

May 8

And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life. 1 John 2:25

WE all should understand that we have something to do in realizing the gracious promises of God to us. In connection with the affairs of this present life He has prom-

R5608 "THE LIFE PROMISED TO THE CHURCH *"This is the promise which He hath promised us, even eternal life."*—1 John 2:25...

When Jesus came, He brought the words of eternal life, everlasting life. As St. Paul declares, Jesus Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." (2 Timothy 1:10) ...When Jesus came, He brought the whole subject to light. He showed that His redemptive work, provided by God's gracious arrangement, would eventually give life everlasting to all who would accept of it upon the Divine terms. He also brought immortality to light. He revealed the fact that God purposes not only to give the world of mankind life everlasting, but to give the faithful followers in Jesus' footsteps a higher kind of life—immortality. Thus a new thought was brought out—one never even dreamed of before...

Our text refers to a certain class only. It does not include the world. "This is the promise which He hath promised us." (1 John 2:25) The promise is now to the Church, and to no others...

This "us" class includes not only the antitypical Priests, but also the antitypical Levites. But while both classes will have eternal life, everlasting life, "the crown of life" (immortality) is only for those who will prove themselves to be "more than conquerors." The Scriptures hold out a special promise to all who will walk carefully in the footsteps of Jesus. This class are promised joint-heirship with Him, the privilege of sitting with Him in His Throne.—Revelation 3:21...

This is the promise, then, which He has promised us. If we would make our calling and election sure to glory, honor and immortality, we must exercise great carefulness indeed. Those who attain the prize will get the grandest blessing God has to give. All should understand that we have something to do in realizing the gracious promises of God to us. While God is both able and willing to perform His part of the contract, yet we must make sure that we co-operate in every reasonable way."

R376 "We pray for daily food, and properly, but if we do nothing more than pray, God might let us starve. He puts within our reach the needful means of procuring the food, and we say the food comes from him from whom cometh every good gift. When we

ised that our bread and water shall be sure, but this does not imply that we shall neglect reasonable opportunities for securing these. He has promised us also a share in the Kingdom by and by; but it is for us to make our calling and election sure. God is thoroughly capable and thoroughly willing to

pray for the Spirit, and desire to "be filled with the Spirit," it is well. God has already provided *all the means necessary* to the fulfillment of our request. The "Spirit of truth" stands ready to give us the *filling* we desire, but we must partake of—eat—the feast, or we will not be filled. He who will not eat of a full table will be empty and starve, as truly as though there were no *food*. Neither will the asking of a blessing on *food* fill you; you must eat it.

The Spirit of truth speaks to us (through the Word) and by obedience to those words, we shall be filled with the Spirit. It was Jesus himself who said "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (John 6:63.) And of those 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.) It is useless then, for us to pray, Lord, Lord, give us the Spirit, and neglect the Word of truth from whence that Spirit is to be supplied. It is for this reason that many who meet often and pray much for the holy Spirit, are "still but babes in Christ," and many seek the outward *signs* as proof of relationship, instead of the inward witness with the Word of truth.

It is because, as we have just seen, we have something *to do* if we would be filled with the Spirit, as surely as we have something to do if we would have natural food, that the Apostle addresses us—"Be ye filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18.)"

E225 "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 filling. 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 "QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT"...

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 imperfections and to the degree of our consecration to the Lord. This we mani-

perform all of His part in connection with every matter, but it is to our advantage that He calls us to show our faith by our works-- by our co-operation with Him in all reasonable ways. Z. '03-175 R3205:4

fest 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...

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...

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 nature. 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...

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...

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."

"Awake, my soul, awake!
The precious days are flying!
Yield not to ease nor sloth,
The far-spent day is dying.

"Up, and gird on thy Sword!
Didst dream the battle ended?
The last fight's on--and no such Cause
Was ever yet defended!

"Not yet, but *soon*, the Prize--
One last, supreme endeavor
Is thine, and then the Crown,
The bliss, the joy, forever!"

R1273 "There comes a time during the period of natural gestation, shortly after the formation of the new creature, when life begins to manifest itself in activity. This manifestation of activity is called the quickening. If this quickening never takes place, the sure indication is that whatever of dormant life there may have been is becoming or has already become extinct, and the birth of the new living creature will therefore never take place unless the dying embryo can in some way be resuscitated and brought to the quickening stage..."

If we hear the truth and merely say that we consecrate ourselves to God, and then go on living just like the rest of the world, spending all or nearly all of our time and our means merely for our stomachs, our backs and the temporal interests of our families and the business pursuits of the present life, what evidence have we that we are quickened, that the Christ character is formed in us, or that the hope of glory is ours? Many seem to make this mistake, and the evidences of the shipwrecked faith of many such lie all about us...

Let us each see that we do not hinder the development of this character by giving our time, our vitality, our means, etc., to the pursuit of the things of this world. Have you *love*? Is it manifested in fervent zeal for the honor of God, the spread of his truth and the

blessing of his children? Are you seeking and finding opportunities for thus showing the Lord how much you love? Have you *faith*? Is it unmistakably manifested, not merely in profession, but in bold and definite acts of faith? If a million dollars were promised to any man who would walk from Pittsburgh to Buffalo, and a dozen men professed faith in the promise, and yet only one actually started out and walked, the natural and correct inference would be that the other eleven did not have the faith. If they had the faith in such a promise it would rouse them to activity. And just so, any man who appreciates fully and believes the exceeding great and precious promises of God to the church, will make haste and run for them; and he will closely observe the directions, too, that he may not run in vain.

And if Christ be formed in him, those established principles of Christian character will hold him firm and steady in the midst of temptations and error, and he will not be easily moved either from the practice of righteousness or from sound Scriptural doctrine. He will demand a "Thus saith the Lord" for every doctrine, and on that sure word he will dare depend. And the language of his heart as expressed in his daily life will be, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed. I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people." "Thy testimonies have I taken as an

heritage forever; for they are the rejoicing of my heart.

While such must be the personal condition of every heir of the Kingdom, the special work of every such one should be to help those begotten by the Word of truth to arrive at this condition of *fixed* and *quickened* Christian character. Be not satisfied, beloved fellow laborers, when those within the range of your influence are merely begotten by the Word of truth, but, by instruction, example and assistance, labor diligently to have Christ formed in them, the hope of glory; and then, so far as possible, minister also to their further development, that they may eventually be born in the glorious, divine nature."

R4377 "THE BODY WITHOUT THE SPIRIT..."

As the body without the spirit of life is dead, even so faith without works is dead." Some might think that the writer of these words had erred in likening the body to faith and the spirit of life to works... But St. James has expressed the matter properly. A body must be had before any spirit of life could come into it. So a *faith* must exist before it can be quickened into activity. But the quickening is absolutely necessary ere we could have our birth of the spirit in the First Resurrection."

R1440 (From Harvest Truth Database V4)

FAITH AND WORKS

Whilst some go to the extreme of saying and hoping that their good works will commend them to God's favor, regardless of what *faith* they hold, others make the serious mistake of supposing that if they hold a *correct faith* there can be no necessity for *works*. But though faith in the redemptive work of Christ is indispensable --so that no works of ours would be acceptable to God without it--and though clear knowledge and faith respecting the divine plan are to be desired and sought, yet the *objective value* of all faith and knowledge is to lead the believer into *works of service for the Lord*.

Nor should we esteem works essential to the success of God's plan for the blessing and instruction of *others*; for, if we are unwilling, our God is able to use many other agencies. Rather we should esteem it a privilege to be co-workers with our God, to honor his name and to serve his people; and indeed it is thus that the worker in the Master's service is blessed-- every effort to serve his Master adds to his strength and joy. The Lord is seeking for membership in his Bride such believers as feel so full of grateful joy for their own redemption and are so anxious to honor and serve their Redeemer that they esteem it a privilege to work in his service--a privilege to suffer as well as to labor for him and in co-operating with his plan.

This being the case, beloved, none of us can afford to exercise or cultivate a spirit of idleness. Those who idle away their time, and those who absorb it all in the service of business, or pleasure, or family, or self, are laying up no treasure in heaven, however much or little they may be laying by on earth. Present opportunities for sacrificing service are therefore to be esteemed, not only as the greatest privileges of the present life, but also as the greatest privileges ever offered or to be offered.

Let each one, then, ask himself--What am I *doing* for God, his plan and his people? If you are *doing* all that you *can do*, be glad and rejoice, even though that *all* be miserably small, even in your own estimation. It is the *will and effort* to DO and to BE that our Redeemer regards with loving favor. But if you are not doing *all* that you could do, be dissatisfied with yourself; and uneasy lest your listlessness and carelessness for his service settle it with the Master that you are unworthy to share in the work of glory as a member of his Church glorified.

Let each one resolve to do something each day to serve our gracious King--not to *merit salvation*, but as the expression of our love for him through whom we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins.

Our Lord does not despise our feeblest efforts when prompted by warm, overflowing hearts. The servant who has but one talent and uses it faithfully will be welcomed as a *good and faithful* servant, as surely as the one who uses faithfully two, five or more talents. He that is faithful with a little can be trusted with more, and he that is unfaithful in the use of *one talent* would be unfaithful with more. And every one who uses his talents faithfully finds them increasing daily. He who cannot deliver an oration can speak a quiet, pointed word, or write a letter, or hand a tract, or loan or sell a DAWN. When so many privileges abound on every hand, surely all have several talents for service. Be assured, dearly beloved, that neglect to use your privilege of serving the truth will react to your spiritual degeneracy. As a sound faith is for the purpose of leading to good works, so the activity of service is necessary to continued purity of faith. It is from this cause that many are stumbling into the "outer darkness" of agnosticism--doubt, uncertainty.

R1719 "THE POWER OF FAITH

"This is the victory [the conquering power] that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John 5:4.—

BLESSED are the overcomers! "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Rev. 3:21

What a reward is this which is held out as an incentive and inspiration to urge us on to noble and heroic effort!—to reign with Christ, to be his bride and joint-heir, his

beloved and confidential companion through all eternity, and to be partakers of his divine nature and glory...

But between the present time and the realization of the promises there lies the necessity of *overcoming*. The word is strongly suggestive of a great conflict, and calls to mind also the Apostle Paul's expressions--"Fight the good fight of faith;" "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ;" "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." To overcome requires energy, force of character, perseverance and

steadfast, patient endurance to the very end of the present life.

In the above text the Apostle John points to the only power which can sufficiently energize our whole being and nerve to patient endurance of tribulation, even to the end. That conquering power is *faith*. "Now," says the Apostle Paul, "faith is a basis of things hoped for, a conviction of things unseen." Faith is not merely belief or knowledge, but is knowledge applied, assimilated, appropriated—made a part of our habit of thought, a basis for our actions and

a spur to all our energies. Such a faith is the overcoming power which all must have who would run successfully the race for the prize of our high calling, and be overcomers...

What is it that is to be overcome? John briefly comprehends it all in the expression, "the world."... Our course is in direct opposition to that of the world, and we must pull hard against the current of the world's spirit which is deeply inwrought in our old nature, as well as surrounding us on every side. Yes, it is a hard pull; and we need all the inspiration and energy that faith can impart to accomplish it...

It is important, too, to see that our faith is a correct faith; for if the faith be an erroneous one, inspiring false and delusive hopes built upon sandy foundations, the stronger this impelling power becomes, the more surely and quickly will it drive its deluded victim to shipwreck upon the

rocks. Faith, like steam in an engine, is a power either for good or for evil. Hence the importance of a correct faith...

Let us see, then, that we have the faith of Christ--the faith well founded in the Word of God, a faith examined and proved, deeply rooted in the heart as well as in the head, and therefore *established* as the motive power of life. Such a faith is not nervously looking about for something new, and always probing the vain philosophies of men to see how skilfully they can withstand the Word of the Lord; for those who do so show plainly that their faith is not of sufficient influence to be the moving power in them, impelling them onward to full and complete victory over the world.

Faith, to be a conquering power in us, must go deeper than the head: it must go into the heart, and thus permeate and energize the whole being, bringing not only the

outward conduct but every thought into subjection to Christ. Then indeed will faith impel to action, to works which clearly manifest it; for "faith without works is dead." A mere intellectual assent to the truth of God, which does not lead to activity in his service, is not faith, and can never overcome the world nor secure the prize of our high calling. But this is the conquering power that overcometh the world, even our faith. Let us examine ourselves and see that we have it pure and simple, and deeply inwrought in the fiber of our character, and that as an energizing principle it is moving us to faithful and persevering activity. Let it be the governor and inspiration of our lives--a living faith which purges and purifies and strengthens to diligence and patience to the end of the narrow way to life."

R3204 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)
"GOD MOVES IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY"

--ACTS 27:33-44.--JUNE 7.--

"Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses."--Psa. 107:6.

NOT long after Paul's discourse before Festus and Agrippa, opportunity offered for sending him a prisoner to Rome, in accordance with his own appeal. He was not sent alone, but in company with other prisoners and under a strong guard. The journey from Caesarea to Rome was by water on merchant vessels, and was probably in the fall of the year, when the storms on the Mediterranean are frequently very severe, sometimes lasting for several days, as in the case mentioned in this lesson. The storm lasted for fourteen days, and was evidently unusually severe. The dangerous season for navigation was reckoned from September 14 to November 14, at which time all navigation in the open sea was suspended for the winter. It is presumed that this storm occurred about September 25.

Doubtless, were we able to look at affairs from God's standpoint, as we will be able to view them by and by, we should see more reason than we now are able to discern why the Apostle's journey to Rome should have been attended with such trying experiences, mental and physical, as were incidental to the shipwreck, wintering on the island of Malta, etc. Possibly the Apostle's faith was being tried; possibly it was being rooted and grounded by these experiences. The Lord had distinctly informed him in a vision that he should go to Rome as his ambassador. He was now on the way, and on several occasions matters looked serious; it seemed as though he would never see the capital of the world; never have the privilege of presenting the truth to the brethren residing there, to whom he had already sent the Epistle to the Romans; never have the opportunity of laboring in their midst, as he had hoped and promised to do.

When in port at Crete a conference was held respecting the wisdom of wintering there or of going on, and the Apostle gave his opinion that it would be unsafe to go on. This may have been the result of some inspiration, but quite possibly was merely the result of his own judgment of the weather, etc. He had already had large experience in seeing disasters, as we are informed in one of his epistles written previous to this time: "Thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep." (2 Cor. 11:25.) Besides, his trade as a sail-maker would naturally bring him in contact with sailors, and interest him in all matters pertaining to the craft. Those in command, however, decided to proceed on the journey, and encountered the disastrous storm of our lesson. During those fourteen days the Apostle had abundant opportunity to fear and doubt and question the Lord's providences, and apparently it was not until the night of the thirteenth day of the storm that the Lord sent an angel to the Apostle, with the consoling message that he should not fear--"Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar; and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." (Vs. 24.) We may safely assume that the Apostle, during these testing days, remained heartily loyal in faith toward God, and that this message at the close was in the nature of an encouragement and an expression of approval.

We may draw a good lesson from this incident, not only in respect to our own affairs in life,--that the Lord may lead in mysterious ways regarding our temporal matters and our service for him and his cause;--but we may additionally apply the lesson in a general way to all spiritual testings and trials. The Lord gives us, for instance, assurances of his love and care, and of the ultimate outcome

of the narrow way to all who faithfully follow in the steps of Jesus; but meantime he may permit trials and difficulties of various kinds to come as storms upon us, threatening our very destruction, threatening the overwhelming of our spiritual life, darkening the sky of our hopes with the thunderclouds of our enemies' threats and Satan's roarings. Our duty is to let the eye of faith be undimmed by these various terrible conditions,--to let our hearts be firmly fixed upon him who has promised, and who is able also to perform. Thus,

(1)"When the storms of life are raging,
Tempests wild on sea and land,
I will seek a place of refuge
In the shadow of God's hand.
"Enemies may strive to injure,
Satan all his arts employ;
God will turn what seems to harm me
Into everlasting joy."

The expression, "God hath given thee all them that sail with thee," is very meaningful. It reminds us of Abraham's prayer for Sodom--peradventure there were even five righteous persons, God agreed to save the city. There is no suggestion in these words of the "fatherhood of God, and brotherhood of men," as that false teaching is now advocated by many who have a noble impulse. The thought, on the contrary, is that there was only one man on that ship who was in personal relationship to God. The others, whatever their natural traits of character, had never come into personal relationship with the Father. Another thought from the words is that the divine care going with the saints may prove a great blessing to their companions, even though, as in this case, they be worldly and unregenerate. This thought is particularly applicable in the earthly families of God's people. The believing consecrated father or mother is the direct subject of divine care; for of the angels it is written, "They are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation," and, in ministering to these, very frequently (indeed, we may suppose generally) those of their families who have not come into full relationship with the Lord are to some extent included under the protecting care. Elsewhere the Apostle points out that in some respects the believing wife has a blessed influence over her husband; or the believing husband a favorable influence over the wife in regard to the children, else the children would be accounted unholy. (1 Cor. 7:14.) This is another illustration of the same general lesson that divine care, though specially for the saints, includes all of their interests of every kind. This does not necessarily imply earthly prosperity, wealth, preservation from accident, shipwreck, etc., as in Paul's case, and yet it does always mean, in some sense and in some degree, an advantage. Let us take from this thought all the comfort we can. All things shall work together for good to the Lord's saints, and those who are nearest and dearest to them will surely be participants to some extent in their interest and in the divine care.

(1) Hymn 328

Promptly after receiving the assurances of the safety of all on board, the Apostle made the matter known to the ship's company, and manifested his own faith in the message by cheerfulness and breaking of his fast, and advising all the others to do likewise. His spirit was contagious; they were all cheered, and doubtless they were all impressed not only by the fact to which the Apostle called their attention--namely, that this disaster had come upon them by their failing to follow his advice--but also by the evidence of God's special favor toward him in connection with the knowledge of their ultimate rescue. So it should be with us: whatever we know that is good or comforting or refreshing to ourselves, we should dispense to others. Had the Apostle kept this good news to himself, it would have implied one of two things; either that he did not have faith in its fulfilment, or that he was selfish; but having the Lord's spirit of generosity, as well as large trust in the Lord, he did not hesitate to make known the coming deliverance; and he glorified God in that he did not claim to have this knowledge of himself, but credited it to a revelation. Evidently the prisoner had produced a deep impression upon many of the soldiers and sailors. Who can say that at some future time the Apostle's brave and noble conduct may not have influenced some of his two hundred and seventy-six companions--possibly eventually drawing some of them to the Lord? So it should be with each of us; ^[2]we should be prompt to tell to others the best tidings we have; sympathy with the groaning creation in the various trials of life should lead us to point to the Lord's promises respecting the coming Kingdom and the blessings that should then be to all the families of the earth. Whoever does not thus proclaim daily, on every suitable opportunity, gives evidence either of lack of knowledge or of faith in the revelation or of selfishness, which the Lord can not approve, and which, persisted in, will ultimately debar him from a share in the Kingdom.

Another thought properly connected with this lesson is the absence of any suggestion of a revival service being held on board the boat. Neither Paul nor Luke nor Aristarchus are reported to have made the slightest effort, except as their lives were living epistles. It is barely possible that religious services may not have been permitted on the vessel; but, anyway, we know from the Apostle's general course of conduct, that he did his fishing for men amongst rather different classes. As we understand the matter, the seamen of that day were of a coarse and ignorant class. We cannot doubt that the Apostle would have been glad indeed to have served any of his companions had he found in them the hearing ear--according to the Master's words, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." That the sailors were not in a condition to receive or appreciate the gospel is evident from the lesson; because they were selfishly intent upon using the only small boat available for their escape, and premeditated leaving the soldiers and the prisoners on the vessel. We mark the spirit of selfishness as totally unbecoming in anyone begotten of the spirit of God, and contrast it with the spirit of the Apostle, as generous, loving, considerate of others. A similar test shows us that the soldiers in general were not of a class likely to have a hearing ear, because, when perceiving that the vessel would go to pieces, and that thus some prisoners might escape, they counselled their destruction. "The liberal heart deviseth liberal things," and all of the Lord's consecrated people should not only have the noble impulses coming to them because they are the Lord's and because they have tasted of his grace, and been made partakers of his spirit, but, additionally, they should see to it that this spirit prevails in them; that it is manifest in all the affairs of life. They should see to it that they do not crush out the noble impulses which would properly come to them; that, on the contrary, they foster them and encourage them and de-

[2] May 7 Manna, 1 Cor. 9:16

velop them more and more. Thus we grow in grace as we grow in knowledge, by obedience to the things which we learn.

The centurion alone seems to have profited by the experiences. He alone seems to have read the Apostle's living epistle to any advantage, and upon him it did make an impression, for while he would not have objected so much to the killing of the other prisoners, who probably were seditious characters and worthy of death, he saw no way to make an exception of Paul, and for Paul's sake, therefore, all the prisoners' lives were spared.

Notwithstanding the Apostle's assurance of the Lord that the lives of the entire ship's company were given him, that all would be saved, he realized the propriety of using all proper diligence in co-operation with the promise. Hence, when he discerned the evident intention of the sailors to escape in the small boat, leaving the passengers, unable to guide the vessel, at the mercy of the sea, he communicated the facts to the centurion, pointing out the necessity of compliance with reasonable precautions to insure the fulfilment of the divine promise. So ^[3]we all should understand that we have something to do in realizing the gracious promises of God to us. In connection with the affairs of this present life he has promised that our bread and water shall be sure, but this does not imply that we shall neglect reasonable opportunities for securing these. He has promised us also a share in the Kingdom by and by; but it is for us to make our calling and our election sure. God is thoroughly capable and thoroughly willing to perform all of his part in connection with every matter, but it is to our advantage that he calls upon us to show our faith by our works--by our cooperation with him in all reasonable ways. He does not expect us to perform miracles; but he does expect us to do what we are able to do both in respect to present things and eternal matters. By and by the Apostle's predictions were fulfilled, and the entire ship's company, some by swimming and others by floating on wreckage, reached the land. We notice again that the Apostle did not propose, on reaching land, to have a general revival service; he was not bent on exciting men's minds, but was practicing the same gospel methods which the Master taught him; viz., "Let us reason together"-- sit down first and count the cost of discipleship, and, if willing to pay the price, "Come, take up thy cross, and follow me." If this, the Lord's method for gathering his people from the world, were still pursued, there would be many fewer nominal Christians; but we believe there would be no smaller number of the genuine ones. The time for bringing in the world is not yet; hence the Master's words in prayer, "I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me out of the world, that they all may be one... that [ultimately, 'in due time'] the world may believe." The gathering of the elect class for the Kingdom is under disadvantageous conditions which will thoroughly test them, and make their way so narrow that few will find it, and still fewer make progress in it. When God's time for dealing with the world shall have come, the powers of heaven and of earth will cooperate with the glorified Church in making the gospel so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein.

So far as the record shows, the Apostle and his companions did no mission work amongst the barbarians of the island on which they were wrecked, nor amongst the soldiers and sailors, their companions during that winter. They left no Church there;--we may safely presume that they found no hearing ears. The lesson to us from this should be that we are not to expect the conversion of the world nor anything akin to it. We are to expect that the Lord will find with the truth a sufficient number to complete the elect Church, and then, with the power and the authority of the Kingdom, establish righteousness and cause the knowledge of himself to fill the earth and bless the whole world through the Church.--Gal. 3:29.

[3] May 8 Manna, 1Jn 2:25

[Poems of Dawn page 114]
JUST FOR TODAY

LORD, for tomorrow and its needs I do not pray;
 Keep me from any stain of sin just for today.
 Let me both diligently work and duly pray;
 Let me be kind in word and deed just for today.
 Let me be slow to do my will, prompt to obey;
 Help me to sacrifice myself just for today.
 Let me no wrong nor idle word unthinking say;
 Set Thou Thy seal upon my lips just for today.
 So for tomorrow and its needs I do not pray,
 But keep me, guide me, hold me, Lord, just for today.