

A Berean Study on HUMILITY AND MEEKNESS

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1. What importance does God attach to these graces of Christian character?

(1Pe 5:5) Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

(1Pe 5:6) Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

(1Pe 3:4) But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

(Psa 147:6) The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

(Psa 149:4) For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.

F90:1 God is evidently putting a premium upon humility in connection with all whom he invites to become members of this New Creation. The Apostle points this out, saying, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (1 Pet. 5:6) Paul points them to the pattern, Christ Jesus--how he humbled himself and made himself of no reputation, seeking a lower nature and suffering death, even the death of the cross, etc.; on account of which obedience and humility God highly exalted him. Then Peter points the lesson, saying, "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." (1 Pet. 5:5) Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many great or wise or learned are called, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith. With the premium which God sets upon humility, there is also a premium which he sets upon faith. He would have for New Creatures those who have learned to trust him implicitly, who accept his grace as sufficient for them, and in the strength which he supplies attain --as incidental to their exaltation--the victory to which he calls them.

E254:2 What these need--what we and all mankind need--are sound minds: but the time for the general healing of a world's mental and physical ailments at the hands of the Great Physician is the Millennial age, when fully introduced; but that age cannot be introduced, and its relief and blessing cannot come, until the due time. Meantime, however, the called-out Gospel Church obtains, through her Lord and his Word, his holy Spirit--the Spirit of his sound mind, which is the same as the Father's mind or Spirit. And in proportion as each member utilizes his privileges in this connection he will be helped over the natural mental and physical troubles which beset us in common with the whole world of mankind. The Word of the Lord through the Apostle directs us thus--"I say...to

every man that is among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly [not according to the flesh, but according to his new nature] according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Rom. 12:3) It is a life work with many, to conquer their too high appreciation of themselves, and to obtain the Spirit of a sound mind as respects their own talents, but they are assisted in this work of rectifying their pride, by the words of the Master, which say, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." They are assisted also by the words of the Apostle, which declare that "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace [favor] to the humble." "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." Matt. 5:5; Jas. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5,6

A83:2 And, dearly beloved, many blows and much polishing must we endure--much transforming must we undergo, and much conforming to his example, under the direction of the great Master-builder; and in order to have the ability and ideality of the builder displayed in us, we will need to see that we have no cross-grained will of our own to oppose or thwart the accomplishment of His will in us; we must be very childlike and humble--"clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

R1920 c2 p2-4: Why has God chosen these weak, inferior instruments for his great work? why does he not employ the eloquent tongues, the pens of ready writers, and the prestige of great names? Paul tells us why. It is in order "that no flesh should glory in his presence." The great work of vanquishing sin and establishing righteousness in the earth is the Lord's work: no human power is adequate to the emergencies of the case. Yet God is pleased to allow his power to operate through any human instrument that is meet for his use; i.e., that can be used without injury to itself. If God were to work his wonders through those whose hearts are inclined to pride, that pride would grow, and would arrogate to self the glory that belongs to God, instead of appreciating the honor of being a servant of God, an instrument in his mighty hand--"for the Master's use made meet."

The Lord's use of even the weakest instruments, of those having even a very small measure of talent for his service, sometimes proves an exaltation too great, and that which was a blessing becomes a curse through pride and vain-glory. Such is the perversity of human nature, and such the subtlety of the Adversary in gaining the advantage, that the very texts above cited sometimes become a stumbling-block to many who are not only poor financially, but who are deficient in intellect and education, and who even lack instruction in the divine Word. They forget that the Lord said, "Blessed are ye poor i.e., those who were poor (or became so) as his disciples]" (^Luke 6:20`); or, as `Matthew (5:3` records it, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." And they forget that the ignorant as well as the learned, the poor as well as the rich, can become "puffed up in their fleshly mind." It is sad to see "a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing" (^Gal. 6:3`), thus deceiving himself,--but specially so, when even the rudiments of education and Christlikeness are lacking. We believe that modesty and simplicity are traits to be cultivated by rich and poor alike, who are blessed with a knowledge of the truth, and that any "confounding of the mighty" should be done kindly and in meekness

(`Eph. 4:2`; `2 Tim. 2:25`), and not in a combative spirit or with a show of gratification over their defeat.

Above almost every thing else, therefore, beloved, let us guard well our humility. It is only when we are little in our own eyes that God can use us with safety to ourselves. And yet he does not shield us from every test of fidelity. If therefore the Lord gives you a little exaltation to-day, a little encouragement of success in his service, receive it humbly, meekly remembering your own unworthiness and insufficiency except as God is pleased to work through you; and be just as ready to receive the humiliations of tomorrow as necessary for your discipline and the proper balancing of your character. If the success of yesterday makes you fret under the humiliation of to-day, then beware: you are not as roundly developed spiritually as you should be. Whatever may be the triumphs of the truth through us, let us always remember that we are among "the things that are not." Let us endeavor therefore to make the Apostle Paul's experience our own, who said,-- "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere, and in all things, I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry, and to abound and to suffer need. I can do all [these] things through Christ which strengtheneth me."--`Phil. 4:11-13`.

R2585, 2586

"MARK THE PERFECT MAN! BEHOLD THE UPRIGHT!"

--`MATT. 4:25-5:12`.--APRIL 1.--

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

WHAT characteristics are essential to our attainment of the most blessed conditions God has to bestow? What must we be in order to inherit the Kingdom, be filled with righteousness, obtain divine mercy and everlasting comfort, be called the sons of God, and be permitted to see his face, obtaining a great reward in heaven? What question, what topic, what Bible lesson, could be more interesting to us or a more profitable study than this one? The great Teacher made it the topic, the text, of one of his principal discourses at his first advent, and caused the gist of his argument to be recorded for the admonition of his true followers throughout this Gospel age.

While the character of our Lord, which we as his followers are to copy, is one; and the attainment of that one character or disposition means the attainment of all the blessings God has to bestow; nevertheless, in order to present the matter the more distinctly to our minds the Lord divides this one character or disposition into different sections, giving us a view of each particular part; just as a photographer would take a front view, right-side view, left-side view, rear view and angling views, of any interesting subject, so that all the details of construction might be clearly discernible.

THE FIRST ESSENTIAL.

The first character-picture which our Lord presents we may reasonably assume was in some respects at least most important: It is Humility. "Blessed are the humble-minded (poor in spirit) for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven." We do not understand this to signify that humility is the only essential grace, and that whoever is humble will therefore attain the Kingdom; but rather that to the attainment of the Kingdom humility is a prerequisite of first importance. In other words, while all humble people will not attain the Kingdom, the Kingdom cannot be attained by anyone who is not humble: the Kingdom is theirs, in the sense that it is possible for this class to accept the terms and to attain to the honors and blessings, while all of a different attitude of mind--the proud, the haughty, the self-conceited, are absolutely debarred from any possibility of attaining the Kingdom so long as these contrary conditions lie at the foundation of their characters.

O that all of the Lord's people might see this point clearly and distinctly, and realize once and forever that "The Lord resisteth the proud and showeth his favors to the humble" exclusively! How this thought should put a guard upon every one of the Lord's little ones who is seeking to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son. How jealously they would watch and foster the development of this spirit of humility in their own hearts, and how it would be more and more discernible to others in their daily course of life, and what a blessing and what an influence for good, especially upon the "brethren," would result!

Growing out of this first essential quality or characteristic, as a tree of many branches out of the root, come the other graces of the spirit, which the Lord has declared blessed--divinely approved. How different our Lord's teachings in this respect from all human teachings! Earthly wisdom would say, on the contrary: Hold up your head; think well of yourself, if you would have other people think well of you; be high-spirited, instead of poor in spirit, a little haughty, rather than of humble demeanor; it will have a greater influence in many respects, for no one will think more highly of you than you think of yourself, nor give you credit for more than you claim; hence, think highly of yourself, and claim much, carrying a high head, and having a lofty and self-important look. No doubt there is worldly wisdom in the worldly counsel; no doubt there is some truth in the worldly suggestion, so far as success in earthly matters in the present time is concerned. But here as in other instances, the Lord shows us that his ways are not as man's ways, but higher, as the heavens are higher than the earth. He assures us that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted in due time, while he who exalts himself shall be brought low, in due time. (Matt. 23:12.) In the Scriptures he points us to our dear Redeemer as the illustration of the humble and obedient one, whom he has now exalted to the right hand of divine power; and our attention is also called to the great Adversary, who, taking a reverse course, sought to exalt himself, and has been abased, and is ultimately to be destroyed.--Phil. 2:9; Heb. 2:14.

A sharp distinction should be noted between being poor in spirit and being poor in pocket, or in intellectual gifts and attainments. We have all seen people who were poor in these earthly senses, yet proud in spirit. The point to be noticed is that whatever our financial or intellectual gifts and conditions, the thing acceptable in the divine sight is humility of spirit. Such a disposition is essential to those who would receive the wisdom which cometh from above--they must have a humble appreciation of their own

deficiencies and lack of wisdom, else they cannot receive freely, heartily, the wisdom which God is pleased to grant in the present time, only to those who are in the attitude of heart to receive it. And it will be seen also that this humility of mind is essential as a basis for the spirit of a sound mind--for who is in a proper condition to think justly, reasonably, impartially, except first of all he have a humble disposition? Hence we must agree that humility is a primary element in the disposition or mind of Christ.

CONSOLATIONS THE REWARD OF SYMPATHY.

The second beatitude or blessed condition mentioned by our Lord stands closely related to the first --"Blessed are they that mourn." Mourning of itself is not a grace, but it betokens an attitude of mind which is acceptable in the Lord's sight. Nor should we think of a mournful spirit, without consolation or joys, as being a Christian spirit. We cannot suppose that our Heavenly Father and the holy angels are continual mourners, as they would certainly be if mourning possessed any merit of itself. The thought rather is, Blessed are ye that mourn now-- to whom present earthly conditions are not entirely satisfactory and happifying--who are not blind to the difficulties and trials through which the human family as a whole is passing--sin and sickness, pain and trouble, dying and crying: blessed are those who have sympathy of heart under present conditions, and to whom they are not satisfactory; for the time is coming when, under God's providence, a better order of things shall be instituted, and their dissatisfaction with present conditions will but bring them into closer sympathy and fellowship with those better things for which the divine plan is preparing. When God's Kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven, all cause for mourning and for sorrow and for tears will be done away: that will be a time for consolation, for satisfaction, to this class. Indeed, a good measure of comfort comes to the Lord's people even in the present age--through faith built upon the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word. The fact that they are able to discern the wrongs, the inequities, the distresses of the present time, creates in this class that very condition of heart to which divine promises appeal, whereas others not so touched at heart with sympathy for the groaning creation, are unable to so thoroughly appreciate the hopes set before us in the gospel. Hence it is by a natural law that such are drawn to the Lord's Word, and are enabled to draw therefrom consolation which speaks peace to their hearts, and gives them an inner joy which the less sympathetic cannot know under present conditions. Blessed are the sympathetic!

As we can cultivate the first of these graces, humility of mind, and by cultivation develop more and more of this first and essential characteristic, so we can cultivate also the second grace, the sympathetic spirit. To do this we should frequently think of others--their interests, their trials, their difficulties, and should seek to enter into these as tho they were all our own, and should seek to lend a helping hand and to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith."--`Gal. 6:10`.

HOW THE GENTLE INHERIT.

The third of these graces which the Lord declares blessed is Meekness, or, as we should say, Gentleness. Webster's Dictionary defines meekness to be, "Submission to the divine

will; patience and gentleness from moral and religious motives." It will be perceived that there is quite a difference between this patient, gentle submission to the divine will, and the ordinary gentleness and patience which may frequently be exercised simply for the gratification of selfish desires. Patient submission to the divine will is impossible to those who have not the first grace in the list, a humble mind: the proud and self-willed find it impossible to be submissive to divine conditions; self rises up, perverts their judgments, and misleads their consciences to such an extent that they cannot have full confidence in divine providence, but feel that they must put forth their hand and steady the ark. Moreover, patient submission can be developed only in those who mourn, in the sense of having large sympathies, and who have been comforted by the blessed promises of God, through which the holy spirit comforteth his people. Realizing the evils of our time, and that they are permitted of God for the present for a wise purpose, these not only sympathize with the groaning creation, but this sympathy and the comfort received as its reward tend to make them patient, submissive to the divine will. Remembering that all things are working together for good to them that love God, they are prepared to recognize divine providence in whatever may befall them, and prepared also to look for the lessons of those providences, as blessings which will be helpful to them and to others, in preparing for the future and eternal joys.

This third grace--patient submission to the divine will--which can be noted by those with whom we come in contact, might be said to be the outer manifestation of the second grace, which is inward, of the heart, and which might not be outwardly discerned by our fellow-creatures. The grace of sympathy manifests itself in our patient submissiveness in all the affairs of life, realizing that to those who are in Christ all matters are under divine supervision, and this patience in respect to God's providences in our own circumstances and affairs leads also naturally and properly to patience with others in their weaknesses and failures and ignorance, and leads properly to helpfulness toward them as we have opportunity.

These "meek," patiently submissive to the divine will, shall inherit the earth. The Lord did not mean, nor is it true, that the patient and submissive to the divine will inherit the earth at the present time: quite to the contrary, the arrogant, the impatient, the aggressive, the selfish, succeed in grasping the chief things of power, of influence and of wealth now; and the patiently submissive have comparatively a poor chance. The reward of this grace, therefore, like the others, is future: following on under the divine leading, these shall be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; and the earth is a part of that great inheritance, which in turn, by divine arrangement, they shall bestow at the close of the Millennial age, upon the world of mankind who then survive--those proved worthy of eternal life by the Millennial tests.

Nevertheless, as there is a sense in which the Lord's people are comforted now, so there is also a sense in which they now inherit the earth--a figurative sense, by faith. The Apostle speaks of this when he says, "All things are yours--things present or things to come." (1 Cor. 3:21-23.) Those who have the proper humble attitude of mind and are patiently submissive to the divine will, get more of blessing out of the things of the present time than do their actual owners, because their hearts are in the attitude in which

it is possible to receive blessing. The world, full of selfish craving, is never satisfied, never contented; the child of God, patiently submissive to the divine will, is always satisfied--

"Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis God's hand that leadeth me."

R2700 c1 last p (to c.2): This is a great lesson applicable, not only to the natural man, seeking progress back to fellowship and harmony with God, but there is in it also a lesson to the "new creature" all through life's journey,--that if divine favor is desired and to be expected it must be sought; not in pride, not in self-sufficiency, but in humility. The Lord resisteth the proud, the self-sufficient, the boastful, and showeth his favors unto the humble. The Apostle James likewise calls attention to the importance of this grace of humility, assuring us that no true progress can be made in the way to God, except by the humble. (James 4:10`.) And the Apostle Peter, after exhorting to humility, saying, "Yea, all of you, be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility," adds, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."-`1 Pet. 5:5,6`.

2. Although the Scriptures use the words interchangeably, yet strictly speaking, what is the *distinction* between humility and meekness?

R2585 c2 p3: A sharp distinction should be noted between being poor in spirit and being poor in pocket, or in intellectual gifts and attainments. We have all seen people who were poor in these earthly senses, yet proud in spirit. The point to be noticed is that whatever our financial or intellectual gifts and conditions, the thing acceptable in the divine sight is humility of spirit. Such a disposition is essential to those who would receive the wisdom which cometh from above--they must have a humble appreciation of their own deficiencies and lack of wisdom, else they cannot receive freely, heartily, the wisdom which God is pleased to grant in the present time, only to those who are in the attitude of heart to receive it. And it will be seen also that this humility of mind is essential as a basis for the spirit of a sound mind--for who is in a proper condition to think justly, reasonably, impartially, except first of all he have a humble disposition? Hence we must agree that humility is a primary element in the disposition or mind of Christ.

R2586 c1 p2: The third of these graces which the Lord declares blessed is Meekness, or, as we should say, Gentleness. Webster's Dictionary defines meekness to be, "Submission to the divine will; patience and gentleness from moral and religious motives." It will be perceived that there is quite a difference between this patient, gentle submission to the divine will, and the ordinary gentleness and patience which may frequently be exercised simply for the gratification of selfish desires. Patient submission to the divine will is impossible to those who have not the first grace in the list, a humble mind: the proud and self-willed find it impossible to be submissive to divine conditions; self rises up, perverts their judgments, and misleads their consciences to such an extent that they cannot have full confidence in divine providence, but feel that they must put forth their hand and steady the ark.

R1962 c1 p1 The Lord gives the key to this rest in the words-- "and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart." Truly, in a meek and quiet spirit is the secret of rest. To be meek is to cultivate the graces of patience; of loving submission to the will of God; of abiding confidence in his love and care and in the wisdom of his guiding counsel and overruling providences; and to perseveringly pursue this course through evil and through good report, or through favorable or unfavorable circumstances.

Let the beloved children of God seek more and more to copy Christ's meek and quiet spirit, accepting the providences of God and obeying his precepts and leading as he did, armed with the strength which he alone can supply, and will, to all those who take his yoke upon them, and learn of him.

Webster's: Meek MEEK, a. [L. mucus; Eng. mucilage; Heb. to melt.]

1. Mild of temper; soft; gentle; not easily provoked or irritated; yielding; given to forbearance under injuries.

Now the man Moses was very meek, above all men. Num 12.

2. Appropriately, humble, in an evangelical sense; submissive to the divine will; not proud, self-sufficient or refractory; not peevish and apt to complain of divine dispensations. Christ says, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls." Mat 11.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Mat 5.

MEE'KNESS, n. Softness of temper; mildness; gentleness; forbearance under injuries and provocations.

1. In an evangelical sense, humility; resignation; submission to the divine will, without murmuring or peevishness; opposed to pride, arrogance and refractoriness. Gal 5. I beseech you by the meekness of Christ. 1 Cor 10.

Meekness is a grace which Jesus alone inculcated, and which no ancient philosopher seems to have understood or recommended.

3. What is the relation between humility and knowledge?

(Psa 25:9) The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

F97: In order to have a hearing ear for the wisdom that cometh from above, an earnest condition of heart is necessary. We must possess a measure of humility, else we will think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, and will fail to discern our own weaknesses, blemishes, unworthiness, from the divine standpoint. We need also to have a certain amount of honesty or candor--to be willing to admit, to acknowledge, the defects

seen by the humble mind. Looking from this standpoint, those who long for righteousness and harmony with God are pointed by the Lord's providences to Jesus as the Savior. However imperfectly at first any may understand the philosophy of the atonement accomplished for us, they must at least grasp the fact that they "were by nature children of wrath even as others"--sinners; that Christ's sacrifice was a righteous one and that God provided and accepted it on our behalf; that through his stripes we may be healed, through his obedience we may be accepted of the Father, our sins being reckoned as laid upon him and borne by him, and his righteousness and merit reckoned as applicable to us for a robe of righteousness. We must see this--Christ must thus be made unto us wisdom--before we can act upon the knowledge, and by hearty acceptance of his merit be justified before the Father and accepted and sanctified, and, by and by, delivered and glorified. But Christ does not cease to be our wisdom when the next step is taken, and he becomes our justification. No: we still need him, as our Wisdom, our wise Counselor. Under his guidance we need to see the wisdom of making a full consecration and the wisdom of following up that consecration in a life of sanctification, to the doing of the Father's will. In every step that we take wisdom is the principal thing; and all through the life of consecration, or sanctification, at every step of the journey to the Heavenly City, we need the wisdom which cometh from above, which the Apostle describes--"first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." (Jas. 3:17) Earthly wisdom operates along the lines of selfishness, self-will, self-esteem, self-righteousness, self-sufficiency; and, as the Apostle points out, these things lead to bitter envying and strife, because this wisdom, instead of being from above, is "earthly, sensual, devilish." The heavenly wisdom, on the contrary, is in harmony with the divine character of love, which "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, behaveth not itself unseemly, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth."

R1920: But if, in the use of these privileges, we open our hearts to receive all that divine grace has in store for us, then, indeed, we may glory in the Lord. Let such a one "glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me." To thus know the Lord is not merely to know of him, to know something of his works and ways, but it is to know him by that intimate fellowship and communion which, by a living faith, seals the testimonies of his Word upon our hearts and makes us to realize that they are ours personally, that the Lord himself is our personal friend and helper and counselor and guide. We thus become acquainted with his spirit, his principles and methods of action,--we understand him,--we know how to interpret his providences, to mark his leadings, to observe his attitude toward us and thus daily to walk with him. Thus also we are led to a fuller appreciation of the Lord's righteousness and of his loving kindness, which will in due time establish justice in all the earth. Well, indeed, may we glory in the Lord and in the fact of his great condescension to us personally, when thus we come to understand and know him.

In this blessed sense of the divine love and care, we may say in the words of the Psalmist, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord. I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. O taste and

see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him."--`Psa. 34:1-9`.

How precious is this experience of the child of God! but it can never be the experience of a proud heart; "for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace [his favor] to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (`1 Pet. 5:5,6`.) It is hard for those who are rich in the wisdom or power or wealth of this world to do this. (`Matt. 19:24-26`.) It was hard for the scribes and Pharisees who were rich in titles and honors and praise of men; it was hard for the whole Jewish nation who were proud of being the seed of Abraham to whom pertained the promises of God; it was hard for the Greeks who were proud of their worldly wisdom and intellectual attainments; it was hard for the Romans who were proud of their power and prestige among the nations. And it is hard to-day for all those who have pride in any thing. It is hard for all religionists whose pride in the sectarian religious systems of Christendom blinds their eyes to the truth now due; it is hard also for those who boast in human philosophies and science, falsely so called; who are proud of being inventors of something new and strange, and who desire to be thought great and to lead men after them; it is hard for all those who reverence the opinions of men more than the words of the Lord. All those who either are rich or desire to be rich in the things of this present life, and specially those who are "rich" in a good opinion of themselves, or in self will, find it hard to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. Indeed, the Apostle intimates that the greatest battle of each one coming to a knowledge of the truth is along this line; for it is after pointing to the severe humiliation of our Lord Jesus that he says, "Wherefore, my beloved, work out your own salvation [in like manner] with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you [by this severe discipline, this humbling process] both to will and to do of his good pleasure."--`Phil. 2:12,13`.

Those who have endeavored in all sincerity to do so have always found the grace of God sufficient for them; but very few are ever disposed to make the attempt. To all the worldly-wise the preaching of the cross is foolishness, and they have no disposition to take up their cross daily and follow Christ.

It is for this reason that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" to share with the Lord in the glory of his Kingdom. They are generally so engrossed with the things of the present life --its pursuits, its cares, its pleasures, etc.-- that they have no ear for the Lord's call. They are not humble enough even to hear the call; much less are they humble enough to obey it and to walk the narrow way of self-sacrifice in which the Lord leads.

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world [those who are not noted for worldly wisdom or influence or wealth] to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world [the humble poor], and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." (`1 Cor. 1:26-29`.) How truly the wise are being confounded to-day by the power of the truth in the hands of the humblest of God's consecrated children! Systems of error which are the growth of centuries are put

to confusion and are tottering before it, and the sages of all the sects are troubled by it; for it is becoming more and more apparent to all men that "the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid."--`Isa. 29:14`.

Why has God chosen these weak, inferior instruments for his great work? why does he not employ the eloquent tongues, the pens of ready writers, and the prestige of great names? Paul tells us why. It is in order "that no flesh should glory in his presence." The great work of vanquishing sin and establishing righteousness in the earth is the Lord's work: no human power is adequate to the emergencies of the case. Yet God is pleased to allow his power to operate through any human instrument that is meet for his use; i.e., that can be used without injury to itself. If God were to work his wonders through those whose hearts are inclined to pride, that pride would grow, and would arrogate to self the glory that belongs to God, instead of appreciating the honor of being a servant of God, an instrument in his mighty hand--"for the Master's use made meet."

The Lord's use of even the weakest instruments, of those having even a very small measure of talent for his service, sometimes proves an exaltation too great, and that which was a blessing becomes a curse through pride and vain-glory. Such is the perversity of human nature, and such the subtlety of the Adversary in gaining the advantage, that the very texts above cited sometimes become a stumbling-block to many who are not only poor financially, but who are deficient in intellect and education, and who even lack instruction in the divine Word. They forget that the Lord said, "Blessed are ye poor i.e., those who were poor (or became so) as his disciples]" (`Luke 6:20`); or, as `Matthew (5:3)` records it, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." And they forget that the ignorant as well as the learned, the poor as well as the rich, can become "puffed up in their fleshly mind." It is sad to see "a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing" (`Gal. 6:3`), thus deceiving himself,--but specially so, when even the rudiments of education and Christlikeness are lacking. We believe that modesty and simplicity are traits to be cultivated by rich and poor alike, who are blessed with a knowledge of the truth, and that any "confounding of the mighty" should be done kindly and in meekness (`Eph. 4:2`; `2 Tim. 2:25`), and not in a combative spirit or with a show of gratification over their defeat.

Above almost every thing else, therefore, beloved, let us guard well our humility. It is only when we are little in our own eyes that God can use us with safety to ourselves. And yet he does not shield us from every test of fidelity. If therefore the Lord gives you a little exaltation to-day, a little encouragement of success in his service, receive it humbly, meekly remembering your own unworthiness and insufficiency except as God is pleased to work through you; and be just as ready to receive the humiliations of tomorrow as necessary for your discipline and the proper balancing of your character. If the success of yesterday makes you fret under the humiliation of to-day, then beware: you are not as roundly developed spiritually as you should be. Whatever may be the triumphs of the truth through us, let us always remember that we are among "the things that are not." Let us endeavor therefore to make the Apostle Paul's experience our own, who said,-- "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere, and in all things, I am instructed, both to be full,

and to be hungry, and to abound and to suffer need. I can do all [these] things through Christ which strengtheneth me."--`Phil. 4:11-13`.

In God's dealings with his people at all times we can see his care in guarding them against pride and self-sufficiency. If he would choose Israel to be his peculiar people, he permits them first to be enslaved for four hundred years, and then with a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm he gathers them to the promised land. Moses, too, the chosen deliverer, was of humble birth. He was slow of speech, and needed Aaron to supplement this weakness. And Paul had his "thorn in the flesh," from which the Lord was not pleased to deliver him, though thrice he besought the Lord to remove it; and the Lord said unto him, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness [i.e., my strength, operating through this imperfect earthen vessel, will be more manifest to men than if the vessel were a perfect and polished one. In that case men might ascribe the greatness of the work to the talent of R1921 Paul, and by and by conclude that since Paul is only a man it is only presumption for him to assume to teach other men, etc. But if the power is seen to be of God, and merely working through Paul as a ready instrument--meek, willing and energetic--then the testimony of the grace of God will be weighty with them: and so it was]."

To this explanation and assurance from the Lord Paul meekly replied, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."--`2 Cor. 12:8,9`.

The Lord with unerring wisdom has always chosen the meek for every great work. Moses was the meekest man in all the earth. (`Num. 12:3`) Meekness was a marked characteristic of all the prophets and ancient worthies. The Lord Jesus was meek and lowly of heart (`Matt. 11:29`), who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor. He was of humble birth, born in a manger and reared in the despised town of Nazareth, that he might be called a Nazarene. The twelve apostles were all plain men, mostly fishermen; and so also the whole Gospel Church--not the church nominal, but the true ones written in heaven--have generally been the poor of this world, who were willing to be humbled yet more and more, that the power of Christ might be manifested through them.

Let every one therefore humble himself under the mighty hand of God. This is not the time for exaltation, but for humiliation and trial. The exaltation will come in due time to the faithful. Let our present glory be in that we understand and know the Lord, and in that he condescends to make use of these poor earthen vessels in his service, that it may be manifest to all men that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of men.--`2 Cor. 4:7`.

R2250c2p2 (4) "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." To whom is this blessed promise applicable? Surely to none other than "the elect," the Church, referred to preceding as "the poor in spirit," "the meek." These, and these alone at the present time, are hungering and thirsting for truth and righteousness, in respect to the divine revelation on every subject and affair of life.

Others may have a little hunger for truth, but they are soon satisfied;--especially when they find the truth unpopular and that, however sweet to the taste, it afterward brings bitter gripings of persecution and ostracism under present unfavorable world-conditions. To a considerable number honesty and righteousness are the best policy, to a limited degree,--so far as public opinion sustains them; but a righteousness and honesty and love of the truth at the cost of persecution, at the cost of having men "separate you from their company," is only hungered and thirsted after by the "little flock" --the overcomers. "They shall be filled." They will be filled to the full by and by, very shortly, in the "change" of the "first resurrection," when this mortal condition shall be exchanged for immortality; when this animal body shall give place to a perfect spirit-body. Then partial knowledge and partial attainment of righteousness shall be superseded by a full, complete knowledge, then "we shall know, even as we are known." But even now this class enjoys much larger measures of knowledge of the truth and experiences in the blessings of righteousness than are possible to any other class.

R2860c2p1: A lesson in connection with this subject which is applicable to all of the Lord's consecrated people, is the lesson of humility. Only as we are in a humble attitude of mind can we get a view of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan. Otherwise we would continually find our view of God and of his Word and plan obscured by self. Thus the Lord declares that he resists the proud and showeth his favor unto the humble. Let us, therefore, dear brethren, instead of thinking of ourselves as great ones, on the contrary remember that we are dust, and that as the poet has expressed it,--

"My highest place is lying low
At my Redeemer's feet;
No real joy in life I know
But in his service sweet."

"He that exalteth himself shall be abased; he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (Luke 14:11; 1 Pet. 5:6.) Let us seek to be servants of the Lord and of the flock--faithful servants, ready and willing to lay down our lives for the Lord, for the truth, for the brethren.

R3511 c1 p6: PRIDE AN OPPONENT TO THE TRUTH.

Touch a man's pride and you arouse his whole being. Blessed, therefore, and favorably conditioned are the humble, the meek and the lowly of heart. They are not only better prepared to receive the good tidings respecting the Kingdom, but will be better prepared to follow the footsteps of the Master in the attainment of the Kingdom. Pride is generally in error and hence frequently comes into contact with the Truth, as in this case. There was nothing really or properly offensive in our Lord's words, "The Truth shall make you free:" it was the power of the Truth in the words and not any rudeness or unkindness of the sentiment that aroused the wrath of the hearers--the expression wounded their pride.

This pride seems to be a part of the difficulty of the Jew from that day to this. The Apostle intimates this in his quotation from the Prophet respecting their fall, "Let their table become a snare, a recompense unto them." The peculiar blessings of God upon that people ensnared them, for instead of appreciating the fact that they were not more worthy than others, they trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others--they thought of themselves as being more worthy than others of divine favors, revelations, etc. So in this case our Lord's hearers resented the thought that the Truth could make them free. If our Lord had said, You who are free, being my disciples, shall bless the heathen and deliver them from the yoke of bondage, the sentiment would have called forth approval and he would have been well thought of.

And this, indeed, would be the strict truth--the Lord's faithful disciples, the Israelites indeed, are the channels through whom the Lord will ultimately break the shackles of sin and death from off the Gentiles, the world and also from Israel. But in order for anyone to be the Lord's disciple, he himself must be made free, and it was to this the Lord referred, and it was this thought that angered those who had a few moments before believed on him. How could they regard him as the Messiah when he spoke thus slightly of the Jewish nation and implied that in some sense of the word they were bondsmen? No; they had been bondsmen for awhile in Egypt but they now were free, was their argument.

4. How do we know that humility is the *underlying principle of the divine government?*

(Mat 23:12) And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

(Jam 4:6) But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

(Jam 4:10) Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

(Phi 2:7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

(Phi 2:8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

(Phi 2:9) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

(Phi 2:10) That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;

E151:2 There is a most important reason for the use of this title. It is a title of high honor, because a perpetual reminder of his great Victory--of his faithful, humble obedience to all the Heavenly Father's arrangements, even unto death, even the death of the cross, by which he secured the title to all his present and prospective honor and glory, dignity and power, and the divine nature. By this title, "The Son of Man," both angels and men are referred directly to the great exhibition of humility on the part of the Only

Begotten of the Father, and to the underlying principle of the divine government--he that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Thus every time this name is used it speaks a volume of valuable instruction to all who shall be taught of God, and who are desirous of honoring him, and doing those things which are well pleasing in his sight.

E423:1 Amongst the angels who had retained their first estate and loyalty to God, no doubt there might have been many found who would gladly have undertaken the accomplishment of the Father's will, and to become man's ransom price: but to do so would mean the greatest trial, the severest test to which loyalty to God could be exposed, and hence the one who would thus manifest his devotion and his loyalty and his faith would be worthy of having the very highest position amongst all the angelic sons of God, far above the angels and principalities and powers, and every name that is named. Moreover, it was a part of the divine purpose to make use of this opportunity to illustrate the fact that whoever seeks to exercise his own selfish ambitions (as Satan did), shall be degraded, abased, while, on the contrary, whoever shall most thoroughly humble himself, in obedience to the Heavenly Father's will and plan, shall be correspondingly exalted. God so arranged his plan as to make this feature a necessity; to the intent that in this manifestation of divine sympathy and love for the world, an opportunity might also be afforded for the manifestation of the love, humility and obedience of the Only Begotten of the Father--his well-beloved Son, whom he delighted to honor.

R2655 c1 p2-4 According to the flesh Peter and several others of the apostles of our Lord were his elders, but according to the spirit our Lord is the Elder Brother of all accepted to the family of God. According to the flesh both Timothy and Titus were young men--young in years--so that the Apostle needed to write to one of them, "Let no man despise thy youth." (1 Tim. 4:12.) And yet these young men the Apostle recognized as Elders in the Church, who, because of their spiritual development and knowledge of the divine plan, and aptness to teach, were well qualified to feed the flock of God and to be overseers in it--but not lords, not rulers, not masters, and not vested with any authority --merely privileged to call to the attention of the flock the voice of the great Shepherd and his twelve chosen assistants, and to lead them to the green pastures and still waters of divine truth.

It was after specially enjoining modesty and humility upon the ones most advanced and most capable of the flock that the Apostle, in the language of our text, urges that each one of the Lord's sheep, so far from seeking to be a leader in the sense of a ruler or lord or master, should seek to be subject one to another --to hear gladly from the humblest of the flock, and to be willing to yield his own preference, so far as his judgment and conscience would permit. A Church operating under this spirit would not be likely to be rent with contention, for each would be so anxious for the interests of the cause and so willing to condescend to the wishes of others, that even the will of the majority would not be considered satisfactory, but rather all would seek, if possible, to reach such a modified conclusion as would meet with nearly or quite unanimous approval.

The Apostle most distinctly points out that the quality essential to such proper conduct on the part of Elders and on the part of all, is humility. How beautiful is his exhortation, "Be clothed with humility." The thought would seem to be that outside of every other adornment of character, and covering all others, should be this robe of humble-mindedness, the opposite disposition to pride.

By way of clinching his argument, the Apostle reminds us of the principle upon which our Lord deals with his flock and with all;--that he disapproves of pride, and that all who are actuated by pride may be sure that the Lord, so far from receiving them, fellowshiping them, leading them, blessing them, will resist them, push them from him. The natural inference is that thus resisted of the Lord, the tendency of such as come under the influence of a spirit of pride and ambition will be not toward the truth nor toward any of the fruits and graces of the spirit, but further and further from these. "The Lord resisteth the proud, but supplies his favor to the humble." Come then, dear brethren, says the Apostle, let us cultivate this humility which the Lord so loves and appreciates and promises to reward. Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time.

5. What does it mean to be "clothed with humility"?

(1Pe 5:5) Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

R2655 c1 p3 The Apostle most distinctly points out that the quality essential to such proper conduct on the part of Elders and on the part of all, is humility. How beautiful is his exhortation, "Be clothed with humility." The thought would seem to be that outside of every other adornment of character, and covering all others, should be this robe of humble-mindedness, the opposite disposition to pride.

6. Is it possible to have too great humility?

E255:3 Thus also those who are too humble (too lacking in self-confidence) ever to accomplish anything in life, are encouraged and uplifted and made useful to themselves and to others, by the same Spirit of truth which reproves and corrects those who are over-confident, self-assertive, self-conscious, self-conceited. The former are encouraged by assurances of God's aid; the latter are restrained, moderated, brought into subjection and taught what is pleasing to God and helpful to themselves: as the Apostle says, "If any man [confidently] think that he knoweth anything [of his own wisdom], he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." (1 Cor. 8:2) But transformations of character, let us remember, come not from saying, Lord, Lord, nor from having a Bible in one's possession; nor from joining a human organization called a church; but from joining Christ, and receiving from him the Spirit of his Word, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of a sound mind--his holy Spirit and the Father's.

7. What elements of character are in direct opposition to humility?

(1Pe 5:5) Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

(Pro 3:34) Surely he scorneth the scorers: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

(Pro 6:16) These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him:

(Pro 6:17) A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

(Pro 6:18) A heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

(Pro 6:19) A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

R2204 c1 p5,6 Perfect Love is humble--"vaunteth not itself." It does not sound a trumpet before it. Its good deeds are not done to be seen of men, but would be done just the same if no one saw or knew but God only. It is neither boastful of its knowledge, nor of its graces, but in humility acknowledges that every good and perfect gift cometh from the Father; and it makes return for every mercy to him. Some one has truly said that-- "Love saves a man from making a fool of himself by consequential conduct, and by thrusting himself into positions which betray his incompetence."

Perfect Love is courteous--"doth not behave itself unseemly." Pride is the root out of which grows most of the unseemly conduct and boorishness so common to those who think themselves somebody, either intellectually or financially. Perfect Love on the contrary develops courteousness along with humility. A thoughtful man has said,-- "Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. The one secret of politeness is to love. A gentleman is one who does things gently, with love."

R2060 c2 point (7) Nothing is more dangerous to the child of God than self-conceit: it blocks the way to true progress and reformation of heart, and hinders true usefulness to others, and especially usefulness in God's service; for his Word declares, "God resisteth the proud, but showeth his favor unto the humble."

R2450 c2 p3 Feelings of emulation, strife and vain-glory seem to specially beset any of the Lord's people who are possessed of any degree of talent or ability or honorable situation in life, and especially those who are in influential places in the Church; and while these, therefore, need to be specially on guard against this besetment of the flesh, it should not be forgotten that, as some one has said, "There is a pride that looks up with envy, as well as a pride that looks down with scorn." The Lord's followers are to remember that pride in any person, in any station, respecting any matter, is highly reprehensible in God's sight and displeasing to him. "The Lord resisteth the proud, but showeth his favor to the humble." Hence, all who would abide in the Lord's love have need to be very careful along this line--to keep very humble, very lowly in conduct, and particularly in mind.--`Jas. 4:6` ; `1 Pet. 5:5`.

R3114 c2 p2 "Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity."-- Pride is an abomination to the Lord and to all those who partake of his spirit. It is a weed which, if once permitted to take root in the heart, will soon crowd out every grace. The Psalmist says, "I hate vain thoughts"; and such should be our sentiments. The grace of humility, meekness, is one of the most beautiful that can adorn the character. It takes a sober estimate of personal qualifications, is not puffed up, does not behave unbecomingly, and seeks to exercise its talents, not for pride and vain glory, but for the joy of doing good. It is modest, candid and sincere, both in consideration of its own qualifications and those of others. What comfort and pleasure are found in the society of those possessed of such a spirit!

R3231c1p1 (2) Goliath may properly represent pride, backed by a host of worldliness. One of the severe ordeals of the New Creature is the conquering of the love of the spirit of worldliness under the leadership of pride. Worldly pride challenges faith in God and obedience to him, and only those who are of good courage and full of confidence in the Lord can overcome this giant. It is necessary, too, that the victory should be made complete --that pride should be thoroughly humiliated, killed, so that it can never rise up again to destroy us. It is an individual battle, and the only proper armament against this giant is a stone from the brook, the message of the Lord, showing us what is pleasing and acceptable in his sight, and assuring us that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted and he that exalteth himself shall be abased. As the poet has expressed it:--

"Where boasting ends, true dignity begins."

8. What lessons may we learn from Jesus' example of humility?

(Phi 2:8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

E111: (2) to 112: (2) The Adversary suggested to our Lord fakir methods of introducing his mission to the people--that he leap from a pinnacle of the temple into the valley below in the sight of the multitude; so that their seeing him survive uninjured would be a proof to them of his superhuman power, which would lead them at once to accept him as the Messiah, and to cooperate with him in the work before him. But our Lord saw at once that such methods were wholly out of harmony with the divine arrangement, and even the misapplication of a scripture by the Adversary (apparently in favor of the wrong) did not swerve him from the principles of righteousness. He immediately replied to the effect that such a procedure on his part would be a tempting of divine providence, wholly unwarranted, and hence not to be considered for a moment. Where duty called or danger the Master did not hesitate, but realized the Father's ability to keep every interest; but true confidence in God does not involve a reckless exposure to danger, without divine command, and merely for a show, and in a spirit of braggadocio.

The Lord's brethren have temptations along this line also, and need to remember this lesson and example set before them by the Captain of our Salvation. We are not to rush unbidden into dangers, and esteem ourselves thus valiant soldiers of the cross. "Daredevil

deeds" may not seem out of place to the children of the devil, but they are wholly improper in the children of God. The latter have a warfare which requires still greater courage. They are called upon to perform services which the world does not applaud, nor even appreciate, but often persecutes. They are called upon to endure ignominy, and the scoffs of the world; yea, and to have the uncircumcised of heart "say all manner of evil" against them falsely for Christ's sake. In this respect the followers of the Captain of our Salvation pass along the same road, and walk in the footsteps of their Captain. And it requires greater courage to ignore the shame and ignominy of the world, in the disesteemed service of God, than to perform some great and wonderful feat, that would cause the natural man to wonder and admire.

One of the chief battles of those who walk this narrow way is against self-will; to bring their wills into fullest subjection to the Heavenly Father's will, and to keep them there; to rule their own hearts, crushing out the rising ambitions which are natural even to a perfect manhood; quenching these kindling fires, and presenting their bodies and all earthly interests living sacrifices in the service of the Lord and his cause. These were the trials in which our Captain gained his victory and its laurels, and these also are the trials of his "brethren." "Greater is he that ruleth his own spirit [bringing it into full subordination to the will of God] than he that taketh a city:" greater also is such than he who, with a false conception of faith, would leap from the pinnacle of a temple, or do some other foolhardy thing. True faith in God consists not in blind credulity and extravagant assumptions respecting his providential care: it consists, on the contrary, of a quiet confidence in all the exceeding great and precious promises which God has made, a confidence which enables the faithful to resist the various efforts of the world, the flesh and the devil, to distract his attention, and which follows carefully the lines of faith and obedience marked out for us in the divine Word.

(3) The third temptation of our Lord was to offer earthly dominion and speedy success in the establishment of his kingdom, without suffering and death, without the cross, upon condition of a compromise with the Adversary. The Adversary claimed, and his claim was not disputed, that he

E423:1 Amongst the angels who had retained their first estate and loyalty to God, no doubt there might have been many found who would gladly have undertaken the accomplishment of the Father's will, and to become man's ransom price: but to do so would mean the greatest trial, the severest test to which loyalty to God could be exposed, and hence the one who would thus manifest his devotion and his loyalty and his faith would be worthy of having the very highest position amongst all the angelic sons of God, far above the angels and principalities and powers, and every name that is named. Moreover, it was a part of the divine purpose to make use of this opportunity to illustrate the fact that whoever seeks to exercise his own selfish ambitions (as Satan did), shall be degraded, abased, while, on the contrary, whoever shall most thoroughly humble himself, in obedience to the Heavenly Father's will and plan, shall be correspondingly exalted. God so arranged his plan as to make this feature a necessity; to the intent that in this manifestation of divine sympathy and love for the world, an opportunity might also be

afforded for the manifestation of the E424 love, humility and obedience of the Only Begotten of the Father--his well-beloved Son, whom he delighted to honor.

R2201 c2 p3,4

Our Lord's words to Peter, "If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me," certainly imply that the washing was more than a mere ceremony--more also than a mere expression of humility, as we shall endeavor to show. Nevertheless, the principle should hold good in every time and in every clime: that whatever useful service can be rendered to a fellow-member of the body of Christ, however humble or menial, it should be performed, as unto the Lord.

Having finished the service the Master explained its significance. He had set them an example (1) of humility, in being willing to perform the most menial

service to those who were truly his; (2) the washing was an illustration of a great truth, namely, that altho already cleansed by the Lord--justified freely from all things, through faith in him--yet that there were certain defilements which would attach to each of them so long as they would be in the world, from contact with its evils and besetments. While the general washing (justification) would stand good for all time, yet they would need continually (figuratively) to wash one another's feet--with the "washing of water by the word." (Eph. 5:26.) This would signify that they should have a mutual watch-care over one another's welfare; to keep each other clean, holy, pure, and to assist one another in overcoming the trials and temptations and besetments of this present evil world;--arising from the three sources of temptation, "the world, the flesh and the devil."

R2228 c1 p3 to end: That we may partially discern how our Lord Jesus exemplified this spirit of humility, the Apostle briefly sums up in few words the story of his humiliation and how it led to his present exaltation. He points out to us that when our Lord Jesus was a spirit being, before he stooped to take our nature and to bear the penalty of our sin, he was in "a form of God"--a spirit form, a high and glorious condition. But instead of being moved selfishly to ambitiously grasp for higher things than those which God had conferred upon him--instead of seeking to set up a rival empire as did Satan-- he did not meditate a robbery of God to make himself his equal (Satan's course), saying, "I will ascend above the stars [the bright ones, the angelic hosts], I will be as the Most High [his peer, his equal]." Quite to the contrary of this, our Lord Jesus, "the beginning of the creation of God," was willing in harmony with the Father's plan to humble himself, to take a lower nature and to do a work which would imply not only a great deal of humiliation but also a great deal of pain and suffering. The Apostle points out how the "Only Begotten" proved his willingness and humility by complying with this arrangement; and that after he became a man he continued of the same humble spirit, willing to carry out the Divine plan to the very letter, by dying as man's ransom-price; and not only so, when it pleased the Father to require that the death should be a most ignominious one in every respect, perhaps beyond the requirements of the ransom merely, he did not draw back, but said, "Thy will not mine be done," and stooped even to the ignominious "death of the cross."

Here, as the Apostle points out, we have the most wonderful demonstration of humility, meekness and obedience to God that ever was manifested or that could be conceived of. And this is the pattern the Apostle points out that we should seek to copy. "Let this same [humble] mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

It was on account of this humility, which enabled him to render perfect obedience, that the Heavenly Father has so highly honored our dear Redeemer as to raise him from the dead to the Divine nature, to a station far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named. That this is his argument is shown (verse 9) by the word "wherefore;" i.e., on this account, on account of this humility just described, God hath highly exalted him.

Not only did our Lord's beautiful and perfect humility and obedience demonstrate that he was loyal to the core to the Heavenly Father, but it also demonstrated that in him the Father's spirit, Love, dwelt richly, for he shared the Father's love for the race he redeemed. On this account also he is found worthy to be the divine agent in the blessing of all the families of the earth, as per the terms of the divine covenant made with father Abraham. Thus he has become the head of the "Seed of Abraham" which is to bless the race redeemed; and hence it will be to him that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, when Jehovah's "due time" shall come for the pouring out of divine blessings upon the redeemed world--that all may come to a knowledge of the truth and, if they will, into full harmony with God, and to eternal life.

The Apostle not only holds up the Lord Jesus as the great example of a proper humility, self-abnegation and obedience to God in the interest of others, but he would also hold up before us the reward, the high exaltation of our Lord by the Father, the result or reward of his obedience, that we also might be encouraged, and realize that, if faithful in following the footsteps of our Redeemer and sacrificing the advantages of the present to serve the Lord and his cause, then, in due time, we also may expect to be glorified with him and to share his name and throne and work, as members of his anointed body, his Church, his joint-heir.

In the succeeding verses (12-16) the Apostle gives a most beautiful tribute to the Church at Philippi, while urging them to continue on and to make more and more progress in the race-course in which they had already started, working out in themselves through humility and obedience the character, the disposition of Christ, with fear and trembling, and thus working out each his own share in the great salvation to glory, honor and immortality which God hath promised.

We cannot work out our own justification; but being justified by the blood of Christ, and being called with the heavenly calling, we can make our calling and election sure, we can work out our own share in the great salvation to which we have been called in Christ, by giving heed to the instructions of the Lord; by following the pattern which he has set for us. Not that we will attain perfection in the flesh, but merely perfection of will, of intention, of heart; and keeping the body under to the extent of our ability, its weaknesses and imperfections will be reckoned as covered by the merit of our Lord, the Holy One.

It is encouraging also for us to know that this warfare is not merely one of our own, against weakness and sin; but that God is for us, has called us, and is helping us. He already works in us, by his Word of promise, and has led us thus far in the willing and the doing of his will, his good pleasure: and he will continue thus to lead and to help us and to work in us by his Word of truth, if we will continue to give heed to his counsel. "Sanctify them through thy truth --thy Word is truth." The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation" to every one that so accepts it; and no greater stimulus to true godliness can be found than the "exceeding great and precious promises given unto us; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature."--`2 Pet. 1:4`.

Moreover, in following in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus, running the race for the great prize set before us in the Gospel, we are not to murmur by the way, finding fault with its difficulties and narrowness; nor are we to dispute respecting it, nor to seek to have any other way than that which divine providence marks out before us, realizing that the Lord knows exactly what experiences are necessary to our development in the school of Christ, and realizing also that, if obedience were possible while our mouths are full of complaints and dissatisfaction with the Lord and our lot which he has permitted, it would indicate that we were at least out of sympathy with the spirit of his arrangement; and such an obedience, if it were possible (but it would not be possible), would not meet the divine approval, nor gain us the prize. Hence, as the Apostle exhorts, we should "Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke,...holding forth the Word of life in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the World."

R2450 c1 p1,3 After accomplishing the work of washing the feet of all, our Lord resumed his outer garment and reclined again at the supper (this was the Passover Supper--the Memorial Supper of bread and wine being instituted afterward). Our Lord now improved his opportunity and explained to them the meaning of what he had done. He pointed out to them that this menial service did not signify that he was not the Lord and Master, but did signify that as Lord and Master he was not unwilling to serve the lesser members of Jehovah's family, and to minister to their comfort, even in the most menial service; and that they should not have been unwilling, but glad, to have rendered such service one to another.

Those who have interpreted this to signify a ceremony similar to the symbolical ceremony of the Memorial Supper and the symbolical ceremony of Baptism, are, we think, in error. There seems to be nothing symbolical in it. It is merely an illustration of the principle of humility which is to attach to every affair of life. If any of the Lord's people need washing, or need any other assistance of a menial character, their brethren should gladly and joyfully serve them; and whoever possesses the spirit of the Lord will surely render such service; but to insist, as some do, that each of the Lord's people should first wash his own feet and have them clean, and then that each should wash one another's feet ceremoniously, is contrary to his example which he instructs us to follow. The example was a service, and not an inconvenience and ceremony.

R3495 c2 last p to R3496 A Samaritan woman came to the well for water while Jesus was resting there, and the account of our Lord's interview with her constitutes one of the most striking presentations of divine truth found in the Gospels. It is remarkable that on so many occasions our Lord said remarkable things to not very remarkable people under not very remarkable circumstances. There is encouragement in this for all of his followers: indeed we find that the Lord's principal communications all through this Gospel age have been with the humble-- "not many wise, not many great, not many learned hath God chosen, but the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the Kingdom." As then, by the grace of God, we have heard the voice divine speaking peace through Jesus Christ, let us rejoice, yet let us feel humble too, remembering that he is taking of the ignoble things of the world with a view to making of these things the noble, that will reflect his glory and show forth his praise through all eternity as marks of his grace.

9. Was humility characteristic of the apostles?

(Eph 3:8) Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

R1885 c1 p5 First. The Apostle made a humble, sober estimate of his spiritual standing and strength. He did not feel puffed up at being a chosen vessel of the Lord to bear his name before the Gentiles. He did not consider himself the Great Apostle, nor vaunt himself in any way. And so far was he from boasting of his spiritual attainments, that he humbly reminded the church of the possibility of himself being a castaway, even after he had preached to others, unless he continued to stand fast in his integrity and to grow in grace. (1 Cor. 9:27.) And while he held up before them Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God, and the model for their imitation, he humbly declared that he, with them, was striving to follow the pattern, Christ, while trusting alone in the merit of his sacrifice to make up his own shortcomings. Thus he was relieved of that greatest hindrance to spiritual development--self-satisfaction; for if any man considers that he has attained a satisfactory spiritual state, from that very moment he may date the beginning of his spiritual decline. No present attainments can be satisfactory to a sincere follower of Christ who studiously endeavors to copy the perfect pattern. It is only when we turn our eyes away from Christ that self-complacency can be exercised; for, in full view of the pattern, our shortcomings are ever manifest. And if in pride of heart we do lose sight of them ourselves, they only become the more manifest to others. Only in the realization of a continual growth into the likeness of Christ should the Christian find satisfaction. Like the Apostle, let him consider, not that he has already attained, neither that he is already perfect, but that he is still in the race and making progress towards the goal. And no doubt it was the considering of himself as not having attained perfection, and as still subject to frailty, that led the Apostle to seek the Lord's grace, that kept him always in a humble attitude of mind and that gave him compassion for the weaknesses and failings of others. It is those who become high-minded and self-sufficient that strain to pull out the mote from their brother's eye and forget the beam in their own.

R2826 c1 p3-5 Note the simplicity of the Apostle's introduction to this most wonderful book. He did not write the title of the book as it appears in our Bibles--"The Revelation of St. John the Divine"--that is to say, the Revelation of St. John, Doctor of Divinity, Doctor of Theology. On the contrary, John claims no credit for the revelation; it was not his, but, as he distinctly explains, it was from our Lord Jesus Christ,--and to him from God the Father. Nor was it even to John in any special sense, but, as he again declares, unto God's "servants," sent by his "servant John." This simplicity, common to all the apostles, commends them to us as men of humble minds,--the very kind we should expect our Lord to use as special servants and messengers to his people. The apostolic simplicity is in striking contrast with the pomposity of the majority of those who claim to be their pupils and fellow servants, and who delight in the titles of "Reverend," "Right Reverend," "Very Reverend," "His Holiness," "Doctor of Divinity," etc. And in proportion as the spirit of the world is quenched by the spirit of Christ--and in proportion as the Lord's people are zealous in seeking and finding "the old paths" (Jer. 6:16`), in that same proportion do these human titles which seem so much to the world and to Babylon come to appear vain, inappropriate, deceitful.

Instead of adding loud and boastful titles to his name, as Reverend, Bishop, Overseer of all the Churches in Asia Minor, we find John introducing himself as "Your Brother," as the companion of all saints in tribulation and in the Kingdom, and in the patient endurance of Jesus Christ. He was sharer with Christ, as a member of his body in his afflictions, in his endurance, and prospectively a joint-heir in his Kingdom, and in all this he was the brother of all fellow-disciples, sharers of the same sufferings, and prospectively of the same glory. It is generally understood that John had already been severely persecuted, and that at the time of this vision he was in banishment on the little island in the Mediterranean Sea called Patmos--a penal island where convicts were worked in the quarrying of marble, etc. Yet John himself, with remarkable modesty, passes over not only his previous service for the truth, which had brought him his persecution, but also lightly passes over the persecution itself, merely noting that he was in the island of Patmos because of his fidelity to the word of God and the testimony that Jesus was the Christ.

This simplicity, this absence of boastfulness so noticeable in the writings of all the apostles, commends them and their words to our attention, and marks them as being in the ministry not for the gratification of vanity, or seeking earthly rewards of any kind; but simply as the servants of God, who delighted to do his will, and to tell the good tidings, to the utter ignoring of themselves, excepting in so far as mention of themselves and their affairs might be necessary and helpful to the Church. All of the Lord's followers do well to note this characteristic of the Master, and of those whom he specially chose to be his followers and our exemplars. In proportion as we attain to the Lord's spirit it will similarly manifest itself in our sentiments and conduct.

F210:2 to 212:1 The other disciples not thus chosen to apostleship were also beloved of the Lord, and no doubt they were in full sympathy with his appointment of the twelve, recognizing it as in the interest of the work in general. Upon what bases the Lord made his choice is not stated; but we have the record of his own prayer to the effect that, "Thine

they were and thou gavest them me"; and again, "Of those whom thou hast given me, I have lost none save the son of perdition" --Judas. In what sense or to what degree the Father made choice of the twelve matters nothing to us. No doubt one qualification which they possessed was humility; and, undoubtedly, their lowly vocations and previous experiences in life had been such as tended to make them not only humble men, but to lead additionally to strength of character, determination, perseverance, etc., to a degree which other pursuits might not have done to the same extent. We are informed that the selection of the twelve at the time it took place, instead of waiting until Pentecost (the date of the begetting of the Church), was, in large measure, for the purpose of permitting these twelve to be specially with the Lord, to behold his works, to hear his message, that thus they might in due time be witnesses to declare to us and to all of God's people at first hand the wonderful works of God, and the wonderful words of life manifested through Jesus. Luke 24:44-48; Acts 10:39-42

The Apostolic Commission - There is not the slightest suggestion anywhere, to the apostles or concerning them, that they were to be lords over God's heritage; that they were to consider themselves as different from other believers, exempt from the operations of divine law, or specially favored or secure as respects their everlasting inheritance. They were continually to remember that "all ye are brethren," and that "one is your Master, even Christ." They were always to remember that it was necessary for them to make their calling and election sure; and that unless they obeyed the Law of Love and were humble, as little children, they should in no wise "enter into the Kingdom." They were given no official titles nor any instruction respecting special garb or peculiar demeanor, but merely that they should in all these things be ensamples to the flock; that others seeing their good works should glorify the Father; that others walking in their footsteps should thus be following in the footsteps of the leader also, and ultimately attain to the same glory, honor, immortality--partakers of the same divine nature, members of the same New Creation.

Their commission was one of service--they were to serve one another, to serve the Lord and to lay down their lives for the brethren. These services were to be rendered specially in connection with the promulgation of the Gospel. They were partakers of the pre-anointing that had already come upon their Master--the same anointing which pertains to all of the New Creation, all of the Royal Priesthood, and is described by the prophet, saying: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek,...to bind up the broken-hearted," etc. Isa. 61:1,2; Luke 4:17-21; Matt. 10:5-8; Mark 3:14,15; Luke 10:1-17

10. Why is humility a chief essential in an Elder?

(1Ti 3:6) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

F246:2 There is no suggestion in the Scriptures that any person disqualified for the work to be done should be considered the Lord's appointee to that position for which he lacks special adaptation; but rather it is as a duty that in the body of Christ each member should

serve the others according to his talents--according to his abilities--and that each should be modest enough, humble enough, "not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly," according to the actual value of the talents the Lord has bestowed upon him. Neither should the Church recognize those of their number desiring to be greatest on that account. On the contrary, they should take cognizance of humility as being one of the essential qualifications to eldership or to service in any department. If, therefore, two brethren seem to have equal talent, but one is ambitious and forward and the other humble and backward, the Spirit of the Lord, which is the spirit of wisdom and of a sound mind, would teach the Lord's people to appreciate the humbler brother as the one whom the Lord would specially favor and wish them to put into the more prominent place in the service.

F251:2 We read, "Let the elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine." (1 Tim. 5:17,18) On the strength of these words the nominal church has built up a class of Ruling Elders; and has claimed for all elders a ruling or authoritative, if not a dictatorial, position amongst the brethren. Such a definition of "ruling" is contrary to all the presentations of the Scriptures on the subject. Timothy, occupying the position of a general overseer, or Elder, was instructed by the Apostle, saying, "Rebuke not an Elder, but exhort him as a brother," etc. "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle toward all men." Nothing here, certainly, would sanction an autocratic ruling, or dictatorial bearing--meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love, must be prominent qualifications of those recognized as elders. They must in every sense of the word be ensamples to the flock. If, therefore, they should be dictatorial, the example to the flock would be that all should be dictatorial; but if they should be meek, long-suffering, patient, gentle and loving, then the illustration to all would be in accordance therewith. A more literal rendering of the passage under consideration shows it to mean that honor should be given to the elders in proportion as they manifest faithfulness to the responsibilities of the service they have accepted. We might, therefore, render the passage thus: Let the prominent elders be accounted worthy of double honor, especially those bending down through hard work in preaching and teaching.

F278:4 Priest-craft, and not the teachings of our Lord and his twelve apostles, is responsible for the division of the saints into two classes, called "clergy" and "laity." It is the spirit of priest-craft and antichrist that still seeks to lord it over God's heritage in every way possible--proportionately to the density of the ignorance prevailing in any congregation. The Lord and the Apostle recognize not the elders, but the Church (Ecclesia) as the body of Christ; and whatever dignity or honor attaches to faithful elders, as servants of the Lord and the Church, is not merely their recognition of themselves nor their recognition by other elders. The congregation choosing must know them, must recognize their Christian graces and abilities in the light of God's Word, else they can grant them no such standing or honor. No Elder, therefore, has any authority by self-appointment. Indeed, the disposition to ignore the Church, the body of Christ, and to make himself and his judgment superior to the whole, is first-class evidence that such a brother is not in the proper attitude to be recognized as an Elder--humility, and a

recognition of the oneness of the Ecclesia as the Lord's body, being prime essentials for such a service

F296:1,2 The Lord's rule on this subject is clearly set forth to be-- "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted; and he that exalteth himself shall be abased." (Luke 14:11) The Church is to follow this rule, this mind of the Spirit, in all matters in which she shall seek to know and obey her Lord. The Lord's method is to advance only him whose zeal and faithfulness and perseverance in well-doing have shown themselves in little things. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." (Luke 16:10) "Thou hast been faithful over a few things: I will make thee ruler over many things." (Matt. 25:21,23) There is always plenty of room at the bottom of the ladder of honor. Whosoever wills, need not for long be without opportunities for serving the Lord, the Truth and the brethren in humble ways which the proud-spirited will disdain and neglect, looking for service more honorable in the sight of men. The faithful will rejoice in any service, and to them the Lord will open wider and yet wider doors of opportunity. Thus his will, exemplifying the wisdom from above, is to be carefully followed by every member of the New Creation--especially in his vote, in his stretching forth of his hand as a member of the body of Christ to express the will of the Head.

A self-seeking brother should be passed by, however capable; and a less capable, but humble, brother should be chosen for Elder. So gentle a reproof should be beneficial to all--even though not one word be uttered respecting the reasons governing. And in the case of a capable Elder giving evidence of a dictatorial spirit, or inclining to regard himself as above the Church and of a separate class, or implying a divine right to teach not coming through the Ecclesia (Church), it would be a kindness as well as a duty to such an one to drop him to some less prominent part of the service or from all special services for a time, until he shall take this gentle reproof and recover himself from the snare of the Adversary.

R3278 c1 p3 The humility of the king (Solomon) is beautifully indicated by his declaration, "I am but a little child and know not how to order my course in life, my outgoings and incomings," and yet he was in the midst of the Lord's people, the center or head of the nation--though he felt himself incapable of the proper management of these high and responsible duties. He did not say "my people," but "thy people which thou hast chosen." We feel like suggesting a lesson here to some of the elders of the Lord's flock, who, after the manner of the Babylonians, are inclined to speak of the congregations to whom they minister, as "my people," "my flock," "my church." They probably do not realize how inappropriate are such expressions; that if natural Israel was the Lord's people, whom he had chosen, how much more the antitypical Israel should be thought of and spoken of as the Lord's people, the Lord's flock. The very fact that any one would speak of the congregation of the Lord's people as his own indicates a dangerous condition of mind and a tendency to be heady, high-minded, injurious, detrimental to the interests of spiritual Zion. Those who have had such a tendency of mind should correct themselves with fasting and prayer, peradventure their wrongdoing may be forgiven of the Lord and they may be kept from stumbling into further self-assurance. And the Lord's flock everywhere should be quick to resent any such human ownership or control. A failure to

quickly discern and properly resent such self-assurance on the part of leaders is an indication that the flocks to whom they minister are not fully appreciating and enjoying the liberty with which Christ is pleased to make free all who are truly his sheep and who acknowledge him as their chief Shepherd.

11. Why should husbands cultivate and exercise humility?

(Eph 5:25) Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

F497:1 Headship in the family, thus exercised in promoting the welfare of those under its care in guiding, counseling, etc., as well as in providing things needful for them, will be far from tyranny. Nor will the spirit of love in such a husband ignore the likes and dislikes of his wife and her properly given advice. He will recognize the fact that while the perfect Adam possessed all the qualities of manhood, the separation of Eve implied the separation of some of these qualities: he will recognize, too, that although the strength of mind and of body by divine arrangement abides with, and constitutes man the head of the family, nevertheless there are qualities of character specially possessed by the woman. The humility which belongs to the spirit of love will hinder him from being blind to the estimable qualities which the Creator apportions to the female, and he will recognize that his own qualities of heart and head need to be supplemented by the other qualities which by nature specially reside in the woman. He will, therefore, in proportion as he has "the spirit of a sound mind," desire the help of his wife, her cooperation, her views, her sympathy, her love, and will appreciate them highly.

12. How can wives exercise humility?

(Eph 5:22) Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

(Eph 5:23) For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body.

(Eph 5:24) Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

F500:2 The wife in such a case should say to herself: I have neglected the Lord's divine regulation and am mismated in that I cannot reverence my husband, but instinctively realize that I am his superior in natural endowment. I must make the best of the matter. I must do my part faithfully; and in proportion as I find my husband deficient, I will seek to use tact and pray for wisdom from on high to know how to help him, to lift him up, to make of him a noble man, and to enlarge his capacity as much as possible, that I may thus increase my love and reverence for him. Nothing short of this is my duty under my marriage covenant--it shall be faithfully done as unto the Lord. As for his weaknesses and poor judgment, not only will I hide these from outsiders, but so far as possible I will hide them from myself; and in mentioning them to my husband I will seek to avoid any reference to or display of my superior abilities. I will expect that in due time his own failures will commend to him my better judgment, which, however, I will not press upon him nor insist upon, but simply state in a kindly manner appropriate to a helpmate. My

expectation will be that ere long he will seek my counsel and give it more and more weight in all his affairs of life, and thus day by day and year by year we may grow up together in harmony with the divine pattern of the relationship between Christ and the Church. I will be blessed as the wife in the cultivation of humility and submission to the divine arrangement: my husband will be blessed by the uplifting influences which I will be enabled to bring to him, and thus the mismating which at first seemed so disadvantageous, may, by the Lord's grace--following the instructions of his Word--result in bringing us both nearer to the divine standard as set forth by the Apostle.

13. Why is it important that we teach our children meekness and humility?

(Zep 2:3) Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger.

F555:1 There is just one promise which seems to hold during that time of trouble, and it appears to be a general one, applicable to all who are meek and lovers of righteousness. This class should include all mature children of the consecrated ones, who have been rightly taught in the precepts of the Lord, rightly instructed out of his Word. The promise reads, "Seek meekness, seek righteousness; it may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Zeph. 2:3

R1963 c2 p2-5 The tendency of all as the storm approaches will be to seek cover, protection, under the great mountains (kingdoms) and in the rocks of society (beneficial orders) (Rev. 6:15-17); and many will flee from the country to the cities. The "overcomers" who will "escape all these things coming upon the world" (Luke 21:36) will indeed flee to the mountain, the Kingdom of the Lord, and be safe, but none others can attain to it. "Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord? who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart," etc.--Psa. 24:3-6.

But, seeing that all the efforts of men to hide themselves "from the wrath of the Lamb" when the great day of his wrath shall have come will be in vain, the saints would best make no such effort to hide their children, knowing that it would be folly. The trouble comes to overthrow sin and every false system and thing; and the lessons it brings will prove beneficial to mankind in general, breaking their idols and purging their hearts. If our children and friends need the purging, we should not wish to have them escape it. If they do not need it, we may rest assured that the Lord will permit the glorified members of his body, his Church, to care for their children and friends during that trouble and to succor them from all that would not be to their benefit. What more could we ask than that we should be their ministering guardians, far more able to help them than if with them in the flesh?

The best provision which parents can make for their children is to give them, by precept and example, faithful instruction in righteousness. Remember that "the fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Begin therefore to instruct them in the plan of salvation, the plan of the ages. As they come to a true appreciation of God's wisdom,

justice and love, it will give them broader and truer views of justice and love, in respect to their own conduct and toward their fellow creatures. Teach them meekness and humility, and the folly of pride and arrogance. Teach them generosity of thought, and how to be happy with little, reminding them frequently that godliness with contentment is true riches. Remind them of the Lord's words, "seek meekness, seek righteousness. It may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. 2:3.) The rich in this world's uncertain riches, and the proud, whether poor or rich, and all that do wickedly, will be special sufferers.--Compare Mal. 4:1; James 5:1-6.

During the time of trouble, for the first time in the world's history, there will be a premium on meekness, patience, love, gentleness, goodness. (However, before that stage of the trouble comes, before Babylon falls, there will be a different trouble upon a "great company" of those not overcomers, who will be severely buffeted by Babylon which for a time will have an increase of power. The foregoing remarks do not apply to this class which will come through great tribulation. Since the service of the poor and afflicted in mind and body is a great privilege, we should endeavor so to train our children that, when the trouble comes, they will be both able and willing to counsel others to righteousness and the avoidance of carnal warfare, rather than selfishly think merely of their own safety. Children should be encouraged to such stability of character, in combination with faith in God, that they will, under any stress, act up to a high conception of nobility.)

R2021 c1 p1,2 "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth which have wrought his ordinances; seek righteousness, seek meekness: perhaps ye will be protected in the day of Jehovah's anger." (Zeph. 2:3.) This is the only safe course. Those who now seek according to this direction may yet make their calling and election sure, and be among the "overcomers" who shall "escape" the things coming upon the world. Those who do not "escape," but find themselves in the great trouble, can follow no better advice;--they may be hid or protected from at least some measure of the trouble.

Hence, instead of seeking a place of safety (which cannot be found) for ourselves and our children, let us seek to bring ourselves and them into the above described condition of safety, by hearty obedience to the reasonable service set before us.

14. What Scriptural promises are given to the meek and humble?

15. What notable illustrations and examples of meekness and humility do we find in the Bible?

(Mat 11:28) Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

(Mat 11:29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

(Mat 11:30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

(Num 12:3) (Now the man Moses *was* very meek, above all the men which *were* upon the face of the earth.)

(Mat 8:8) The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.

(Joh 13:1) Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

(Joh 13:2) And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him;

(Joh 13:3) Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

(Joh 13:4) He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

(Joh 13:5) After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

(Joh 13:6) Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

(Joh 13:7) Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

(Joh 13:8) Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

(Joh 13:9) Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head.

(Joh 13:10) Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

(Joh 13:11) For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

(Joh 13:12) So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

(Joh 13:13) Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am.

(Joh 13:14) If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

(Joh 13:15) For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

(Joh 13:16) Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

(Joh 13:17) If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

R2903 c2 p2,3 If as a child Moses was remarkable and attractive, so that Stephen calls him "exceeding fair" or margin "fair to God" (Acts 7:20), signifying refined, elegant; and if it be true, as Josephus says, that those who met him as he was carried along the streets forgot their business, and stood still to gaze at him, we may well suppose that his early training by pious parents, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and his subsequent instruction "in all the learning of the Egyptians," as the adopted son of the monarch-- the result must have been a very noble, refined and handsome man. And yet, strange to say, that with all these accomplishments by nature and education, he is described to us as having been "the meekest man in all the earth." Who can doubt that

this very quality of meekness was largely inculcated by the poverty of his parents, and their subjection to bondage, and the humble sentiments inspired by their consecration of Moses to the Lord from the time of his begetting? Certain it is that very rarely are those who are the natural children of princes and rulers humble-minded. Yet this meekness was another of the qualities essential to Moses as the leader of God's people. As it was, we find that his forty years' dealing with the Israelites in the wilderness, as their leader and the mediator of their covenant with God, so far overcame the meekness of Moses that he was hindered from entering the promised land, because he took to himself, instead of ascribing to God, some of the credit of bringing water out of the rock, saying, "Ye rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?"--smiting the rock.

Under all circumstances we must think it very remarkable that a man so really great, and occupying so exalted a position for such a length of time, should have overcome the haughty "spirit of princes" in which he was reared, and have maintained his meekness with so slight an exception down to the very close of his career. We may well ask ourselves what would have been the result had God chosen for the leader of Israel a man who was naturally haughty and proud, or any other man than one who was very meek indeed. No other than a meek character could possibly have stood such a strain as Moses so grandly and so faithfully endured. There is a lesson for the Lord's people here. The Mediator of the New Covenant, Jesus, was also meek and lowly of heart, and those whom God is now calling from the world to be joint-heirs with Jesus, members of his body--as the great anti-type of Moses, to lead mankind out of the bondage of sin and Satan--these all must have likeness to their Lord and Head in this quality of meekness, if they would attain to his general character in other respects. We do well to remember continually the Apostle's injunction, that we "Humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt us in due time"--so that we may be meet [fit] for the inheritance, the Kingdom.

16 Give suggestions as to the best methods for acquiring and cultivating these important graces.

R1962 top of page The Lord gives the key to this rest in the words-- "and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart." Truly, in a meek and quiet spirit is the secret of rest. To be meek is to cultivate the graces of patience; of loving submission to the will of God; of abiding confidence in his love and care and in the wisdom of his guiding counsel and overruling providences; and to perseveringly pursue this course through evil and through good report, or through favorable or unfavorable circumstances.

Let the beloved children of God seek more and more to copy Christ's meek and quiet spirit, accepting the providences of God and obeying his precepts and leading as he did, armed with the strength which he alone can supply, and will, to all those who take his yoke upon them, and learn of him.

(a) By prayer – Psa. 19:12-14

(Psa 19:12) Who can understand *his* errors? cleanse thou me from secret *faults*.

(Psa 19:13) Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins*; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

(Psa 19:14) Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

(b) By studying the divine wisdom, knowledge and power, as manifested in the Word and in Nature. Psa 8:3,4; I Cor. 4:7

(Psa 8:3) When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

(Psa 8:4) What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

(1Co 4:7) For who maketh thee to differ *from another*? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it*?

(c) By comparing ourselves with our Perfect Pattern, the Lord Jesus—Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18

(Rom 8:29) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

(2Co 3:18) But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord.

17. What additional thoughts can be found by consulting the *Topical Indexes* of the “*New Bible*” and “*Heavenly Manna*”?