainment of the mind of Christ, the spirit of the truth, by the acceptance of the entire Word of God, and the bringing of every interpretation into alignment with it, and the rejection of everything found contrary to it.

The questions of the hour, which may as well be faced one time as another, are these: Have we who believe in "Present Truth" greater mental acumen and greater ability in the interpretation of the Word than all of our forefathers for eighteen centuries? Or, are we living in the glorious epoch which is designated the harvest time? And is not the Lord to receive the credit for having brought to our attention the harmonies of the Divine Word?

We believe that all who have a proper conception of "Present Truth" realize it to be indeed the Divine Plan of the Ages, and realize, too, that it is so far above and beyond the natural man's ability that it would be a miracle for him to construct such a theory--the most stupendous miracle of which we have any knowledge. If its discernment now is not of man, nor by man, but by the holy Spirit, then the holy Spirit should be looked upon as the Teacher and not the human instrumentality through which the presentation has been made to the Church. And if this be accepted as a reasonable and truthful solution of the matter, is it not equally true that the "independent thinker" and the "independent teacher" is more likely by his independence to lead into darkness than to lead into further light?

It is surely in vain that we pray in the hymn, "Be thou my teacher, Lord," if in practice we give no heed to the Lord as the Teacher, but, on the contrary, encourage great *independence* of thought, and encourage the suggestion that anybody could strike a spiritual match which would give greater light and throw the Divine Plan of the Ages into the shadowy back-ground.

Whoever believes this to be possible cannot believe that the Divine Plan is the Truth--the true plan of God. It cannot satisfy his longings as nothing else could do, else he would not be longing for or seeking for something further, an independent and special light. Rather, he would be so over-awed with the wonderful grace of God in the light of Divine Truth, which had percolated through the blindness of his previous superstitions and given him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, that he would be bowed down in humility and gratitude. He would fear to lift his eyes even for a moment from the beatific vision lest a single feature should be missed. Nor could he rationally expect to find a grander one, if he has really seen and really tasted the riches of God's grace and truth, as now made manifest to the saints.

The only explanation that at all fits or explains present conditions, and the present bright-shining of the Divine Word, is that given us by the Master himself. He assured us that at his second coming he would make himself known to those who would be at that time his true, loyal, faithful servants. He assured us that he would gird himself, become their servant, and cause them to sit down to meat, and bring forth to them from the treasuries of Divine Truth things new and old. (Luke 12:37.) This is the only explanation of the wonderful light on the Divine Plan now shining; the only explanation of the bounties that crowd the table of the Lord's faithful

ones. Meat to eat indeed have they of which the world knoweth not.

The Lord is proving us to see to what extent we recognize him as the *giver* of all good; to what extent our hearts are *feeding* upon the Truth; to what extent they are being *nourished* spiritually; and to what extent in others there is merely a feverish excitement and dissatisfaction, and looking for something new. We may be sure that to those who are in this dissatisfied condition Satan will present himself as a messenger of light, offering them other food and other light--"newer and better." We may be equally sure that God will be pleased to permit him to bring such delusions upon his people to prove them, to test them.

Our Lord's parable of the wheat which fell on the highway and was devoured by the birds of the air, and on the stony ground where the earth was shallow and the sun of persecution wilted it, and on the thorny ground and was choked by the cares of this life, and on the good ground where it brought forth thirty, sixty and an hundred fold, has fulfilment in our day as well as in the past. Truth tests the character, and God desires that it should do so. We must see to it that whatever we might have been by nature, by God's grace our hearts shall be in a productive condition, and that if possible we shall be of those who bring forth a hundred fold.

Only those who take heed to the Lord's Word and cultivate its spirit, and recognize the Master, and his providential leadings and care, and the feeding of the flock, will be ready to mind the same things, and be able to bring forth much fruit, and to gain the Kingdom.

Since writing the foregoing we have received inquiries from several quarters on matters closely allied to this subject and give our responses herewith:

(1) What shall the Lord's sheep do when those who have been leading them object to references to and quotations from *Dawn-Studies* in the church meetings, at which there is otherwise full liberty of expression? The specious claim is that this is "man worship, or book-worship," and that God's people should use God's Book only--the Bible.

We reply that the answer which should be openly made is this: We are unable to see the difference between hearing a teacher expound orally and having his teachings in printed form read or quoted by another. If teaching by the printed page is wrong, then all teaching is wrong. If it is not unreasonable for us to hear with respect the words of one who *claims* ability to assist us in the right understanding of God's Word, it cannot be unreasonable for us to hear the words from these books which *already have* actually and truly taught us nearly all that we do understand of God's Word. If we ever conclude to have only the one human channel of instruction our decision will be to stick firmly to the one God has used and blessed to our enlightenment rather than to an oral teacher, who thus shows his *opposition* to the agency God has owned, used and blessed to us. To do otherwise would be not only unwise but dishonoring to the Giver of all good.

(2) Our chosen class-leader or Elder is a clever brother, and yet we often think his expositions slightly in error--different from our own views drawn largely from our study in the light of the *Towers* and *Dawn-Studies*. When we call the Elder's attention to the matter, he generally replies that it is a good while since he read the *Dawn-Studies* and, that as for the *Towers*, he really is too busy to read them. What would our duty as a class be in this case?

We reply that there are two duties to be considered: (a) The duty towards the leader or Elder would be to tell him in love and kindness that according to his own statement he is "*overcharged*" with the cares of this life," and that it is your duty toward him to excuse him from the leading of the class that he may have proper time for personal study and development. (b) The duty toward the class would be to set as leader of its Berean Lessons a naturally less talented brother possessed of more time for study or more zeal for Truth. Elect him Elder and then all turn in and help him by studying well the questions for each lesson. We feel sure that the Lord will bless this courage and loyalty to the principles of his Word.

Remember that we and our forefathers have had Bibles and attempted to have Bible studies, Bible classes, etc., for centuries, without gaining much wisdom or light as a result. Did the light which you now enjoy come to you by "independent Bible study"? We doubt it!

What are the "*Dawn-Studies*" but *the Bible arranged topically*, with citations for every point and paragraph? Is it not probable that the great Adversary who delights to pose as an angel of light and an upholder of the Bible is really deceiving some of our dear friends--attempting to gradually draw them away from the great light which our Lord has now provided for us all, back to the methods in vogue before the true light shone upon our pathway?