

May 2

All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 2 Timothy 3:12

OPPOSITION is to be expected, and will, doubtless, continue until we finish our course in death. To submit patiently to this opposition is to sacrifice our own *natural*

R5395 "Persecution is something that is *intended* and *pursued*, or followed up. Persecution is not merely one act or one word -- it is a succession of unkind words and acts with a view to punishing someone for adhering to an opinion or course of conduct."

R5172 "FIDELITY TO THE TRUTH A CAUSE OF PERSECUTION"

All down through the Gospel Age, those who have been faithful to the Truth of God have been put "out of the synagogue." The creeds of men have been barriers to keep out those who understood the Word of God. There was a time when many were excommunicated as heretics *because of conscience*. One of these was Michael Servetus, a brother Christian, whose horrible death at the stake was brought about by John Calvin. This course of conduct literally fulfilled the Scripture which says, "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."--John 16:2...

His followers, honorable, moderate, truthful, honest, virtuous, possessing the spirit of a sound mind, like Himself, would be highly esteemed amongst the nominally religious, were it not for their loyalty to the Word of God. Because of faithfully pointing out popular errors, because of fidelity to the Truth."

(Mat 5:11 KJV) "Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."

R5173 "THE ANTITYPICAL BURNING OUTSIDE THE CAMP...As our Lord suffered in the flesh, so will also those who are members of the Church, which is His Body. (Eph. 1:22,23.) St. Peter admonishes us to expect this, saying, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind." 1Pet. 4:1...

In proportion as we are faithful to our Heavenly Father and to the terms of our consecration, we shall have similar experiences. Faithfulness to our covenant of sacrifice will bring upon us opposition from the world, the flesh and the Devil. Particularly will our persecution come from those Christians who are not developed sufficiently to appreciate matters from the proper standpoint.

St. Paul, in speaking of his own case, says that he was dying daily. (1Cor. 15:31.) This statement applies to all who are laying down their lives in the Lord's service. Sometimes it is by the expenditure of physical strength; sometimes it is by a stab from some one who has hurt us, wounded us, injured us with his tongue. In the type, this kind of experience is represented by the burning of the flesh outside the camp, a place which typifies the outcast condition."

R5173 "These conditions are also a test to the Lord's people, to prove whether they are willing to endure these persecutions and

preferences for the friendship and the pleasures of the present life, and to endure hardness as good soldiers for the Truth's sake, in whatever shape that hardness may come, in our effort to do the Lord's will and work of advancing the interests of His Kingdom.

To be really in the Lord's service in-

oppositions cheerfully, as a part of the cost of being disciples of Christ. If under the pressure they revile in return and slander and backbite, they are thus demonstrating their unfitness to have a place in the Kingdom. If, on the other hand, they receive these lessons with patience and long-suffering, they will develop more of the character-likeness of their Redeemer and thus become more worthy of a share with Him in the future glory.

Our Lord's declaration, "Ye are the salt of the earth," may very properly be applied to those of the followers of the Lord who give heed to His teachings and who cultivate His character-likeness."

(1Pe 2:21-23 KJV) "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: (22) Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: (23) Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously"

(Eph 4:29 KJV) "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

R5172 "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My Name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." (Isa. 66:5).... It behooves the Lord's people to look with great sympathy upon those who may be their persecutors."

R5117 "Whatever affliction that *New Creature* undergoes because of following the Lord, is suffering as a Christian... He permits the Church to have them in order to develop and crystallize character. If we rejoice that we are found worthy to share in the sufferings of the present time, every trial will be turned to advantage."

R5116 "*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*"--2Tim 3:12

GODLINESS IMPLIES a character which is actuated by principles of righteousness. In all our dealings we are either just or unjust, kind or unkind, not according to what some people may think of us, but according to the standard of righteousness found in the Scriptures. Therefore, in order to develop that character which is pleasing to God, we should in every detail of life consider carefully what is right and what is wrong, according to that standard...

What the Lord desires to see in His people is not merely an outward manifestation of devotion to Him and to His brethren, but a development of love in our hearts and our dispositions. If we profess to love one another and yet pursue a course of self-seeking, wherein do we manifest love? So St. John admonishes to love not in word only, but in deed and in truth."

R4201 "Those whose hearts are loving to

volves, first, the careful and continual study of God's plan; second, the imbibing of its spirit; leading, thirdly, to an enthusiastic zeal for its accomplishment, and to activity to the extent of ability in its service, at whatever cost or sacrifice it may require. Z.'03-164,165 R3199:2

their enemies, and loving to the Household of Faith, and above all, loving to the Lord, these would indeed be exceedingly sensitive if their hearts got into any attitude in which they would not be seeking the welfare of others, and praying for them. In such hearts there would be no room for anger, bitterness, strife, envying. In such hearts the love of God is shed abroad as represented by the holy anointing oil, the unction from the Holy One, which lubricates all of the sensibilities, smoothing not only the countenance, but also the tongue and the heart..."

DO NOT MAKE UNHOLY COMPROMISES

(Pro 23:23) Buy the truth, and sell *it* not..."

March 19 Songs "On the part of Paul there was no compromise of the truth, no mixing of it with human philosophies to make it more palatable to either Jews or Gentiles, or to avoid thus any measure of the otherwise inevitable persecution."

R2381 "We should beware how at any time we lose sight of the Lord's power on our behalf, no matter how threatening or great or dark the evil which assails us... How many, on the contrary, are disposed to do as Hezekiah did, purchase peace with things consecrated to the Lord, -- to compromise the truth: for instance, if threatened with the disfavor of friends or neighbors or employers, how many are willing to conciliate such adversaries by a more worldly course, by subtracting from the time, influence, means, etc., consecrated to the Lord, considerable portions to be given to worldly service, or to secure domestic peace or social advancement, or commercial prosperity. So surely as the Lord's consecrated people do this, we may expect that the Lord will permit to come upon them the very difficulties which they dread and seek to avert by unholy compromise."

F601-602 "The New Creature, the new heart, with its new affections, is continually assailed... The old affections, the selfish disposition...finding that the New Creature is bound by divine command to be considerate and generous toward others, frequently practices deceptions upon the new heart, and says in effect: ...You ought to look out for number one, and for your family; not--merely for their necessities, but much more--and should endeavor to give them wealth and social advantages. You should sacrifice yourself for them..."

If the old heart, the old mind, the old will, can get the new one to make a *compromise* of truth or duty for the sake of peace, there will be no end to the demands it will make; and the result will be that the New Creature would soon, in the interest of peace, be violating the very essence of his covenant with the Lord...

Hence, when appealed to by the cravings of the flesh, and the arguments of those who are near and dear through earthly ties, the New Creature must first of all consider his primary obligation, viz., that he shall

love and serve the Lord with all his heart, mind, being, strength, and that all dealings with family or flesh or neighbors must be subject to this primary law of obedience to God."

R4921 "THE END OF THE RACE FULLY REVEALS OUR POSITION..."

Nothing is determined or fixed in respect to any of us until our tests have all been passed. St. Paul, after having sacrificed much, after having experienced many sufferings of Christ as a tentative member of

the Lord's goat class, and even after being honored of the Lord as a special mouth-piece, wrote: "I keep my body under (in subjection to the new will and its consecration to sacrifice), lest after having preached to others I myself might be a castaway."—1Corinthians 9:27...

If any reader realizes that he has not been zealously and voluntarily suffering with his Savior, laying down time and strength, reputation and life in His service he is realizing his danger of being counted in as one of the scape-goat class, or worse.

Such should quickly arouse himself or herself and appeal in prayer to the Master for grace and faith to walk in His steps of voluntary sacrifice. He should also seek to "arm himself with the same mind" that the Lord had by studying afresh the "exceeding great and precious promises" of God's Word. He should at once "Lay aside every weight... Look unto Jesus, the Author of our faith, who is also to be the finisher of it. He should consider Him lest he be weak and faint in his mind and thus fail to be an overcomer.--Heb. 12:1-3."

R5394 (From Harvest Truth Database V7.0 2013)

GODLINESS ATTRACTS PERSECUTION

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."--2 Tim. 3:12.

GODLINESS represents in general the condition of righteousness, opposition to sin, as God is opposed to sin--a condition in harmony with justice, as He is just; generosity and kindness and love, as He is generous and kind and loving. There are kind, generous and noble characters in the world who are not Christians. These may have more or less of opposition from others who are evilly disposed--as darkness always opposes light; yet these noble people exercise moderation in their righteousness--they are not righteous overmuch. They do not go to an extreme in their religion, as it is sometimes expressed. These fine characters might occasionally get some persecution, politically or otherwise; but even the enemies of such would have respect for them.

But the Apostle in our text limits persecution to "those who live godly in Christ Jesus." What is the difference between *living godly* and *living godly in Christ Jesus*? We answer that because of their special relationship to Christ Jesus, God's people have a special enlightenment. They see more clearly the principles of God's Justice. They have a more exacting rule by which their lives are governed. Others do not see these deeper things of the Divine Plan and the special arrangement God has made with the Church.

Those who are "in Christ Jesus" have an intelligent knowledge that they have entered into a Covenant of Sacrifice. They realize that they are not to compromise their religion in any way; they are not to compromise with sin, nor with the world. They must uphold the principles of righteousness, even to the detriment of their own earthly interests.

The godly *not* in Christ Jesus--those who have a measure of Godlikeness--may indulge in a great many things that would not be wrong for the world--not sinful, not immoral, not unkind. With the Christian, however, all of his time, talent, influence, money, are consecrated to the one service, according to what he understands to be the Lord's Word and the spirit of that Word. The worldly man who is righteous might feel perfectly free to give of his money for various causes and purposes, that would be reasonable and proper in themselves; while the Christian would ask himself, What is the Lord's will, the Lord's way?

THE CHRISTIAN STEWARD RESTRICTED

The Christian is restricted in his use of money; for he always considers as to how the Lord would have him use it. The Christian uses his money for the preaching of the Gospel and the publishing of it in various ways; while other people might use their money for large benefactions and endowment of colleges. The Christian would reason: There are many opportunities for people to get education along earthly lines, and I believe the Lord would have me as His child to use His money to help people get spiritual education.

Likewise in the use of his time; the natural man might say, We will have a certain evening for attending a good opera. We will not go to any disreputable place, but we will spend a certain amount each season on the opera. Or, we will be patrons of art and music and literature. We must adopt a course that will win the approval of society. That will be the wise thing to do. But the Christian says, My time, my money are consecrated to the Lord. I am His steward, I can use these in a better way. A worldly man may be a patron of art and spend a thousand dollars--or ten thousand dollars--on a single painting, because he wants art to flourish. Or he might buy a fine piece of sculpture to adorn his home, but this is not the course for me. I must consider the Lord's will for me as His servant.

The Christian has limitations which the worldly do not have. But we are glad for all good men and good women, who can be good and noble even though not in Christ Jesus. We are glad to esteem them. There are noble people in the world. There are some godly ones outside the Church, godly to a certain degree; and they are likely to come to see something of the Truth, if they are really noble characters. The godly of this world will get a blessing in the

Restitution time. Every godly thing that they have done, every act of generosity, will get its reward. And by cultivating their higher sentiments, they will have fewer steps to retrace.

SPECIALLY GODLY ARE SPECIALLY PERSECUTED

The persecutions which come to the godly in Christ Jesus are special persecutions. We are not to expect much of this from the Body of Christ. A man is not expected to use his fist to strike his own eye, nor is it to be expected that one hand will injure the other hand. It may be that the skin on one hand is rough, and will sometimes scratch the other one. But we cannot be members of the same Body and persecute each other. Persecution is something that is *intended* and *pursued*, or followed up. Persecution is not merely one act or one word--it is a succession of unkind words and acts with a view to punishing some one for adhering to an opinion or course of conduct.

So persecution comes from a certain class called by Jesus *the world*. But the class that Jesus called *the world* are those who had a *form* of godliness, but did not have the *power* thereof. Christianity has its counterfeits, as has money. So the Apostle speaks of a class who would take the name of the Lord upon them and misuse that name. And there are people in the world today who do not know the difference between the genuine and the counterfeit--between Truth and error--and who do not *want* to know, and who keep out of the way of *being told*. They somehow know that there would come a certain measure of condemnation to themselves if they recognized the real facts and did not act in accordance with them.

They are not all bad people by any means. There are very many good people among the tares; but there is no real wheat among the tares--no real nutriment. But these tares pose as the Church of Christ; the tare systems pose as Christianity. And from this class usually come the persecutions. They try to crowd out the wheat, or to choke it and make it unfruitful. It was so in our Lord's day. Those to whom the Lord referred as persecutors were not the Gentile world of His day, but the worldly ones of the Jews--those who were not fully consecrated to the Lord, but who thought they were.

Nicodemus was a fine character, and Gamaliel was a fine character--and so were a great many who did not become Christ's disciples at all. Evidently many were seeking after righteousness; as, for instance, the young man who came to the Lord and asked Him, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" The Lord answered, "Thou knowest the commandments." The young man said, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth up." He was a noble character, and Jesus looking on him *loved* him, even though he was not a disciple. And Jesus said to him, "One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come, take up thy cross, and follow Me." But he went away sorrowful. He did not want to become a member in Christ Jesus. He did not want to give everything to the Lord. He was very rich--"had great possessions," and he preferred to hold on to his wealth.-- Mark 10:17-22.

There were others who went through many of the forms and ceremonies, and who kept the various admonitions of the Law, and its feasts and fasts; but they were not the "Israelites indeed in whom was no guile." And later they became the persecutors of Christ and those who walk in His steps of sacrifice.

PROFESSED CHRISTIANS PERSECUTORS

And so those who live godly in Christ Jesus have their persecutions, not so much from the worldly class as from professing Christians. There is a class in Churchianity today that has a great deal of pride and self-satisfaction. They are upholding a large institution. If anything seems to be inimical to that institution, they are wrathful and wish to persecute. Some say respecting those who proclaim Present Truth and who live saintly lives as followers of Jesus Christ: If we let these people alone and let them teach these things, all that

we have been upholding for centuries will crumble. Did not Luther hand down Truth to us? Did not Calvin give the Church Truth? Have we not the teachings of Wesley? No, no; we will not have these "new doctrines"!

But we see that these people are persecuting the Truth and its representatives because of misunderstanding. We should have a great deal of sympathy and not feel specially angry with them. This does not mean that we should be *glad of persecution*--no persecution "for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous." (Heb. 12:11.) But if we know that we are suffering for righteousness' sake, then we know the Spirit of God rests upon us. It is those who know that they suffer for Christ's sake, and who take it gladly because it is the will of God, that may rejoice, because the persecution is working out in them blessed effects. Let us then

"Be still beneath His tender care,
For He will make the tempest cease;
And bring from out the anguish here,
The afterward of peace."

"THE LORD YOUR GOD DOTH PROVE YOU"

Why does God permit His people to suffer? Why does He not shield those who are His from suffering, just as a loving parent would shield a child? The Scriptures reply that it is because God is working out a great Plan that will eventually bring blessings to all who will do righteously; for God wishes to show the evil effects of sin, its deteriorating effects. God's purpose is that after the Six Days of Sin and Death are ended, in the Seventh Day there shall be a

blessing for the whole groaning creation. "Jehovah God will wipe away tears from off *all* faces."--Isa. 25:8.

And there is a particular reason why God should permit persecution to come upon His consecrated ones. "The Lord your God doth prove you," test you. Why? What is He proving? We profess to be His loyal children. We profess to be laying down all that we have. And now "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."--Deut. 8:2; 13:3.

How much will you endure? How patiently will you endure? To what extent will you endure? Those who will endure most, and endure most patiently, will give evidence of the best character. And those who demonstrate the best character will have the highest positions in the Kingdom. Each will get a position according to his faithfulness. But as star differeth from star in glory, so it will be in the Kingdom. He who fights the greatest fight against his own nature and demonstrates most the love and zeal of his heart, such is the one who will have a high place.

"How goes the fight with thee?

The lifelong battle with all evil things?
Thine no low strife, and thine no selfish aim;
It is the war of giants and of kings.
Heed not the throng of foes!
To fight 'gainst foes is still the Church's lot.
Side thou with God, and thou must win the day;
Woe to the man whom Satan fighteth not!"

R3199 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light....Ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious, to whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."--1 Pet. 2:9,3-5.*

AT no time in the Church's history has our great Adversary been so active in multiplying false doctrines and in diverting attention from the truth by introducing unprofitable and irrelevant questions as at present. Just when the exaltation and glory of the Church are soon to be accomplished, and when the faithful are about to be received into the joy of their Lord, every device is resorted to to beguile them of their reward and to frustrate this feature of the divine plan. To really frustrate any part of the divine plan is impossible: God has purposed to take out from among men a "little flock," "a people for his name," a royal priesthood; and such a company is assuredly being gathered; but whether all those now in the race for the prize will surely be of that company, is still an open question. Take heed, beloved, that no man take thy crown. (Rev. 3:11.) If any come short of their privileges and prove unworthy of the rich inheritance, there are others who will quickly fill their places.

We beseech you, brethren, as you value the glorious hope set before you in the gospel, that you give no heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, as the Apostle terms them (1 Tim. 4:1); but that, with fixedness of purpose, you apply yourselves to the one thing you are called and are privileged to do as prospective members of that Royal Priesthood. Let us never forget that we are a "peculiar people," separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God, having been called out of our former darkness into his marvelous light. And if thus separate from the world and from Christians who partake largely of the worldly spirit, what wonder if we find them all out of harmony with us, and either ignoring or opposing us.

⁽¹⁾Such opposition is to be expected and will, doubtless, continue until we finish our course in death. To submit patiently to this opposition is to sacrifice our own *natural* preferences for the friendship and the pleasures of the present life, and to endure hardness as good soldiers for the truth's sake, in whatever shape that hardness may come, in our effort to do the Lord's will and work of advancing the interests of his Kingdom.

This is what is meant by the presenting of our bodies living sacrifices in the divine service. ⁽²⁾To be really in this service involves: first, the careful and continual study of God's plan; second, the imbibing of its spirit; leading, thirdly, to an enthusiastic zeal for its accomplishment, and to activity to the extent of ability in its service, at whatever cost or sacrifice it may require.

If we are faithful in this service we have no time, nor have we the disposition, to give heed either to false doctrines or to other

themes which have no bearing on the *one thing* to which we have solemnly dedicated our lives. Our time is not our own if we have consecrated all to God; and consequently, we have none to spare for the investigation of fanciful false theories, built upon other foundations than that laid down in the Scriptures; nor have we time to devote to the ideas and pursuits which engross the world's attention, many of which are harmless in themselves, but would be harmful to us if we were to allow them to occupy consecrated time and to divert our attention from the *one thing* we ought to be doing. The Apostle warns us "to shun profane babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness;" but adds, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." "Teach no other doctrine: neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith."--2 Tim. 2:15,16; 1 Tim. 1:3,4.

Each consecrated believer should ask himself, How carefully have I studied that which I have clearly recognized as divine truth? and how fully capable am I, therefore, of handling the sword of the spirit? Few indeed are those who can say they have fully digested and assimilated all they have received; that they have let none of these things slip from memory; that they have so treasured it up in their hearts that it is their meditation by day and by night; that they have a ready answer--a "Thus saith the Lord"--for every man that asks them a reason for the hope that is in them, concerning any point of doctrine; that they can clearly and intelligently portray the divine plan, quote the divine authority for each successive step of it, and, if need be, point out its place in the divine system of types. To gain such proficiency in the Word is indeed the work of a lifetime; but every day should see a closer approximation to that proficiency, and will, indeed, if we are faithful students and faithful servants of the truth.

If all the consecrated were thus busily engaged putting on the armor of God, and in proving it by actual use in zealous endeavors to herald the truth and to help others to stand, there would indeed be no time left for disputings on the Anglo-Israel question, or whether the earth is a plane instead of a globe, or whether the principles of socialism would be advisable among Christians in the management of their temporal affairs. Nor would there be time for politics, nor even for the good temperance-reform work, nor the work among fallen women, nor among the slums of the great cities, nor even for preaching the doctrine of divine healing. All this is work which can and will be effectually accomplished in "the Times of Restitution," now in the near future; and, besides, there are others interested in these works (and we are glad of it and bid them Godspeed), while we recognize and seek to accomplish the work set before us in the divine plan. And if, indeed, we have no consecrated time for these things which are only side issues and not harmful in themselves, except as they divert attention and consume valuable time which has

* Sinaitic MS. omits *spiritual* before sacrifices.

⁽¹⁾ ½ May 2 Manna, 2 Tim. 3:12

⁽²⁾ ½ May 2 Manna

been consecrated to another and higher use, surely there is none whatever for giving heed to false doctrines such as so-called Christian Science and the various no-ransom or Evolution theories, all of which are attempts to show men how to climb up to everlasting life by some other way than that which the Scriptures point out; viz., by faith in the precious blood of Christ shed on Calvary for our redemption. He that climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber (John 10:1); and we are commanded to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them.--Eph. 5:11.

How narrow this way! say some, contemptuously, of those who, like Paul, devote their energies to the *one thing*--the service of the truth. Yes, that will be the verdict against you, of all except the few who, like yourself, have carefully sought out this "narrow way," and who are determined to walk in it, regardless of the reproach it brings. The way to the mark for the prize of our high calling is not wide enough to admit all the vain philosophies and foolish questions and babblings and speculations of science, falsely so called. It is only wide enough to admit the Lord's plan and those who are willing to discard all other plans and projects and questionings and to devote themselves fully and entirely to its service, and who are quite willing to bear any reproach it may bring.

Consider your calling, brethren, for ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood to offer sacrifices acceptable to God; a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ⁽³⁾ The very object of our being called into this light is that we may let it shine. If we do not let it shine we are unworthy of it, and the treasure will be taken away and we will be left in darkness. If indeed we have received the light and have consecrated ourselves fully to God, let us ask ourselves, What am I doing to show forth the praises of him who hath called me out of darkness? Am I going forth with these tidings to my neighbors near and far? Am I busy from day to day in seeking to vindicate the divine character, and to make known God's righteous ways? Am I economizing time and means, and so arranging my temporal affairs as to give as much time as possible to the work? And, then, am I diligently studying to make myself thoroughly familiar with the truth, so that I may indeed be a living epistle known and read of all men within the circle of my influence? --a workman indeed that need not be ashamed? Can I truly affirm that I am

"All for Jesus, all for Jesus--
All my being's ransomed powers;
All my thoughts, and words, and doings,
All my days and all my hours?"

If so, then we are just narrow-minded enough to say, This one thing I do; and I make everything else bend to this one thing of showing forth God's praises and helping others into his marvelous light. And to this end I cultivate and use what talents I possess as a wise steward of my heavenly Master.

Dearly beloved, we impose no vows or bondage upon each other, but the call has its own limitations: the Master has directed us, saying, "Go ye and teach all nations [for the gospel is no longer confined to the Jewish nation], baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all things"--concerning our (questionable) Anglo-Israelitish origin? No.--All things concerning the shape of the earth? No.--All the vain philosophies of men who have erred from the truth, and all the subtle sophistries by which they make void the word of God? No.--"*Observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*"--Matt. 28:19,20.

This is just what the apostles did. There were plenty of errors and side issues in their day; but, ignoring them, they resolutely devoted themselves to the promulgation of the truth. Paul paid no attention to his fleshly genealogy, because he recognized himself as a new creature in Christ Jesus. It was easier for him to prove his fleshly origin as an Israelite than for any of us to do it; but he cared nothing for that. He did not care whether he was of the ten tribes or of the two tribes; for he had on none of the tribal righteousness of the Law. His only ambition was to be found "in Christ, not having on his own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ--the righteousness which is of God by faith." (Phil. 3:9.) He says (*verses 3-7*), "We [new creatures in Christ] are the [real] circumcision, which worship God in spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh [or the fleshly relationships], though indeed I have had confidence also in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I had more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the

stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the Law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the Church; touching the righteousness which is of the Law, *blameless*. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ."

Hear him again in his zeal for this *one thing* to which he had devoted his life: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the mystery of God; for I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. [I *riveted* your attention on this *one thing*! I kept this *one thing* continually before you.] And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and power [of the truth], that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."--1 Cor. 2:1-5.

Paul was a plain uncompromising teacher. When he knew he had the truth, he spoke it with confidence, and boldly declared that everything contrary to it was false doctrine; and he taught his disciples that it was not only their privilege, but their duty also, to be *established* in the faith and to know, on the evidence of God's Word, why they believed, and to be able to give to every man that inquired for it a reason for the hope that was in them.

There is among Christians today a great lack of established faith on any point of doctrine. They say, "I think," "I hope," or "Perhaps it may be so, but this is only my opinion, and it may be right or it may be wrong. I have charity, however, for your opposing opinion, and for every man's opinion; for who knows which is right? I'm sure I cannot say; but, nevertheless, I have *great faith* and charity (?). I shake hands with every body and call him brother if he claims to be a Christian, no matter what he believes and teaches, whether he is pointing to Christ as the door to the sheepfold, or whether he is trying to teach men how to climb up some other way. In Christian love I bid them all Godspeed and pray for the success of all their teachings, no matter how antagonistic they may be to each other or to the Scriptures as I read them."

All this passes among Christians generally for large-hearted benevolence and personal humility, while in fact it is an ignoble, compromising spirit that is unwilling to forego the friendship of those who oppose the Lord by opposing the truth; and which would rather see the truth suffer, and those weak in the faith stumbled, than that they should bear the reproach of Christ. ⁽⁴⁾ Those who have real and sincere faith in God are willing to take him at his word; and with these the first principles of the doctrine should long ago have been established; much of the superstructure of gold and silver and precious stones should already be erected, and the work be steadily progressing. Such are able, if they are loyal and true to God, to discern between truth and error. The Apostle John, recognizing this ability, says, "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed; for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 John 10.) We ought to *know* what we believe and why we believe it, and then should be bold and uncompromising in declaring it; for "if the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

Again says the Apostle (1 Cor. 2:6-10), "However, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect [developed; we are not to cast our pearls before swine]; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes [the popular leaders and teachers] of this world, that come to naught. But we speak the wisdom of God, which was hidden in a mystery, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew....Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; for the spirit [or mind of God in us, is so anxious to know his truth, that it] searcheth all things; yea, the deep things of God."

The princes of this world do know something of astronomy and geology, and have their ideas of the shape of the earth, etc., but they have not known this hidden wisdom of the divine plan, which maps out a destiny so glorious to the faithful saints who will constitute the royalty of the age to come. Let the world speculate as it may about its own themes of interest, but let us devote ourselves to the one thing in hand, avoiding foolish questions and genealogies and contentions, ...for they are unprofitable and vain. (Titus 3:9.) Let us be faithful to our commission to preach this gospel to the meek who are ready to hear it. (Isa. 61:1.) Let the bride of Christ be diligent in making herself ready (Rev. 19:7), for the marriage of the Lamb is the event of the very near future.

⁽³⁾ Apr. 30 Manna, 1Pet. 2:9

⁽⁴⁾ May 3 Manna, Heb 5:14