

September 19

Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth. John 17:17

OUR Lord always links the progress and development of our spiritual life with our receiving and obeying the Truth, and

every child of God should beware of that teaching which claims to be in advance of the Word, and that Christ or the Holy Spirit speaks to such advanced Christians independently of the Word. It cultivates spiritual pride and boastfulness, and renders power-

less the warnings and exhortations of the sacred Scriptures because the deluded ones think they have a higher teacher dwelling in them. And Satan, taking advantage of the delusion, leads them captive at his will. Z.'03-377 R3251:5

[Poems Of Dawn Page 5] GREAT TRUTHS

GREAT truths are dearly bought. The common truth,
Such as men give and take from day to day,
Comes in the common walk of easy life,
Blown by the careless wind across our way.

Truth springs like harvest from the well-ploughed fields,
Rewarding patient toil, and faith, and zeal.
To those thus seeking her, she ever yields
Her richest treasures for their lasting weal.

R5876 "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification."—1 Thess. 4:3...

This is God's will, His desire, His design—even their sanctification, their full setting apart from the world to Himself and His service.... God has a great work to be accomplished, and hence He has a very particular reason for the selection of such a class. If we would be of this number when completed, we must make our calling and election sure by full compliance with the terms and conditions of the call, and this even unto death. We should bear in mind that the Lord is now selecting, electing, a sanctified class for a very special position, a very special work—First, for a thousand years they are to be associated with the Lord Jesus Christ in the regeneration of the whole world... Then they are to reign with Christ their Head and be associated with Him in all His future work throughout eternity."

R5877 "The word sanctification not only has in it the thought of this definite and complete consecration at the beginning, but also takes in the entire process of transformation of character and preparation for the Kingdom."

R5319 "THE TWO PARTS TO SANCTIFICATION "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth."—John 17:17..."

The word *sanctify* has the significance of *set apart, made holy*. There are two parts to this work of sanctification. The first is that which *we* do, in the very beginning, when we *set ourselves* apart, with the desire to know and to do the will of God. The second is that part which comes gradually—the teachings and instructions which set before us things that we did not perceive before... This is a *deeper* setting apart, and is done by *God*, inasmuch as it is done by the Father's arrangement.

This deeper meaning of sanctification is the one signified in the text. Hence, our Lord prays the Father to do this work. The disciples had left all to follow Jesus, and were set apart in the sense that they desired to know and to do the will of the Father. Our Lord prayed that the work of Divine instruction might go on in them, as it is written: "They shall all be taught of God." The Master desired that the disciples should come under Divine, providential instruction, which He indicated would come through the Word of God."

R4690 "Our Lord prayed, "Sanctify them through thy Truth; thy Word is Truth." And we are learning that there can be no sanctification without the Truth."

R2079 "Every error hides some truth; every misunderstanding of the character of God or of the fundamental features of his plan of salvation is so much to hinder men from becoming to the fullest extent possible worshippers of God in spirit and in truth. It is to this end that God's people are exhorted to search the Scriptures to "know the truth," to "know God," because, as our Lord declares, the object of the giving of the truth is to produce *sanctification* of heart and life, and hence whatever beclouds or hinders the truth hinders sanctification of heart."

(Pro 14:12 KJV) "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

R4808 "Neglect of this Divinely appointed means of knowledge is equivalent to setting up our own imperfect standard of righteousness and ignoring the Divine standard"

R5889 "The Word of the Lord is the only thing that will cast down imaginations--ignorance, superstition, pride, unholy ambitions, idle speculations."

(2 Cor 10:4-5 KJV) "(For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) (5) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ"

NS168 "TRUTH ALONE SANCTIFIES

...All who have attempted to walk in this way have found it a difficult one at first, and wise have been those who, finding the difficulties, have appealed to the Lord in prayer and who have hearkened to his Word, the Scriptures, for his answer. The majority have not done this, but have been inclined to lean rather to their own understanding, and, while not disloyal at heart to the Lord, they have been ruled rather by their own wisdom. Hence the majority of those who have entered the narrow way have made little progress, have remained very close to the entrance, and have required the Lord's hand of chastisement and discipline to move them along. The better way, the way set forth in the Scriptures, the way mentioned in our text, is the sanctification of the heart and the life produced by the Truth."

R1532 "Our Lord prayed for his disciples, saying, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." The knowledge of the truth is the sanctifying power, the peace-

and-joy-imparting power, and is the precious evidence of divine grace or favor...

The Apostle says, he "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." But this knowledge of God is not only an intellectual knowledge of his great and loving plan: it includes also a personal acquaintance with God, a heart to heart communion and fellowship with him--an established sympathy of love and common interest and co-operation. Such a knowledge or acquaintance with God is gained through the study of his precious word with reverence and diligence, through the personal application of the principles of that word in every day life and through secret prayer and communion with God."

NS169 "Sanctification does not mean perfection in every thought, word and act of life—it does not mean the pharisaical and hypocritical pretensions to such perfection. It does mean perfection of intention—so far as possible the bringing of our thoughts and words and deeds into accord with that perfect intention; realizing the while that we are attempting the impossible because of the imperfection of the flesh, but that God's arrangement with the sanctified in Christ Jesus is that, because of the right intention and endeavor, all the results shall be reckoned as though they were fully up to the intentions. How gracious a provision this is! How well adapted to the various degrees of imperfection amongst the Lord's sanctified "little flock!" In our text the Lord indicates the proper, yea, the only means of attaining the sanctification which is pleasing to him—"Sanctify them through thy Truth; thy Word is Truth." Whoever, therefore, has the desire of heart to approach the Lord step by step, and to attain a full sanctification or setting apart of himself to do the Lord's will in every particular, should give earnest heed to the Truth, should realize that he will reach his goal only by conforming to the Truth."

(Rom 6:17 KJV) "Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

R3116 "The true sheep will carefully listen for the faintest accents of the voice of the Shepherd--i.e., he will treasure up his words in his heart; he will study his providences; and he will cultivate that communion and personal fellowship with the Lord which are his privilege. Those who thus abide in him can never go astray."

(1 Pet 3:15 KJV) "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear [reverence]"

(1 Tim 4:15-16) "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. {16} Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

R5246 "In reality a man is not always what on the surface he seems to be. His real character is deep down below--the purpose of his life. These are not the mere transitory thoughts, but the deep fissures of thought, if we may so designate those which involve the whole life. The Scriptures bring to our attention the fact that we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds--by having them made over.--Rom. 12:2.

The Apostle, speaking of some very vicious traits of character, says, "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:11.) This cleansing, this sanctifying, comes not merely through the reading of the Truth, or the *mental* application of the Truth, but through the *heart-thinking on the Truth*. These heart-thinking, these deep resolutions, are ours as Christians, and are to be guided by certain principles. These have to do with the real man whom God is considering--not the old creature, more or less blemished, according to the degree of depravity. God looks at the New Creature.

These deep heart convictions and purposes constitute a transformation of character. This is the man's *real* condition, and so is *he*. If he have some transitory emotion of anger or of malice, it would not be his *real* thought, his *real* intention. Therefore it would not be *he*, but his old *nature*, temporarily asserting itself. As a New Creature, he is to watch his words, his thoughts, his actions. If a transitory, wrong thought should pass through his mind, it would not be the thought of his heart. And he as a New Creature, should stop it, put it away, so that it may not take root in his heart, and choke out better sentiments.

This right thinking of the heart has very much to do with the whole life. The Apostle says that we are transformed by the renewing of our minds, to know what is the perfect will of God. This is the Christian's standpoint. How glad we are that our Heavenly Father is judging us from this standpoint! How glad we are that He is able to read the heart, that He knows our hearts, that He knows our inmost thoughts!

At one time we might have thought that we were doing God service when we were not. We show our loyalty to God by giving attention to His Word, that we may know what is His will. The more we study God's Word, the more we receive the spirit of the Truth, and the more we appreciate it. And in proportion as we understand God's regulations and desire to be guided by them, our hearts will become purified. Then the more care shall we take of our hands, what they shall do; and of our tongues, what they shall say. Thus we shall keep our hearts--submit our wills to the will of God.

The will is a part of our heart, just as the rudder is a part of the ship. The new will is

the rudder to steer us this way or that way. The more we understand the Word of the Lord, the better we understand how to guide our lives. Therefore we are to keep our hearts and purify them by the *knowledge* of God's Truth, the *study* of God's Truth. To do this, the will must ever be on the alert, watching with prayer and thanksgiving."

R1530 "A TOWER reader writes that she recently met some of like precious faith, who, while recognizing Sanctification as she does, did not seem to have an ecstatic joy, accompanied by great emotion, but, on the contrary, seemed to hold the doctrine of full consecration by a process of mental reasoning. She was disappointed in finding them, as she thought, too cold and calculating. She found, too, that they did not hold to an *instantaneous* change of character;--from sin to perfection in holiness, at one bound. She desires our expression on the subject in the TOWER.

We are glad of the opportunity thus afforded us of giving a word of caution on both sides of this question.

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; and *not merely to see the duty or privilege*.

Where truth is seen, and when the heart falls in love with it so that it delights to conform itself to it, even at the cost of convenience or friendships, or other selfish advantages,--there the sanctifying influence or spirit of the truth is at work;--there the results sought and intended by our Lord are being attained. Joy will accompany, and peace and trust and love. And *zeal* will never be lacking in a thoroughly sanctified heart, although all may not manifest it in the same way. With one it may be manifested boisterously and with great activity, as a mountain stream when suddenly swollen by a cloud burst; with another it may be that deep and unshown current of spiritual life which enables its possessor to go more calmly forward in a life of sacrifice and faithfulness to duty, against all opposition;--as an iceberg, moved by the under current of the ocean, moves steadily and irresistibly with that current, against all the surface currents of the ocean.

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."

(2 Cor 7:1 KJV) "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear [reverence] of God."

R3985 "PERFECTING OUR HOLINESS..."

"It was proper that our Lord should give the perfect standard or pattern just as the school-book sets before the child a copper-plate engraving showing the perfect, the desirable standard of writing, not with the expectation that the child will ever succeed in exactly copying the engraving, but with the desire that the child shall improve itself by attempts at copying..."

Our text [2 Cor 7:1] declares that this perfecting of holiness is to be attained through a reverence for the Lord--an appreciation of his greatness, his perfection. The Christian who according to the flesh is deficient in veneration will have greater difficulty along this line of perfecting holiness than one who has naturally large veneration. A great deal of reverence for God and holy things is surely a great aid in our appreciation of the Lord's wonderful greatness and wisdom, power, justice, love; and the greater our appreciation of him, the higher our esteem of the pattern set before us, the better undoubtedly will be our success in the copying of it."

F409 "The Apostle Paul urges that we cleanse not only our flesh as much as possible, but also our spirits, or minds--that the new mind, the holy resolution, or will, be given full control, and that every thought be brought into captivity to the will of God as expressed by and illustrated in Christ.

It will be in vain that we shall endeavor to cleanse the flesh and to bridle the tongue if we neglect the heart, the mind, the spirit, in which are generated the thoughts, which merely manifest themselves in filthiness of the flesh--by words and deeds. Only by prayer and perseverance can this cleansing necessary to a share in the Kingdom be accomplished --"perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord." Not that we may hope, either, to effect an absolute cleansing of the flesh. It is the absolute cleansing of the will, the heart, the spirit, that the Lord demands (implying as complete a cleansing of the flesh and tongue as we can accomplish). Where he sees the heart pure and true to him and his spirit and law of Love he will, in due time, give the new body suited to it. "Blessed are the pure in *heart*, for they shall see God." Matt. 5:8"

E205 "The promise of being "filled with the Spirit" or mind of God is not to those who merely possess the Word of God, nor to those who merely read the Word of God, but is to those who search it earnestly, seeking to understand it; and who understanding it are willing, nay, anxious to obey it."

R5320 "The real object and purpose of our call is to fit and prepare us... We are to be Divine channels of blessing to all creatures--angels and men--for the development of all God's Universe, including other worlds, as

they come to have inhabitants. As we come to see the scope of God's Plan, we see a reason why God is giving us trials, experiences. Our Lord Jesus was to be a merciful High Priest; hence His experiences, His sufferings. And if it was necessary that our Lord Jesus, the Shepherd of the Flock, should suffer, how much more is it necessary to our perfecting that we should suffer!

We should have a great deal of trial, suffering, temptation, and, being succored in these, we should know how to succor others...

Sanctification is a gradual work, lasting throughout the Christian's life. It is not a point which he reaches only at *death*, but which he should attain soon after consecration. Consecration opens the door and gives him the standing, gives him the relationship, gives him the backing and encouragement of the Divine promises, and puts him in the way, therefore, to cultivate the various fruits of the Spirit, and finally to attain joint-heirship with our Lord in the Heavenly glory. But to *maintain* this standing in the Body of Christ, requires that fruits shall be produced, evidences of love and devotion.

Testings will come thereafter as to the degree of faithfulness in service, and to see how much of besetments he would endure--how strong a wind of false doctrine he could stand, how much of the assaults of the flesh and of the Devil he could bear without being unsettled and driven away from the Truth.

The Scriptures tell us that the Lord knows our frame, that He will, with each temptation, provide a way of escape. We shall all be tried. If the fire becomes so hot that to go any further would destroy us, the Lord will prevent this. By and by we be-

come stronger. Then He may give us even greater testings. So "the Lord your God doth prove you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."

TRIALS PROPORTIONATE TO STRENGTH

A metallurgist tries his metal--proves it. He tests it, to separate the dross from it. After he has separated some of the alloy, he puts in another flux, to remove other dross; and then another flux, etc. So the Lord is taking away our dross. He does not take away all of the dross of our flesh; for it is the New Creature that is being perfected. As the dross in our minds becomes apparent to us, we as New Creatures will more and more co-operate with God in its elimination.

So the Lord's people are to be more and more sanctified through the Truth. The word *sanctify*, then, conveys the thought of making saintly, holy. Every day of our lives should make us more sanctified--more fit for God's service in the future.

It is not necessarily true that the one having the most trying experiences would have the most dross. Our Lord Jesus had more trials than any of His followers, and He was perfect. As St. Paul intimates, these trials work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And the brightness of our *future* will depend upon the heart-development and character-development attained *now*. Our Lord Jesus will have the highest position because of greatest faithfulness under trials. Some of the Lord's brethren will have high positions because of having proved faithful under great trials. These trials are to fit us for a high position, both in the present life and in that which is to come."

R3250 (From Harvest Truth Database V8.0 2013)

"CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY"

--COLOSSIANS 1:27--

LANGUAGE is but a medium for the communication of thought, and words are but symbols of ideas. When words are so framed in sentences as to express an impossibility or an absurdity, when considered literally, but do forcibly illustrate a known truth when symbolically interpreted, we instinctively recognize the figure, and are instructed by it. In this way many of the deep things of God--the spiritual things--are expressed to us, since they are often forcibly illustrated by things familiar to us on the natural plane. Thus, for instance, the resurrection, both natural and spiritual, finds an illustration in the processes of vegetation (1 Cor. 15:35-38); and the processes of the beginning, development and final perfecting of the spiritual sons of God find a remarkable illustration in the begetting, quickening and birth of the natural man. (James 1:18; Eph. 2:1; John 3:3.) But if, when we read these symbols or illustrations of spiritual things, we pervert and dishonor our God-given reason by accepting palpable absurdities as their interpretation, we deceive ourselves, and in so doing are not blameless. In parables and dark, symbolic sayings our Lord opened his mouth and taught his disciples, expecting them to use their common sense in either interpreting them themselves, or in judging of the correctness of any interpretation offered by others as they should become meat in due season. And when on one occasion, instead of using their brains to draw from it the implied lesson, the disciples asked for the interpretation of a parable, Jesus suggestively and reprovingly replied, "How then will ye know all parables?" (Mark 4:13.) He would have us think, consider and put our God-given mental faculties to their legitimate use.

Bearing in mind these wholesome reflections, together with the fact that the Scriptures abound in these symbolic expressions of truth, let us consider the Apostle's meaning when he speaks of "Christ in you, the hope of glory." He uses the same figure again in his letter to the Galatians (Gal. 4:19), saying, "My children, whom I am bearing again, till Christ be formed in you," etc. Here the Apostle is likening his care and labor and endurance for those who had been begotten by the Truth to the new nature, to the physical endurance of a mother in nourishing and sustaining the germ of human life until the new human creature is formed and able to appropriate

for itself the life-sustaining elements of nature, independent of her life. So the Apostle sought to nourish and sustain those germs of spiritual being with his own spiritual life until, apart from his personal work and influence, they would be able to appropriate for themselves the God-given elements of spiritual life contained in the Word of Truth;--until the Christ-character should be definitely formed in them.

In no other reasonable sense could the Apostle bear those Galatian Christians; and in no other reasonable sense could Christ be formed in them, or in us. The thought is that ⁽¹⁾every true child of God must have a definite individual Christian character which is not dependent for its existence upon the spiritual life of any other Christian. He must from the Word of Truth, proclaimed and exemplified by other Christians, draw those principles of life, etc., which give him an established character, a spiritual individuality of his own. So positive and definite should be the spiritual individuality of every one, that, should even the beloved brother or sister whose spiritual life first nourished ours and brought us forward to completeness of character fall away (which the Apostle shows is not impossible--Heb. 6:4-6; Gal. 1:8), we would still live, being able to appropriate for ourselves the spirit of Truth.

Paul feared, and had reason to fear, that the Galatian Christians had not yet come to this condition of established character--that the Christ-life was not yet definitely formed in them. He said, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain" Gal. 4:11); for already they were giving heed to seducing teachers and departing from the faith, showing that they were not established in the Truth, and consequently not established in the spirit of the Truth, which is the spirit of Christ, and, hence, that Christ was not yet formed in them.-- *Verse 19.*

Alas, how often we see among those who bear the name of Christ, and who have truly received the spirit of adoption as sons of God, that Christ is not yet formed in them! that they have not yet reached that degree of development which manifests a distinct spir-

(1) Sept. 17 Manna Col. 1:27

itual individuality! They depend largely upon the spiritual life of others, and if their spiritual life declines these dependent ones suffer a similar decline; if they go into error, these follow, as did many of those Galatian Christians to whom Paul wrote. How is it, beloved, in your several cases? Apply the question to yourselves--Is Christ formed in you so fully that none of these things move you? that, however they may grieve you at heart, they cannot affect your spiritual life? This is what it is to have "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

A cloak of mystery and superstition has been thrown around this expression of the Apostle, evidently by the great Adversary of the Truth and the Church, to the effect that in some secret way, known only to the initiated, Christ personally comes into the consecrated soul and uses that soul simply as a machine; and that, consequently, the machine is about infallible, because Christ is using it; that for them to speak, or think, or act, or interpret the Scriptures, is for Christ to do it, in whose hands they are merely the passive agents. With this idea they generally go further, and claim that Christ personally talks with them and teaches them independently of his Word; and some go so far as to claim that they have visions and special revelations from the Lord. Some speak of this presence as Christ; some as the holy Spirit; and some speak of them interchangeably. While there is a semblance of truth in all this, and while we remember that Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them...shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him;...and we will come unto him and make our abode with him" (John 14:21,23), it is true that a more serious error could scarcely be entertained than this idea of personal infallibility because of the supposed mysterious presence of another being within.

Notice that this promise of the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is to those who *have* and *keep* the commandments of the Lord Jesus. Those, therefore, who ignore the Word of the Lord and have not his commandments--who do not know what they are, and hence cannot keep them, but who hearken to the voice of their own imaginations and note all the changing states of their own feelings, mistaking them for the voice of the Lord and follow the impressions arising from this source, instead of the commandments or teachings of the Lord--are quite mistaken in claiming this promise. Under their delusion they are following another spirit than the spirit of Truth; and unless recovered from the snare they must inevitably plunge deeper and deeper into superstition and error.

The first difficulty we meet in attempting to dispel this delusion from the minds of those infatuated with it, is the claim that this is a higher attainment in the spiritual life, up to which we have not yet measured. If the testimony of the Scriptures bearing on the subject is brought forward they say, "Oh, I see you have the head-knowledge, but you have not the Spirit, you have not Christ in you." They then proceed to tell how Christ is in them, and that he is "teaching them wonderful things," which we shortly discover to be quite out of harmony with the Word of God. The case is indeed a sad one when all Scripture testimony contrary to their belief is set aside with claims of superior revelations of Christ or the holy Spirit which other children of God do not enjoy, and that Christ personally dwells in them, etc., etc.

Who but these deceived ones cannot see that, if their theory be true--if God talks with them and answers all their queries aside from his written Word, the Bible, through mental inspiration, or by dreams, or by audible sound--then the Bible is to such a useless book, and time spent in its study is so much time wasted. Who would "search the Scriptures" as for hid treasures, as the Lord enjoined and as all the apostles searched, if they could shut their eyes, or kneel, and have God make a special revelation to them, respecting the information desired. Surely any sensible person would prefer a special revelation on a subject, rather than to spend days and months and years examining and comparing the words of our Lord and the apostles with those of the prophets and the Book of Revelation ("searching what or what manner of time the spirit did signify"), if they could ask and have an inspired and infallible answer in a moment. None of God's consecrated ones should be thus misled of the Adversary. It is the stepping-stone to pride and every evil work;--to *pride*, because those who are thus deceived soon feel themselves honored of God above the apostles, who even in conference judged of the mind of the Lord as read in his Word and in his providential leadings in harmony with his Word (Acts 15:12-15); to *every evil work*, in that those thus puffed up fancy themselves infallible, and, separated from the anchor of truth, the Bible, Satan can soon lead them rapidly into the outer darkness of the world, or into yet darker delusions.

But the testimony of the Scriptures is quite contrary to this vaunting spirit. Paul says, "Know ye not...that Jesus Christ is in you,

except ye be reprobates?" and then he exhorts that we examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, or whether we have rejected the faith and thus become reprobates--no longer acceptable to God. (2Cor. 13:5.) Every *true* child of God has respect to the commandments of God; he searches the Scriptures that he may know them, and is not left in ignorance of them; and, learning them, he endeavors to keep them, and the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is with all such so long as they continue to hold and to keep (obey) his commandments--to hold the Truth in righteousness.

To have the Truth and to keep it is not merely to accept it on the recommendation of some friend, and because it gives some comfort and costs nothing, and to hold it until some other presumed friend dazzles the unsettled mind with some fanciful theory. The promise of the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is not to such. Christ is not in them; Christ is in the humble and sincere ones. He and the Father love and abide with them.

But how? To illustrate--a friend accompanying another to a railway station said, as he was about to board the train, "Remember, I will be with you all the way." He meant that his thoughts would be with his friend and that he would be concerned for his welfare, etc. In a similar, and yet in a fuller and broader sense, ⁽²⁾the Lord is ever present with his people. He is always thinking of us, looking out for our interests, guarding us in danger, providing for us in temporal and spiritual things, reading our hearts, marking every impulse of loving devotion to him, shaping the influences around us for our discipline and refining, and hearkening to our faintest call for aid or sympathy or fellowship with him. He is never for a moment off guard, whether we call to him in the busy noon hours or in the silent watches of the night. And not only is the Lord Jesus thus present, but the Father also. How blessed the realization of such abiding faithfulness! And no real child of God is devoid of this evidence of his adoption. Sometimes it is more manifest than at others; as, for instance, when some special trial of faith or patience or endurance necessitates the special call for special help, and forthwith comes the grace sufficient with a precious realization of its loving source. Thus

"E'en sorrow, touched by heaven, grows bright,

With more than rapture's ray,

As darkness shows us worlds of light

We never saw by day."

Every true child of God has these precious evidences of sonship, and the roughest places in his pathway are so illuminated with divine grace that they become the brightest, and memory continues to refer to them with thankfulness; and faith and hope and love grow strong and inspiring.

⁽³⁾Our Lord always links the progress and development of our spiritual life with our receiving and obeying the Truth, and every child of God should beware of that teaching which claims to be in advance of the Word, and that Christ or the holy Spirit speaks to such advanced Christians independently of the Word. The snare is a most dangerous one. It cultivates spiritual pride and boastfulness, and renders powerless the warnings and exhortations of the sacred Scriptures because the deluded ones think they have a higher teacher dwelling in them. And Satan, taking advantage of the delusion, leads them captive at his will.

These symbolic expressions of the Scriptures must be interpreted as symbols, and to force any unreasonable interpretation upon them manifests a culpable wilfulness in disregarding the divinely appointed laws of our mind, and the result is self-deception. When we read, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 Jno. 4:16), the only reasonable interpretation is that we dwell in the love and favor, and in the spirit or disposition of God; and that his spirit or disposition dwells in us. Thus God by his indwelling spirit works in us to will and to do his good pleasure (Phil. 2:13); and we are reckoned as not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in us.--Rom. 8:8,9.

Let us endeavor to have more and more of the mind, the Spirit of God--to have his Word abide in us richly (John 15:7; Col. 3:16)--to have and to keep his commandments, that the abiding presence of the Father and the Son may be with us; and that, realizing that the Christ-character and life are definitely formed in us, the hope of glory may be ours; for our Lord said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21.) How careful then should we be in seeking both to know and to do the will of God. Many indeed will come forth with the plea of their wonderful works, hoping to be admitted into the Kingdom, but only those will be recognized who have done the will of the Lord, and who have no theories or works of their own whereof to boast.

[2] Sept. 18 Manna, Ex. 33:14

[3] Sept. 19 Manna, Jn. 17:17