

October 13

I will show thee my faith by my works.
James 2:18

WHILE the Lord's people of the present age are not to be judged by their works but by their faith, nevertheless, works will be required. By our works we demonstrate

R2159 "THE FAITH THAT WORKS...
JAMES 2:14-23.— "I will show thee my faith by my works."—James 2:18...

The Apostle Paul did not for a moment mean to say that a mere intellectual assent was sufficient. His teachings are in fullest accord with James' statement in this lesson, that a faith that produced no efforts or works toward righteousness would be a dead faith, a valueless faith—or worse, a condemning faith.

Nor should James here be understood to ignore faith, and to teach that works of the law would be able or sufficient to justify sinners or make them heirs of eternal life. It is probable that some in the early Church, having come to realize that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and that we are "justified by faith in his blood," went to the opposite extreme, as some do to-day, claiming that the conduct of life is immaterial, if only the faith be maintained. It is probable that James had this class of persons in mind when writing this epistle. He therefore guards the reader on this point—not to think that a mere *belief* or *faith*, that makes no

our faith, and, thank God, imperfect works can demonstrate to Him the loyalty of our intentions, our wills....If our works demonstrate to the Lord the sincerity of our faith, that faith will be acceptable to Him and we will be counted perfect and be granted a share in the Kingdom, and all the great and

impression upon the life, and is unaccompanied by any efforts so to live as would be pleasing in God's sight, would be a faith of any vitality, or that would do any real good. On the contrary, that is the kind of belief that devils have...

The points to be kept clearly in mind in this lesson are (1) that no works which fallen men could do would be perfect works; consequently, none of them could be acceptable to God. (2) The Christian is acceptable to God through the exercise of faith... It is this faith that counts in his acceptance, because he is unable to perform works that would be acceptable. (3) His acceptable faith must be proved by his efforts to do, so far as he may be able, the divine will. (4) Since works alone would not justify, and since faith must precede good works before they will be acceptable, and since the good works, when accepted, are not accepted on account of their own perfection, but on account of the faith which makes them acceptable, therefore it follows that it is the faith that justifies us where works could not justify us, and that the

precious things which the Lord has in reservation for those who love Him—not merely in word but also in deed—for those who strive by the deeds of life to show forth, to demonstrate, their love. Z.'04-45 R3318:1

works do not set aside faith, but merely attest the genuineness of the faith.

There is a grand lesson here for all who desire to please God. It is our faith that is pleasing to him—we at first having nothing else; but if the faith remains alone, without effort to produce fruits of righteousness in the life, it becomes a dead, a putrid thing, offensive to both God and man. He whose life is one of self-gratification and sin dishonors and injures any faith which he professes. Further, it is our experience that whoever fails to live in harmony with his faith will not be permitted to maintain it very long. It is to such as have some faith without corresponding efforts toward good works that the Lord sends "strong delusions that they may believe a lie."—2 Thess. 2:11.

Let us remember that the Lord's people are "living epistles known and read of all men;" that it is the works that are read rather than the faith, and hence the importance of the Golden Text, which should more and more be the sentiment of every follower of Christ,—"*I will show thee my faith by my works.*"

R4377 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)
"YOU HATH HE QUICKENED"

--JAMES 2:14-26.--MAY 30.--

Golden Text:--"Faith without works is dead."--V. 20.

MANY have supposed doctrinal conflict between St. Paul and St. James, the former holding *faith* as the important feature of Christianity, the latter insisting that *works* take precedence. More or less this conflict of thought has come down the ages and is with us today. We hold that there was no such conflict between the Apostles, and that the subject, rightly understood to-day, leaves no room for disputation. St. Paul insists that the Law Covenant was a Covenant of works, and that none could be justified under it, because none could do perfect works, and that, therefore, all Jews were under condemnation. He points out that the original Abrahamic Covenant was better and superior to the Law Covenant, because its provisions did not require perfect works, impossible to the fallen man, but instead tested him along another line--the line of his *faith*. St. Paul did not mean, and did not say, that works were valueless in God's sight; but, realizing that the Jews, trusting in their special Law Covenant, already laid more stress upon works than upon faith, he pressed upon their attention the fact that with Spiritual Israelites of the Isaac class, heirs of the original Sarah Covenant, faith must be regarded as the standard. Under it whoever would attain the proper kind of faith would be acceptable to God. That Covenant does not declare for faith without works, but it does indicate a proper development of faith as necessary--something beyond the initial belief that "God is and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him."--Heb. 11:6.

Faith is a matter of steps and development; and only the developed faith could possibly bring to us the blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant. This would imply *works*, to the extent that they would be possible, as in attestation of the *faith*. Nevertheless, none of us can be justified by works, because our best works are imperfect. Our judgment, our test, in its last analysis is, "According to thy *faith* be it unto thee." (Matt. 9:29.) St. James possibly noticed a tendency in some to go to the opposite extreme in the matter of faith, and to ignore works entirely. He does not claim that any could do works that would justify them before God, but merely insists that if the right kind of faith be developed in the heart it will surely bear fruit

and make an outward manifestation, according to circumstances. Undoubtedly this is a sound position and one fully in accord with our Lord's words, "By their fruits ye shall know them." --Matt. 7:16.

Coming to an orchard filled with fruit, we may quickly discern the various kinds of trees by their fruits. So with the Christian. If he professes faith in Christ we are willing to acknowledge him as a brother, but "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;" hence, we look for evidences of the Lord's Spirit, disposition, character, in all those who profess to be his "members," "brethren." (Rom. 8:9.) If we see little of the Lord's Spirit (disposition) we are inclined to next inquire how long the brother has known the Lord and professed consecration to him. We thus sometimes find "babes in Christ," who, for the time they have had a knowledge of him, should be more developed and have a larger measure of his Spirit. We should be on guard against considering such, in any sense of the word, suitable teachers or exemplars.

On the contrary, we may very speedily discern the Spirit of Christ in some--their gentleness, meekness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. And if, as sometimes, these qualities be quickly developed in some who have only recently come to a knowledge of the Truth, we may the more rejoice with the fruit-bearer. However young in years, the fruit-bearing quality, the heart development, would indicate such to be possibly one of the "Elder" brethren--even though, because a novice, the Church may not yet consider it due time to advance him formally to an official position as an "Elder."

THE BEGETTING, THEN THE QUICKENING

In other words, the teachings of St. Paul and St. James may be fully harmonized by remembering the words of the former, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1.) After the sinner, dead in trespasses and under condemnation, has, by the grace of God, heard of Christ and has accepted his share of the redemptive work by *faith*, he is "justified by faith," before he has had any time to bring forth works or fruitage of any kind. Then if, following the Lord's leading and instruction, he presented himself a living sacrifice to the Lord to take up his cross and follow in the

footsteps of Jesus, the acceptance of his sacrifice by the Father meant his begetting to a new nature--to the spirit plane as a "New Creature." If the begetting spirit be not lost, if it do not die, a transformation work will progress. By and by a *quicken*ing or activity will result from the indwelling of the holy Spirit in the mortal body. If this process continues, ultimately the "New Creature" will be perfected and ready for birth on the spirit plane--by resurrection. Thus our Lord in his resurrection was the First-Born of many brethren, and we, his brethren, will be "born from the dead" in due time, if faithful. But if the spark of life perish, we become castaways and will experience no resurrection birth.

From this standpoint we are ready to discern that the beginning of God's leading with us is along the lines of *faith*, and that it is to our *faith* that the promises of God appeal, and that by these "exceeding great and precious promises," touching our faith, energizing our faith, God works in us, first to will, and later to do, his good pleasure. To *will* to do right is of primary importance and is wholly of faith. The doing, which results from this faith, is God's operation through it and corresponds to the "quicken"ing of the natural birth. The period of the quickening may come sooner or later, but the strength, the vigor, of the unborn infant is usually estimated by the degree of quickening manifested. And so it is with the Christian. When his faith shall have developed sufficiently, the degree of his activity in obedience to God in the service of the Truth and righteousness and the brethren will indicate the strength or the weakness of his spiritual development.

Self-examination along this line is very proper. If we have heard, seen, tasted, of the grace of God and enjoyed it, and if no desire to serve our gracious Father or to assist others to the same blessings that we enjoy has been manifested, it implies that our spiritual vitality is very weak and in danger of perishing. But if, on the contrary, we find ourselves burning with fervency of love for the Lord, and with appreciation of his great Plan of Salvation, and are consumed with a desire to tell the good tidings to others for their blessing, strengthening, upbuilding and participation in the Divine faith, it should encourage us. We should notice, too, that Jesus specially loved and favored the more zealous, vigorous and energetic of the apostles, Peter, James, John, and, we may be sure, Paul also.

BE YE WARMED AND FILLED

St. James presses his point and endeavors to awaken some who have a measure of *faith*, but who have not gone on to the *quicken*ing degree. He asks what profit there would be for us to say that we have faith if we do not have works to correspond--to attest the faith, however imperfect the works would be. He asks (R. V.), "Can that faith save him?" We answer, No. As St. Paul declares, It is the *faith that works* by love that counts. But it is the faith that counts, and not the works; because the faith can be perfect, complete; but perfection of works is impossible to us, because we have this treasure of the New Nature in an earthen vessel.

Illustrating this point he suggests that to tell a poor brother of our faith that God will help him and to send him away without relief, when it is within our power to relieve him, would not be such a faith as God would approve. It would rather signify that we had deceived our own selves. It would profit us nothing. So faith that has no works, of any kind or degree, cannot be called a living faith, because, as yet, it has given no evidence of life--it has shown no quickening.

St. James clearly attests his thought, saying, "A man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." Again he points to the special feature of the Jewish faith in one God in contrast with the beliefs of the heathen in many gods. He says to the Jewish brethren, "You boast in having knowledge of the one living and true God, but surely this is not the extent of your faith in this direction; because the devils believe and tremble. Oh, foolish man, faith without works is barren. It can never bring you life, birth." A faith that will not develop obedience, in harmony with ability, is, therefore, unavailing during this Gospel Age, even as imperfect works failed to justify to life under the Law Covenant.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF FAITH AND WORKS

Note the case of Abraham, the "father of the faithful." It is written that he believed God, and that his *faith* was counted to him for righteousness. But how much faith is required and to what extent is it involved in works? St. James points out that God placed a crucial test upon Abraham's *faith*, which would have proven it inefficient, if

it had not developed to the quickened stage of *works* of obedience. It was years after the promise had been made, and Isaac, the seed of promise, was grown to young manhood, when God commanded that he should be sacrificed upon the altar--thus prefiguring how The Christ, the true Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29), must all have the testing of faith to the point of obedience, even unto death --sacrificial death.

Then, fearful that he had given an example of so lofty a faith and obedience as would discourage us, St. James picks out and holds up before us another illustration of faith and works--that of Rahab the harlot. She had *faith* in God, but it would not have availed her if it had not developed to the degree of activity and helpful service, risking her own interests temporarily for the assistance of the spies. Manifestly she would never have had such works without faith--and it is the *faith* that is specially pleasing to the Lord. But the faith would not have been pleasing to the Lord, had it not led up to works in accord. Thus we see how *works* have to do with our justification, in conjunction with our *faith*, which is the foundation of our works.

THE BODY WITHOUT THE SPIRIT

St. James summarizes this thought, saying, "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, supposing that the illustration should be reversed, namely, to compare the body to works and the spirit of life to faith. 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.

Notwithstanding all that we have written on this subject, especially in *Studies*, Vol. VI., some of the dear friends occasionally write us in perplexity, desirous of knowing what course they should pursue, in respect to brethren (and sometimes prominent brethren) whose works do not correspond with their professions of faith. For instance, a letter recently received noted the fact that one prominent in the Truth at whose residence the meetings were usually held, has a weakness for intoxicating liquors. They feared that if the meetings were removed from his home he would not attend them elsewhere. They desired to know the Lord's will respecting their course of action.

We were glad to note their love for the brother and also their solicitation for the Truth, lest his weakness might bring the cause of Christ to a measure of dishonor. We advised that the erring one be still treated as a brother, for his weakness may be of heredity and much against his own will; but we also advised that one thus weak should not in any sense of the word be set forth to the world as a prominent representative of the Truth; that so doing would dishonor the Truth and also be injurious to the brother, who might come to feel that his weakness was conceded by the brethren to be justifiable, and thus encouraged he might fail to put forth the necessary energy--fail to allow his *faith* to work in him, to rule him, to control his mortal flesh, as the Scriptures require.

With full sympathy and brotherly love it is our belief that the brother is not being helped by the course pursued; that it would be better for him if the dear friends would give him loving reproofs and remove the meeting from his home. If he has any of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of meekness and love of the brethren, such a course would be a most helpful reproof, setting before him, and before all, the high standards of Christian deportment. Is it claimed that this might lead him to antagonize the Truth? We answer that the Scriptures forewarn us that our Gospel is a "savor of life unto life, and of death unto death." (2 Cor. 2:16.) Our whole responsibility is in doing the Lord's will in the kindest, most gentle, most loving manner possible, yet with that force and positiveness which will impress a lesson upon those who are amenable to our influence and the influence of the Lord through us.

We have just received a letter from a dear Sister who has been connected with and deeply interested in the Truth for years. She writes us that she is only now awakening to a realization of the wonderful privileges that are hers in connection with the Harvest work, and of "showing forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." This dear Sister is only now becoming thoroughly *quicken*ed, energized with the Truth. The good features to result may be expected, not only in the bringing of others into a knowledge of the Truth, but also a bringing of her own heart

into full harmony with the Lord and to greater character likeness to him, in the manifestation of the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. This quickening came in conjunction with the endeavors of the Sis-

ter to live up to all the various features of The Vow. We hope to hear from others similarly blessed and energized to good works for the Lord, the brethren and the Truth.

R3317 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)
WHO ARE REAL CHRISTIANS?

--MATT. 7:21-29.--FEBRUARY 28.--

Golden Text:--"Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only."--James 1:22.

FOLLOWING our Lord's course, we reach in this lesson a more particular stage in his work. After the example of Peter, Andrew, James and John, others became disciples or followers of the Lord, until we may presume that his company was of considerable numbers. It was about this time that, after prayer in solitude in the mountain, our Lord made choice of the twelve who should be his special representatives or apostles; and whether it was before or after this selection from amongst the other disciples or followers that he gave the Sermon on the Mount, we may not be too positive, but evidently the two events occurred about the same time.

Our lesson is really a portion of the Sermon on the Mount--a conclusion to it. Supplementing Matthew's statement with that of Luke 6:43-49, we find that our Lord gave several illustrations of true discipleship at this time: (1) The straight gate and narrow way by which any might become his disciples; (2) the fruit-bearing test of being his disciples; (3) the difference between words and deeds in the Lord's estimation; (4) the vital results as illustrated by the two buildings, the one on the sand and the other on the rock.

THESE TESTS IGNORED BY CHURCHIANITY

In our day, when the public teachings of the ministry of nearly all denominations is so different from the teaching of the Scriptures, we believe that the degeneracy of faith and practice would be much more rapid than it is were it not that very many feel it a duty to read a portion of the Scriptures daily, even though they think little about their meaning. In such readings lessons like the one we are now considering occasionally present themselves; and the lines of true discipleship are here so distinctly drawn, that the mere nominal professor is made to shudder while the true Christian is profited in proportion as he determines by the grace of God he will seek to so conform his life that he may become more and more a copy of God's dear Son.

The general thought of today in the pulpits and in private conversation and at funerals seems to be that in civilized lands everybody is a Christian and sure to go to heaven eventually, except such persons as are moral reprobates--such as are to be found in penitentiaries and prisons--and even for them hope is entertained that ere they die they may express some regret for their misdeeds. Such regrets are seized upon by their friends as evidence that they have become Christians, and gone to heaven too.

FALSE DOCTRINE IS CHARGEABLE FOR THIS

While condemning the foregoing as wholly wrong, we nevertheless sympathize with those whose confusion of thought is thus manifested. Their unscriptural views of what constitutes a Christian is the result of two things: (1) Teachings of the dark ages handed down through the creeds of Christendom from the "mother of harlots" to her "daughters"--creeds inspired by the teachings of those who, in centuries gone by, persecuted one another to the death for differences of opinions on doctrinal subjects--tortured one another with rack and sword and fagot. (2) To this bad foundation of error there has come within recent years a larger spirit of enlightenment and generosity in which we rejoice. But the two qualities--the errors of the past and the generosity of the present--produce a very bad combination of doctrine for modern Churchianity--a doctrine which seeks to be reasonable with itself, and which, in so doing, runs counter to a great many teachings of Scripture. The present lesson is an illustration of this.

From the standpoint of orthodox Churchianity and its teaching of eternal torture for all except those who become Christian, our Lord's words in this lesson seem very unreasonable, very unsatisfactory, very heart-rending. From their standpoint a strict application of this lesson would mean not only that the heathen world is without hope in the future, but also the civilized world and the vast majority of those called Christians have nothing to expect in the future except tribulation--eternal torment, because rejected of the Lord and not recognized as Christians, not recognized as members of his Kingdom, his Body, of his Church.

THE TRUTH ALONE IS CONSISTENT

It is only when we get rid of the smoke and darkness and confusion of Babylon and the dark ages and their creeds, and get back to the pure, unadulterated words of the Lord and apostles and prophets, and by the grace of God are granted some opening of the eyes of our understanding, only then can we see these matters in their true light. Our Lord's discourses continually reiterated that he was seeking for some who should be counted worthy to constitute his Kingdom, to sit with him in his throne, to be his joint-heirs, to rule and to judge Israel and all the nations of the world. Not until we learn to differentiate between the Church, his Bride, the members of his Body, the Kingdom class, and the world that is to be judged or ruled by this Kingdom class in due time, can we get a clear conception of the divine purposes progressing throughout this Gospel age.

From this standpoint we can see most clearly why none can be of the Kingdom class unless they shall develop faith and character above and beyond that of the world in general. We can see why these should be called upon to bear the good fruits; we can see why they must walk the narrow way of self-denial, self-sacrifice and character development in order to be fitted and prepared for the great work the Lord has for them to do for the world in the coming age--in the Millennium. It seems to be peculiarly difficult for the majority of people long blinded by false doctrines to see that the heavenly Father has

SPECIAL TIMES AND SEASONS FOR THE VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTS OF HIS WORK

The world is getting a certain kind of experiences in the present time which will be valuable to it in the future--when God's due time shall come for blessing all the families of the earth to be on trial for life or death everlasting. Meantime, with those present experiences come the disciplines of the laws of nature--under which poverty, sickness and mental and moral derangements follow excesses of evil doing as pain follows contact with fire. And it is not an unreasonable hope that with the lessons of the present time before them, the world during the Millennial age will act more wisely than at present; that under the favorable conditions prevailing then many will not only rejoice in the great plan of salvation, but will avail themselves of it--many who are now careless in such matters, partly because they cannot see or walk by faith.

It is when we realize that the present time is one for schooling, discipline, chastening, proving the characters of those who hear and accept the divine invitation, that we see the reasonableness of all the restrictions and requirements attaching to such special discipleship. No longer do we wonder that our dear Redeemer said, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it"; no longer do we wonder that it is recorded that he spake in parables and dark sayings to the intent that the majority should not understand his message--to the intent that only Israelites indeed might appreciate and accept his call. No longer do we wonder that he declared that only those who would forsake all could become his disciples; no longer do we wonder that discipleship means self-sacrifice even unto death. Now we see that our heavenly Father could make no easier terms than these in connection with the peculiar high calling to joint heirship with his Son in the Kingdom to which he is now calling a little flock.

"NOT EVERY ONE THAT SAITH UNTO ME, LORD, LORD, SHALL ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN"

The point of this lesson is specially for those who have named the name of Christ, and who are professing to be his disciples. It is not enough that we profess discipleship; unless the matter goes deeper than this we will be rejected. Our professions of discipleship must be sincere, and the Lord knoweth the heart and will. Although he will judge us leniently so far as unwilling and unintentional weaknesses and imperfections are concerned, he will judge us most strictly in respect to our purposes, the intentions of our hearts. Our Lord is not here referring to the Church in her present condition as

the embryo Kingdom: he refers to the glorified, actual Kingdom to be established at his Second Advent. His faithful will enter into that Kingdom by the resurrection change--by participation in the First Resurrection, which is to include only the blessed and holy.--Rev. 20:5,6.

⁽¹⁾While the Lord's people of the present age are not to be judged by their works but by their faith, as the Apostle Paul distinctly points out, saying, "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight," but we are justified by faith, nevertheless, works will be required. By our works we must demonstrate our faith, and, thank God, imperfect works can demonstrate to him the loyalty of our intentions, our wills. Hence the Apostle James says, "I will show thee my faith by my works," and to this all the Scriptures agree. If our works demonstrate to the Lord the sincerity of our faith, that faith will be acceptable to him and we will be counted perfect and be granted a share in the Kingdom, great and precious things which the Lord has in reservation for those who love him--not merely in word but also in deeds--for those who strive by the deeds of life to show forth, to demonstrate, their love.

The Lord carries this illustration to a considerable length, showing that he does not merely refer to people who are nominally called Christians *en masse*. From the Lord's standpoint the great majority of these would be merely classed as Gentiles; because they have never entered into any covenant relationship with God. The reference in this passage is evidently to those who have outwardly made a consecration of themselves to the Lord-- to those who have outwardly professed a change of heart and vital relationship to the Lord. More than this, he includes not only a few, but "many," who in their outward course of life have in some measure acknowledged the Lord publicly and as here expressed.

"IN THY NAME HAVE CAST OUT DEVILS, DONE MANY AND WONDERFUL WORKS"

This represents a class claiming relationship to the Lord and public ministry in his name--far above the ordinary masses of Churchianity. Our Lord declares that unless our consecration shall lead us to more than miracle-working and calling ourselves Christian, and preaching to others in the Lord's name, it shall profit us nothing. In order to have his approval "in that day" it will be necessary that we shall develop characters in conformity with the Father's will--in conformity to the Lord's Word. Nothing but character will stand the final tests.

All about us in so-called Christian lands we see and hear many in public prayer and hymns of praise call repeatedly Lord, Lord, yet whose conduct, so far as we can see, bears no good fruit, but rather evil fruitage. Many of them are like the thorns and briars to which the Lord likened them. They reach out with helping hands to lift man up, to bless and to ennoble, but the thorns and briars tear and do injury. We live in a day when little of this injury is done physically, because the laws of civilization would take cognizance of such evil deeds and punish the evil doers. Nevertheless, the thorny and briary people find abundant opportunity for injuring others with their lips, with their tongues. Slandering, backbiting, malice, hatred, envy, strife, proceed from them because this is their nature. These bramble and thorn bushes may indeed tie on clusters of grapes and figs to deceive, but the thorny and brambly character will be sure to manifest itself to those who come near them in the contact of daily life.

No wonder that our Lord determines that such are unfit for a share with him in his Kingdom and its great work of judging and blessing the world of mankind. How could busybodies and backbiters and slanderers be fit for the Kingdom of God's dear Son? Saying, Lord, Lord, or performing some miracle in his name, does not warrant them in expecting the great blessings which the Lord has in reservation for those who love him and who in turn are controlled by the spirit of love toward him and toward all the household of faith.

OUR FAITH STRUCTURE MUST HAVE PROPER FOUNDATIONS

We are aware that in our day the confused and confusing doctrines handed down from the dark ages have become so obnoxious to reasoning people that they are inclined to say, Away with doctrines! it matters not what a man believes; it matters everything what he does. We sympathize with those who hold this sentiment, although we cannot at all agree with it. We hold to the contrary that

doctrine is all important both to faith and works. If it were not so the Lord would not have given his doctrines so important a place in his teachings and in his parables as in the one now under consideration. No man can build a proper life unless he have some foundation, some doctrine, some faith. A man with no faith, no hope, is sure to be correspondingly lacking in character. We believe that the important thing is that we should have a proper foundation, a proper faith, a proper doctrine upon which to build character and good works.

Our Lord's illustration shows the possibility of building upon two kinds of foundation--a worthy and unworthy sort. But let us notice before we go further that this parable does not represent the heathen in any sense of the word, nor does it represent any who, living in civilized lands, have the eyes of their understanding so beclouded by ignorance and superstition, and their ears so dulled by the god of this world, that they do not hear distinctly the Lord's message. The parable is addressed to him "that heareth these sayings of mine"--who understands my teaching. The heathen have no place under this designation, neither have the great majority of those who profess Churchianity.

The parable then most clearly finds its two classes in those who have heard the good tidings and who have received them who outwardly have made consecration to the Lord, and who outwardly are building their hopes upon his promises. ⁽²⁾The hopes built upon the Lord's promises and unaccompanied by works are hopes built upon the sand. It is only a question of time until the great testing time shall come and such hopes will be shown to be worse than useless. They will be shown to have deceived their possessor, who thought himself safe in his assurances of a share in the Kingdom. Such hopes, such faith, as fail to obediently strive to do the Lord's will, such faith and hopes as consider that obedience is not essential to a place in the Kingdom, are falsely founded; their overthrow will come with great disaster.

⁽³⁾On the contrary, those who build with obedience, their hearts as well as their tongues confessing and honoring the Lord, their deeds corroborating their faith, and their fruits bearing testimony of their vital relationship with the Lord --these shall pass through all the storms of life and shall never be moved, never be shaken, because they are on the foundation. No wonder that his hearers thought that our Lord's teachings were different from those of the scribes and Pharisees. There was a positiveness in his teaching not to be found elsewhere. And so it is today: the Word of the Lord is reasonable, logical and satisfying in a manner and to a degree that nothing else is.

"SAVED SO AS BY FIRE"

The Apostle Paul (I Cor. 3:10-15) uses this same illustration in a slightly different manner. His illustration shows only those who are built upon the rock, Christ Jesus, but shows that two classes are building upon the rock and that while all such builders will be eventually saved, gain everlasting life, there will be nevertheless two classes of them--some saved abundantly in the Kingdom and others "saved so as by fire"--by passing through great tribulation. The Apostle's explanation is equally possible, whether we apply the gold, silver, and precious stones of the proper building to true doctrines, in contrast with the wood, hay and stubble to false doctrines, or whether we apply these symbols of gold, silver and precious stones as signifying character development, the results of sound doctrine, and the wood, hay and stubble the deficiency of character development.

The general tenor of all these lessons is that all those who think worth while to be on the Lord's side at all in this present age will do wisely if, after counting the cost, they completely lay aside not only their besetting sins but their ambition and their hope and every desire of an earthly kind--that their entire interests may be devoted to the Lord, to knowing his will, to serving him. These are they who really love the Lord more than they love houses or lands or father or mother or children or self; these are the Lord's Jewels, who shall be joint-heirs with him in the Kingdom and in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth in due time. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels."

⁽²⁾ ½ Oct. 7 Manna, Mat. 7:26

⁽³⁾ ½ Oct. 7 Manna

⁽¹⁾ Oct 13 Manna, Jam. 2:18