

A Berean Study on BROTHERLY KINDNESS (BROTHERLY LOVE)

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1. What is the "new commandment" given by Christ to his disciples?

John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

John 15:10,12,17 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. [vs. 12] This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. [vs. 17] These things I command you, that ye love one another.

1 John 4:21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

R2649 [col. 1 ¶1, 2]:

This reminds us of our dear Redeemer, in whom verily the love of the Father was perfected, and who is represented by the Prophet as saying, "I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psalm 40:8.) And our Lord marked out the same spirit, as being essential to those who would be his disciples, saying, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." (John 15:10.) There is no suggestion in any of these or in other Scriptures that mere outward formalistic obedience and piety count anything with the Lord. The Lord "seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth"--such as have the spirit of righteousness, love for righteousness, love for truth, love for all the qualities of the divine character, and a desire to conform thereto in thought, word and deed.

Nor are we to make the mistake that some have made, of supposing that the commandments referred to by our Lord are the Ten Commandments upon which hung the covenant which God made with the Jews. We are not Jews, and hence have nothing whatever to do with their covenant, given through Moses, its mediator, at Sinai, nor with the Law upon which it was based. We are Christians, and have to do with a better covenant, sealed with the precious blood of Christ our Mediator, and based upon a still higher law than the Decalogue --a law which instead of saying, "Thou shalt not" do this, "Thou shalt not" do that, is positive, and declares what we shall do, saying, "**Thou shalt love** the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength; and **thou shalt love** thy neighbor as thyself." This is a higher law, of which our Lawgiver, Jesus, said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love," and of which the Apostle said, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The Apostle John says, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God; he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love."--1 John 4:8,16.

1 John 3:11,23 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. [vs. 23] And this is his commandment, That we should

believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

John 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

R2620 [col. 2 ¶5]:

One lesson connected with this subject which should specially commend itself to any of the Lord's people who are masters or employers is the lesson of kindness for servants. If a Gentile would be so careful for the interests of his servant, and thus bestir and trouble himself much to secure his release from pain, much more should every true Christian not only feel a kindliness for those who are of the household of faith, but also be disposed to do good unto all men as they may have opportunity. We may be sure that all such evidences of interest in fellow-creatures, all such evidences of the spirit of love and kindness, are pleasing in the Lord's sight; and not only so, but that every time we exercise ourselves along such lines we deepen them and strengthen, confirm and establish character along the lines of love and mercy. This is one of the ways in which we are to develop ourselves more and more as copies of God's dear Son.--Rom. 8:29.

2. What is brotherly love?

R3034 [col. 1 ¶1, 2]:

As sons of the Highest, who are seeking to be like unto our Father in heaven, and like unto the copy which he has set before us in his dear Son, our Lord, we are to have for the world in general that broad sympathetic pity and mercy-love which would delight in doing any and everything possible to be done for their uplifting, in accord with the divine program, in the divine time and order. Like our Father and our Elder Brother, we are to love the brethren "with a pure heart, **fervently**"-- with sincerity. This love for the brethren is nothing like the love for the world. It is not the pity-love, nor mere generosity. It is far more; it is brotherly love. All of the children of God are brethren, as new creatures; all these brethren have hopes, ambitions, interests and promises linked together in the Lord Jesus and in the heavenly Kingdom in which they hope to share. All these brethren are joint-heirs, fellow-heirs one with the other and with the Lord. They are partners; their interests are mutual and co-ordinating.

Additionally, they have a special mutual sympathy of compassion; for while, as new creatures, they are rich in divine favor and promises, they all have serious weaknesses, according to the flesh-- draw-backs; altho the Lord is not reckoning with them according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, the intention, the heart desires, nevertheless, they each and all have besetments arising from these weaknesses and imperfections of the earthly tabernacle, which cause them to "groan," and to sympathize one with the other in their groanings. As the Apostle says, "We which have the first-fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our **body**"--the complete Church. Thus the sons of God have a further mutual sympathy and love and care for each other, an interest in each other, helpfulness toward each other, which is entirely beyond and above and outside of any feelings which could possibly be appreciated by the world or exercised toward it;--because the world has no such conflict between the old nature and the new; no such covenant of sacrifice; no such acceptance in the Beloved; no such union of heart and purpose and aim and spirit.

Oh, yes! the exhortation to love as brethren, fervently, is one which appeals to us specially.

R2330 [col. 1 ¶3, 4]:

And love of the brethren does not mean merely love for a faction, or clique, or for some of the brethren who have natural qualities which we admire. It means love for all who have accepted the New Covenant and are seeking to walk by the Golden Rule of love. It means that if some have peculiarities of natural development and disposition, which are discordant to our ideas and sentiments, nevertheless, we will love and cherish them, and cheerfully serve them, because they are trusting in the Lord, and have been accepted of him, and have adopted the law of the New Covenant, the royal law of liberty and life, as their standard. We thenceforth know them not after the flesh, with its peculiarities and knots and twists: but after the new nature, as "new creatures." It means also that each of us in proportion as we discover our own natural crooks and twists, which are contrary to the law of love, will seek to get rid of these imperfections of the flesh as rapidly as possible, and to make them as little obtrusive and offensive to others as possible.

From this standpoint love will not be forever noting the defects of the various members of the body of Christ, nor holding them up to ridicule and scorn of others; but each will be, so far as possible, fully as anxious to cover the defects of others as to cover his own defects; and to sympathize with others in their conflicts with their besetments, as he sympathizes with himself, and desires that the Lord shall sympathize with him in his own conflict with his own imperfections. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ [the disposition of Christ, love] he is none of his." --Rom. 8:9.

3. Who are our "brethren"?

Matthew 12:50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

R2235 [col. 1 ¶5-7]:

The Apostle follows the example of our Lord Jesus in symbolizing truth and righteousness as Light, and sin and every evil way as so much of opposing Darkness. God himself thus considered would be the very perfection of light,--"in him is no darkness," no sin, no imperfection. With this thought before the mind, the Apostle points out that any growth of fellowship with God which we may aspire to, must be along the lines of truth, goodness, purity; and he points out that it would be sin for us to say to others or to imagine in our own hearts that we are walking with God and having fellowship with him, if our course of life is a dark, a sinful one. Such are merely deceiving themselves and others: they are not deceiving God, and they are not getting the blessings of those who do "walk in the light."

Moreover, to the extent that we walk in the light and in harmony and fellowship with God, we will find ourselves in fellowship with all others who are like-minded. So then, if we do not "love the brethren, whom we have seen," so as to be able to have fellowship and spiritual pleasure with them, that would be an indication that we are not wholly in harmony and fellowship with God. But who are the "brethren?" Our Lord tells us that not all who profess his name are true brethren; he says, "Not everyone that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven [be recognized as his brethren and joint-heirs], but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." We thus see that it is by our deeds and not merely by our professions that we are accepted of the Lord who again says, "Who are my

brethren?...Verily, I say unto you he that doeth the will of my Father the same is my brother."--Matt. 7:21; 12:50.

So then, we are not to anticipate "fellowship" with all who name the name of Christ as a proof of fellowship with the Father, and that we are in the light: we are merely to anticipate this true fellowship with those who are earnestly seeking to do the Father's will, to serve his cause and exemplify the instructions of his Word, in their deeds as well as in their professions. Between all such there must be, whether hidden or open, a **bond of fellowship** and union--that bond is the one faith and one baptism into the one Lord.

R2647 [col. 1 ¶5, 6]:

Our standard of orthodoxy as applied not to sects but to Christians, personally, recognizes as **correct** and **sound** in doctrine all who acknowledge the following points. (1) That he is by nature a member of the fallen, condemned race and hence a child of wrath even as others, and justly under the divine sentence of condemnation. (2) That Christ died for the ungodly, for Adam and all his condemned race; and hence God can now be just in justifying him and all who believe in Jesus. (3) That his justification is the basis of his call to full consecration in self-sacrifice, and that he has thus devoted his all to the Lord, in exchange for the share in the Millennial Kingdom which the Lord has promised to all such "overcomers." -- Rev. 2:26; 3:12,21.

All the above described class are properly recognized as "orthodox" and "brethren," however they may differ on minor details in the correct knowledge of which they may be expected to grow under the Lord's guidance;--building one another up in [the details of] their most holy faith, as revealed in the Word of the Lord, which, as they come more and more to understand it, will make them wiser and wiser respecting the good and acceptable and perfect will of God,--unto salvation,--until salvation actual, the "crown of life," with glory, honor and immortality, shall be the grand outcome of the finished race.

R3219 [col. 1 ¶6, 7]:

Question.--What should be our attitude toward professing Christians of the various denominations who give evidence of but slight knowledge of the truth, and but slight appreciation of the ransom? Should we consider them brethren in Christ? and should we fellowship them as such? or should we treat them as heathen men and publicans?

Answer.--All who profess love to the Lord Jesus Christ and have faith in him as their Savior--even though their knowledge of his redemptive work be but limited and vague--and whose general conduct is noted as indicating their desire to walk after the spirit and not after the flesh, should be considered and treated as brethren. But when we use the word "brother" we are to remember that amongst believers there are two classes of brethren: (1) Those who have merely pledged themselves to the Lord for a reformation of life, and who are to some extent trusting in the Savior; and (2) those who have gone on and who have consecrated their lives even unto death, and have been begotten as new creatures by the holy spirit. These are brethren of a different order; the first were typified in the Levites, the last in the priests. Both are our brethren, and both should be treated courteously, kindly, helpfully; but it would be impossible to fellowship the first class in the same manner or degree that we would fellowship the second class. In considering the Church, only the latter should be counted, because the Church is the body of Christ, the Royal Priesthood. Only the latter, therefore, should be expected to participate in the Memorials of the Lord's

death, and the pledge of consecration to be dead with him. It is to the first of these classes of brethren (typified by the Levites) that the Apostle addressed the exhortation, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices," etc. (Rom. 12:1.) Those who follow this exhortation and make the sacrificial consecration, thereby become brethren on the highest plane of the spirit, and thus become members of the highest degree of fellowship as members of the body of the Anointed One.

E108 [¶2]:

But our Lord's "brethren" were not immaculate, were not separate from sinners. How, then, could he be "made like unto his brethren," and yet be separate from sinners? The answer to this question is found in the recognition of the fact that the world of mankind, sinners in general, are not the ones who are referred to as "his brethren." The man Adam, indeed, was a son of God at his creation, and up to the time of his transgression (Luke 3:38), but not subsequently. And all of his race are Scripturally designated "children of wrath." (Eph. 2:3) Only those who have "escaped the condemnation that is on the world," and who have gotten back into harmony with God, through Christ, are Scripturally authorized to consider themselves the sons of God. (John 1:12) Of the others, our Lord declares, "Ye are of your father, the devil, for his works ye do." (John 8:44) Our Lord Jesus never counted himself in as one of the children of the devil, nor as one of the "children of wrath," but declared that he "proceeded forth and came from God." Neither did he recognize as "his brethren" any of those who were still "children of wrath." The only ones recognized as the "Lord's brethren" are those who, having escaped the condemnation that is on the world, have been brought nigh to the Father through the blood of Christ, and have received "the spirit of adoption" into God's family, and the promise of full "adoption of sons" at the establishment of the Kingdom. (Rom. 8:15,23; Gal. 4:5) It is because these are **justified**, reckonedly freed from Adamic guilt and reckonedly constituted righteous, through the blood of Christ, that they are in any sense of the word like our Lord Jesus, "his brethren," on a similar footing of divine favor and separateness from the world. Of the consecrated of this class our Lord says, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "I have chosen you out of the world." (John 15:19; 17:16) From this standpoint it can readily be seen that our Lord **was** "made like unto his brethren"--**exactly**, in every particular. Not that his "brethren" were in this condition at the time he humbled himself and was made flesh--he had no brethren at that time, except as this class was **foreknown** of God. (Eph. 1:5,11; Rom. 8:29) But the divine arrangement was such that God foresaw that he could be just, and yet justify those of the sinner race who accepted divine grace through Christ, and whose sins were, on this account, covered, not imputed to them, but imputed to him who "bore our sins in his own body on the tree." God forearranged, foreknew, his purpose to call out the Gospel Church to be "joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord," to the inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven. And it was in view of this prearranged plan that all who will constitute this class were spoken of in advance, through the prophets, as the "brethren" of Christ. Prophetically, our Lord is represented as saying to the Father, "I have declared thy name unto **my brethren**; in the midst of the Church have I sung thy praise." (Psa. 22:22; Heb. 2:12) Since this was the divine program--that our Lord should not only be the Redeemer of the world, but also a pattern for the "brethren" who would be his joint-heirs--therefore, in carrying out this divine program it was fitting that he should in all his trials and experiences be "made like unto his brethren."

4. Why is the manifestation of brotherly kindness so *necessary*?

R3434 [col. 2 ¶2, 3]:

It was with the full appreciation of the fact that the Church would need comfort rather than chiding and reproof that our Lord said, "If I go not away the Comforter [the holy Spirit] cannot come." The ransom must be paid, must be presented in the "Most Holy," to the heavenly Father, before his blessing could be bestowed. That blessing would yield the comfort of the begetting of the Spirit and the comfort of the exceeding great and precious promises to those who had accepted Jesus,--and to those who would believe on him through their word. True, our Lord spoke of the holy Spirit as reproofing--but not as reproofing the Church; he said, "He shall reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of a coming judgment." The nearest suggestion to reproof in respect to the holy Spirit's dealing with the Church is that given by the Apostle, when he says, "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." And again he says, "Quench not the Spirit."--Eph. 4:30; I Thess. 5:19.

The grand provision made for the comfort of the Lord's people clearly indicates a necessity for such comfort; nor is this necessity difficult to find. The Lord's people are beset on every hand with adverse conditions--the world, the flesh, the adversary--seeking to intimidate or discourage or entrap the new creature, so as to hinder its development in grace, knowledge and love, and ultimately to hinder it from the attainment of the perfection and glory to follow, which God has promised to the faithful only. What we need, in order to make us sons and daughters of consolation in the Church, is a larger measure of love and sympathy in our hearts. In proportion as sympathy and love come in, they will crowd out the spirit of strife and contention and judging and fault-finding; even as they crowded out at first the spirit of the flesh, --anger, malice, hatred, strife, vain-glory.

5. Is it important that we observe the spirit as well as the form of our Lord's command?

1 Peter 1:22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

Romans 12:9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

R2518 [col. 1 ¶5(4) to end]:

"Seeing ye have **purified** your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit [the spirit of the truth] unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart, fervently."-- `1 Pet. 1:22`.

This medicine is for those who have used the other prescriptions and gotten clean. It points out that the purity came not merely through **hearing** the truth, nor through **believing** the truth, but through **obeying** it. And not merely a **formal** obedience in outward ceremony and custom and polished manner, but through obedience to the **spirit** of the truth--its real import. All this brought you to the point where the love of the "brethren" of Christ was **unfeigned**, genuine. At first you treated all with courtesy, or at least without impoliteness; but many of them you did not **like**, much less did you love them: they were poor, or shabby, or ignorant, or peculiar. But obeying the **spirit** of the truth you recognized that all who trust in the precious blood and are consecrated to the dear Redeemer and seeking to follow his leadings are

"brethren," regardless of race or color or education or poverty or homeliness. You reached the point where your heart is so free from envy and pride and selfishness, and so full of the spirit of the Master, that you can honestly say, I love all the "brethren" with a love that is sincere and not at all feigned.

Now having gotten thus far along in the good way, the Lord through the Apostle tells us what next --that we may preserve our hearts pure,--"See that ye love one another with a pure heart **fervently** [intensely]." Ah, yes, the pure heart must not be forgotten, else it might be but a step from pure love into a snare of the Adversary, carnal love. But the pure love is not to be cold and indifferent: it is to be so warm and so strong that we would be willing to "lay down our lives for the brethren."--` 1 John 3:16`.

With such a love as this burning as incense to God upon the altar of our hearts there will be no room there for any selfish, envious thoughts or words or deeds. Oh how blessed would all the gatherings of the "brethren" be, if such a spirit pervaded all of them! Can we doubt that, if it held sway in one-half or one-third or even one-fourth, it would speedily exercise a gracious influence upon all--for righteousness and fidelity and love and peace, and against envy, strife, malice, slanders and backbitings?

Let all the "brethren" more and more take these medicines which tend to sanctify and prepare us for the Master's service, here and hereafter.

R2213 [col. 1 ¶2]--"Let love be without dissimulation.":

He had already explained the necessity for love; but he now puts us on guard against a merely feigned love, which would only outwardly appear kind and polite. The true spirit of love, a holy spirit, will not be a dissimulating one, a hypocritical one: the love will be genuine, heartfelt as well as mouth expressed. This love is to be toward God, and toward all in proportion as they are God-like, or striving to be so. It is to be a love of that which is good, right, pure, true.

R2242 [col. 1 ¶4]:

While the outward affairs of life are to be regulated and harmonized with the Lord's character and will, as expressed to us in his Word, yet the object sought is to have these good qualities proceed from an **inward source**, a regenerated heart; a heart from which Selfishness has been dethroned, and in which Love has been enthroned as the moving impulse of life. Love to God will regulate all of our obedience to him, so that it will not be merely outward and formal ceremonies, but worship in spirit and in truth. Love to fellow-men --especially to the household of faith--will guide us in our dealings with them; for love thinks no evil, love slanders not, love backbites not, love bears no false witness, love seeks not her own interests merely, but also the welfare of others, is not proud, but humble, meek, gentle, easy to be entreated, long-suffering and patient.

R3542 [col. 2 ¶4, 5]:

It is difficult for us to gage our own hearts thoroughly and hence we should use great charity in measuring the hearts and intentions of others, and should err rather on the side of too great sympathy and leniency than on the side of too strong condemnation. Doubtless had the apostles been inquired of respecting the matter they would have denied any elements of selfishness in their motives and conduct, and would have thought and spoken only of their zeal for the Lord and desire to be near him. This illustrates to us, what the Scriptures declare, that the human heart is exceedingly deceitful-- that it needs scrutinizing carefully lest, under the cloak of

something good, it might harbor qualities which without that cloak we would despise or spurn.

As further illustrating this subject, and as helping us each and all to apply the lesson personally, we relate a dream told by a Scotch minister, Horatius Bonar, shortly before his death. He dreamed that his zeal was represented in a package of considerable size and weight, and that some angels came to it and weighed it and assured him that it was full weight, an hundred pounds-- all that was possible. In his dream he was greatly pleased with this report. They next determined to analyze it. They put it into a crucible and tested it in various ways and then reported the result thus: "Fourteen parts selfishness; fifteen parts sectarianism; twenty-two parts ambition; twenty-three parts love to man; twenty-six parts love to God." Awakening he realized that it was but a dream, yet felt greatly humbled, and doubtless was profited by it throughout the remainder of life. That dream may be equally profitable to each of us in leading us to a close inspection of the motives which lie beyond our words and thoughts and doings--especially beyond our service for the Lord and for the brethren.

R3233 [col. 2 ¶4]:

As there are nominal Christians and real Christians, so there is a nominal love as well as a real love amongst those who profess the name of Christ, and it should be more and more the aim of the Lord's true people to cultivate his spirit, his character, his disposition, his love, his friendship; and that they may be able to cultivate these he has caused the Apostle to present to our attention a most graphic description of the love which is from above. This description is given in 1 Cor. 13. It must be enjoyed to some extent by all who are New Creatures, for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his; but it will be increasingly enjoyed and appreciatingly understood in proportion as the Lord's people each become stronger in the Lord --copies of God's dear Son --like him who is the friend above all others.

6. Why do the Lord's "brethren" need no "outward passwords, grips, or badges"?

John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

R3553 [col. 1 ¶3, 4]:

The spirit of trusts and combinations which is abroad in the world and which is permeating everything has the effect of combining congregations, combining denominations, and in general is leading on rapidly to the formation of great religious trusts, whose development will be a serious menace to the liberties of the Lord's truly consecrated people, but not an injury to their spiritual interests. On the contrary, it will prove a blessing to the Lord's little flock in that it will more particularly differentiate them and confirm to them the teachings of the Scriptures, separating them the more completely from the nominal systems and the binding in bundles of the tares, giving them the while the confirmations of the Scriptures, which clearly predict this condition in the end of this age as preceding the collapse of great Babylon.--Rev. 18:21.

Our Lord's prayer, "That they all may be one," has been fulfilled throughout the age. All who have been truly his have had a oneness of heart, a oneness of purpose, a oneness of spirit, with the Father and with the Son--a fellowship divine which cannot be produced by earthly creeds and fetters. So it is to-day, and so it is always

between those who are truly the Lord's. They know each other not by outward passwords or grips or signs, but by the touch of faith and love which it gives and which each recognizes. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, in that ye have love one for another." "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." True, we love all men and seek to serve all as we have opportunity, but, as the Apostle explains, "especially the household of faith," especially those who love the Lord and are trusting in the precious blood, and are fully consecrated to him and, so far as they are able, doing his will and seeking to further know that will day by day.

R3566 [col. 2 ¶14(4)]:

The great mistake seems to be in what is called a Church. As bricks and beams and stones do not make a church, neither is every assemblage of well-dressed people a Church. Christ's Church is composed only of those **united to him** in faith and obedience, and these will know and fellowship each other always, and need not names, badges, grips and passwords.

7. How is our love for God measured by our love for "the brethren"?

1 John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love .

R2649 [col. 1 ¶3, 4]:

Altho the first evidence of the possession of "the love of God" is a love for God, nevertheless the Scriptures distinctly point out to us that an additional requirement is specified, viz., love for the brethren--for those who have the spirit of God, especially, but in a general way at least a sympathetic love for all mankind. Thus the Apostle says, "If we love one another, [it is an evidence that] God dwelleth in us, and [that] his love is perfected in us." (1 John 4:12.) The same Apostle emphasizes this same point, saying, "Whosoever hath this world's goods [interests, affairs], and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:17.) The intimation is that such a lack of love and sympathy, and such a restraint of assistance from a brother in need, would imply that the love of God either did not at all dwell in such an one, or that it was but slightly developed--far from being perfected.

Nor does this love merely exercise itself toward the brethren in matters of temporal necessities; rather, it affects all the affairs of life, leading the one who enjoys it to "walk in love," "forbearing one another in love." (Eph. 5:2; 4:2.) And even were it necessary to speak an unpalatable truth, the spirit of the Lord, "the love of God," will dictate the speaking of the truth in love, which the Apostle assures us is essential to our growth in Christ.--Eph. 4:15.

F467 [¶3]:

Another thought is in respect to the mutual love, sympathy and interest which should prevail amongst all the members of this "one body" of the Lord. As the Lord's Spirit comes more and more to rule in our hearts it will cause us to rejoice in every occasion to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, but especially unto the household of faith. As our sympathies grow and go out toward the whole world of mankind, they must grow especially toward the Lord, and, consequently, especially also toward those whom he recognizes, who have his Spirit, and who are seeking to walk in his footsteps. The Apostle indicates that the measure of our love for the Lord will be indicated by our love for the brethren, the fellow-members of his body. If our love is to be such as will endure all things and bear all things in respect to others,

how much more will this be true as respects these fellow-members of the same body, so closely united to us through our Head! No wonder the Apostle John declares that one of the prominent evidences of our having passed from death unto life is that we love the brethren. (1 John 3:14) Indeed, we remember that in speaking of our filling up the measure of the afflictions of Christ, the Apostle Paul adds, "for his body's sake, which is the Church." Col. 1:24

F600 ¶2:

The inspired Word declares that "the [natural] heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9) --not the organ called the heart, but that which the heart represents in Scripture, viz., the natural affections. The New Creature gets a new heart, a new will, a new standard of affection, in which God and his righteousness and truth and plan and will are first; and in which all other things occupy a place of honor and love in proportion to their harmony with the Lord and his righteousness. To those possessing this new heart all the members of the New Creation are necessarily first and closest: hence, as the Apostle says, love of the brethren is one of the best tests of relationship to the Lord as New Creatures. But this, as already shown, must not interfere with a just recognition of obligations to others.

8. Can we fellowship with all "the brethren" alike?

Jude 21,22 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference:

R3233 [col. 2 ¶1-3]:

In a word there are two planes of friendship--a natural plane, on which men of like natural qualities would be drawn together; and a spiritual plane, on which those unlike in natural qualities, but alike in spiritual hopes, aims and ambitions, are drawn still more closely together by the new tie, the new love, which binds not their flesh but their hearts in Christian love and unity.

These New Creatures in Christ Jesus know each other not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. In each other's spirits or new minds there are the noblest sentiments, the highest aspirations, that which is good, true, noble, pure-- whatever may be their weaknesses according to the flesh. They love each other from the new standpoint of intention, will, harmony with God, and their friendship for one another grows increasingly as they perceive each other's energy in fighting the good fight of faith against the evil influences of the world, the flesh and the Adversary. Nor tongue nor pen can properly express the love, the friendship, which subsists between these New Creatures in Christ Jesus, to whom old things have passed away and all things have become new.

This does not signify, however, that a parent must have exactly the same love for other children as for his own;--he has a greater responsibility for his own, and should realize it. Nor does it imply that even the saints will all be loved to the same degree. Our Lord, we are told, **specialy** loved some of his disciples. By and by, when perfection shall have replaced imperfection, all "brethren" will be perfect and all neighbors will be brethren beloved. Until then, however, we must love all, but "making a difference"--according to natural obligations and spiritual development.--Jude 22.

R3034 [col. 1 ¶3, 4]:

But now we come to another point. Our love for the brethren cannot be exactly of the same measure and exactly of the same intensity or fervency toward all. There is something which gauges or regulates it. What is it? It is that we love God and the glorious principles of righteousness, which are represented in his character; and we love our Lord Jesus from the same standpoint, as being the very exemplifications of all that is good, noble, true, just, generous, loving; and our love for the brethren must, of necessity, be in proportion as we find the brethren to be copies of our Lord. We do not mean copies in the flesh, but viewed from the Lord's standpoint; copies in spirit, copies in heart, copies in motive, copies in intention, copies in loving zeal for righteousness, truth, etc. Thus, as we grow in the love of God and in the love of Christ and in the love of the principles which they represent, we grow also in love toward all men and toward the brethren, but particularly toward those who are growing most in likeness to the Lord. This is not partiality; this is not doing to others different from what we should wish them to do to us. This is following the Lord Jesus' example; for we find that amongst his apostles, even, all of whom were chosen, there were three specially beloved; and of those three one is specially noted as "that disciple whom Jesus loved." He was specially loved, because he was specially lovable; and so with us and the brethren. We should love them all warmly, fervently, but of necessity with varying degrees of fervor, and the fervor should increase with each in proportion as we note his growth in heart-likeness to our Lord.

And if this be so, what shall we say of those who, after having come to a knowledge of the truth, and after having tasted and appreciated its goodness, fall away into sin?--of those who cease to walk after the spirit, and begin to walk after the flesh? Can our love for them burn with the same fervency as before? By no means; it should not do so. As the Apostle says in our text, we should make a **difference**. In doing so we are following the example of our Heavenly Father; for we have just noted that only by walking after the spirit can any of us keep ourselves in the love of God. Only by following the same course, therefore, should any be able to keep himself in the love of the brethren. Any deflection should bring corresponding loss of brotherly love and fellowship.

R3219 [col. 2 ¶2]:

Knowledge is to be highly esteemed in the Church, and to be regarded as an evidence of progress, of growth; for none can grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might--in grace--unless he grows also in knowledge. We properly esteem most highly those whose love for the Lord and for his truth are evidenced by zeal in the study of his Word, and whose favor with God is evidenced by their being guided more and more into the deep things of God. Nevertheless, as in the earthly family we love and care for the babes and immature, so also in the household of faith the little ones and the dwarfs are to be cared for and loved and helped that they may grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

9. Should we always expect to have our manifestations of brotherly kindness received in the same spirit?

R3537 [col. 1 ¶2 and col. 2 ¶1]:

The Apostle, speaking of the ministries of the Church one for another, says that ours is a sacrifice of sweet odor unto God, but again he adds that the Gospel referred to is of life unto life to some and of death unto death to others. That is to say, good deeds, kind words and efforts will be appreciated by those who are in the right attitude of heart to appreciate them, while on the contrary the same good deeds will arouse offence and constitute a bad odor to those who are in a wrong condition of

heart. How often have we seen it so, that with our best endeavors to serve the feet of Christ some have been comforted and refreshed, others have been angered --to one the effort was a sweet odor, to the others it was an offensive odor, because of their wrong attitude of heart toward the Lord and toward the body of Christ-- because, perhaps, of their ambitions or whatnot that were interfered with.

It was just so at Bethany: the sweet odors that filled the house, and the blessing and refreshment that came to Mary in connection with the ministration, had a very different effect upon Judas. He was angry; his selfishness hindered his appreciation of the honor done to the Lord; he could think only of himself and what he had hoped to get out of the transaction, and how, so far as he was concerned, the whole matter was a waste. The sourness that came to his heart because of its wrong attitude is indicated by the testimony that he straightway went to the chief priests to bargain with them for the betrayal of Jesus. Let us, then, dear brethren, see to it that our hearts are in a loving attitude toward the Lord and not in a selfish attitude-- that we appreciate everything done in his name and for his body, and that we be not selfseeking. Otherwise the result will be with us the savor of death unto death, as it was with Judas.

10. How are the comfort and peace of the Church dependent upon the manifestation of this grace?

R3436 [col. 2 ¶4]:

Finally, we notice that the Apostle implies, in some of his statements, that the comfort and peace of the Church are dependent largely upon unity of the Spirit of the Lord in the various members: and that we from experience should note that this is the case. He says, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." (2 Cor. 13:11.) And again (Phil. 2:1,2), "If there be any consolation [comfort] in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." What exhortations these are to unity, peace, brotherly kindness! How they suggest to us patience, forbearance, gentleness, helpfulness and **comfort** one toward another in the Church; that thus the Spirit of the Lord may abound in all, that each may make the greatest possible progress in the right way. Dear brethren and sisters, let us more and more be worthy of the name Barnabas--Comforter of the brethren. Let us have the holy Spirit abounding in us more and more, for this is the Lord's good pleasure; that with it dwelling in us richly we may be all sons and daughters of comfort in Zion, representatives of our Father, and channels of the holy Spirit, as well as of the Truth.

11. How should brotherly love exercise itself in seeking opportunities for service?

R2343 [col. 2 ¶3] through R2344 [col. 1 ¶2]:

Looking about us for opportunity of service we find our Lord's instruction through the Apostle, that we should seek to do good to all men according to our ability and opportunity, but especially to the household of faith. As we look first to the household of faith to see what service we can render, we find in this household some who are naturally more attractive to us than others, some whom we would find it a pleasure to serve; while others, because of more perverse natural conditions, we find less congenial, even repellent; and these we feel less disposed to serve. But this is because of a wrong view of the subject. We are to remember that all consecrated

believers are new creatures in Christ Jesus and accepted of the Lord as members of his body, fellow-members with ourselves. From this standpoint only can we realize to the full the significance of the Apostle's words in our text, "Ye do serve the Lord Christ." The Master informs us that the slightest service done to the least of his brethren is accepted as done to himself. With this view of matters clearly in mind, we see our duty of service in a new light. We see that the brother or sister of high spiritual development and possessing more of the Lord's likeness and grace, whose company we find so congenial, and whom we would delight to serve, often needs our service far less than others who are of the same Body, acknowledged by the same Head, who have much more natural depravity, unconquered, to contend with. These need our special sympathy and love and care and helpfulness; for the proper conception of service is a desire to render some benefit: and there is the more opportunity to benefit or help those who most need assistance.

Of our Lord it is written that he "pleased not himself," in his serving. He did not come into the world on a mission of self-gratification and pleasure; but to render service. He himself said, "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." We are to have his spirit, and the thought with us is not to be our own pleasure or convenience, but on the contrary the necessities of those whom the Lord would have us serve,--namely, those of his household most in need of our aid. We may have less pleasure, according to the flesh, in serving such than we would have in serving others, but it is not fleshly pleasure that we are seeking; and we can have as much or more spiritual pleasure serving those who are the most needy members of the body of Christ, because we realize that this is the will of our Master. It is to him that we really render the service, and our highest spiritual pleasure must be in doing those things which are pleasing in his sight. And it is because our Master has so ordered, that the household of faith is to be served in preference to any other class; consequently we are to ignore the opinions of the worldly and of the nominal church and not to seek out the most degraded people of the world, and spend our energies upon them, but we are to seek the most needy members of the body of Christ, that we may be most helpful to them. The Lord will attend to the poor heathen world in due time, and the time is now nigh at hand. The first work is, as we have seen from the Scriptures, the preparation of the body of Christ; and it is to this end that we are to "edify **one another**, building up **one another** in the most holy faith."

Another thought respecting service is that the true service of the Lord and his truth may be a small, humble and comparatively insignificant service, or a larger and more prominent service. And of course, if two opportunities for service offer, which were otherwise alike, we should choose and use the larger and the more important of the two opportunities. But we are to guard ourselves against seeking for large opportunities for service, and overlooking or intentionally passing by smaller opportunities. We believe this is a common error amongst those who seek to serve the Lord Christ. They desire to do some great thing for him; they would be overjoyed with the privilege of addressing thousands of intelligent and interested hearers. They fain would sway nations to the Lord's standard. Some would be willing to use smaller opportunities, and to address a hundred or fifty or even less, yet perhaps would think it not worth while to use the little opportunities of everyday life in speaking to one or two or three, or a dozen or a score, in a day, or of handing a tract, or of loaning a book, or of circulating tracts in the railway train, or upon the street corner. These services they would esteem too insignificant to render to the Master; they feel that they must do some great thing.

This is a serious mistake, and any who find such a disposition in their hearts should at once analyze their sentiments carefully, to ascertain whether or not they have the desire to serve the Lord, or whether theirs is a desire for self-glorification,--a desire to be identified with something great, prominent and distinguished. The Lord's rule is, not to put a new servant into a very important place. The captains in the Lord's army are expected to rise from the ranks. He tells us the process of his judgment respecting fitness for prominent service, when he says, "He that is faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in that which is greater." "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted; he that exalteth himself shall be abased." And the more we look at the principles here set forth, the more we see of their wisdom and correctness. The person who is earnest and zealous to serve the Lord, so willing and so anxious for the opportunity that he will do what his hand finds to do with his might, that is a true servant; that servant shows his love for the Master,--shows that his is not a love of self and of self-advancement. Such servants, the Lord sees, can be trusted with a more important service, and consequently, when a more important service is to be attended to, usually the Lord selects one who has been faithful in a few things, to give charge over larger things. And who would dispute the wisdom of the Lord's method? He who has not humility enough to do the smallest service for the Lord, for the truth, and for the fellow-members of the body of Christ, has not humility enough to be entrusted with any larger service; for larger service might prove a great injury to himself, since it would tend to cultivate a quality which is latent in every member of the fallen race, and one which would thoroughly incapacitate him for further service, namely, pride,--self-conceit and its concomitant evils.

12. How should brotherly love manifest itself "in honor preferring one another"?

Romans 12:10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

R2213 [col. 1 ¶6]--"In honor preferring one another."

That is, rejoicing more if honor come to another than if it had come to self. Our hearts should be so unselfish that we would take pleasure in seeing honor and prosperity come to another, and rejoice in it: and so sympathetic that a brother's failure would cause us as much chagrin as if it were our own failure. This is the holy spirit which unfeignedly rejoices with those who rejoice, and weeps with those who weep.

R3553 [col. 1 ¶2]:

Wonder of wonders! Where will the divine compassion cease! While we were yet sinners, under divine condemnation of death, we were loved and redeemed at a great price; and now, having been redeemed, we hear the voice celestial saying, "Come up higher," yea, even to the throne, to joint-heirship with the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Could we keep ever before our minds this grand display of love and unselfishness how thoroughly it would scatter from the minds of all who are seeking to be copies of God's dear Son every thought of rivalry one with another. How it would cause us to rejoice in the growing usefulness and advancement in the Lord's service of every member of the body. How we should more and more feel what the Scriptures describe as "in honor preferring one another," and which rejoices in the prosperity of a brother, in his growing usefulness in the Church, in the growing evidences of his favor with God and man. Those who can thus rejoice in the prosperity of the fellow-members of the body have another evidence of their growth in the likeness of our

great and glorious Head. Those who are without this sentiment should strive for it and be very discontented until it is attained.

13. How should we "consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works"?

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

F308 [¶1, 2]:

What a loving and beautiful thought is here expressed! While others consider their fellows to fault-find or discourage, or selfishly to take advantage of their weaknesses, the New Creation is to do the reverse--to study carefully each other's dispositions with a view to avoiding the saying or doing of things which would unnecessarily wound, stir up anger, etc., but with a view to provoking them to love and good conduct. And why not? Is not the whole attitude of the world, the flesh and the devil provocative of envy, selfishness, jealousy, and full of evil enticement to sin, of thought, word and deed? Why, then, should not the New Creatures of the Christ body not only abstain from such provocations toward themselves and others, but engage in provoking or inciting in the reverse direction-- toward love and good works? Surely this, like every admonition and exhortation of God's Word, is reasonable as well as profitable.

R3536 [col. 2, ¶4]:

"Let us consider one another," said the Apostle-- consider one another's weaknesses, consider one another's trials, consider one another's temptations, consider one another's efforts to war a good warfare against the world, the flesh and the Adversary--consider one another's troubles in the narrow way against opposition from within and without, and as we do so it will bring to our hearts sympathy, a sympathy which will take pleasure in pouring out the spikenard perfume, very costly, purest and best, upon all who are fellow-members of the one body.

14. How will brotherly love exercise itself in "laying down our lives for the brethren"?

1 John 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

R2343 [col. 2 ¶2]:

The foundation principles of the Christian religion are laid upon these lines, which are the reverse of the world's lines of thought and conduct; namely, that the greatest one in the Church is the one who is the greatest servant, the one who renders most assistance to others. The greatest servant in the Church was the great Head of the Church himself, who gave even his life on our behalf. And those of his followers who desire to be great in the estimation of the Lord and so esteemed of their fellows, are enjoined that they should follow closely in the Master's footsteps, and with humility of heart be ready and seek to lay down their lives for the brethren. (1 John 3:16.) Nor does this mean simply formal service; it means an actual service. Our Lord's sacrifice, we see, was not merely a form or a show of interest and of love: it was the giving of his life as the purchase price for ours. So with us; we are not merely to love one another and to serve one another, in word, in profession, in title (as for instance, the word "minister" signifies servant); but we are to serve one another as we are to love one another, "in deed and in truth."--1 John 3:18.

R2751 [col. 2 ¶4]:

For these reasons we are expecting great things in the way of progress of the truth in the near future. We believe it the duty, as well as the pleasure, of all who have been enlightened of God through the harvest message, to spread the good tidings abroad,--to hand out to famishing brethren the meat in due season which has so strengthened our own hearts. And this seems to be more and more the spirit of the Lord's brethren, as they receive of the Lord's grace and truth and become more and more copies of God's dear Son, and have more and more of his spirit of willingness to serve the brethren, and, as the Apostle suggests, are willing to lay down their lives for the brethren (1 John 3:16)--not literally, but day by day and opportunity by opportunity--willing to sacrifice the comforts and advantages which, to the natural man, go to make up the sum of earthly life and happiness. They take pleasure in renouncing earthly privileges and luxuries, and even some of life's comforts, that they may spend the more of their substance and be the more spent themselves in doing good unto all men, especially to the household of faith, and especially in the higher spiritual good things which they have the inestimable privilege of dispensing as servants of our present Lord.--Matt. 24:45.

R2807 [col. 2 ¶9]:

We are to recognize as "brethren" those who have only the phileo, degree of duty-love, as Paul did when he wrote, "Greet [for me] all that love [phileo], us in the faith" (Titus 3:15); but we are to see to it that we "love the brotherhood" (1 Pet. 2:17) with agape or higher love, which counts not present life precious and to be saved, but gladly lays down life for the brethren--in daily and hourly sacrifices of time and money and all earthly interests on their behalf. --1 John 3:16.

F468 [¶1] through F469 [¶1]:

The same thought is again expressed in the words, "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16) What a brotherhood is thus implied! Where else could we hope to find such love for the brethren as would lay down life itself on their behalf? We are not now speaking of how the Lord may be pleased to apply the sacrifice of the Church, represented in the "Lord's goat" as a part of the Atonement Day sacrifices.* We merely, with the Apostle, note the fact that, so far as we are concerned, the sacrifice, the laying down of life, is to be done in the main for the brethren--in their service; the service for the world belongs chiefly to the age to come, the Millennium. Under present conditions, our time and talents and influence and means are, more or less, mortgaged to others (the wife or children or aged parents or others depending on us), and we are obligated also to the provision of "things needful," "decent," and "honest in the sight of all men" for ourselves. Hence, we find comparatively little left at our disposal for sacrifice, comparatively little to lay down for the brethren, and this little the world and the flesh and the devil are continually attempting to claim from us, and to divert from the sacrificing to which we have consecrated it.

The Lord's selection of the Church, during this time when evil prevails, is to the intent that surrounding circumstances may prove the measure of the love and loyalty of each to him and his. If our love be cool, the claims of the world, the flesh and the Adversary will be too much for us, and attract our time, our influence, our money. On the other hand, in proportion as our love for the Lord is strong and warm, in that same proportion we will delight to sacrifice these to him--not only to give our surplus of energy and influence and means, laying these down as we find opportunity in the service of the brethren, but additionally, this spirit of devotion to the Lord will

prompt us to curtail within reasonable, economical limits the demands of the home and family, and especially of self, that we may have the more to sacrifice upon the Lord's altar. As our Lord was for three and a half years breaking his body, and for three and a half years giving his blood, his life, and only finished these sacrifices at Calvary, so with us: the laying down of our lives for the brethren is in small affairs of service, either temporal or spiritual, the spiritual being the higher, and hence the more important, though he who would shut up his compassion toward a brother having temporal need would give evidence that he did not have the Spirit of the Lord ruling in his heart in any proper degree.

15. How should we manifest brotherly kindness toward the weaker brethren?

1 Thes. 5:14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

R2321 [col. 2 ¶4]:

Let us (Christians), then, take a broader view of matters, and especially of all who have named the name of Christ, and who give any evidence of seeking to walk in his footsteps. Let our love for them cover not only the little, trifling blemishes and differences from ourselves, but let our love cover also a multitude of imperfections in their flesh, so long as we see that their hearts are loyal to the Lord, and that they are seeking to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit: so long as they profess to be seeking to get rid of the meanness and selfishness and littleness of the fallen nature and to cultivate in themselves the nobility of character which belongs to perfect manhood, the image of the divine nature.

F236 [¶1]:

The Apostle sets before our minds a picture of the New Creation which illustrates the entire subject. It is a human figure, the head representing the Lord, the various parts and members representing the Church. In 1 Cor. 12 this subject is grandly elaborated, and with great simplicity, the explanation given being that, "As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ [one body or company composed of many members]. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body [whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free]." The Apostle proceeds to call attention to the fact that as the well-being of a human body depends largely upon the unity and harmony and cooperation of all its members, so also it is with the Church, the body of Christ. If one Continuing our examination of the Apostle's words in our text, we note that the Church is to comfort the feeble-minded. We thus have notice that the reception of the holy Spirit does not transform our mortal bodies so as to entirely overcome their weaknesses. There are some with feeble minds, as there are others with feeble bodies, and each needs sympathy along the line of his own weakness. The feeble minds were not to be miraculously cured; nor should we expect that because the minds of some are feeble and unable to grasp all the lengths, and breadths, and heights, and depths of the divine plan that, therefore, they are not of the body. On the contrary, as the Lord is not seeking for his Church merely those who are of fine physical development, strong and robust, so member suffer either pain or degradation or disgrace, all the members are affected, willingly or unwillingly, and if one member is specially blessed or comforted or refreshed, proportionately all others share the blessings. He points out (verse 23) that we seek to cover and hide the weaknesses, blemishes, etc., of our natural bodies and seek to relieve and help them; and that thus it should be with the Church, the body of Christ--the most

blemished members should have special care as well as the covering of charity--love; "that there be no schism [division] in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another," for the most humble as well as for the most highly favored member-- Verse 25.

F304 through F306--"Comfort the Feeble-Minded."

Continuing our examination of the Apostle's words in our text, we note that the Church is to comfort the feeble-minded. We thus have notice that the reception of the holy Spirit does not transform our mortal bodies so as to entirely overcome their weaknesses. There are some with feeble minds, as there are others with feeble bodies, and each needs sympathy along the line of his own weakness. The feeble minds were not to be miraculously cured; nor should we expect that because the minds of some are feeble and unable to grasp all the lengths, and breadths, and heights, and depths of the divine plan that, therefore, they are not of the body. On the contrary, as the Lord is not seeking for his Church merely those who are of fine physical development, strong and robust, so likewise he is not seeking merely those who are strong and robust in mind, and able to reason and analyze thoroughly, completely, every feature of the divine plan. There will be in the body some who will be thus qualified, but others are feeble-minded, and do not come up even to the average standard of knowledge. What comfort should we give to these? We answer that the elders, in their presentations of the Truth, and all of the Church in their relationship one with the other, should comfort these, not necessarily in pointing out their feebleness and condoning the same, but rather along general lines--not expecting the same degree of proficiency and intellectual discernment in the members of the family of God. None should claim that those who have such disabilities are, therefore, not of the body.

The lesson is much the same if we accept the revised reading, "Comfort the fainthearted." Some naturally lack courage and combativeness, and with ever so good will and ever so loyal hearts cannot, to the same degree as others of the body, "be strong in the Lord," nor "fight the good fight of faith" in the open. The Lord, however, must see their will, their intention, to be courageous and loyal, and so should the brethren--if they are to attain the rank of overcomers.

All should recognize that the Lord's judgment of his people is according to their hearts, and that if these feeble-minded or fainthearted ones have had a sufficiency of mind and will to grasp the fundamentals of the divine plan of redemption through Christ Jesus, and their own justification in God's sight through faith in the Redeemer, and if on this basis they are striving to live a life of consecration to the Lord, they are to be treated in every way so as to permit them to feel that they are fully and thoroughly members of the body of Christ; and that the fact that they cannot expound or cannot perhaps with clearness discern every feature of the divine plan intellectually, and defend the same as courageously as others, is not to be esteemed as impugning their acceptance with the Lord. They should be encouraged to press along the line of self-sacrifice in the divine service, doing such things as their hands find to do, to the glory of the Lord and to the blessing of his people--comforted with the thought that in due time all who abide in Christ and cultivate the fruits of his Spirit and walk in his steps of sacrifice will have new bodies with perfect capacity, in which all the members shall be able to know as they are known--and that meantime the Lord assures us that his strength is shown the more fully in our weakness.

"Support the Weak"

This implies that there are some in the Church weaker than others; not merely physically weaker, but weaker spiritually --in the sense of having human organisms depraved in such a manner that they as New Creatures, find greater difficulty in growth and spiritual development. Such are not to be rejected from the body, but, on the contrary, we are to understand that if the Lord counted them worthy of a knowledge of his grace, it means that he is able to bring them off conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. They are to be supported with such promises as the Scriptures afford--to the effect that when we are weak in ourselves we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, by casting all our care upon him, and by faith laying hold upon his grace; that in the hour of weakness and temptation they will find fulfilled the promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness." The entire congregation can assist in this comforting and supporting, though, of course, the elders have a special charge and responsibility toward these, because they are the chosen representatives of the Church, and, hence, of the Lord. The Apostle, speaking of the various members of the body, after telling of pastors and teachers, speaks of "helps." (1 Cor. 12:28) Evidently the Lord's good pleasure would be that each member of the Church should seek to occupy such a place of helpfulness, not only helping the elders chosen as the representatives of the Church, but also helping one another, doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, but especially to the household of faith.

16. How will brotherly love sympathize with the more demonstrative brethren?

F132 [¶2]:

All thus **marked** by the holy Spirit as prospective members of the New Creation are assured by the Lord, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "I have chosen you [out of the world], and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." "If ye were of the world the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:16,19; 17:16) Although these **marks** of sanctification may, to some extent, be discerned by the world, we are not, therefore, to expect that they will bring the world's admiration or approval; but, rather, that they will consider these evidences of the holy Spirit upon the New Creatures as evidences of weakness and effeminacy. The world appreciates and approves what it would designate a robust and strenuous life--not righteous over-much. Our Lord explains to us why the world would not approve his followers; namely, because the darkness hateth the light--because the standard of his Royal Priesthood for thought and word and action would be higher than the standard of mankind in general, and would, therefore, seem to more or less condemn their course. The world desires rather to be approved, to be flattered; and whatever in any degree casts reflection upon it is to that extent avoided, if not opposed. This disapproval of the worldly-wise of Christendom constitutes a part of the testing of the Royal Priesthood; and if their consecration be not a most hearty one they will so miss the fellowship of the world and so crave its approval that they will fail to carry out in the proper spirit the sacrificing of earthly interests which they have undertaken--fail to be priests; hence, fail to be of the New Creation. However, on account of their good intentions, the Lord may bring them through the fiery trials, for the **destruction** of the flesh which they had not the zeal to **sacrifice**: thus they may be counted worthy of a share in the blessings and rewards of the Great Company that shall come up out of great tribulation to serve before the throne, in which the little flock will sit with the Lord.

17. How should brotherly kindness deal with the self-seeking?

F296 through F297:

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.

All are to remember that, like other faculties, **ambition** is necessary in the Church as well as in the world; but that in the New Creation it must not be a selfish ambition to be something great and prominent, but a loving ambition to serve the Lord and his people, even the very humblest. We all know how ambition led to Satan's fall--from the favor and service of God to the position of an enemy of his Creator and an opponent of all his righteous regulations. Similarly, all who adopt his course, saying, "I will ascend above the stars of God [I will set myself above others of the sons of God], I will be as the Most High--[a ruler amongst them, a usurper of divine authority without divine appointment, and contrary to the divine regulation]," are sure to suffer divine disapprobation, and proportionate alienation from the Lord. And the influence of such, like Satan's, is sure to be injurious. As Satan would be an unsafe teacher, so are all who have his disposition sure to lead into darkness for light; because they are not in the proper attitude to receive the light and be used as messengers of it to others.

Whenever, therefore, any brother feels sure that he is called to preach in some public capacity when no door of service has been opened to him in the appointed manner--if he is inclined to force himself upon the Church, without its almost unanimous request--or if having been chosen to the position of a leader or Elder he seeks to hold the position and consider it his by right, without regular votes of the Church from time to time requesting his service continued, we may set it down either that the brother has not noted the proprieties of the case, or that he has the

wrong, self-seeking spirit unsuitable to any service in the Ecclesia. In either event it will be the proper course to make a **change** at the first proper occasion for holding an election: and, as already suggested, the first Sunday of a year or in a quarter would be an appropriate time easily remembered.

18. How will brotherly kindness deal with brethren who lack self-control?

F148 [¶2] through F150 [¶1]:

Another class of the consecrated, but spiritually diseased, needs consideration. These, apparently justified by faith and sincere in their consecration, seem to make little or no progress in controlling their flesh. Indeed, in some instances, it would appear that their faith in God's goodness and mercy, removing the brakes of fear, have left them rather more exposed to temptation through weaknesses of the flesh than they were at first-- when they had less knowledge of the Lord. These have experiences which are very trying, not to themselves only, but to the entire household of faith with whom they come in contact; their lives seem to be a succession of failures and repentances, some along the lines of financial inconsistencies, others along the lines of moral and social delinquencies.

What is the remedy for this condition of things? We answer that they should be distinctly informed that the New Creation will not be composed of those who merely **covenant** self-denials and self-sacrifices in earthly things and to walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit; but of those who, because of faithfulness in the willing endeavor to **keep** this covenant, will be counted overcomers by him who readeth the heart. They should be instructed that the proper method of procedure for all the consecrated is that, being made free by the Son, they should be so anxious to attain all blessings incident to divine favor, that they would voluntarily become bond-servants-- putting themselves under certain restrictions, limitations, bondage, as respects their words, their conduct, their thoughts--earnestly desiring of the Lord in prayer the aid he has promised them, expressed in his words to the Apostle, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness." Each time they find that they have transgressed they should not only make amends to those injured, but also make confession to the Lord, and by faith obtain his forgiveness-- they should promise greater diligence for the future, and should **increase the limitations of their own liberties** along the lines of weakness ascertained by their latest failure.

Thus watching and praying, and setting guards upon the actions and words of life, and bringing "every thought into captivity" to the will of God in Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), it will surely not be long until they can assure themselves and the brethren also respecting the sincerity of their **hearts**, and walk in life so circumspectly that all may be able to discern, not only that they have been with Jesus, but also that they have learned of him, and have sought and used his assistance in gaining victories over their weaknesses. The cases of such brethren or sisters would come under the head of what the Apostle terms "walking disorderly"--not after the example of the Lord and the apostles. In another chapter we will see the Lord's direction respecting the manner in which those weak in the flesh and who bring dishonor and discredit upon the Lord's cause should be treated by the brethren.

Here we remark, however, that so long as they give evidence of repentance for their wrong course and a desire of heart to go in the right way and of continued faith and trust in the Lord, they must be esteemed as brethren--however necessary it may be to restrict fellowship with them until they have given some outward, tangible

demonstration of the power of grace in their hearts in the restraint of their fleshly weaknesses. Nevertheless, they are still to be encouraged to believe that the Lord is very merciful to those who trust him and who at heart desire his ways, although they cannot be encouraged to expect that they could ever be counted worthy of the overcoming class unless they become so earnest in their zeal for righteousness that their flesh will show some considerable evidence of its subjection to the New Mind.

19. How should brotherly kindness seek to avoid "busy-bodding"?

1 Tim. 5:13 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not .

1 Peter 4:15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

F583 through F586--Conscientious Meddling

"Busyboding in other men's matters" is severely reprov'd by the Apostle, as wholly inconsistent with the new minds of the New Creation. (1 Tim. 5:13; 1 Pet. 4:15) A busybody is one who busies himself in the affairs of others, with which he has properly nothing whatever to do. Even the "children of this world" are wise enough in their generation to discern that in the brief span of present life a person of reasonably sound mind has quite sufficient to occupy him in attending to his own business properly; and that if he should give sufficient attention to the business of others to be thoroughly competent to advise them and meddle in their concerns he would surely be neglecting to some extent his own affairs. Much more should the New Creatures begotten of the Lord to the spirit of a sound mind, realize this truth, and additionally realize that they have still less time than the world for meddling in the affairs of others, their time being not their own, because of their full consecration of time, talent, influence, all to the Lord and his service.

Such, even if lacking a naturally sound mind on this subject, will be constrained in the right direction by the injunctions of the Scriptures, and by the realization that the time is short for the fulfilment of their covenanted sacrifice. They should also realize that the Golden Rule, required of the New Creation, prohibits everything akin to busyboding. Assuredly they would not appreciate having others meddle in their business, and should be equally careful to do to others as they would be done by. The Apostle realized, nevertheless, that the reverse of this is the general worldly spirit, and, hence, admonishes the saints to study, to practice, to learn, along this line. His words are, "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business." 1 Thess. 4:11

This natural disposition to be careful about the affairs of others, and to lend a hand in correcting them, and in picking motes out of a brother's eye, to the neglect of the beam in one's own eye, as the Lord illustrated the matter (Matt. 7:3-5), sometimes attacks the New Creature in a peculiar form. He fancies that it is his "**duty**" to advise, to pick, to investigate, to chide, to reprove. As he turns the matter over in his mind he convinces himself that not to do so would be sin; and thus he becomes what we might designate a conscientious busybody, or meddler--one whose meddlesomeness is made doubly strong and aggressive by a misinformed and misdirected conscience. These, often sincere and good people, veritable New Creatures, are hindered by this flaw in all that they attempt to do in the Lord's service. Each should take himself in hand, and learn to apply the rules of justice and love already pointed out. He should educate his conscience to discriminate between

brotherly duty and busyboding; and so far as our observation goes the majority of the Lord's people, as well as of the world, would find themselves doing a great deal less chiding, rebuking, faultfinding and picking, after coming to appreciate the rules of justice and of love, as combined in the Golden Rule and applied to the affairs of life and their intercourse with others.

It is safe to inquire respecting any matter suggesting itself along these lines--Is it any of my business? In our intercourse with the world we will generally find upon careful examination that it is not our business to chide or reprove or rebuke them. We have been called of the Lord, and have turned aside from the course of the world to follow in the narrow path; **that** is our business. We should desire the world to let us alone, that we may follow the Lord; and correspondingly, we should let the world's concerns alone, addressing ourselves and our Gospel message to him that "hath an ear to hear." The world, not having been called of the Lord, and not having come into the "narrow way," has a right to choose respecting its own way, and has a right to expect that we will not interfere, as we do not wish to be interfered with. This will not hinder the fact that our light will be shining, and thus we will indirectly be exercising a continued influence upon the world, even though we do not reprove or otherwise meddle in the affairs of others. Where the matter is one of business, in which we are financially concerned, it, of course, will not be meddling with other people's business, but minding our own business, to give proper attention to such a matter. Neither is it meddling for the parent to have a knowledge and direction in respect to all the transpiring interests of the family and home. Yet even here the personal rights of each member of the family should be considered and conserved. The husband and father of the family being recognized as its head and chief in authority, should use that authority in loving moderation and wise consideration. The individuality of the wife, her tastes and preferences, should have his consideration, and as his representative she should be qualified with full power and authority in her own special domain as his helpmate and home keeper; and in his absence she should represent his authority fully in respect to all the affairs of the family. The children also, according to age, should be given a reasonable degree of privacy and individuality in their affairs, the parent merely exercising his authority and supervision in such connections as would minister to the order and comfort of the home, and to the proper development of its members in matters mental, moral and physical. Children should be early taught not to pick at each other, nor to meddle with each other's belongings, but to respect each other's rights and to do kindly and generously each to the other according to the Golden Rule.

Nowhere is this admonition against busy bodying more important to be remembered than in the Church. Brethren should speedily learn, from the Word as well as from precept and example of the elders, that it is not the divine intention that they should meddle in each other's business nor discuss each other; but that here, as elsewhere, the divine rule applies, "Speak evil of no man." Busy bodying--thinking and talking about the private affairs of others, with which we have no direct concern--leads to evil speaking and backbiting, and engenders anger, malice, hatred, strife, and various works of the flesh and of the devil, as the Apostle points out. (Col. 3:5-10) Thus it often is that little seeds of slander are planted and that great roots of bitterness develop, whereby many are defiled. All who have the new mind surely recognize the banefulness of this evil, and all of them should be models in their homes and neighborhoods. The worldly mind can realize that murder and robbery are wrong, but it requires a higher conception of justice to appreciate the spirit of the divine Law--that slander is an assassination of character, and that stealing a neighbor's good name under any pretext is robbery. The worldly minded grasp this

matter to some extent, and their sentiments are represented in the poet's words: "He who steals my purse steals trash;...but he who filches my good name steals that which not enriches him, but leaves me poor indeed."

20. How should brotherly love control the tongue?

F291 [¶2] through F292 [¶1]:

Unquestionably, the majority of the Church troubles (and society and family troubles as well) spring not from a desire to wrong, nor even from a wrong unintentionally committed, but from misunderstandings and, at least, partial misinterpretations of intentions or motives. The tongue is the general mischief-maker; and it is part of the spirit of a sound mind, therefore, to set a guard upon the lips as well as upon the heart, from which proceed the ungenerous sentiments which, the lips expressing, set fire to evil passions and often injure many. The New Creation--the Church--has strict instructions from their Lord and Head on this important subject. His spirit of love is to fill them as they go **alone**, privately, to the injuring person without previous conference or talking with anyone. They go not to make him (or her) **ashamed of his conduct**, nor to berate him or otherwise punish, but to secure a cessation of the wrong and, if possible, some recompense for injury already received. Telling others of the wrong, first or afterward, is unkind, unloving--contrary to the Word and Spirit of our Head. Not even to ask **advice** should the matter be told: we have the Lord's **advice** and should follow it. If the case be a peculiar one, the wisest of the elders should be asked for advice along the lines of a hypothetical case, so as not to disclose the real trouble and wrongdoer.

Unless the trouble is serious, the matter ought to stop with the personal appeal to the erring one, whether he hears or forebears to hear--to yield. But if the second step be deemed necessary, no explanation of the trouble should be made to those asked to confer until they gather in the presence of the accuser and the accused. Thus slanderous "talk" will be avoided and the committee of brethren will come to the case unbiased and be the better able to counsel both parties wisely; for the trouble may be on both sides, or, possibly, wholly on the side of the accuser. At all events, the accused will be favorably impressed by such fair treatment and will be much more likely to yield to such counselors if his course seems to them also to be wrong. But whether the one deemed by the committee to be in error shall yield or not, the whole matter is still strictly private, and not a mention of it should be made to anyone until, if thought sufficiently important, it is brought before the Church, and passed upon finally. Then for the first time it is common property to the saints only, and in proportion as they are **saints** they will desire to say no more than necessary to anyone respecting the weaknesses or sins of anybody.

R3594 [col. 2 ¶4, 5]:

Evil speaking, backbiting and slandering are strictly forbidden to God's people, as wholly contrary to his spirit of love--even if the evil thing be true. As a preventive of anything of the nature of slander, the Scriptures very carefully mark out **one only way of redress of grievances**, in Matt. 18:15-17.

Even advanced Christians seem to be utterly in ignorance of this divine ruling, and hence professed Christians are often the most pronounced scandal-mongers. Yet this is one of the few special, specific commandments given by our Lord; and considered in connection with the statement, Ye are my disciples **if ye do** whatever I command you, its constant violation proves that many are not far advanced in discipleship.

R3595 [col. 1 ¶7, 8]:

If any Brother or Sister begins to you an evil report of others, stop him at once, kindly, but firmly. "Have **no** fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather **reprove** them." Refuse to have any share in this violation of our Master's commands, which does great mischief in the Church. Supposing the Brother or Sister to be only a "babe" in spiritual matters, call attention to the Lord's ruling on the subject, Matt. 18:15, and 1 Tim. 5:19. If the conversation is not directed to you but merely in your hearing, promptly show your disapproval by withdrawing.

If, after having his attention called to the Lord's command on this subject, the slanderer still persists in "evil-speaking," "back-biting" and telling you his "evil surmisings," reprove him more sharply, saying as you go,--I cannot, must not hear you; for if I did, I would be as criminal in the matter as you are--violating the Lord's command. And even if I were to hear your story, I could not believe it; for the Christian who does not respect the Lord's Word and follow his plan of redress for grievances, shows so little of the Lord's spirit that his word can not be trusted. He who twists and dodges the Lord's words would not hesitate to twist and misrepresent the words and deeds of fellow-disciples. If to any extent you listen to such conversation or express "**sympathy**" with it or with the gossip or slanderer, you are a partner in the sin and in all its consequences; and if a "root of bitterness" is thus developed, you are more than likely to be one of those "defiled" by it.--Heb. 12:15.

F586 to F588--"Blessing God and Cursing Men"

No wonder the Apostle James terms the tongue an unruly member, full of deadly poison! No wonder he declares that it is the most difficult member of our bodies to govern! No wonder he says that it sets on fire the course of nature! (James, Chap. 3) Who has not had experience along these lines? Who does not know that at least one-half the difficulties of life are traceable to unruly tongues; that hasty and impetuous words have involved wars costing millions of money and hundreds of thousands of lives; that they are also at the foundation of one-half the lawsuits, and more than one-half of the domestic troubles which have affected our race for the past six thousand years! The Apostle declares respecting the tongue, "Therewith bless [praise] we God, and therewith curse [injure, defame, blight] we men, made in the image of God. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." (Verse 9) The Christian who merely has attained to the standard of not stealing from his neighbor, or not murdering him but who commits depredations upon that neighbor with his tongue--wounding or slaying or stealing his reputation, his good name--is a Christian who has made very little progress in the right way, and who is still far from the Kingdom of heaven condition.

All know how difficult a matter it is to control the tongue, even after we realize its vicious disposition in our fallen nature. We, therefore, call attention to the only proper method of restraining or curbing the tongue, viz., through the heart. The inspired Word declares that "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." This being true, it implies that when we have a great deal of difficulty with our tongues, there is a great deal that is not altogether right about our hearts; and that in proportion as we get our hearts right we will have the less difficulty in controlling our tongues. The lips which continually speak scornfully of others indicate a proud, haughty, domineering, self-conscious condition of the heart. The lips which continually speak evil of others either directly or by insinuation, indicate that the heart back of the lips is not pure, not filled with the Lord's spirit of love--for "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor," not even in thought. It "thinketh no evil." It would

not permit itself to surmise evil respecting him. It will give him the benefit of every doubt, and rather surmise the favorable than the unfavorable.

Self-love is usually strong enough in all mankind to hinder the tongue from speaking anything to its own injury; and proper love, unselfish, that would love the neighbor as himself, would be as loath to speak to the detriment of one's neighbor or brother, or even to cast a reflection against his conduct, as it would be unwilling to take such a course against itself. We see then, from whatever direction we look at the subject, that the matter of prime importance with the New Creation is the attainment of perfect love in our hearts. This toward God would stimulate us to the more zeal and energy and self-sacrifice in cooperating in the divine service, the service of the Truth; and toward men it would stimulate us not only to act justly and lovingly, but to think and speak graciously of all so far as possible. This is the holy Spirit, for which our Redeemer taught us that we should pray, and respecting which he declared that our Heavenly Father is more willing to give it to us than are earthly parents to give earthly good gifts to their children; and sincerity in praying for this spirit of holiness, spirit of love, implies earnest desire and striving that in thought and word and deed love may be shed abroad through all the avenues of our being. So shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven, and be accounted worthy of his love and of all the precious things he has promised and has in reservation for those who love him.

F406 [¶1]:

But if to tell uncomplimentary truth is to violate the Law of Love and the Golden Rule, what shall we say of the still more disreputable, still more unlovely, still more criminal habit so common, not only amongst the worldly and nominally Christian, but also among true Christians--that of telling about others disreputable things not positively known to be the truth. Oh shame! shame! that any of the Lord's people should so overlook the Lord's instruction, "speak evil of no man"; and that any but the merest babes and novices in the Law of Love should so misunderstand its message--that any without the most indubitable proofs at the mouth of two or three witnesses, and then reluctantly, should even believe evil of a brother or a neighbor, much less to repeat it--to slander him upon suspicion or hearsay evidence!

21. How should brotherly love treat a slanderous report against an elder or other brethren?

F293 [¶1] through F294 [¶2]--Accusations Against Elders

"Against an Elder receive not an accusation, except at The Apostle in this statement recognizes two principles. (1) That an Elder has already been recognized by the congregation as possessing a good and noble character, and as being specially earnest for the Truth, and devoted to God. (2) That such persons, by reason of their prominence in the Church, would be marked by the Adversary as special objects for his attacks--objects of envy, malice, hatred and strife on the part of some, even as our Lord forewarned--"Marvel not if the world hate you"; "ye know that it hated me before it hated you"; "If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household!" (Matt. 10:25; 1 Jno. 3:13; Jno. 15:18) The more faithful and capable the brother, the more nearly a copy of his Master, the more proper his choice as an Elder; and the more faithful the Elder, the more sure he will be to have as enemies--not Satan and his messengers only, but as many also as Satan can delude and mislead.

These reasons should guarantee an Elder against condemnation on the word of any one person, if otherwise his life appeared consistent. As for hearsay or rumor, they were not to be considered at all; because no true yokefellow, cognizant of the Lord's rule (Matt. 18:15), would circulate rumors or have confidence in the word of those who would thus disregard the Master's directions. To be heard at all, the accusers must profess to have been **witnesses**. And even if two or more witnesses made charges there would be no other way of hearing the case than that already defined. Any one person charging wrong the mouth of two or three **witnesses**."--1 Tim. 5:19, R.V. against the Elder, should, after personal conference failing, have taken with him two or three others who would thus become witnesses to the contumacy. Then the matter, still unamended, might be brought by Timothy or anyone before the Church, etc.

Indeed, this accusation before two or three witnesses, being the requirement as respects all of the members, leaves room for the supposition that the Apostle was merely claiming that an Elder should have every right and privilege guaranteed to any of the brethren. It may be that some were inclined to hold that since an Elder must be "well reported," not only in the Church, but out of it, an Elder should be arraigned upon the slightest charges, because of his influential position. But the Apostle's words settle it that an Elder's opportunities must equal those of others.

This matter of **witnesses** needs to be deeply engraved on the mind of every New Creature. What others claim to know and what they slanderously tell is not even to be heeded--not to be received. If two or three, following the Lord's directions, bring charges against anyone--not back-bitingly and slanderously but as instructed--before the Church, they are not even then to be believed; but then will be the proper time for the Church to **hear** the matter--hear both sides, in each other's presence; and then give a godly decision and admonition, so phrased as to help the wrongdoer back to righteousness and not to push him off into outer darkness.

R3035 [col. 2 ¶3]:

But we close as we began, by urging that facts, evil deeds or evil doctrines, and not evil surmisings, knowledge, and not rumors, are the bases of Scriptural disfellowship. Hence the necessity for the observance of the Lord's rule. (Matt. 18:15.) While we are not to close our eyes to wrong in a brother, love will refuse to keep picking to find fault where none is openly apparent. And if fault is apparently discovered it is not to be "**discussed** among the brethren," but as the Lord directs should be taken direct to the offender by the discoverer and not so much as mentioned to others unless offender refuse to hear;--refuses to correct the fault. Oh, how much trouble would be saved, how many mistakes and heart-aches avoided if this rule were strictly followed!

22. How should the Church exercise brother kindness toward those who "walk disorderly"?

1 Thes. 5:14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

F292 [¶2]:

In carrying out the findings of the Church court, the matter rests with each individual; hence, each must discern the justice of the decision for himself. The penalty of withdrawal of fellowship is designed to be a correction in righteousness, and is of the Lord's prescribing. It is to serve as a protection to the Church, to

separate those who walk disorderly, not after the spirit of love. It is not to be esteemed a perpetual separation, but merely until the reprov'd one shall recognize and acknowledge his wrong and to the extent of his ability make amends.

F297 [¶12] through F299--"Warn Them That Are Unruly"

"We exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any, but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men." 1 Thess. 5:14,15

This exhortation is not to elders, but to the entire Church, including the elders. It takes cognizance of the fact that although the entire Church, as God's New Creation, has a perfect standing before him as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, nevertheless each and all of them have their imperfections according to the flesh. It shows, further, what we all recognize; viz., that there are differences in the degrees and in the kinds of our fleshly imperfections; so that, as in children of an earthly family different dispositions require different treatment by the parents, much more in the family of God there are such wide differences of disposition as to require special consideration one for the other. To take notice of each other's imperfections, from the standpoint of criticism, would be to do ourselves much injury, cultivating in our hearts a faultfinding disposition, keenly awake to the weaknesses and imperfections of others, and proportionately, perhaps, inclined to be blind to our own defects. Such criticism is entirely foreign to the spirit and intention of the Apostle's exhortation.

Those are addressed who have been begotten of the spirit of the truth, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of humility, the spirit of love. Such as are thus growing in the graces of the Spirit, will fear and criticize chiefly their own defects; while their love for others will lead them to make as many mental excuses and allowances for them as possible. But while this spirit of love is properly condoning the offenses and weaknesses of the brethren, it is to be on the alert, nevertheless, to do them good--not by bickering, strife, contention, chiding, faultfinding and slandering one another, but in a manner such as the Golden Rule, would approve. With gentleness, meekness, long-suffering and patience, it will seek to make allowance for each other's weaknesses, and at the same time to help each other out of them, each remembering his own weaknesses of some kind.

The **unruly** are not to be comforted and supported and encouraged in their wrong way; but in kindness, in love, they are to be admonished that God is a God of order; and that in proportion as we would grow in his likeness and favor we must observe rules of order. They should be admonished that nothing is further from the divine arrangement than anarchy; and that as even worldly people recognize the principle that the worst form of government imaginable is preferable to anarchy, so much the more should God's people, who have received the spirit of a sound mind, the holy Spirit, recognize this same principle in the Church; and the Apostle exhorts us to submit ourselves one to the other, for the sake of the general interests of the Lord's cause. If we were all perfect, and our judgment of the Lord's will perfect, we would all think exactly the same--there would be no particular necessity for submitting one to another; but since our judgments differ, it is necessary that each consider the other and the other's standpoint of observation and judgment, and that each seek to yield something in the interest of general peace --yea, to yield everything so as to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace in the body of Christ, except where principle would be infringed by such a course.

The unruly or disorderly are not entirely to blame for their condition, perhaps. Many people are born disorderly and inclined to be so in their dress and in all their affairs in life. Disorderliness, therefore, is a part of their weakness, which should be thought of sympathetically, kindly, but, nevertheless, should not be permitted to do injury to the Church of God, to hinder its usefulness, to prevent its cooperation in the study and service of the Truth. It is not the will of God that his people should have that meekness which would amount to weakness in dealing with disorderly persons. Kindly, lovingly, but firmly, they should be shown that, as order is heaven's first law, so it must be highly esteemed amongst those who are heavenly-minded; and that it would be sinful for the congregation to permit one or two or more of its members to do violence to the divine regulations, as expressed in the Word of God and as generally understood by the congregation with which he is associated.

F303 [¶1]:

But in respect to others, who "walk disorderly," the regulation is very different. Such an excluded brother or sister should not be treated as an enemy, nor thought of as such; but as an erring brother, as the Apostle says further on in this same epistle, "If any man obey not our word by this epistle [if he be disorderly, unwilling to submit himself to sound reasoning and loving, generous rules of order] note that man, and have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed; yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." (2 Thess. 3:14,15) Such a case as this would imply some open, public opposition on the part of the brother to the rules of order laid down by the Apostle, as the Lord's mouthpiece; and such a public opposition to right principles should be rebuked by the congregation, should they decide that the brother is so out of order that he needs admonishing; and if he does not consent to the form of sound words, sent us by our Lord through the Apostle, he should be considered as so out of accord as to make it no longer proper that he should have the fellowship of the brethren until he would consent to these reasonable requirements. He should not be passed by on the street unnoticed by the brethren, but be treated courteously. The exclusion should be merely from the privileges of the assembly and from any special brotherly associations, etc., peculiar to the faithful. This is implied also in our Lord's words, "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." Our Lord did not mean that we should do injury to a heathen man or a publican, nor treat either in any manner unkindly; but merely that we should not fellowship such as **brethren**, nor seek their confidences, nor as New Creatures give them ours. The household of faith is to be cemented and bound together with mutual love and sympathy, and expressions of these in various ways. It is from the lack of these privileges and blessings that the excluded brother is caused to suffer, until he feels that he must reform his ways and return to the family gathering. There is a suggestion in this respect to warmth, to cordiality, to true brotherliness, that should prevail amongst those who are members of the Lord's body.

F307 [¶2]--"See That None Render Evil for Evil"

This is more than an individual advice: it is an injunction, addressed to the Church as a whole, and is applicable to each congregation of the Lord's people. It implies that if some of the household of faith are disposed to take vengeance, to retaliate, to render evil for evil, either upon brother members or upon those outside, that the Church will not be acting the part of a busybody in taking notice of such a course. It is the duty of the Church to **see** to this. "**See** that no man render evil for evil," means, give attention to it that this proper spirit is observed in your midst amongst the brethren. If, therefore, the elders should learn of such occasions as would be covered by this injunction, it would be their duty kindly to admonish the brothers or

the sisters respecting the Word of the Lord; and, if they will not hear, it would be the duty of the former to bring the matter before the congregation, etc., etc. And here is the Church's commission to take cognizance of such an improper course on the part of any. Not only are we thus to see one another, and to look out for each other with kindly interest, to note that backward steps are not taken, but we are to see to it that, on the contrary, all follow after that which is good. We should rejoice in and commend every evidence of progress in a right way, giving it our support as individuals and as congregations of the Lord's people. By thus doing, as the Apostle suggests, we may rejoice evermore, and with good cause; for so helping one another the body of Christ will make increase of itself in love, growing more and more in the likeness of the Head, and becoming more and more fit for joint-heirship with him in the Kingdom.

R3034 [col. 2 ¶3] through R3035 [col. 2 ¶1]

We are at present specially referring to the proper attitude to be observed toward unruly brethren--they are not to be treated as those who are esteemed very highly in love for their works; otherwise they would be encouraged in being unruly. On the contrary they are to be warned, cautioned,--in love, truly, and with patience, but not with marks of the same love and esteem as tho they were walking orderly in the footsteps of Jesus and in harmony with the directions of his Word. The marks and evidences of our love and esteem must be sincere; and must be in proportion as we see in the brethren evidences of the right desires of heart,--to walk after the spirit of the truth. The Apostle Paul intimates how our disapproval ought to be shown, in cases which seem, in our judgment, to be of sufficient importance to demand a manifestation of disapproval.

Evidently the Apostle did not mean that the brethren should be watching each other for an occasion of fault-finding in every word and every act; but that, on the contrary, they should be so full of love one for the other that trivial matters would be entirely passed over, as merely of the weakness of the flesh, and not at all of intention, of the heart. The matters to be considered worthy of manifestations of disapproval and warning are, rather, those which are so open and manifest on the surface as to leave no room to question the fact that they are displeasing to the Lord, and injurious in their influence upon the brother or upon the household of faith. For instance, if the brother had been seen under the influence of liquor; if he had been heard to utter vile or otherwise improper language; if it were a matter of general knowledge that he was living in sin; these would be such grounds as we believe the Apostle had in mind. But evidently the Apostle had no intention of cultivating a spirit of fault-finding and judging one another as respects the heart and private affairs,--use of time or money, etc. These belong to our individual stewardship and none should endeavor to interfere with the proper liberties of conscience and conduct which the Lord has granted to each. The Apostle is very stringent in his condemnation of such judging of one another, which so often leads to roots of bitterness, misunderstanding, disfellowship, etc., and which, as the old leaven, should be purged out of our hearts and lives.--Rom. 14:10,13.

But now, for those who "obey not our word," the apostolic Scriptural directions in respect to their conduct, etc., is "note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." Nevertheless, knowing the tendency of the fallen mind to go from one extreme to another, either of too great leniency or of too great severity, the apostle continues, "Yet count him not an enemy, but admonish as a brother." (2 Thess. 3:13-15.) To admonish as a brother does not mean to denounce roundly and severely; it means to admonish in a spirit of love, gentleness, meekness, patience,

and with a sincere desire to help the brother to see the fault which we are certain exists, and which we are sure is not evil surmising on our part.

The Apostle John shows us that this matter of distinguishing as between brethren that are to be esteemed and brethren that are to be warned, appertains not merely to conduct but also to doctrinal matters. Yet we may be sure that he does not mean that we are to disfellowship a brother merely because of some differences of view on non-essential questions. We may be sure that he does mean his words to apply strictly and only to the fundamentals of the doctrine of Christ: for instance, faith in God; faith in Jesus as our Redeemer; faith in the promises of the divine Word. These will be marks of a "brother," if supported by Christian conduct, walking after the spirit of the truth;--even tho the brother might have other views which would differ from ours in respect to certain features of the plan of God not so clearly and specifically set forth in the Scriptures. But for those whom we recognize as being doctrinally astray from the foundation principles of Christ, the Apostle intimates that very drastic measures are appropriate;--not persecutions, nor railing; not bitter and acrimonious disputes; not hatred, either open or secret; but a proper showing of our disfellowship with the false doctrines held and taught by them; a proper protection, so that our influence shall not be in any manner or degree used to uphold his denial of the fundamentals of the Gospel. This drastic course is outlined by the Apostle in these words: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine [confessing Christ to have come into the world, in the flesh, to redeem our race, etc.] receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds."--2 John 10,11.

But, as our text intimates, we are to use discretion, judgment,--"and of some have compassion, making a difference." Some we may recognize as being merely entrapped of the Adversary, either in sin or in false doctrine, as the case may be, and not wilfully, intelligently, of their own volition. Toward such, still maintaining an attitude of firmness, we are nevertheless to express freely our trust that they are only temporarily wrong; and to seek to restore them, either doctrinally or in respect to their perverse moral course, to the position of fellowship with the Lord and with all the brethren who are in fellowship with him. Others we are to "save with fear, pulling them out of the fire." We may be obliged to speak very plainly to them; we may be obliged to tear open and expose before their eyes the sores of their own immoral course, showing them, as the case may be, the grossness of the sin or the grossness of the error in which they are involved; and doing so perhaps in strong language, if we realize that nothing short of this has availed to arouse them from their lethargy. In pulling them out of sin we are "pulling them out of the fire"-- out of the Second Death--as the Apostle James says, speaking of this same class: "Let him know that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death"-- a brother who is a sinner, a brother, he explains, who has "erred from the truth." -- James 5:19,20.

Finally, we remark that the dealing of the brethren with the disorderly is not to be in the nature of a **punishment**; for it is not with us to punish. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Our warnings or reproofs or withdrawals of fellowship, are to be merely in the nature of correctives, with a view, as the Apostle says, to the restoring of such an one. "Ye that are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted";--if not in the same manner, possibly in some other manner, in which you are weaker .--Gal. 6:1.

As to what would be a sufficiency of **evidence** of repentance and reformation, each will require great wisdom and grace to determine. The heart in which brotherly love dwells richly, the heart which loves righteousness and hates iniquity, the heart which realizes its own imperfections, and that it is acceptable only through the Beloved and the New Covenant--that heart will rejoice at the first evidences of contrition and repentance on the part of the disorderly brother. If very full of love, his heart may go out to him almost too quickly; he may need to restrain himself; especially if it be a second or a third offense of the kind, or the circumstances otherwise very grievous. It will be apparently his duty to look for works in harmony with the repentance, and to wait to see some demonstration, in the nature of restitution for wrong done, or such an open and radical change of conduct as will give evidence that the heart has returned to its loyalty to God, to the truth, and to righteousness.

R3092 [col. 1 ¶1]:

Let us not be misunderstood; the Scriptures nowhere teach that all men are brethren in the spiritual sense; on the contrary, they teach that the unjustified are not God's children, but "children of wrath," and some of them are so thoroughly evil that from God's standpoint they are of "their father the devil"; we are to recognize as brethren in Christ only the household of faith, and to draw a sharp line of demarcation in our minds and in our salutations as between these and the children of this world. This does not imply either that the children of this world are to be treated unkindly by us or insulted or offended; rather they are to have our sympathy, our love, to whatever extent possible, our assistance as the Apostle suggests. We are to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity," especially unto the household of faith, --the brethren. Brethren are still to be recognized even though they fall into difficulty, dangerous snares of the adversary; and if it be necessary that our fellowship be withdrawn for a time, it is merely with the view to assist them back to their proper relationship to the Lord and back to our love and sympathy in fullest measure; as the Apostle says even such are to be treated, not as enemies, but, as misguided brethren for whose recovery we are to be willing to lay down even our lives--an hour here, another hour there, an effort for this one and an effort for another one because they are the Lord's. It is only after such brethren have turned back from the Lord's service like a "sow to her wallowing in the mire" or after they have discarded the redemptive work of Christ like the man in the parable who took off the wedding garment--only then are we to esteem them as enemies, adversaries, and even then we are not to bring against them a railing accusation, but to leave the matter for the Lord's judgment.-- 2 Thess. 3:15.

23. How should the elders exercise brotherly love in reproofing the "unruly"?

R3211 [col. 1 ¶3]:

"Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." This part of the exhortation is not alike applicable to all; too many feel at liberty to reprove and to rebuke. Doubtless many need reproofs and many need rebukes, but how few are able to administer these to profit and not to injury! The Apostle addressed these words in a particular sense to Timothy as an experienced elder in the Church of Christ, and to some extent an overseer amongst the elders. It would be a great mistake to apply these words in general, and for each of the Lord's people to see to what extent he could administer reproofs and rebukes to his brethren. Rather should sympathy go out to such an extent that reproofs and rebukes would be avoided, except as duty, because of responsibility in the Church of God, should necessitate this. Even so experienced an elder and overseer as Timothy must see to it that his reproofing and rebuking and exhorting should be done with all longsuffering--with

patience, gentleness and forbearance, and with doctrine (2 Tim. 4:2); showing clearly wherein the principles of righteousness were infringed and pointing out distinctly the Word of the Lord concerning the same. This duty still rests upon those who occupy places of prominence in the Church to which they have in the Lord's providence been appointed; and in proportion as they are filled with the Lord's spirit of love and gentleness and meekness and patience and forbearance, they will strive to perform this delicate and unpleasant business of reproof and rebuking, where necessary, in most modest language and under the most favorable conditions.

F300 through F301--Admonishing Not a General Order

It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose that the Apostle, in using this general language to the Church, meant that every individual of the Church was to do such admonishing. To admonish wisely, helpfully, is a very delicate matter indeed, and remarkably few have a talent for it. The election of elders on the part of congregations is understood to signify the election of those of the number possessed of the largest measure of spiritual development, combined with natural qualifications to constitute them the representatives of the congregation, not only in respect to the leading of meetings, etc., but also in respect to keeping order in the meetings and admonishing unruly ones wisely, kindly, firmly. That this is the Apostle's thought is clearly shown in the two preceding verses, in which he says:

"We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake. And be at peace amongst yourselves." 1 Thess. 5:12,13

If divine wisdom has been properly sought and properly exercised in the choosing of elders of a congregation, it follows that those thus chosen were very highly esteemed; and since novices are not to be chosen, it follows that these were appreciated and selected for their works' sake, because it was discerned by the brethren that they had a considerable measure of the holy spirit of love and wisdom and meekness, besides certain natural gifts and qualifications for this service. To "be at peace amongst yourselves," as the Apostle exhorts, would mean that, having chosen these elders to be the representatives of the congregation, the body in general would **look to them to perform the service to which they were chosen**, and would not attempt to take it each upon himself to be a reprover, or admonisher, etc. Indeed, as we have already seen, the Lord's people are not to judge one another personally; and only the congregation as a whole may exclude one of the number from the fellowship and privileges of the meeting. And this, we have seen, can come only after the various steps of a more private kind have been taken--after all efforts to bring about reform have proved unavailing, and the interests of the Church in general are seriously threatened by the wrong course of the offender. But in the text before us the Apostle exhorts that the congregation shall "know"--that is, recognize, look to-- those whom they have chosen as their representatives, and expect them to keep guard over the interests of the Church, and to do the admonishing of the unruly, up to the point where matters would be serious enough to bring them before the Church as a court.

24. How may we avoid judging one another as individuals?

Matthew 18:15-18 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall

neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

R2431--"Instructions for the Body of Christ":

And our Lord not only approved of judging on the part of the Church, but gave explicit directions to all its individuals respecting how to avoid **judging** one another and how to submit themselves to the judgment of the Church as the body of Christ.

(1) They were to avoid judging a brother or sister guilty of wilful wrong-doing and were to attempt to reason the matter out privately, that the one or the other might see his error.

(2) If this proved unavailing, the one feeling himself aggrieved (yet still not judging his brother wilfully guilty) is to call in two or three brethren to hear both sides of the controversy. (As the Apostle suggests, those called in should be "wise"--1 Cor. 6:5;-- such as both the accuser and the accused would recognize, and whose judgment they would respect and follow.)

(3) If these brethren, called on to act as judges, and his own choice of "wise" brethren, give their verdict against the accuser, that should settle the matter: the accuser should recognize his error. Not to do so would imply that he was not seeking to ascertain the truth, but that he had **judged his brother personally**, the very thing that both the Lord and the Apostle warn us against. If the accuser be not able to see matters fully in the same light as his "brethren," he should nevertheless accept their decision and trust and pray to the Lord that he would be guided into clearer views. But should the brethren, called in to judge, agree with the accuser, the accused of course should yield,--especially if he had acknowledged the judges to be "wise." The violator of the judgment of such "wise" brethren (if the matter were considered of sufficient importance) was to be charged and the cause heard before the Church-- whose decision was to be final; and disregard of its decision implied excommunication.--Matt. 18:15-35.

We have examined this question somewhat in detail, because fearful that something in our last issue might have seemed to sanction **personal** judging. The Lord, however, does recognize his Church and does promise to act through it and to give his judgment thus to those who seek it, promising in this very connection that, Where two or three are gathered in his name, **he is in their midst**. The great difficulty with many is their **lack of faith**; they do not believe the Lord's Word, nor trust to his providences, but want to take matters into their own hands. And this is particularly the case with those who are in the **wrong**.

F289 through F292--Discipline in the Ecclesia (Matt. 18:15-18)

The administration of discipline is not the function of the elders only, but of the entire Church. If one appears to be in error or in sin, his supposed wrong should be pointed out to the erring one only by the one he has injured, or by the member first discovering the wrong. If the reprov'd one fails to clear himself, and **continues** in the error or sin, then two or three brethren without previous prejudice should be asked to hear the matter and advise the disputants. (Elders they may or may not be, but their eldership would add no force or authority in the case except as their judgment might be the riper and their influence the more potent.) If this committee decide unanimously with either party, the other should acquiesce and the matter be

wholly at an end--correction, or restitution, so far as possible, being promptly made. If either of the original disputants still persists in the wrong course, the one who made the original charge or one of those called in committee or, preferably, all of these together, **may** then (but not sooner) exercise their privilege of bringing the matter before the Ecclesia, the body, the Church. Thus it is evident that the Elders were in no sense to be judges of the members--hearing and judgment were left to the local body, or Church.

The two preliminary steps (above mentioned) having been taken, the facts being certified to the elders, it would be their duty to call a general meeting of the Ecclesia, or consecrated body, as a **court**--to hear the case in all of its particulars, and in the name and reverence of its Head to render a decision. And the matter should be so clear, and the condemned should have such generous treatment, that the decision would be a unanimous one, or nearly so. Thus the peace and oneness of the body (the Ecclesia) would be preserved. Repentance even up to the moment of the Church's condemnation is possible. Nay, to secure repentance and reform is the very object of every step of these proceedings--to reclaim the transgressor; his **punishment** not at all the object. Punishment is not ours but God's: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." (Rom. 12:19) Should the wrongdoer repent at any step in this proceeding, it should be a cause of thanksgiving and rejoicing to all who possess the Lord's Spirit, and no others are members of his body. Rom. 8:9

Indeed, even if the transgressor refuse to hear (obey) the decision of the entire Church, no punishment is to be inflicted or even attempted. What then? Merely the Church is to withdraw from him its fellowship and any and all signs or manifestations of brotherhood. Thenceforth the offender is to be treated "**as** a heathen man and a publican." Matt. 18:17

At no time in these proceedings are the faults or failings of the offender to be made public property --scandalizing him and the Church, and the Lord, the Head of the Church. Nor is he to be harshly spoken of even after the separation; just as we are not to berate, or rail against, heathen men and publicans, but are to "speak evil of no man" and to "do good unto all men." (Titus 3:2; Gal. 6:10) Love is the quality which insists on the strictest obedience to these last two requirements to "all men": how much more will love insist that a "brother," a fellow-member in the Ecclesia, the body of Christ, shall not only not be injured by false or garbled statements, but that additionally, his weaknesses or blunders or sins be carefully covered, not from the unsympathetic world only, but also from "the household of faith" and from even the Church-- until the final step of "telling it to the Church" should be found absolutely necessary. At every step the spirit of love will hope that the wrongdoer is laboring under some misapprehensions, and will be praying for wisdom and grace to turn a sinner from the error of his way and thus (possibly) to save a soul from death. James 5:20

Oh, that the holy Spirit, the spirit of love, might dwell in every member of the Ecclesia so richly that it would give pain to hear a defamatory tale about any one, and especially about a fellowmember! This would at once eliminate one-half the friction, or more. Nor would the following of the above procedure, outlined by our Lord, lead to **frequent** church trials: rather, while removing the ground for animosities, it would inculcate a respect for the judgment of the Church as being the judgment of the Lord, and the voice of the Church would be heard and obeyed accordingly. Furthermore, with order and love thus prevailing we may be sure that each would seek as far as possible to "mind his own business" and not attempt to

reprove his brother or correct him, or bring the matter before a committee or the Church, unless the matter were one of some importance as concerned himself or the Church or the Truth.

Unquestionably, the majority of the Church troubles (and society and family troubles as well) spring not from a desire to wrong, nor even from a wrong unintentionally committed, but from misunderstandings and, at least, partial misinterpretations of intentions or motives. The tongue is the general mischief-maker; and it is part of the spirit of a sound mind, therefore, to set a guard upon the lips as well as upon the heart, from which proceed the ungenerous sentiments which, the lips expressing, set fire to evil passions and often injure many. The New Creation --the Church-- has strict instructions from their Lord and Head on this important subject. His spirit of love is to fill them as they go **alone**, privately, to the injuring person without previous conference or talking with anyone. They go not to make him (or her) **ashamed of his conduct**, nor to berate him or otherwise punish, but to secure a cessation of the wrong and, if possible, some recompense for injury already received. Telling others of the wrong, first or afterward, is unkind, unloving--contrary to the Word and Spirit of our Head. Not even to ask **advice** should the matter be told: we have the Lord's **advice** and should follow it. If the case be a peculiar one, the wisest of the elders should be asked for advice along the lines of a hypothetical case, so as not to disclose the real trouble and wrongdoer.

Unless the trouble is serious, the matter ought to stop with the personal appeal to the erring one, whether he hears or forebears to hear--to yield. But if the second step be deemed necessary, no explanation of the trouble should be made to those asked to confer until they gather in the presence of the accuser and the accused. Thus slanderous "talk" will be avoided and the committee of brethren will come to the case unbiased and be the better able to counsel both parties wisely; for the trouble may be on both sides, or, possibly, wholly on the side of the accuser. At all events, the accused will be favorably impressed by such fair treatment and will be much more likely to yield to such counselors if his course seems to them also to be wrong. But whether the one deemed by the committee to be in error shall yield or not, the whole matter is still strictly private, and not a mention of it should be made to anyone until, if thought sufficiently important, it is brought before the Church, and passed upon finally. Then for the first time it is common property to the saints only, and in proportion as they are **saints** they will desire to say no more than necessary to anyone respecting the weaknesses or sins of anybody.

In carrying out the findings of the Church court, the matter rests with each individual; hence, each must discern the justice of the decision for himself. The penalty of withdrawal of fellowship is designed to be a correction in righteousness, and is of the Lord's prescribing. It is to serve as a protection to the Church, to separate those who walk disorderly, not after the spirit of love. It is not to be esteemed a perpetual separation, but merely until the reprovved one shall recognize and acknowledge his wrong and to the extent of his ability make amends.

R2666 [col. 1 ¶2, 3]:

In the family of God, the saints, begotten of the holy spirit, are all to be recognized as brethren, and to be dealt with accordingly. It is the new creature, and not the old creature, that is the brother in Christ; hence we may love the new creature, and in some respects have very little love for the old, just as all have disrespect for certain blemishes in their own mortal flesh, as they realize its weakness and imperfection,--and the more so in proportion as they grow in the divine likeness as new creatures.

If, therefore, a brother should trespass against us it should be our first thought that this wrong done us is not by the brother, the new creature in Christ, but by his mortal flesh, which for the moment has gotten the upper hand with him or to some extent blinded him. Accordingly, instead of feeling angry with the brother, we should feel sympathetic, and our hearts should go out to him, and our desire be strong to do him good and to help him to overcome the weaknesses of his earthen vessel.

It is in line with this thought that our Lord suggests that the proper course is for the aggrieved one to go quietly, without saying a word to anyone else, and have a kindly conference with the one who is doing him wrong, seeking to point out the merits and demerits of the question at issue, and if possible to gain the brother back to fellowship, righteousness, harmony with the Lord. If this shall be unavailing, the next step shall be still a secret one--the taking of two or three brethren of supposedly good heart and large experience, and that without attempting to prejudice their minds, and to ask these to hear the cause and to give counsel as to which one is in error. Whichever of the brethren is in error should be convinced by his fellow-pilgrims, whose arguments with him should be based upon the Scriptures and the spirit of love; but if differences still exist between them, and cannot be harmonized, then, as a court of last resort, the matter should be taken before the Church--the consecrated--and after being heard by the Church, its decision should be considered final, and be accepted by all. If either of the brethren still have doubts as to his receiving justice in the matter he may console himself with the thought that he will surely obtain a blessing by giving full and hearty assent to the Lord's arrangements, even if he have so large a measure of self-conceit that he still believes his side of the question to be right, notwithstanding the judgment of all the brethren to the contrary.

F402 ¶2 through F406--"Judge Not, that Ye Be Not Judged. For with What Judgment Ye Judge, Ye Shall Be Judged" (Matt. 7:1,2)

The competent judges of the Church are the Father and the Son--the latter being the Father's representative, to whom he has committed all judgment. (John 5:22,27) The New Creatures are not competent to be judges one of another for two reasons: (1) Few of them fully comprehend and appreciate the divine Law of Love governing all. (2) Evidently few can read their own hearts unerringly; many either judge themselves too severely or too leniently, and, hence, should modestly decline to sit in judgment of the heart of another whose motives may be far from appreciated. It is because of our incompetence for judging that the Lord--while assuring us that this shall be one of our future functions in the Kingdom, after being qualified by participation in the First Resurrection --forbids all private judgment amongst his followers now; and threatens them that if they persist in judging each other they must expect no more mercy and leniency than they show to others. (Matt. 7:2; Luke 6:38) The same thought is enforced in the sample prayer given us, "Forgive us our debts [trespasses] as we forgive our debtors." Matt. 6:12

This is not an arbitrary ruling by which the Lord will deal unjustly and ungenerously with us, if we deal thus with others: on the contrary, a correct principle is involved. We are "by nature children of wrath," "vessels fitted for destruction"; and although the Lord mercifully proposes to bless us and relieve us of our sins and weaknesses and to perfect us through our Redeemer, he will do this only on condition of our acceptance of his Law of Love, and our heart-conformity to it. He does not propose accepting unregenerates and having "children of wrath" in his family. To be fit for any place in the Father's house of many mansions [planes of being] (John 14:2) all must cease to be children of wrath and become children of Love--being changed

from glory to glory by the Spirit of our Lord, the spirit of Love. Whoever, therefore, refuses to develop the spirit of Love, and contrary to it insists on uncharitably judging fellow-disciples, proves that he is not growing in knowledge and grace, not being changed from glory to glory of heartlikeness to the Lord, not a true follower of the Lord, and, hence, should not have mercy extended to him beyond what he uses properly in copying his Lord. The amount of his likeness to the Lord (in love) will be shown by his mercy, and generosity of thought, word and deed toward his fellows.

Oh, that all the Spirit-begotten ones, the "New Creation," could realize that this spirit of judging (condemning), alas! so common (indeed, almost the "besetting sin" of the Lord's people) measures their lack of the spirit of Love--their lack of the Spirit of Christ--which, totally absent, would prove us "none of his." (Rom. 8:9) We are persuaded that the more speedily this fact is realized the more speedily will progress the great transformation "from glory to glory," so essential to our ultimate acceptance as members of the New Creation.

But few of the Lord's people realize to what extent they judge others, and that with a harshness which, if applied to them by the Lord, would surely bar them from the Kingdom. We might have feared that, under our Lord's liberal promise that we shall be judged as leniently as we judge others, the tendency would be to too much benevolence, too much mercy, and that "thinketh no evil" might be carried to an extreme. But no! All the forces of our fallen nature are firmly set in the opposite direction. It is more than eighteen centuries since our Lord made this generous proposal to judge us as leniently as we will judge others, and yet, how few could claim much mercy under that promise! It will be profitable for us to examine our proneness to judge others. Let us do so, prayerfully.

The fallen or carnal mind is selfish; and proportionately as it is **for** self it is **against** others--disposed to approve or excuse self and to disapprove and condemn others. This is so thoroughly inbred as to be an unconscious habit, as when we wink or breathe. This habit is the more pronounced with advanced education. The mind recognizes higher ideals and standards and forthwith measures everyone by these, and, of course, finds something at fault in all. It delights in rehearsing the errors and weaknesses of others, while ignoring its own along the same or other lines--and sometimes, even, hypocritically denouncing the weaknesses of another for the very purpose of hiding its own or giving the impression of superior character along the line in question. Such is the mean, contemptible disposition of the old fallen nature. The new mind, begotten of the Spirit of the Lord, the holy Spirit of Love, is in conflict with this old mind of selfishness from the start, under the guidance of the Word of the Lord--under the Law of Love and the Golden Rule, and becomes more and more so as we grow in grace and knowledge. At first all New Creatures are but "babes in Christ" and appreciate the new Law only vaguely; but unless growth is attained and the Law of Love appreciated and measured up to, the great prize will not be won.

The Law of Love says: For shame that the weaknesses and shortcomings of brethren or of others should be exposed before the world; for shame that pity and sympathy did not at once advance to speak a word in their defense, if too late to spread over their faults a mantle of charity to hide them entirely! As our noble, loving Master declared on one occasion, when asked to condemn a sinner: "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." The person without frailties of his own might be to some extent excusable for assuming unbidden of the Lord the position of executioner of Justice--taking vengeance on wrongdoers, exposing them, etc.; but we find that our Master, who knew no sin, had so much Love in his heart that he was

disposed rather to condone and forgive than to punish and expose and berate. And so it will doubtless be with all begotten of his Spirit: in proportion as they grow up into his likeness they will be the last to pray for vengeance-- the last to execute punishments by tongue or otherwise, until so commanded by the Great Judge. He now, on the contrary, instructs us, "Judge nothing before the time," and declares, "Vengeance is mine."

Well has the Apostle delineated the spirit of Love, saying, "Love suffereth long and is kind" -- to the wrongdoer. "Love envieth not" the success of others, seeks not to detract from their honor nor to pull them back from it. "Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up," and, consequently, never seeks to detract from the splendor of others to make self shine by contrast. It "doth not behave itself unbecomingly," immoderately --it has no extreme and selfish desires and avoids extreme methods. Love "seeketh not that which is not her own"--does not covet the honors or wealth or fame of others, but delights to see them blessed, and would rather add to than detract from these blessings. Love "is not easily provoked," even to render just recompenses: remembering the present distress of the entire race through the fall, it is sympathetic rather than angry. Love "thinketh no evil"; it not only will not invent and imagine evil, but is so disposed to give the benefit of any doubt that "evil surmisings" are foreign to it. (Compare 1 Tim. 6:4.) Love "rejoiceth not with iniquity, but rejoices with the Truth [rightness]": hence, it would delight to uncover and make known noble words or acts, but would take no pleasure in, but avoid, exposing ignoble words or deeds. Love "covereth all things," as with a mantle of sympathy-- for nothing and nobody is perfect, so as to stand full inspection. Love anticipates and has her mantle of benevolence always ready. Love "believes all things"--is not disposed to dispute claims of good intention, but rather to accept them. Love "hopes all things," disputing the thought of total depravity so long as possible. Love "endures all things"; it is impossible to fix a limit where it would refuse the truly repentant one. "Love never faileth." Other graces and gifts may serve their purposes and pass away; but Love is so elemental that, attained, it may always be ours-- throughout eternity. Love is the principal thing. 1 Cor. 13:413

But if to tell uncomplimentary truth is to violate the Law of Love and the Golden Rule, what shall we say of the still more disreputable, still more unlovely, still more criminal habit so common, not only amongst the worldly and nominally Christian, but also among true Christians-- that of telling about others disreputable things not positively known to be the truth. Oh shame! shame! that any of the Lord's people should so overlook the Lord's instruction, "speak evil of no man"; and that any but the merest babes and novices in the Law of Love should so misunderstand its message--that any without the most indubitable proofs at the mouth of two or three witnesses, and then reluctantly, should even believe evil of a brother or a neighbor, much less to repeat it--to slander him upon suspicion or hearsay evidence!

F414 [¶2] through F417--"If Thy Brother Trespass Against Thee"

But is not this in conflict with our Lord's command, "Judge not that ye be not judged?" Must we not first judge the evildoer individually, and then talk, or gossip, about his evil deeds, or do "evil speaking" respecting him, so that the entire Church may know and repudiate the evildoer?

By no means: the divine arrangement is fully in harmony with itself when rightly understood. If A and B have a difference, and A **believes** himself to be defrauded by B, he must not judge B in the sense of condemning him. He may only say, "There is a difference between us, and I feel sure that I am right; though B may feel equally

confident that he is right and that I have not been wronged." A may not disfellowship B on this account, for to do so would be to **judge** him--to **condemn** him. He may say, to himself, "The matter is trivial, anyway, as between brethren, and I will let it drop, believing that B, as a brother in the Lord, would not wrong me intentionally, and that it may be that my view and not his is the wrong one."

However, if he be not able to take this view he still must not judge, must not decide, that he is right and B wrong--but must **go to** B and explain how the matter appears to him, and if possible reach a kind, brotherly agreement, perhaps by mutual concessions. But if they cannot agree, he may ask two or three of the wisest brethren of the Church, C and D (brethren in whose sincerity B as well as himself would have great confidence), to **go with him** to see B on the subject--not to condemn B, for even A himself must not have judged, or condemned, him; but to hear the matter in the presence of A and B and give their advice to both. This should result satisfactorily to all--especially if all have the spirit of love one for the other and the desire to do right toward one another as members of the anointed body. But if peace is not yet established, there still is to be no judging, no condemnation; for two or three brethren cannot "**judge**" but only the Church.

If when A took with him C and D, they gave their opinion against A and in favor of B, that should end the matter. Under such conditions A cannot take the question to the Church. He evidently would be quite self-opinionated and "heady" to carry the matter further. The Lord's instructions give him no further privilege (Matt. 18:15); but if he were still dissatisfied, we know of no principle that would be violated if he took two or three other able and unprejudiced brethren, E, F, G, to B, for a fresh hearing of the case and for their advice.

But if, when A took C and D to B, they all sided with A's contention that B had wronged him and refused to desist, and if B after a reasonable time refused or neglected to right the wrong, A would be privileged in conjunction with C and D to call a meeting of the Church, to whom the whole matter should be rehearsed by both A and B--for it is to be supposed that if B still associates with the Church he recognizes its counsel and authority, and it is to be presumed also that B is conscientious. When the Church hears the matter, it is not to be forgotten that only the **justified and sanctified** constitute the Church, and that they are sitting in **judgment** in the name of their Lord and Head and to deliver **his judgment**. The matter is not to make a factional fight in the Church, but to preserve its unity in the bonds of peace. A and B, of course, should not vote, nor should anyone vote who felt any other than a desire to express the Lord's judgment in the matter. The decision should be unanimous, or practically so--even though this should require some modification of the extremes of sentiment. Let justice always be tempered with mercy, "Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Gal. 6:1

The Church's decision is to be accepted as final by all; and whoever refuses to accept and conform to its requirements in such a matter of morals (not of conscience) is to be unto the others "as an heathen man or a publican"--until such time as he shall cease to defy the Church--when, of course, he shall be forgiven and received fully into fellowship as before. The object is not to cast the brother off utterly; but merely to show disfavor toward his wrong course with a view to assisting him to its correction. To treat such an one "as an heathen man and a publican" would not mean to slander or dishonor him even after he had been cast off. The Lord's people are not to be slanderers or backbiters under any circumstances: the general command--"Speak evil of no man," covers the case exactly. We are neither to speak

ill of, nor to look cross at, publicans and sinners, nor to refuse to do business with them; but we are to withhold from them the special fellowship and courtesy appropriate to the brethren of the New Creation and possessed of the holy Spirit and its love, joy and peace.

Should B refuse to hear the Church and to desist from doing wrong to A, and then later repent and be received back into full fellowship, his contumacy should be remembered against him if at any time he were nominated for the duties of an Elder. He would need to manifest a decided change before being considered fit for that service; for even if he were thoroughly conscientious, his course would, at least, prove him rather obtuse as respected right where his personal interests were involved. Indeed, to refuse to heed the counsel of three brethren and to necessitate the bringing of the wrong to the Church for adjudication would be an unfavorable indication, even if he afterward heard the Church and obeyed it and made amends to A.

25. How should brotherly kindness be exercised toward brethren who have doctrinal "hobbies"?

Romans 14:1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

F317 [¶1] through F318 [¶1]:

In support of our third proposition: No matter how confident we are that we have the truth, it would certainly be unwise for us so to shut and lock the door of interrogation and contrary expressions as thoroughly to exclude all that might be considered error by the leader of the meeting or by the entire congregation. One limitation alone should prevail to a thorough exclusion; viz., that the gatherings of the New Creatures are not for the consideration of secular subjects, worldly sciences and philosophies, but solely for the study of the divine revelation; and in the study of the divine revelation the congregation should first, last and always recognize the difference between the foundation principles of the doctrines of Christ (which no member may change or alter, nor consent to have questioned) and the discussion of advanced doctrines, which must be fully in accord with the foundation principles. The latter should at all times have full, free opportunities to be heard, and there should be meetings at which they can be heard. This, however, does not mean that they should be heard over and over, and that some individual should be permitted to confuse and distract every meeting and every topic with some particular hobby. Let his hobby have a fair hearing and a fair discussion at an appropriate time, in the presence of some well versed in the Truth, and if ruled out by the congregation as unscriptural, and the promoter of the thought be not convinced of its unscripturalness, let him at least refrain from intruding the subject upon the notice of the Church for a long time--perhaps a year--when he might without impropriety request another hearing, which might or might not be granted, as the congregation should think the matter worthy or unworthy of hearing and investigation.

What we urge is, that unless there be some such vent, two dangers may be encountered: One, the danger of falling into the condition we see prevailing now in the nominal churches of Christendom, in which it is impossible to find access to their ears through their regular Church meetings, every avenue of approach being carefully guarded. The other danger is, that the individual having a theory which appeals to his judgment as truth--no matter how false and irrational it might be--would never feel satisfied unless it should have a reasonable hearing, but would be

continually obtruding the topic; whereas, after having been heard reasonably, even if not convinced of the error of his argument, he would be disarmed as respects the impropriety of intruding the matter upon those who have already heard and rejected his thought.

26. What is the relation between brotherly kindness and "the unity of the faith"?

Ephes. 4:11-16 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

F239 [¶1] through F240 [¶1]:

In his letter to the Ephesians (4:1-16) the Apostle reiterates this lesson of the oneness of the Church as one body of many members, under one Head, Christ Jesus, and united by one spirit--the spirit of love. He exhorts all such members to walk worthy of their calling in lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. In this chapter the Apostle sets forth the various members of the body appointed to special services in it, and tells us the **object** of the service; saying: "he gave some [to be] apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers; **for the perfecting of the saints** for the work of the ministry [preparing them for the glorious ministry or service of the Millennial Kingdom], for the edifying [building up] of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we,...speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth ... maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. 4:11-16

We note the picture which the Apostle draws for us--that of a human body, but small and undeveloped. He informs us that it is the divine will that all of the various members should grow to full development, full strength and power--"the full stature of manhood" is the picture which represents the Church in its proper, complete condition. Carrying the figure down through the age to the present time, we see that member after member fell asleep to await the grand organization of the Millennial morning in the First Resurrection, and that the places of these were being continually supplied, so that the Church was never without a full organization, although at times there might be greater weaknesses in one member and greater strength in another. However, the endeavor of each member at all times must be to do everything in his power for the upbuilding of the body, for the strengthening of the members and for their perfection in the graces of the Spirit--"till we all come to the unity of the faith."

Unity of faith is desirable; it is to be striven for--yet not the kind of unity that is generally aimed at. Unity is to be along the lines of "the faith once delivered unto the

saints" in its purity and simplicity, and with full liberty to each member to take different views of minor points, and with no instruction whatever in respect to human speculations, theories, etc. The Scriptural idea of unity is upon the foundation principles of the Gospel. (1) Our redemption through the precious blood, and our justification by demonstrated faith therein. (2) Our sanctification, setting apart to the Lord, the Truth and their service--including the service of the brethren. (3) Aside from these essentials, upon which unity must be demanded, there can be no Scriptural fellowship; upon every other point fullest liberty is to be accorded, with, however, a desire to see, and to help others to see, the divine plan in its every feature and detail. Thus each member of the body of Christ, maintaining his own personal liberty, is so thoroughly devoted to the Head and to all the members that it will be his pleasure to lay down all, even life itself, on the behalf.

F326 through F328--"Let Every Man Be Fully Persuaded in His Own Mind" (Rom. 14:5)

All logical minds delight in reaching a **decision**, if possible, respecting every item of truth; and this the Apostle declares should be striven for by each member of the Church for himself--"in his own mind." It is a common mistake, however, to attempt to apply this personally good rule to a Church or to a class in Bible-study--to attempt to force all to decide on exactly the same conclusion respecting the meaning of the Lord's Word. It is proper that we should wish that all might "see eye to eye"; but it is not reasonable to expect it when we know that all are fallen from perfection, not only of body, but also of mind, and that these deflections are in various directions, as shown by the various shapes of head to be found in any gathering of people. Our various kinds and degrees of education are important factors also in assisting or hindering oneness of view.

But does not the Apostle intimate that we should all mind the same things?--and that we will be all taught of God so that we will all have the spirit of a sound mind?--and that we should expect to grow in grace and knowledge, building one another up in the most holy faith?

Yes, all this is true; but it is not intimated that it will all be attained in one meeting. The Lord's people not only have differently developed heads, and differences in experience or education, but they are additionally of different ages as New Creatures--babes, youths, matured. It must not surprise us, therefore, if some are slower than others to comprehend and, hence, slower to be fully persuaded in their own minds respecting some of "the deep things of God." They must grasp the **fundamentals**--that all were sinners; that Christ Jesus, our Leader, **redeemed** us by his sacrifice finished at Calvary; that we are now in the School of Christ to be taught and fitted for the Kingdom and its service; and that none enter this School except upon full consecration of their all to the Lord. These things all must see and fully and always assent to, else we could not recognize them as even baby brothers in the New Creation; but we have all need of patience with each other, and forbearance with each other's peculiarities--and behind these must be love, increasing every grace of the Spirit as we attain more and more nearly to its fulness.

This being so, all questions, all answers, all remarks--in meetings where several participate --should be **for the entire company present (and not personal to any one or any number), and should, therefore, be addressed to the Chairman**, who represents all--except when the Chairman may for convenience request the speaker to face and address the audience direct. Hence, too, after having expressed his own view, each is quietly to hear the views of others and not

feel called to debate or restate his already stated position. Having used his opportunity, each is to trust to the Lord to guide and teach and show the truth, and should not insist that all must be **made to see** every item as he sees it, nor even as the majority view it. "On essentials, unity; on non-essentials, charity," is the proper rule to be followed.

We agree, however, that every item of truth is important, and that the smallest item of error is injurious, and that the Lord's people should pray and strive for unity in knowledge; but we must not hope to attain this by force. Unity of spirit on the first basic principles of truth is the important thing; and where this is maintained we may be confident that our Lord will **guide** all possessing it into all truth due and necessary to him. It is in this connection that the leaders of the Lord's flock need special wisdom and love and force of character and clearness in the Truth, so that at the conclusion of each meeting he who has led may be able to summarize the Scriptural findings and leave all minds under their blessed influence-- expressing himself clearly, positively, lovingly-- but never dogmatically, except upon the foundation principles.

R2877 [col. 1 ¶7]:

No doubt all have been struck with the fact that those who manifest the deepest interest in the divine plan are not always the most smooth and most agreeable people in the world: frequently they are so combative as to be continually distressing both themselves and their friends by their unwisdom or their disposition to wrangling and contention. The very quality which the Apostle mentions in this text as like-mindedness or harmony is peculiarly lacking, naturally, in the disposition of the majority of those who become deeply interested in present truth. And some have been inclined hastily to condemn the doctrines and to say, This is not the peaceable spirit of Christ. Where the spirit of Christ is there should be love and harmony. So says the Apostle: "**Finally**, be ye all of one mind." And this should be borne in mind as being the final result of discipline and instruction in the school of Christ; by our attainment of this disposition to harmony (while at the same time loyal and courageous for the truth), we may safely gauge our growth in grace, knowledge and love.

R3127 [col. 1 ¶6]:

But if there was nothing in the condition of the Philippians to reprove, they, nevertheless, needed the exhortation to stand fast. They had already, by the Lord's favor, reached a considerable attainment in the graces of the spirit--they must needs be tested, however, to prove them, to try them; and for this ordeal, which every individual, as well as every congregation of the Lord's people must expect, the Apostle wished to prepare them--to urge that they do not retreat from the advanced steps of love and obedience already taken --that they continue firm, not, however, trusting to their own strength, but, as he expresses it, that they should "stand fast in the Lord," trusting in his power, in his grace, sufficient for every time of need.

R3128 [col. 2 ¶2, 3]:

"Be careful for nothing" is the next exhortation; but since our English word **careful** has lost its original meaning, there is danger of error here. The word originally had the thought of being full of care--anxiety, trouble. The Apostle's words correspond exactly to our Lord's injunction, "Take no thought," and signify, Be not anxious, burdened, full of care. It is proper that the Lord's people should be careful, in the meaning of the word careful as used today. We should not be careless, indifferent, loose in our conduct or words, but be circumspect.

Anxiety and burdens are unavoidable to those who are depending on themselves, their own wisdom, their own strength, their own skill; but the members of the body of Christ, accepted in the Beloved, adopted into the divine family, sons of God, are assured over and over again in the Word that if they abide faithful all things shall work together for their highest welfare. Why should they be burdened? Why should they feel anxious? He who guards their interests slumbers not. When Christians find themselves anxious, fearful, burdened, the evidence is that they are lacking in faith, and the probability is that they have either never grown to the point of having the proper faith in the Lord, or that they have allowed "earth-born clouds" and cares of this life to come between them and the Lord, so that they no longer have confidence that they are abiding in his love and in his care. All in such condition should go at once to the throne of heavenly grace, and to the divine promises, and obtaining mercy at the former, and feeding upon the latter, they should grow strong in the Lord and in confidence in him, and their corroding cares will give place to faith, confidence, peace of heart, whatever the outward conditions.

27. How should brotherly kindness deal with serious offenders in the Church?

F302 [¶1]:

While considering this phase of the subject, we might pause a moment to inquire the extent to which the Church, directly or indirectly, or through its elders, is to exercise this duty of admonishing the disorderly, and of eventually excluding them from the assembly. It is not within the power of the Church to exclude permanently. The brother who, having offended either a brother member or the whole Church body, returns again and says, "I repent of my wrong course, and promise my best endeavors to do right in the future," or the equivalent of this, is to be forgiven--fully, freely--as heartily as we hope the Lord will forgive the trespasses of all. No one but the Lord has the power or authority to cut off any individual everlastingly--the power to sever a branch from the Vine. We are informed that there is a sin unto death, for which it is useless to pray (1 John 5:16); and we are to expect that such a wilful sin as would thus bring the penalty of the Second Death would be so open, so flagrant, as to be readily discerned by those who are in fellowship with the Lord. We are not to judge of any by what is in their hearts, for we cannot read their hearts; but if they commit wilful sin unto death it will surely become manifest outwardly--by their lips, if they are doctrinal transgressions, denying the precious blood of atonement; or by their immoralities, if they have turned to walk after the flesh, "like the sow that is washed, to her wallowing in the mire." It is respecting such as these, referred to in Heb. 6:4-8; 10:26-31, that the Apostle warns us to have no dealings whatever--not to eat with them, not to receive them into our houses, and not to bid them Godspeed (2 John 9-11); because those who would affiliate with them or bid them Godspeed would be accounted as taking their places as enemies of God, and as partaking of the evil deeds or evil doctrines, as the case might be.

F417 [¶2] through F418-- Offenses Against the Church

We have considered the procedure proper in judging offenses against the individual; but in the case of the fornicator mentioned by the Apostle, and in other supposable cases, the offense might be against no particular member of the **Ecclesia**; but against the whole--against the cause we unitedly represent. What then should be the mode of procedure?

It might be the same as in the individual grievance, if the sin were not public property. But if the matter were publicly known, it would be the duty of the elders to

cite the offender before the Church for trial, without the preliminary private visits; because the publicity had taken it beyond any private settlement. Likewise, if it were a case of slander against the elders or any of them, the hearing should be by the Church and not privately; because the slanderers, if they conscientiously thought they had a good cause, yet had neglected the Lord's rule ("Go to him alone," and afterward "Take with thee two or three others") and had spread scandalous and defamatory tales, had thereby **carried** the matter beyond the power of **individual** rectification and **made** it a matter for the Church.

In such cases it would be proper for the slandered Elder to call together the Board of Elders as representatives of the Church, and to deny the calumnies and ask that the slanderers be indicted to answer charges of slander and false-witnessing before the Church; because their offense was toward the Church (1) in that it was contrary to the rules laid down by the Head of the Church and contrary to decency and good morals; and (2) because the slander being against an Elder chosen by the Church was thus a slander against the entire Church selecting him. The slanderers should be condemned and rebuked and required to acknowledge their error; but after doing this they would have a right to proceed against the Elder supposed to be in error, just as they should have done at first.

28. By what rules are "false brethren" to be judged?

See Topical Index of Watch Tower Bible, under "Brethren."

29. What should be our attitude toward "siftings" among the brethren?

1 Cor. 11:19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

R2386 [col. 1 ¶2 to end]:

But gradually the leads his readers onward and points out to them their low spiritual condition (1 Cor. 3:3), as evidenced by the facts which he cites, saying, "There is amongst you envying and strife and divisions" (a party spirit, dividing themselves under human leadership rather than uniting themselves under Christ, the true and only head). Let it be noted that the Apostle does not accuse the Church at Corinth of what would be termed gross worldly sins, murder, theft, blasphemy, etc., but of the more refined evidences of a wrong condition of heart--a lack of the spirit of love: And yet, as our Lord pointed out, anger, hatred and malice are **murder in the heart**. Proceeding further, however, he shows that not all of them, but only a part, are in this seriously wrong condition of heart. He adds, therefore (11:18), "I hear that there be divisions amongst you, and I believe it respecting part of you; for there must be also parties amongst you, **that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.**"

Likewise the siftings in progress during this harvest time are not only to separate those whom the Lord disapproves, but are also to make manifest those whom the Lord does approve: and in no way can this matter be more clearly and distinctly noted than in respect to the difference of spirit manifested where there is a division, a sifting, in progress. We do not refer particularly to the difficulty which you mention, of which we have no other knowledge as yet: we are dealing merely with general principles, which seem applicable in every such case. Those who have not yet had a sifting have had special opportunities to grow strong in the knowledge of the truth and in the spirit of it, and when their sifting does come, it probably will be severe in proportion to the blessings previously enjoyed.

We urge, therefore, upon all of the Lord's people, everywhere, that they set their own hearts in order, purging out all the leaven of malice, envy, strife, hatred, evil speaking (incipient **murder**), and fill every corner and interstice of their nature, so far as possible, with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of the truth, Love: and that when siftings or separations shall come, they take heed and be not deceived by the Adversary, who always will attempt to put darkness for light, and will not hesitate at misrepresentations, back-biting, evil speaking, slander, etc. And as the Adversary does not hesitate at these, neither do those who become, either knowingly or unknowingly, his agents and tools. Such seem to lose not only their self-respect and sense of propriety and justice and love of truth (which even the world and nominal Christians would have), but in their bitterness of spirit seem to give full testimony respecting which spirit it is that animates them. In these trials and siftings we may be sure that only the one class will come off victors, viz., those who abide under the shadow of the Almighty, trusting in the precious blood, and seeking in all things to be conformed to the image of the Lord, not only in their doctrines, but also in the acts of daily life, and in their words and thoughts. Remember the words of the Apostle Peter, respecting the necessity for putting on the graces of the spirit:--"If ye do these things ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

The duty of the faithful in every case is the same: to hold up the light--to manifest the spirit of the truth and to **refuse** to tolerate the evil--to reprove it by the Word of the Lord and in a spirit of love and gentle firmness. The sooner all who love evil--anger, malice, hatred, etc.--depart from those who delight to speak the truth in love, the better. As the Apostle suggests of this class-- "They went out from us, because they were not all of us." Let not those who love the truth and have its spirit of love depart; but let them forget not the assembling of themselves together, and so much the more as they see the Day drawing on.

But nothing in the foregoing should be understood to advise the **forcing** of a breach, or carelessness as to who may "stumble." Quite the contrary, true love of the brethren means patience, long suffering, gentleness, kindness,--willingness to yield to them and accommodate them in anything nonessential--in anything not opposed to the letter or spirit of the truth. For love and faithfulness to God alone takes precedence to love and faithfulness to the brethren. Each, therefore should not only sacrifice his own non-essential preferences (to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace), but more: the Apostle declares the proper measure of this love is willingness to "lay down our lives for the brethren."

Only after we have thus done **all in our power** to preserve unity along Scriptural lines and a rupture is unavoidable, may we regard it as a providential sifting from which good will result. And each should previously carefully and prayerfully scrutinize his own heart and conduct to make sure that not selfishness and vainglory are ruling him, but only love. And when a rupture does occur, each should be careful to avoid any unkind words or acts and looks, which later on might be barriers to hinder the return of any who, seeing the error of their way, might subsequently desire to return to holy fellowship. And such returning ones should be most heartily and joyfully received;--"pulling them out of the fire," etc.

These "siftings" seem to emphasize the Master's words,--"Take heed that no man take thy crown." Our joy at seeing some come into the light of present truth is necessarily modified by the thought that they are probably taking the places in trial

of some who have been weighed in the balances and found wanting. "Let us fear," as the Apostle suggests, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it by losing either the **faith** or the **spirit** of the truth: for the loss of either one means soon or later the loss also of the other.

30. What should be the attitude of all "true sacrificers" toward each other and toward those who have left "the Holy"?

T62 [¶1-3]:

The Apostle Paul explains that only those animals which were **sin-offerings** were burned outside the camp. And then he adds, "Let **us** go to **him**, without the camp bearing the reproach with him." (Heb. 13:11-13) Thus is furnished unquestionable evidence not only that the **followers** of Jesus are represented by this "Lord's goat," but also that their sacrifice, reckoned in with their Head, Jesus, constitutes part of the world's sin-offering. "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me." Psa. 69:9

As with the bullock so with the goat in the sin-offerings: the **burning** "outside the camp" represents the dis-esteem in which the offering will be viewed by those outside the camp--not in covenant relationship with God--the unfaithful. (1) Those who recognize the sacrifice of the Body of Christ from the divine standpoint, as sweet incense to God, penetrating even to the mercy seat, are but few--only those who are themselves in the "Holy"--"seated with Christ in the heavenlies." (2) Those who recognize the sacrifices of the saints, represented by the fat of the "Lord's goat" of the sin-offering on the Brazen Altar, and who realize their self-denials as acceptable to God, are more numerous--all who occupy the "Court" condition of justification--"the household of faith." (3) Those, outside the camp, who see these sacrificers and their self-denials only as the consuming of "the filth and offscourings of the earth" are a class far from God--his "enemies through wicked works." Those are the ones of whom our Lord foretold, "They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake."

What lessons do these things inculcate? That so long as we ourselves are true sacrificers in the "Holy," or true members of the "household of faith" in the "Court," we will not be revilers of any that are true sacrificers of this present time. Nor will we be blinded by malice, hatred, envy or strife--so as to be unable to see the sacrifices which God accepts. What, then, shall we say of those, once "brethren," sharers in the same sacrifices and offerers at the same "Golden Altar," and fellows of the order of royal-priesthood, who become so changed, so possessed of an opposite spirit, that they can speak evil of their fellow-priests continually! We must surely "**fear**" for them (Heb. 4:1) that they have **left** the "Holy," and the "Court," and gone outside of all relationship to God--into "outer darkness." We should do all in our power to recover them (James 5:20); but under no consideration must we leave the "Holy" to render evil for evil, reviling for reviling. No, all who would be faithful under-priests must follow in the footsteps of the great High Priest and love their enemies and do good to those who persecute them. They must copy him "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered threatened not; but committed his cause to him who judgeth righteously." 1 Peter 2:23

F478 [¶2 through first half of ¶3]:

Of the Master it is written, "Of the people there was none with him"--none able to sympathize with him in his own hour of trial. With us it is different. We have fellow-members of the body, similarly baptized into death, similarly pledged to be "broken"

as members of the one loaf, and accepted and anointed with the same holy Spirit. And as we remember this, let us the more earnestly seek to be helpful to the fellow-members of the body, remembering that whatsoever is done to the least member of the body is done unto the Head, and is appreciated by him. We can appropriately remember at the same time the example of Peter--his earnest impulsiveness, as a servant of the Lord, and yet his weakness in a moment of trial, and his need of the Lord's help and prayers. "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." To remember this may be a special aid to us, as it undoubtedly was subsequently to the Apostle Peter. It will enable us all the more to look to the Lord for "grace to help in every time of need."

It will be well at the same time that we remember Judas, and that his fall came through selfishness--ambition, covetousness; and as we remember how through this door of selfishness Satan more and more entered into him, it may help us to be on our guard lest we should similarly fall into a snare of the Adversary; lest we, for any consideration, should deny the Lord that bought us; lest we should ever in any sense of the word betray the Lord or his brethren or his Truth.

31. How does brotherly kindness apply "the Golden Rule"?

F376 [¶1, 2]:

This divine law affects the New Creature's relationship to God. He recognizes the meaning of the expression, "Love the Lord with **all** thy heart, with **all** thy mind, with **all** thy being, with **all** thy strength." He finds no room for self here, except as self shall be fully in accord with God. This affects his relationship with the brethren, for how could he love God, whom he has not seen (except with the eye of faith), if he does not love the brethren who have God's Spirit and whom he has seen with the natural sight? (1 John 4:20,21) As he learns to consider carefully in his dealings with them, to do for them and toward them as he would that they should do for him and toward him, he finds that it effects a great transformation in life; that this is not at all the rule or law under which he himself and others have been accustomed to live, to think, to act, to speak.

He finds that as he would like brethren to act kindly toward him, and speak gently to him, so he should speak and act kindly and gently to them. As he would like to have them be patient with his imperfections and weaknesses, and to draw the mantle of charity over these human defects, so he should do toward them. He finds that as he would not like to have the brethren speak evil of him, even if the evil were true, so he should be kindly affectioned toward them, and "speak evil of no man," but "do good unto all men," especially to the household of faith. As he would not like to have others expect of him more than he could reasonably do, so he would not expect of others more than they could reasonably do. The same principle would operate also in respect to the world and its affairs. The whole course of life is thus gradually changed; and, as the Apostle suggests, this change comes in proportion as we "behold the glory of the Lord"-- in proportion as we come to appreciate and learn to copy the grandeur of the divine character ruled by this Golden Rule of perfect Justice, coupled with abounding Love.

F406 [¶1] through F409:

But if to tell uncomplimentary truth is to violate the Law of Love and the Golden Rule, what shall we say of the still more disreputable, still more unlovely, still more criminal habit so common, not only amongst the worldly and nominally Christian, but also among true Christians--that of telling about others disreputable things not

positively known to be the truth. Oh shame! shame! that any of the Lord's people should so overlook the Lord's instruction, "speak evil of no man"; and that any but the merest babes and novices in the Law of Love should so misunderstand its message--that any without the most indubitable proofs at the mouth of two or three witnesses, and then reluctantly, should even believe evil of a brother or a neighbor, much less to repeat it--to slander him upon suspicion or hearsay evidence!

We Should Judge Ourselves

"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged [punished, corrected of the Lord]." 1 Cor. 11:31

The Golden Rule would surely settle this disposition to "gossip" about others and their affairs. What slanderer wishes to be slandered? What gossip wishes to have his matters and difficulties and weaknesses discussed either publicly or confidentially? The "world" has little else to talk about than gossip and scandal, but the New Creation should preferably be dumb until the love and plan of God have furnished them with the great theme of which the angels sang--"Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will toward men." Then the "words of their mouths and the meditations of their hearts" will be acceptable to the Lord and a blessing to those with whom they come in contact.

The Apostle, commenting upon the tongue, shows that this little member of our bodies has great influence. It may scatter kind words that will never die, but go on and on blessing the living and through them the yet unborn. Or, "full of deadly poison," it may scatter poisonous seeds of thought to embitter the lives of some, and to blight and crush the lives of others. The Apostle says--"Therewith bless [honor] we God, even the Father; and therewith curse [injure] we men,...out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?" James 3:8-11

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh"; so that when we are gossiping about others, "busybodying" in their affairs, it proves that a large corner of our hearts, if not more, is empty as respects the love and grace of God. This thought should lead us at once to the throne of grace and to the Word for a filling of the Spirit such as the Lord has promised to those who hunger and thirst after it. If, still worse than idle gossiping and busybodying, we have **pleasure** in hearing or speaking evil of others, the heart condition is still worse: it is overflowing with bitterness--envy, malice, hatred, strife. And these qualities the Apostle declares are "works of the flesh and the devil." (Gal. 5:19-21) Would that we could astound and thoroughly awaken the "New Creation" on this subject; for if ye do these things ye will surely fall, and no entrance will be granted such into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Fitting for the Kingdom leads us in the very opposite direction, as the Apostle Peter declares, "Add to your faith patience, brotherly kindness, **love**; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall; but gain an abundant entrance into the Kingdom." (2 Pet. 1:5-11) The Apostle James is very plain on the subject and says: "If ye have bitter envyings and strife in your hearts, glory not and **lie not against the truth**. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." (James 3:14,15) Whoever has such a slanderous and bitter spirit has the very reverse of the Spirit of Christ, the holy Spirit, the spirit of Love: let him not lie either to himself or

to others--let him not glory in his shame --let him not thus put darkness for light, the spirit of Satan for the Spirit of the Anointed.

Proceeding, the Apostle declares the secret of the confusion and unrest which has troubled the Lord's people at all times, to be in this unclean, only partially sanctified condition of the heart, saying, "where envying and strife is, there is confusion [disquiet, unrest] and every evil work." (James 3:16) If these weeds of the old fallen nature are permitted to grow they will not only be noxious but will gradually crowd out and kill all the sweet and beautiful flowers and graces of the Spirit.

R2667 [col. 1 ¶1-4 and col. 2 ¶1, 2]:

Our sins were covered from the Lord's sight, and we were treated as tho we owed him nothing, by his grace, exercised toward us through Christ Jesus and his atoning sacrifice; and this reckoned forgiveness will be made actual by and by, and the debt entirely canceled, if, according to the New Covenant we have made with the Lord, we shall prove faithful in cultivating his spirit of love and in becoming copies of his dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,--forgiving others as we would be forgiven by the Lord, loving, sympathizing with and helping others as we have been treated by the Lord, etc.

The parable is but an illustration of the Golden Text of our lesson, taken from the Lord's prayer: it is only so long as we are willing to forgive our debtors that we may pray with confidence to our heavenly Father and hope for his forgiveness of our trespasses. If we forgive not our fellow-creatures, and that not merely in word, but in deed and from the heart, neither will our heavenly Father forgive our trespasses, and altho he has generously covered them from his sight, and treated us as justified by faith, he would immediately remember our trespasses against us, and thus our justification would lapse or be abrogated, by a failure on our part to exercise the holy spirit toward the brethren and toward all men as we have opportunity.

From this standpoint the question of forgiveness of the brethren and forgiveness of all others is a very serious one to the Lord's people. It means that if they do not in a reasonable time develop this spirit of forgiveness, the spirit of love, the spirit of God, the holy spirit, they cannot continue to be recognized as Christ's disciples, they cannot continue to be recognized as children of God, they cannot be recognized as having their sins covered, but, on the contrary, will be treated as even more responsible than the world of mankind in general, and have executed upon them severer punishments than will be exacted from others who knew not the Master's will, and who have never tasted of his grace, and who therefore would be less culpable in the exercise of a selfish, uncharitable, ungenerous, unforgiving spirit.

We cannot suppose, however, that the Lord would expect perfection in this matter at once, from those who are still but "babes" in Christ. But his expectations are reasonable, that we should grow in grace as we grow in knowledge of him, and as expressed in the lesson of the Vine and the Branches; every branch which in due time, after due opportunity, does not bring forth the fruitage of the vine, the grapes of love (including forgiveness), will be cut off by the great Husbandman,-- no longer recognized as a branch. So in this parable, the one who had experienced such great blessing from the king, and who had been reckoned for the time an honored member of his kingdom lass, ceased to be so regarded and so treated, and, on the contrary, was treated by the king without favor.

The Lord's people very generally find themselves in considerable trouble along the line of justice. We all recognize justice as the very foundation of all order and righteousness, and when we feel that justice is on our side it is proportionately the more difficult to freely forgive the person whom we believe to have been acting from the standpoint of injustice. There is a general tendency to require others to measure up to our standard of justice, by some sort of penance, before we forgive them. It is against this very spirit that our Lord was teaching, and to counteract which he gave this parable. We are to remember that the Lord will require us to live up to the standards we set for others. If our standard in dealing with others be one of exact **justice**, we may expect no mercy at the Lord's hands. (See James 2:13.) And what would this mean as respects the sins that are past through the forbearance of God, and what would it mean as respects the obligations upon us every day and every hour, to whose full requirements we are unable to measure? As we cannot come to the Lord ourselves on the score of justice, so we are not to deal with others upon that standard. As we must ask of the Lord mercy, grace, forgiveness, so we must be willing to extend to others mercy, grace, forgiveness, when they trespass against us; and as heartily, quickly and freely as we ourselves hope for.

The Lord has not laid down this rule in an arbitrary fashion, as simply saying, If you do not forgive others I will not forgive you. There is a deeper reason for it than this. He wishes to develop in us his own spirit, his own character, a likeness or copy of which was exhibited to us in the person and life of his dear Son, our Lord Jesus. It is absolutely essential, therefore, that we shall have the character he desires, or else we can never attain to the joint-heirship in the Kingdom which he is pleased to extend. Hence we are to understand that this requirement or command of forgiveness, etc., is with a view to develop us as copies of his dear Son, in order that he may bestow upon us, in due time, all the riches of his grace, contained in the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word.

32. How should brotherly love exercise itself toward the special servants of the Church?

R2593--"Avoid Flattery":

In a recent letter one of the "Pilgrims," after giving particulars respecting his efforts to feed the Lord's sheep and lambs concludes thus:--"Pray for me, dear brother, that I may be kept a `servant.' Could you not in some way through the TOWER suggest to the friends not to praise a `pilgrim' to his face: they do not know what `offences' they sometimes cause, what feelings of latent pride they arouse."

R3572 [col. 1 ¶5, 6 through col. 2 ¶1]:

Having pictured the work of restitution down to its consummation in the delivery of the kingdom to man, in harmony with the Father's intention, the address of the revelation changes. We are assured that these wonderful promises are faithful and true, that the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. Then the Master speaks to all of his Church who have ears to hear, saying, "Behold, I come quickly: Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." The intimation seems to be that the book being symbolical, none can understand it except as its seals are loosed, as its message opens before the Lord's people; and that when its sayings, its teachings come to be appreciated, it may be recognized by those who do understand it as an evidence that the Lord's second advent and the establishment of his Kingdom are close at hand.

This thought is further borne out by the statement of `verse 8`. As we have already seen, John the revelator represented those favored members of the Church who, living in this end of the Gospel age, are granted the privilege of seeing and appreciating more and more the things which he saw in symbol. The revelation being complete, John fell down before the angel who had given him the revelation to offer him worship. This may signify that in the end of this Gospel age as the whole Church, the John class, comes to see the unfolding of the divine plan, there might be a spirit or disposition amongst them to do too much honor to the one used of the Lord in communicating to them the divine light now due.

The proprieties of the case are set forth to us in the conduct of the symbolical angel who talked to John and who represented some in the end of this age commissioned to present God's truths to his people. He said, "See thou do it not"--do not worship me, for I am not the author of this plan. I am thy fellow servant, a brother to all the prophets and all those who keep the message of this revelation. God alone should be worshiped: he is the Author of the great plan and will be the finisher of it. It is brought to our attention now by him because it is now "due time" for his people to come to an appreciation of his plans.

R2079 [col. 2 to end]--Worshipping Fellow Messengers.

God's people are to love and esteem each other, and that in proportion as they recognize in each other the spirit of God, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of holiness and devotion to truth and righteousness; as the Apostle says, the faithful should be esteemed "very highly for their work's sake" (1 Thess. 5:13); but while there may be danger that some will fail to render "honor to whom honor is due" (Rom. 13:7), there is undoubtedly danger also that some might render too much honor to human instruments, whom God is pleased to use in connection with the service of the truth. It is proper therefore that we call attention here, as we have done heretofore, to the danger of man-worship. This matter is very forcibly brought to our attention in Revelation 22:9. John the Revelator, who, representing the living saints all down through the Gospel age, is caused to see unfolding the various features of the divine plan, in conclusion falls down to worship the angel who showed him those things. So there has been and is a tendency on the part of many to give more than love, respect and honor to the servants of God who from time to time have been used as special servants of God in bringing to the attention of the Church things new and old, or to the particular brother or sister who was the means of conversion or other spiritual benefit. There was this disposition in the early Church, some exalting one Apostle and some another as their chief and master, and naming themselves as his disciples, saying, "I am of Paul;" or "I am of Apollos;" or "I am of Peter," etc. The Apostle Paul assures them that this disposition indicates a measure of carnality, and he inquires, who then are Paul, Apollos and Peter, but merely the servants or channels through whom God has been pleased to send you the blessings of the truth. "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." He indicates thus that they should recognize, not the channels through whom the blessings came, but the Lord, the Author of their blessings, and loyally bear no other name than his who died for and redeemed them.

Likewise, when the Church began to get rid of the gross darkness of the dark ages under the help and instruction of the reformers, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and others, they naturally and properly had great respect for those whom God had honored as the instruments in the work of reformation. But again the tendency to "worship" the messengers, the human agents, instead of the divine Author was manifested, and to-day there are hundreds of thousands who call themselves by the name of Luther,

Calvin, Wesley, Campbell and others, and who give more respect to their teachings and writings than to the Word of God, and this with corresponding injury to themselves.

Likewise, to-day, in the light of present truth, shining more clearly than ever before, no doubt there is need to be on guard against this carnal tendency which has had so deleterious an influence in the past.

When John fell down to worship the angel who had shown him the wonders of the divine plan, the angel's refusal to accept homage should be a lesson to all ministers (servants--messengers) of God. He said, "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant [not thy Lord and Master], and [fellow-servant] of thy brethren the prophets, and [fellow-servant] of [all] them which keep the sayings of this book. Worship God [the source from which come all these blessings and all this light]." All servants of God are fellow-servants regardless of the time or extent of their service.

The Apostle calls attention to this man-worshipping tendency in his epistle to the Colossians (2:18, 19), saying, "Let no man **beguile** you of your reward, in a **voluntary** humility and worshiping of angels [messengers]." The intimation is that this temptation will come insidiously, craftily, and not by brazen demands for reverence. Such is the reverence accorded in general to the ministry of the nominal churches. Many ministers who seem very meek, and who would not think of demanding reverence or worship, nevertheless accept of their flocks the **voluntary** title, Reverend, and encourage it, and feel offended if reverence or worship of this sort is not rendered. The effect has been and still is to injure the household of faith, to give an over-confidence in the judgment and word of the minister in spiritual things, so that many neglect to prove their faith by God's Word, and to trust implicitly to its authority.

And there is danger amongst those who do not use the title, Reverend. It should always be remembered (as pointed out in our issue of Nov. 15, 1895) that **control** resides in the congregation and not in **self**-appointed leaders, whether they seek to serve a dozen or thousands. The churches of Christ should recognize the leading of their Head, and know their leaders to be of his choice (See Heb. 13:7,17,24, Diaglott), but they should beware of any disposed to usurp the rights of the congregation or to ignore those rights by taking the place of leaders without the **specific** request of the congregation; **beguiling** the company into supposing that the leader alone is competent to judge and decide for the congregation as to the Lord's choice, and thus failing to hold the Head (Christ) as the only real teacher, who is able and willing to guide all the meek in judgment, because they are his Church--"his body."

Nor is this **beguiling** of the attention of the flock, away from the only Shepherd, to a fellow sheep always the fault of the "leaders:" there seems to be a general tendency on the part of all who have the true, humble, sheep nature to follow one another. It is a lesson, therefore, for all to learn,--that each sheep recognize as leaders only such as are found in full accord with the voice and spirit of the Chief Shepherd (Christ), and the under-shepherds (the Apostles), and that each sheep see to it that he eats only "clean provender" and drinks only "pure water" as directed by the Shepherd. (See Ezek. 34:17-19.) This implies the exercise of the individual conscience of each member of Christ's flock on matters of doctrine and practice, and tends to keep each one in sympathy and fellowship with the Shepherd, who knoweth each sheep and "calleth his own sheep by name." The same intimate relationship of

the individual Christian with the Lord is illustrated in the figure of Christ the Head and the Church as members of his body.--1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 4:15,16.

As we have been to some extent, by the grace of God, used in the ministry of the gospel, it may not be out of place to say here what we have frequently said in private, and previously in these columns,--namely, that while we appreciate the love, sympathy, confidence and fellowship of fellow-servants and of the entire household of faith, we want no homage, no reverence, for ourselves or our writings; nor do we wish to be called Reverend or Rabbi. Nor do we wish that any should be called by our name. The name of him who died for all--the name Christian--is quite sufficient to designate the spiritual sons of God, the true brethren of Christ; and whatsoever is more than this cometh of evil, of carnality, and tends toward more of the same.

Nor would we have our writings revered or regarded as infallible, or on a par with the holy Scriptures. The most we claim or have ever claimed for our teachings is, that they are **what we believe to be harmonious interpretations of the divine Word**, in harmony with the spirit of the truth. And we still urge, as in the past, that each reader study the subjects we present in the light of the Scriptures, proving all things by the Scriptures, accepting what they see to be thus approved, and rejecting all else. It is to this end, to enable the student to trace the subject in the divinely inspired Record, that we so freely intersperse both quotations and citations of the Scriptures upon which to build.

33. How should we exercise brotherly love toward our brethren still "in Babylon"?

R3541 [col. 1 ¶6-8]:

Let us rejoice with those who rejoice! Let us be glad to note every evidence of reform in heart or conduct! But let us remember that conversion is the beginning and not the end of the Christian life. If these converts are now of "the household of faith," let us greet them as such and congratulate them and hope for their growth in grace and knowledge to the point where they will be ready for the next step,--full consecration.

The privilege and responsibility for the instruction of these lies at our door; for alas! most other Christians through lack of development are unable to assist these into right paths of faith and hope, not having found these for themselves,--being still bewildered by the fog and smoke of the "dark ages." Let us be as wise and kind and helpful as possible along these lines; and let us pray for the wisdom from above promised in our year-text.

Meantime let us stand fast in our uncompromising but kindly opposition to Churchianity, "Babylon," and our loyalty to the One Church of many members of which Christ is the Head. While repudiating sectarian systems as of the Adversary, let us fellowship as brethren all who trust in the precious blood and are consecrated to his service --no matter how imperfectly they discern the truth--hoping for the fuller opening of the eyes of their understanding soon.

R3566 [col. 2 ¶10-13]:

Every true Christian, that is every believer in the atonement, secured by the precious blood, who has consecrated his all to his Savior and is striving daily even though stumblingly to walk in his steps, has a duty toward the visible Church-- toward the fellow-members of the Church of Christ.

(1) He should recognize **all** such and that without partiality, loving and striving to serve them as "brethren" in deed and in doctrine.

(2) Should he find these "brethren" bound in sectarian "bundles" (Matt. 13:30) he should not join a "bundle" to please them and encourage them in their error; but standing fast in his liberty in Christ he should seek the deliverance of the "brethren." His duty is to lift up the standard and get the true wheat out of all the tare-bundles into the same liberty, in union with Christ, the only Head.

(3) If he cannot have full fellowship at first, he will be all the more in the position the Savior himself occupied before he got a faithful few delivered from Jewish bondage and error. He should be just as kind and helpful to opposing brethren as their wrong ideas and position will permit; and he should foster fellowship specially with those who more and more hear the voice of the Shepherd and come out of Babylon.

F150 ¶2:

We have seen some of the Lord's consecrated people in a lean and starved condition--earnestly desiring a fulness of fellowship with him, yet lacking the necessary instruction as to how it should be attained and maintained. True, they had the Bible; but their attention was called away from that and they learned to look more to teachers and catechisms, etc., running after the traditions of men and not after the Mind or Spirit of God, and have, therefore, lacked the proper spiritual nourishment. The result has been that they have felt dissatisfied with formalism, and yet knew not how to draw nigh unto the Lord with their whole heart, because they knew not of his goodness and the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus, and of the grand plan of salvation for the world by and by, nor of the call of the Church to the New Nature. This starved condition needs, first of all, the pure, "sincere milk of the Word," and afterward the "strong meat" of the divine revelation. Such dear ones are not to be despised nor neglected even though, after realizing the emptiness of churchianity in general, they have been inclined to seek for something else to satisfy their heart-hunger--something of worldly entertainments, etc. We have known some of this class who had settled down to seeming indifference to spiritual things after having vainly tried in various directions to find some soul-satisfaction; but receiving "Present Truth" they blossomed forth in the spiritual graces and knowledge in a most remarkable manner. We believe there are many more of such in the various denominations, and that it is the privilege of those who have received the light of Present Truth to lend them a helping hand out of darkness into the marvelous light; out of spiritual starvation into a superabundance of grace and truth. But to be used of the Lord in blessing such, it is necessary that both wisdom and grace from on high be sought in the Word, and that these should be exercised kindly, faithfully and persistently.

34. How should brotherly kindness consider "social obligations"?

F588 through F590--Social Obligations

The New Creation, so long as identified with these mortal bodies, has through them a social contact with natural men, and certain social responsibilities. The new mind naturally craves fellowship with other new minds, and in proportion as development is made in graces of the Truth it finds itself more and more out of touch with worldly associations, aims, ambitions, literature and topics of conversation. With many the question arises, To what extent should the New Creatures who have reckoned themselves dead to earthly matters, interests, etc., still keep up association with

their friends according to the flesh--the unconsecrated. This is a matter which deserves the serious and careful attention of each individual; no two are circumstanced exactly alike, and no advice that could be given would fit all cases.

The Apostle advises that we do not company with evildoers, with those whose practices we recognize as being impure; that we have our companionship in harmony with the new mind. Such a course unquestionably will be to our advantage, because, first, such companionship will not continually encourage our fallen appetites, and natural, degraded tendencies; and, secondly, because it will be the more helpful in our endeavors to follow the Apostle's injunction and to think about and talk about and practice "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." Phil. 4:8

However, we should of course feel an interest in those related to us by ties of blood more than in mankind in general. So, then, if the Spirit of the Lord leads and prompts us to be gracious and kind toward humanity in general, it would imply that our sentiments toward our relatives should be specially considered, and be, to the extent of our opportunities, helpful. Nevertheless, it would not be wise, according to our judgment, nor would it be in harmony with the instructions of the Scriptures, nor in accord with the examples which they set before us of our Lord's conduct and the conduct of the apostles, for us to extend a very special fellowship to our earthly relatives; or to receive them or treat them better than, or even as well as, we would treat the household of faith. We here bar such close relationships as would have a demand upon us in accord with the Apostle's words, "He that provideth not for his **own**,... hath denied the faith." (1 Tim. 5:8) In general we are to apply the Apostle's words, "Do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith." Next to the household of faith should come our more distant relatives.

It evidently was the intention of our Lord to draw together his followers as a new family, as a new household, the "household of faith." Hence, we find the repeated injunction and encouragement for mutual fellowship, mutual helpfulness, and regular association; with the promise that where two or three meet in the Lord's name he would be specially present with them, to grant a blessing; and that his people should not forget the assembling of themselves together. Our Lord's course was in full accord with this giving of special attention to the household of faith, for we find that in celebrating the last Passover Supper, which was to be kept by each family apart (Ex. 12:1-21), the Lord met with his twelve apostles as a separate family--separate from all of their connections and his. We find the same thought in his words when informed that his mother and brethren were outside, desirous of speaking to him. He answered and said, "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." Matt. 12:47-50

Following this divine example, therefore, we are to expect to find our affections and interests more particularly drawn toward the fellow members of "the body of Christ," associates in the New Creation. This, however, must not be understood as nullifying in any measure the strictest proprieties between the sexes in the New Creation; nor does it imply that the unbelieving husband or wife is to be neglected that time and fellowship may be given to those of the new mind. On the contrary, the obligation of each is toward the mate--to see to it that no proper comfort, privilege or company is withheld. This, however, would not imply a submission to tyranny, such as would make no reasonable provision for the following of the divine command, "Forget not

the assembling of yourselves together,...and so much the more as ye see the day drawing on." Heb. 10:25

35. What course will brotherly love dictate in the matter of "borrowing and lending"?

Romans 13:8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

F564 [¶1, 2]:

"Owe no man anything but to love one another," is the divine rule, as expressed by the Apostle. (Rom. 13:8) It would be well if all the world knew of this rule and followed it closely, and we know that in due time just this rule will be rigidly enforced--during the Millennial age. But the New Creation has this as its rule now, and however others may fail to recognize it and to follow it, the Lord's people should obey this instruction implicitly. Even to natural Israel, the house of servants, the Lord laid down the injunction that if faithful to him they should be lenders, not borrowers (Deut. 15:6), and this principle commends itself to every person possessed of good judgment as being the very essence of wisdom-- wisdom which it would be well, were it possible, to apply to the world--wisdom which the world recognizes, but which comparatively few either of the Lord's people or of the world strenuously endeavor to follow as an invariable rule of life.

In other words, every member of the New Creation should, as respects earthly things, live within his means. If he can earn but a dollar a day he should not for a moment think of spending more than that, except upon the direst necessity, but should adapt his conditions accordingly, until there be a change to more favorable circumstances. Recognizing that the Lord's providential care is over him and all his affairs, he should, after arranging as wisely as he knows how respecting his temporal matters, conclude that these as well as his spiritual affairs have been subject to divine supervision, and that the Lord designed a blessing for him in connection with these conditions. He should, therefore, be thoroughly content with them, however trying they may be--waiting patiently on the Lord for such relief as divine love and wisdom may bring in due time. If the income be a liberal one, moderation should be his rule of conduct in this as in all things. "Let your moderation be known unto all men." Economy is a part of the divine arrangement, as exemplified by our Lord and the apostles, and particularly illustrated in the matter of the saving of the fragments by order of him who had power to create out of nothing food for a multitude.

F569 [¶1, 2]:

There is a kind of petty borrowing and lending practiced by many, especially in respect to household articles, soap, sugar, tubs, tools, etc., that deserves consideration here. The New Creatures, under the control of the spirit of a sound mind, must deprecate in their hearts such petty annoyances; so much so that they will be sure so to regulate their own affairs and wants as to make such borrowing an extremely rare matter --a matter of absolute necessity in case of sickness or other extremity. It should be a part of the determination of all the Lord's saints to put other people to as little trouble as possible. If, therefore, through neglect of proper attention to their affairs, they are short of butter for a meal, they should prefer to do without it rather than to annoy a neighbor and to set a bad example. If they have only one smoothing iron, and cannot afford to purchase another, they would best abide by the consequences, and use the one only.

Those who cultivate such strict regulations in respect to their own affairs will naturally feel more annoyed than would others if a neighbor comes to them to borrow. Nevertheless, the Lord's people are to be lenders, not borrowers; and our advice would be that in all reasonable moderation the Lord's people should gain a notoriety of peculiarity in both these respects--that they would be always willing to lend, and that heartily, with cheerfulness and goodwill, and a desire to please and accommodate, to the extent that they could afford to lose--and always unwilling to borrow. Such persons would admittedly be considered "good neighbors," whether they were thought "peculiar people" as respects their devotion to the Lord and his Word or not. True, the borrowers might not always return the article, and it might cost trouble to go after it; or, in the case of borrowing food, they might never return it. We should reflect, however, that if they thus borrowed and consumed and failed to return food, they would be less likely to come again for more. If circumstances would permit, we would prefer never to ask the return of a borrowed article. We would rather consider these favorable opportunities for making friends with the "mammon of unrighteousness"--good opportunities for sacrificing trivial earthly interests that we might, through these, obtain a greater moral and spiritual influence with our neighbors.

Luke 6:35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

F567 [¶2] through F568 [¶2]:

The Lord's counsel to his people on the other side of the question is equally explicit. If they see their brethren have need they are to do good and to "lend, hoping for nothing again"--without thought of gaining similar or other favors in return. We must, however, understand this injunction to "lend" to a brother in harmony with the other injunction that we should not borrow; and, hence, the implication would be that the brother possessed means and would be able to repay, but that temporarily he had need, and was able to give some kind of a mortgage or security to the one lending. But such lending, to assist a brother in necessity, should be done freely and without hope of reward--without stipulating for interest (usury), but merely for the return of the principal within the specified time. It should be purely an accommodation, an expression of brotherly love.

If the brother be not circumstanced so that he could repay or give security for the money, the loan should not be made, but, instead, a gift--to whatever extent the giver felt himself able to exercise charity and in proportion to the necessities of the brother. The brother might engage to pay back, but it should be insisted upon that it is a gift, unless subsequently the brother's affairs should decidedly change, and he should be abundantly able to return the gift, in which case he certainly should have the desire of heart so to do. Even then, if the giver were well able to afford it, he might say to the brother, "I cannot feel happy to take back the gift; therefore, I entreat you, pass it on to someone else, whom you may find in need, now or at some future time." The matter would be entirely different, however, if the brother or any other person wished to borrow money with a view to extending his business, and with the intention of making profit. To loan the money to such an one, taking ample security, and requiring interest would be thoroughly legitimate; and such interest would not be "usury," in the oppressive or wrong sense, but would be in harmony with what the Lord enjoined in his parable when he said, "Thou oughtest to have put

my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury [interest]." Matt. 25:27

In full accord with these injunctions, the Scriptures give us another, which might well be heeded, and always to profit, not only by the New Creation, but also by the world in general. The injunction reads, "A man void of understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend." (Prov. 17:18) According to this suggestion, sureties and securities for others, indorsements of notes, etc., would be barred, and wise it would be for all of the Lord's people to follow this rule carefully. Even in the most urgent case imaginable, in which there might be almost absolute necessity for going upon the bond of a brother, care should be exercised that no obligation is taken that could not be met without serious disaster. If the bond were for a sum that one would be willing to lend to the brother, or to give to him in case of necessity, then the bond or security or indorsement would be allowable, but not otherwise--never to the jeopardy of one's own credit, nor to the risk of one's own business, nor to the impoverishment of one's own family. Compare Prov. 22:26; 11:15; 6:1-5.

36. How should brotherly love regard visiting, "borrowing a neighbor's time"?

F570 [¶1] through F572:

While considering this subject we might mention another, closely related to it in a general way, viz., the habit of some of considering themselves at liberty to intrude upon their friends as visitors--borrowing the neighbor's **time**. It is a part of the generous spirit of love to be hospitable, and all of the Lord's people should cultivate this disposition on every suitable occasion, as one that is pleasing to the Lord and that will be helpful to their own spiritual growth. (Heb. 13:2) They should be pleased to entertain friends, neighbors, for a meal or for a night, etc., as their circumstances may permit: a heart desire to entertain should always be present, whether opportunity for the exercise of that desire be found or not. Hospitality does not signify lavish expenditure beyond one's means, nor that better should be provided for a guest than for one's own family. It does signify, however, a willingness to share such things as we have with others.

But let us look at the other side of the question. The Lord's consecrated people of the New Creation should never be intruders. They should be sure that they have a positive invitation and welcome before they accept hospitalities for a meal or for a night. How beautiful an illustration of this proper principle we have in the case of our Lord, walking with the two disciples to Emmaus! It was his desire to go with them into their home, and to share their evening meal, that he might confer additional blessing upon them. Nevertheless, when they reached their home, "he made as though he would go further," and waited until they had urged, or constrained him, before he consented to tarry with them. This was not a deception, nor would it be deceptive on our part to do similarly. Our Lord would not have remained with them unless they had urged him to do so, nor should we stay with any except such as give us a hearty welcome, nor remain longer than the hearty welcome might continue, whatever our circumstances.

The idea which seems to prevail in the minds of some, that they are at liberty to "sit down upon" natural relatives or spiritual relatives, is a great mistake. No such right prevails. We have the right to give and to be generous, but are not authorized to request or require such things from others. They have the right to give or to withhold

that which is their own, that of which they are stewards. As to how much the New Creatures should permit themselves to be imposed upon by mistaken brethren or relatives after the flesh would depend upon circumstances, largely upon the physical and financial conditions of the visitor. However, in justice to himself, and in justice also to the visitor who has the unsound mind upon this question, and who purposes to make his visit a visitation, the entertainer should kindly but plainly say--"I ought perhaps to tell you that it will not be convenient for me to have you with us longer than___"; or another good way in dealing with such people is to tell them at the beginning of their visit that it will be convenient to have them until a certain date, or to invite them definitely for a meal or a day or a week, as the case may be--indicating clearly the extent of the invitation and not leaving it to conjecture. Such a course seems absolutely necessary in the interest of the home, the family purse, one's own time, the Lord's service, etc., as well as proper and helpful to the large number of people who have unsound judgments along this line. But it is not necessary for us either to think or speak unkindly to or of these. They may perhaps have fallen more in this particular than we or some others, and we perhaps by nature were more fallen than they in other particulars. In any event we should think kindly, generously, respecting them, and all the more resolve that we ourselves will most thoroughly avoid the objectionable course.

37. What is the relation between brotherly love and communism?

D473 [¶3] through D481--Communism as a Remedy

Communism proposes a social system in which there will be community of goods; in which all property shall be owned in common and operated in the general interest, and all profits from all labor be devoted to the general welfare--"to each according to his needs." The tendency of Communism was illustrated in the French Commune. Its definition by Rev. Joseph Cook, is-- "**Communism** means the abolition of inheritance, the abolition of the family, the abolition of nationalities, the abolition of religion, the abolition of property."

Some features of Communism we could commend (see Socialism), but as a whole it is quite impracticable. Such an arrangement would probably do very well for heaven, where all are perfect, pure and good, and where love reigns; but a moment's reflection should prove to any man of judgment and experience that in the present condition of men's hearts such a scheme is thoroughly impracticable. The tendency would be to make drones of all. We would soon have a competition as to who could do the least and the worst work; and society would soon lapse into barbarism and immorality, tending to the rapid extinction of the race.

But some fancy that Communism is taught in the Bible and that consequently it must be the true remedy--God's remedy. With many this is the strongest argument in its favor. The supposition that it was instituted by our Lord and the Apostles, and that it should have continued to be the rule and practice of Christians since, is very common. We therefore present below an article on this phase of the subject from our own magazine:

"They Had All Things in Common"

"And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house

to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people." Acts 2:44-47

Such was the spontaneous sentiment of the early Church: selfishness gave place to love and general interest. Blessed experience! And without doubt a similar sentiment, more or less clearly defined, comes to the hearts of all who are truly converted. When first we got a realizing sense of God's love and salvation, when we gave ourselves completely to the Lord and realized his gifts to us, which pertain not only to the life that now is, but also to that which is to come--we felt an exuberance of joy, which found in every fellow-pilgrim toward the heavenly Canaan a brother or a sister in whom we trusted as related to the Lord and having his spirit; and we were disposed to deal with them all as we would with the Lord, and to share with them our all, as we would share all with our Redeemer. And in many instances it was by a rude shock that we were awakened to the fact that neither we nor others are perfect in the flesh; and that no matter how much of the Master's spirit his people now possess, they "have this treasure in earthen vessels" of human frailty and defection.

Then we learned, not only that the weaknesses of the flesh of other men had to be taken into account, but that our own weaknesses of the flesh needed constant guarding. We found that whilst all had shared Adam's fall, all had not fallen alike, or in exactly the same particulars. All have fallen from God's likeness and spirit of love, to Satan's likeness and spirit of selfishness; and as love has diversities of operations, so has selfishness. Consequently, selfishness working in one has wrought a desire for ease, sloth, indolence; in another it produced energy, labor for the pleasures of this life, self-gratification, etc.

Among those **actively** selfish some take selfgratification in amassing a fortune, and having it said, He is wealthy; others gratify their selfishness by seeking honor of men; others in dress, others in travel, others in debauchery and the lowest and meanest forms of selfishness.

Each one begotten to the new life in Christ, with its new spirit of love, finds a conflict begun, fightings with in and without; for the new spirit wars with whatever form of selfishness or depravity formerly had control of us. The "new mind of Christ," whose principles are justice and love, asserts itself; and reminds the **will** that it has assented to and covenanted to this change. The desires of the flesh (the selfish desires, whatever their bent), aided by the outside influence of friends, argue and discuss the question, urging that no radical measures must be taken--that such a course would be foolish, insane, impossible. The flesh insists that the old course cannot be changed, but will agree to slight modifications, and to do nothing so extreme as before.

The vast majority of God's people seem to agree to this partnership, which is really still the reign of selfishness. But others insist that the spirit or mind of Christ shall have the control. The battle which ensues is a hard one (Gal. 5:16, 17); but the new will should conquer, and self with its own selfishness, or depraved desires, be reckoned dead. Col. 2:20; 3:3; Rom. 6:2-8

But does this end the battle forever? No—

"Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor once at ease sit down;
Thine arduous task will not be done

Till thou hast gained thy crown."

Ah, yes, we must renew the battle daily, and help divine implore and receive, that we may finish our course with joy. We must not only conquer self, but, as the Apostle did, we must keep our bodies under. (1 Cor. 9:27) And this, our experience, that we must be constantly on the alert against the spirit of selfishness, and to support and promote in ourselves the spirit of love, is the experience of all who likewise have "put on Christ" and taken his will to be theirs. Hence the propriety of the Apostle's remark, "Henceforth know we no man [in Christ] after the flesh." We know those in Christ according to their new spirit, and not according to their fallen flesh. And if we see them fail sometimes, or always to some degree, and yet see evidences that the new mind is wrestling for the mastery, we are properly disposed to sympathize with them rather than to berate them for little failures; "remembering ourselves, lest we also be tempted [of our old selfish nature in violation of some of the requirements of the perfect law of love]."

Under "the present distress," therefore, while each has all that he can do to keep his own body under and the spirit of love in control, sound judgment, as well as experience and the Bible, tells us that we would best not complicate matters by attempting communistic schemes; but each make as straight paths as possible for his own feet, that that which is lame in our fallen flesh be not turned entirely out of the way, but that it be healed.

(1) **Sound judgment** says that if the saints with divine help have a constant battle to keep selfishness subject to love, a promiscuous colony or community would certainly not succeed in ruling itself by a law utterly foreign to the spirit of the majority of its members. And it would be impossible to establish a communism of saints only, because we cannot read the hearts--only "the Lord knoweth them that are his." And if such a colony of saints could be gotten together, and if it should prosper with all things in common, all sorts of evil persons would seek to get their possessions or to share them; and if successfully excluded they would say all manner of evil against them; and so, if it held together at all, the enterprise would not be a real success.

Some saints, as well as many of the world, are so fallen into selfish indolence that nothing but necessity will help them to be, "not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." And many others are so selfishly ambitious that they need the buffetings of failure and adversity to mellow them and enable them to sympathize with others, or even to bring them to deal justly with others. For both these classes "community" would merely serve to hinder the learning of the proper and needed lessons.

Such communities, if left to the rule of the majority, would sink to the level of the majority; for the progressive, active minority, finding that nothing could be gained by energy and thrift over carelessness and sloth, would also grow careless and indolent. If governed by organizers of strong will, as Life Trustees and Managers, on a paternal principle, the result would be more favorable financially; but the masses, deprived of personal responsibility, would degenerate into mere tools and slaves of the Trustees.

To sound judgment it therefore appears that the method of individualism, with its liberty and responsibility, is the best one for the development of intelligent beings; even though it may work hardships many times to all, and sometimes to many.

Sound judgment can see that if the Millennial Kingdom were established on the earth, with the divine rulers then promised, backed by unerring wisdom and full power to use it, laying "judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet," and ruling not by consent of majorities, but by righteous judgment, as "with a rod of iron"-- then communism could succeed; probably it would be the very best condition, and if so it will be the method chosen by the King of kings. But for that we wait; and not having the power or the wisdom to use such theocratic power, the spirit of a sound mind simply bides the Lord's time, praying meanwhile, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." And after Christ's Kingdom shall have brought all the willing back to God and righteousness, and shall have destroyed all the unwilling, then, with Love the rule of earth as it is of heaven, we may suppose that men will share earth's mercies in common, as do the angels the bounties of heaven.

(2) **Experience** proves the failure of communistic methods in the present time. There have been several such communities; and the result has always been failure. The Oneida community of New York is one whose failure has long been recognized. Another, the Harmony Society of Pennsylvania, soon disappointed the hopes of its founders, for so much discord prevailed that it divided. The branch known as Economites located near Pittsburgh, Pa. It flourished for a while, after a fashion, but is now quite withered; and possession of its property is now being disputed in the Society and in the courts of law.

Other communistic societies are starting now, which will be far less successful than these because the times are different; independence is greater, respect and reverence are less, majorities will rule, and without superhuman leaders are sure to fail. Wise worldly leaders are looking out for themselves, while wise Christians are busy in other channels--obeying the Lord's command, "Go thou and preach the Gospel."

(3) **The Bible** does not teach Communism, but does teach loving, considerate Individualism, except in the sense of family communism--each family acting as a unit, of which the father is the head and the wife one with him, his fellow-heir of the grace of life, his partner in every joy and benefit as well as in every adversity and sorrow.

True, God permitted a communistic arrangement in the primitive Church, referred to at the beginning of this article; but this may have been for the purpose of illustrating to us the unwisdom of the method; and lest some, thinking of the scheme now, should conclude that the apostles did not command and organize communities, **because** they lacked the wisdom to devise and carry out such methods; for not a word can be quoted from our Lord or the apostles advocating the communistic principles; but much can be quoted to the contrary.

True, the Apostle Peter (and probably other apostles) knew of, and cooperated in, that first communistic arrangement, even if he did not teach the system. It has been inferred, too, that the death of Ananias and Sapphira was an indication that the giving of all the goods of the believers was compulsory; but not so: their sin was that of **lying**, as Peter declared in reviewing the case. While they had the land there was no harm in keeping it if they got it honestly; and even after they had sold it no harm was done: the wrong was in misrepresenting that the sum of money turned in was

their all, when it was not their all. They were attempting to cheat the others by getting a share of their alls without giving their own all.

As a matter of fact, the Christian Community at Jerusalem was a failure. "There arose a murmuring"--"Because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations." Although under the Apostolic inspection the Church was pure, free from "tares," and all had the treasure of the new spirit or "mind of Christ," yet evidently that treasure was only in warped and twisted earthen vessels which could not get along well together.

The apostles soon found that the management of the community would greatly interfere with their real work--the preaching of the gospel. So they abandoned those things to others. The Apostle Paul and others traveled from city to city preaching Christ and him crucified; but, so far as the record shows, they never mentioned communism and never organized a community; and yet St. Paul declares, "I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." This proves that Communism is no part of the gospel, nor of the counsel of God for this age.

On the contrary, the Apostle Paul exhorted and instructed the Church to do things which it would be wholly impossible to do as members of a communistic society--to each "provide for his own"; to "lay by on the first day of the week" money for the Lord's service, according as the Lord had prospered them; that servants should obey their masters, rendering the service with a double good will if the master were also a brother in Christ; and how masters should treat their servants, as those who must themselves give an account to the great Master, Christ. 1 Tim. 5:8; 6:1; 1 Cor. 16:2; Eph. 6:59

Our Lord Jesus not only did not establish a Community while he lived, but he never taught that such should be established. On the contrary, in his parables he taught that all have not the same number of pounds or talents given them, but each is a steward and should **individually** (not collectively, as a commune) manage his own affairs, and render his own account. (Matt. 25:14-28; Luke 19:12-24. See also James 4:13,15.) When dying, our Lord commended his mother to the care of his disciple John, and the record of John (19:27) is, "And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." John, therefore, had a home, so had Martha, Mary and Lazarus. Had our Lord formed a Community he would doubtless have commended his mother to it instead of to John.

Moreover, the forming of a Commune of believers is opposed to the purpose and methods of the Gospel age. The object of this age is to **witness** Christ to the world, and thus to "take out a people for his name"; and to this end each believer is exhorted to be a burning and a shining light before men--the world in general--and not before and to each other merely. Hence, after permitting the first Christian Community to be established, to show that the failure to establish Communities generally was not an oversight, the Lord broke it up, and scattered the believers everywhere, to preach the gospel to every creature. We read--"And at that time there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem; and they were **all scattered abroad** throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles," and they went everywhere preaching the gospel. Acts 8:1,4; 11:19

It is still the work of God's people to shine as lights **in the midst** of the world, and not to shut themselves up in convents and cloisters or as communities. The promises of Paradise will not be realized by joining such communities. The desire to join such

"confederacies" is but a part of the general spirit of our day, against which we are forewarned. (Isa. 8:12) "Trust in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of Man." Luke 21:36

38. Do those who have reached "the mark" still have trials along the line of brotherly love?

F190 [¶1, 2]:

We must reach this climax of love before we can be counted worthy of a place in the New Creation, and we are not to expect that each one of the Lord's followers will reach this mark just at the moment of expiring in death. Quite the contrary. We are to expect to reach it as early as possible in our Christian experience, and then to remember the words of the Apostle, "Having done all-- Stand!" (Eph. 6:13) We require testings in love after we have reached the mark; and our exercises while at the mark--striving to maintain in our lives that mark, or standard--will be very strengthening to our characters. In this, especially, our experiences will correspond to those of our Lord; for while he did not need to run to attain the mark, he did need to fight a good fight of faith **at the mark**--not to be turned from it, not to be overcome by the various besetments of the world and the Adversary. "I press down upon the mark," says the Apostle; and so must each of us hold fast that mark after we do attain it, and see to it that in all the testings which the Lord permits to come upon us we shall be accounted of him as overcomers--not in our own strength, but in the strength of our Redeemer's assistance.

Besetments will come against us to turn us from the perfect love toward the Father, to induce us to consent to render less than the full homage and obedience due to him. Temptations will come to us in respect to the brethren also, to suggest that we do not permit love for the brethren to cover a multitude of faults-- suggestions that we become provoked with those whom we have learned to love and appreciate, and with whose weaknesses we have learned to sympathize. Besetments will come against us in respect to our enemies, after we have learned to love them--suggesting to us that there are exceptional cases and that our magnanimity toward them should have its limitations. Blessed are we if in these temptations we hold fast, bearing down upon the mark, striving to retain that position which we have already attained--fighting the good fight of faith --holding firmly to the eternal life which is counted ours through Jesus .

39. Why is brotherly love "one of the final and most searching tests" of the brethren and how may we prepare to meet it?

1 Peter 3:8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

R2453 [col. 2 ¶2-5]:

One of the final and most searching tests of these "brethren," and the one under which probably the most of those once awakened and armed will fall, will be--love for the brethren. Seemingly many will fail at this point and be therefore accounted unworthy of an abundant entrance to the Kingdom on this score. Whoever has the spirit of love according to the pattern (Rom. 8:29), is expected to agree with the Apostle Paul's statement,-- "Because he laid down his life for us, we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren."-- 1 John 3:14, 16; 1 Pet. 1:22; 3:8.

This, like all other tests, will be most pointed and conspicuous during this time of special privilege and special trial in the end of the age. (Rev. 3:10.) Let us consider how it will come that we may be the better prepared to meet it successfully. (a) It will recognize brotherhood neither along the narrow channels of sectarianism, nor on the unlimited plane of worldly disregard for the divine Word which declares for "the brotherhood of man." It will recognize children of the Evil One and children of God: and all of the latter will be esteemed and loved and served as "brethren"--all trusting in the precious blood of Christ for forgiveness, and fully consecrated to the Lord's service.

(b) If such are seen anywhere, in "Babylon" or out of her, asleep, fettered and blinded by false doctrines and superstitions, by a soldier of the cross who has gotten awake and put on the armor, it is his duty, as it should be his pleasure, to speed to his relief in the wisest and best and quickest manner. Self-ease, self-repute nor any other selfish spirit must hinder him; the spirit of love must energize him to do all in his power-- even to the laying down of his life--for the brethren. All who have this spirit must yearn to help those in danger of losing their hold upon the Lord after the manner of those now blindly leading them into unbelief.

(c) The same spirit of the "Captain" (Heb. 2:10) will lead him to so love not only the brethren that are still asleep, but if possible still more ready to lay down life for the brethren who, like himself, have gotten awake and are putting on the armor. He will sympathize with their trials by the way and assist them to put on the sandals and to adjust every piece of the armor. Should any be specially weak and liable to stumble he will not despise him, nor revile him, even as the elder brother, the Captain, would not do so. On the contrary, he will be the more watchful and helpful toward the weaker even tho he most enjoy himself in the company of the stronger. This is not the time for the strong to gather by themselves for mutual admiration and enjoyment;--that will come later on to all such who so love the brethren as to lay down their lives on their behalf. These will hear the Master say, "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter into the joys of thy Lord."

R2330 [col. 1 ¶2]:

He who finds his heart not in harmony with this law of the New Covenant, love--mercy, kindness, gentleness, goodness--lacks the evidence of proof that he is in any sense of the word accepted as a son of God, and a joint heir with Christ. If he have not this spirit of love, he will find it impossible to go far in the footsteps of the Master, for the sacrifice of Christ was not vainglorious, not for outward show, not for honor of men, but prompted by love--toward God and men. So likewise with us, if we have not love in our hearts for the brethren, and the love of gentleness and benevolence toward all men, and even toward the brute creation, we have not the spirit which will carry us through in making the sacrifices necessary under present conditions. It will only be a question of time with such when the power of pride or vain-glory, holding them in the way of sacrifice, will snap asunder, and selfishness take full control. He who would be faithful even unto death, walking in the footsteps of the Master, must receive of the Master's spirit of love, before he can thus follow him. As the Apostle declares, "He that saith, I love God, and hateth his brother, is a liar. He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" Hence, the Scriptures place the love of the brethren as one of the evidences of our having been begotten of the spirit, and of our being in touch with the Master.

40. What should be "the main-spring back of brotherly kindness"?

1 John 4:7,8 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God ; for God is love .

F137 [¶1]:

True sanctification of the heart to the Lord will mean diligence in his service; it will mean a declaration of the good tidings to others; it will mean the building up of one another in the most holy faith; it will mean that we should do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith; it will mean that in these various ways our lives, consecrated to the Lord, shall be laid down for the brethren (1 John 3:16) day by day, opportunity by opportunity, as they shall come to us; it will mean that our love for the Lord, for the brethren, for our families and, sympathetically, for the world of mankind, will increasingly fill our hearts as we grow in grace, knowledge and obedience to the Divine Word and example. Nevertheless, all these exercisings of our energies for others are merely so many ways in which, by the Lord's providences, **our own sanctification may be accomplished**. As iron sharpeneth iron, so our energies on behalf of others bring blessings to ourselves. Additionally, while we should more and more come to that grand condition of loving our neighbors as ourselves--especially the household of faith--yet the mainspring back of all this should be our supreme love for our Creator and Redeemer, and our desire to be and to do what would please him. Our sanctification, therefore, must be primarily toward God and first affect our own hearts and wills, and, as a result of such devotion to God, find its exercise in the interest of the brethren and of all men.

41. What does the illustration of "the third-quarter mark" signify?

F188 [¶1]:

The third-quarter mark on this racecourse we will call-- love for the brethren. From the first we recognize a duty-love toward the brethren even as toward the Father, only in a less degree, because the brethren had done less for us; and we recognized them chiefly because such was the Father's will. But as we got to see the principles of righteousness, and to appreciate the Father, and to see that the Father himself loveth us, notwithstanding our unintentional blemishes, our hearts began to broaden and deepen toward the brethren; and more and more we became able to overlook their unwilling imperfections and blemishes and mistakes, when we could see in them evidences of heart-desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and in accord with the principles of the divine character. Love for the brethren became distinctly marked in our experiences. Alas! evidently a good many of the Lord's dear people have not yet reached this third-quarter mark on the race course toward the prize of our high calling. There is much need of developing the brotherly kindness, the long-suffering, the patience, which the Scriptures inculcate--and which are necessarily tried and tested more in our connection with the brethren than in our connection with the Father and our Lord. We can see the perfection of the Father and the Son, and that they have no imperfections; we can realize their magnanimity toward us and our own shortcomings toward them: but when we look toward the brethren we see in one this weakness, and in another that weakness; and the temptation is, alas, too common to say to a brother: "Let me pick out the mote from thine eye"--instead of realizing that such a picking and nagging and fault-finding disposition toward the brethren is an evidence that we still have a large beam of impatience and lovelessness of our own to contend with. As we near this third-quarter mark, we gradually get the beam out of our own eyes--we get to see our own blemishes, and to appreciate more and more the riches of our Lord's grace toward us; and the

influence of this upon our hearts is to produce in us a greater degree of the spirit of meekness, patience, and gentleness toward all--and this again enables us to overlook or cover a multitude of sins, a multitude of imperfections in the brethren, so long as we realize that they are surely brethren--so long as they are trusting in the precious blood, and seeking to run this same racecourse for this same prize.

F370 [¶3]:

Our Love is growing, and we press along for the third quarter-mark. By the time we reach it, our duty-love, plus love for the principles of righteousness, has extended, not only to the divine character, and included dislike for every wicked thing doing injury to mankind, and contravening the divine character and plan, but at this mark we have attained a position of broader sympathy for others--we begin to share God's sentiment, not only of opposition to sin, but also of love for, and sympathy with, all who are seeking the way of righteousness and holiness. By this time we are able to recognize the brethren in a somewhat different light than ever before. We can now see them as New Creatures, and differentiate between **them** and their mortal bodies, whose imperfections are obvious to us. We learn to love the brethren as New Creatures, and to sympathize with them in the various weaknesses, misjudgments, etc., of their flesh. So keen becomes our Love for them that we have pleasure in laying down our lives on their behalf--daily, hourly, sacrificing our own earthly interests or pleasures, or conveniences, giving of our time, our influence, or what-not, to assist or serve them.

R2754 [col. 2 ¶3, 4]:

Love of God from this latter standpoint as the representative of every grace and every virtue, as the representative of righteousness, and the opponent of every injustice and inequity, led us to seek and to follow out these principles amongst our fellow-men, as well as in our own characters. As we began to love truth, purity, nobility of character, wherever it could be found, we found some of it in a mottled and streaked condition even in the world of mankind: we found that the original law of God, written in the heart of father Adam, altho largely erased and obliterated from the hearts and consciences of his children, is not wholly gone;--that to some extent, especially under the influence of Christianity in the past eighteen centuries, some features of this perfect law may be dimly discerned amongst men.

But our scrutiny, backed by our increasing love of these principles of righteousness, found nothing satisfactory amongst natural men--nor even amongst those professing godliness--professing to be followers in the footsteps of Jesus. We found these all, like ourselves, far short of perfection, far short of the glory of God. But as the true love, of right principles, burned in our hearts more and more fervently, we learned to **sympathize** with the entire "groaning creation," and to **"love** the brethren;" for in the latter we perceived a class inspired by the same spirit by which we ourselves had been begotten of God, the spirit of the truth; we saw some of them struggling as we had struggled, with appreciation only of the duty-love; we saw others who had gained a higher conception than this, who had learned to appreciate the principles of righteousness and to love them, and to hate iniquity, and further, to love the God who is the embodiment of these. And the realization that these "brethren," like ourselves, were gradually approximating the divine standard--"pressing toward the mark"--filled us with interest in them and in their battle against sin and its weaknesses, and against the Adversary and his beguilements. We became more and more interested in their welfare and overcoming in proportion as we were striving and making progress in the same "narrow way." This love of the brethren we did not have at the beginning; it marks a distinct progress in our race toward the "mark;"

we might term it the third quarter-mile mark. But altho a grand attainment was achieved when this love of the brethren reached the point of willingness to "lay down our lives for the brethren" (`1 John 3:16`), yet it was not the **full** attainment of the "mark" for which we are running.

42. Why is it important that we manifest brotherly love now?

R3536 [col. 2 ¶2, 3, 6, 7] through R3537 [col. 1 ¶1, 2]:

If Mary had waited another week she might have used the perfume upon herself but not upon the Lord--within a week from the time of this incident our Lord was buried, the tomb was sealed, the Roman Guard stood before it and there would have been no opportunity even to have poured it upon his dead body. How much better that she improved the opportunity, that she showed the Lord her devotion while he was still her guest. The parallel is here: it will not be long until all the members of the body of Christ will have filled their share of the sufferings and have passed beyond the veil "changed."

Wisdom tells us that we should not delay in bringing our alabaster boxes of ointment and pouring their contents upon our dear ones of the body of Christ, the feet of Christ. No matter if they do not notice us, or think of us, or pour any upon us as members of the feet; let us do our part, let us be of the Mary class, let us pour out the sweet perfume upon others, and the house, the Church of the Lord, will be filled with the sweet odor, even though some disciples might mistakingly charge us with being extravagant with our love and with our devotion, not understanding that the Master by and by will say again, "Let her alone, she hath done what she could." Our Lord's estimate of this spikenard and anointing is that it is all that we can do--nothing could be more or better. It indicates love, great love--and "love is the fulfilling of the law."

Respecting the propriety of using present opportunities for the comfort and encouragement one of another, a writer has pointedly said: "Don't keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up till your friends are dead. Fill their lives with gladness. Speak approving, cheering words while they can hear them...If my friends have alabaster boxes full of the fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection laid away, which they intend to break over my body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them while I need them....I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. ...Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward on the weary road."

Mrs. Preston's poem, "Ante Mortem," expresses the same thought thus:--

..."Had I but heard
One breath of applause, one cheering word—
One cry of ` **Courage!**' amid the strife,
So weighted for me with death or life—
How would it have nerved my soul to strain
Thro' the whirl of the coming surge again."

43. How may we become members of "the Mary class"?

R3536 [col. 1 ¶3 through col. 2 ¶1]:

Spikenard Mary represents one of the most beautiful elements of Christian character amongst the Lord's people from that day until the present. For be it remembered that the entire Church of Christ in the largest sense is the "body of Christ," as expressed by Jesus and also by the apostles. The Mary class, who would rather purchase perfume at a great cost whereby to serve the anointed Church, the body of Christ, than to spend the same upon themselves, is still with us, and has been of the Church for these eighteen centuries. Not only was the Head of the body anointed, perfumed, honored, comforted, cheered, but all of the members since have likewise received a blessing from this class, this spikenard Mary class. It is composed not always of the orators, the wealthy or the wise--its ministry is unostentatious and to many, especially of the world, it seems foolishness and waste--but the Lord appreciates it, and so do the members of his body who are comforted and refreshed thereby. Blessing be upon this Mary class!

Honor To Members--Honor To Head.

But if there have been members all the way down who have been comforted in this way, should we not expect some particular blessing of the kind in the end of this age, upon the "feet" members? According to our understanding we are now in the closing of this age --the Head has been glorified, many of the members of the body have passed beyond the veil, and only the feet are here. Perhaps this very picture of Mary's anointing the feet of our Lord as well as his head constitutes a type or picture of what we may expect in this present time. And here comes in a beautiful feature of the divine arrangement--we may all be of the Mary class as well as of the feet class. In other words, each member of the body of Christ may to some extent serve the fellow-members of the body, the fellow-members of the feet, as Mary served the feet of Jesus.

Let each one of the Lord's true people as he studies this matter conclude that by the grace of God he will join the Mary class, and purchase spikenard very costly and lavish it upon the feet of the body of Christ--the Church--the true members. This will mean love, sympathy, kindness, gentleness, patience and assistance and comfort. It will mean large and growing development in all the fruits and graces of the Spirit, whose combined name is Love.

Dear readers, let us each remember that while it is impossible for us to do as Mary did in this lesson, it is the privilege of each to do still more important things for each other, for the brethren of Christ now in the world, the feet members of his body. Hers was a literal perfume and in time lost its virtue; but the little acts of kindnesses and helpfulness which we may render one to another will never lose their merit in the estimation of our Lord, and never lose their fragrance to all eternity in the estimation of each other. The little things of life, the little words, the little tokens, the kind looks, the little assistances by the way, these and not great things are our possibilities, our perfumes, the one for the other.

"Wash One Another's Feet."

The washing of the feet in olden times in oriental lands was very necessary to the comfort, and hence to wash one another's feet would signify to comfort and refresh one another even in the most menial services. This is the essence of our Lord's lesson to us, that we should be glad for any opportunity for serving one another, for comforting and helping one another, however menial the service. Apply this now to the expression of our lesson. Mary washed our Lord's feet with perfume, and the

Mary class, the most loving and devoted class in the Church, are to help one another, to wash one another's feet; and they are to do so not in the rudest and clumsiest manner imaginable, but, inspired by love and devotion one to another, they are to wash one another's feet with the kindness and sympathy and love and appreciation symbolized by Mary's spikenard; and their comforting of one another is to be with that love and solicitation which was represented by Mary's using the very locks of her head for her Master's feet.

We see some evidence that this love, this spikenard-Mary love and sympathy, is growing amongst the members of the Lord's body; that as they perceive the animosity of the world and the flesh and the Adversary against the Lord's anointed they are all the more devoted one to another, and all the more disposed to honor one another with care and love and sympathy, and to speak and act generously and kindly one toward another. We are glad of this--we know of no better evidence of growth in grace on the part of the consecrated. Let the good work go on until we shall have filled the house with the perfume of love, until the whole world shall take knowledge of how Christians love one another-- not in a narrow or partisan sense, but in the broad sense that Christ loved all who love the Father and all who sought to walk in the Father's ways.

R2201 [col. 1 ¶4-7]:

What a comforting thought it should be to all who are of Mary's attitude of mind that it is still possible to wash and to anoint the Lord's feet. His own lips have declared that, whatever is done for the least one of his consecrated followers, is accepted by him as done unto himself. Ah! blessed thought; the Lord is still in the flesh, representatively; his faithful are to be esteemed "members of his body," as new creatures. And while these are still in the flesh, the sufferings of Christ in the flesh are still in progress, and will not be finished until the last member has been glorified.--`Col. 1:24`.

Moreover, the Scriptural figure holds good: Christ is the Head of this body which is his Church, and which for eighteen hundred years has been in process of development; and now the last members of the body are here,--"The feet of him." As members of the feet class many are weary, discouraged, needing rest, refreshment and comfort, such as was bestowed upon the literal feet of the Master.

Here comes in a test with respect to the symbolic feet of Christ, similar to that with respect to the natural feet which proved the great love of Mary and the slight of love of Simon. The members of the feet class are unpopular to-day as was the Master himself in his day, with a class corresponding to the scribes and Pharisees and doctors of the Law. Only those who love the Master much and appreciate greatly their own forgiveness will love his "feet members" in the present time to the extent that they would be willing to serve them and to fellowship them; while others like Nicodemus and Simon, altho well-meaning and considerably interested, will be ashamed of the gospel of the Nazarene in the present time, and ashamed of his feet, which published to Zion glad tidings, saying, "Thy God reigneth"--the Millennial age is dawning and the reign of Christ has already begun. (`Isa. 52:7`.) But those who are ashamed either of the gospel or of its servants are ashamed of the Master and of the Father; and such cannot be recognized as "overcomers" of the world, because instead they are overcome by the world and its spirit. Such shall not be accounted worthy to progress into the full knowledge and privileges of discipleship.

How few there are who seem to have a large measure of the spirit of Mary Magdalene! How few are really very helpful to one another. How few pour upon one

another the spikenard ointment of comforting words, helpful suggestions and encouragements. Those who are thus helpful will be found filled with a genuine love for the "head," for the "body" in general and even for the "feet." And the secret of their love as in Mary's case will be found to be a large appreciation of their own imperfections and of the Lord's mercy and grace toward them, in the forgiveness of their sins. The Apostle expresses the sentiments of these helpful and loving members of the body, who are the only ones who are making their calling and election sure, saying,--"For we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead; and that we who live should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again."

44. How did Jesus show us a grand example of brotherly love and sympathy?

R3434 [col. 1 ¶7 through col. 2 ¶1]:

All this means that our Lord Jesus was a Comforter in Zion above and beyond all other comforters. He entered into sympathy with the meek and lowly and right-intentioned in all of their weaknesses and trials and difficulties; and this is the hold that the character and words of Jesus have to-day upon our hearts, and also upon the hearts of many who are not his people in the full consecrated sense. It was not by continually chiding the apostles, and accusing them, but because, instead, our Lord sympathized with them, assisted them, and interpreted their heart-intentions liberally, generously, that they became more and more his faithful followers, even unto death. Note the case of the woman taken in sin, and our Lord's failure to make any pharisaical tirade against her. Mark his reproof to those who stood by: "He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone." Mark how, when they were all thus convicted of imperfection in some particular themselves, our Lord said to the woman, "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more." (`John 8:3-11`.) Notice his dealing with the Apostle Peter, after he had denied him, cursing and swearing. Many of the Lord's followers, if in his stead, would have felt it their bounden duty to rebuke Peter publicly before all the apostles, and to have required public confession and some sort of penance; and on every possible occasion afterward to have thrown in his face his weakness and disloyalty. Such have not rightly interpreted and copied the Lord's spirit, and hence are not sons and daughters of consolation in the Church. They are, on the contrary, strife-breeders, vexatious hinderers of the work they desire to forward. They should hear the Master's voice, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." In proportion as we learn of the Lord we become, not mouthpieces for the Law merely, but mouthpieces specially for mercy and love and helpfulness and comfort.

So far as the record shows, our Lord did not once mention to Peter either his profanity or his disloyalty. Peter knew about these without being told; he had already wept over them; a mere word from the Lord in chiding, reproof, might have discouraged him,-- perhaps hopelessly. The nearest thing to a reproof in our Lord's conduct and language was the inquiry, "Lovest thou me?" Let all who would be true sons and daughters of consolation in Zion learn this lesson from the great Teacher-- not to strive to punish and correct and reprove and rebuke; but to avoid these so far as possible, and to inquire, not so much about the past as about the present--What is the offender's present attitude toward the Lord and toward his flock?

R2807 [col. 2 ¶14]:

So far as the record shows these questions respecting his present love were the only reproof our Lord gave Peter on account of his temporary deflection and denial of his

cause; and here we have a lesson which many of the Lord's people will do well to lay closely to heart. Many feel as tho they must exact from a brother or a sister a very decided apology for any act of discourtesy, even tho much less important than Peter's misdeed. Let us learn well this lesson of reproofing others very gently, very considerately, kindly, by a hint rather than by a direct charge and detail of the wrong--by an enquiry respecting the **present** condition of their hearts, rather than respecting a **former** condition, in which we know that they have erred. We are to be less careful for the punishments that will follow wrongdoings than for the recovery of the erring one out of the error of his way. We are not to attempt to judge and to punish one another for misdeeds, but rather to remember that all this is in the hands of the Lord; --we are not in any sense of the word to avenge ourselves or to give a chastisement or recompense for evil. This is not to be understood as annulling parental obligation to judging and chastening children; tho the principle of love is to have full control there also, to the extent of our judgment. We are to have kindness, love and benevolence toward all, especially toward those who are followers of Jesus. As for Peter and his denial of the Lord, and as to the offences which may come to us through brethren, we may know that under divine providence some corrective penalty or discipline, direct or indirect, always follows; but we are not to attempt to inflict those penalties, nor to impress a condemnation, upon those who are in error and who realize their error, but rather to sympathize with them wisely, by helping them to learn the good lessons.

45. How can we fulfill Jesus' command to "wash one another's feet"?

R3543 [col. 2 ¶4 to end]--The Meaning of the Lord's Action

Here we have the entire lesson explained. In their fear to be the least, all the disciples had shunned the opportunity of service for the Master and for each other. Our Lord, their acknowledged Head and Master, the Messiah, had humbled himself to serve them all, and had thus rebuked their in humility, and at the same time set them an example that would apply to every affair of life, namely, that they should be glad to serve one another on every proper occasion, in the high things or in the common affairs of life. This washing of one another's feet we may readily see applies to any and every humble service of life, any and every kindness, though specially to those services and kindnesses which would be along the lines of spiritual assistances and comfort.

From this standpoint it will be seen that we do not understand that our Master here enjoined a form or ceremony as our Dunkard friends and others believe. We do not even see in the matter the groundwork for the custom of the pope of Rome, who once every year, at this season washes the feet of twelve poor men, perhaps beggars, who are first prepared by a general washing and then brought in while the pope performs the special public service in the washing of their feet. We see no such formality in our Lord's intention. Indeed so far from it being a comfort or necessity to literally wash feet in our day and under our conditions, the reverse would be true. On the contrary, the Apostle points out, to wash the saints' feet in olden times was a mark of special hospitality, and entitled the performer to a loving respect in the Church.--1 Tim. 5:10.

How many blessed opportunities we have for comforting, refreshing, consoling one another and assisting one another in some of the humblest affairs of life, or in respect to some of the unpleasant duties, experiences or trials of life. As our Golden Text expresses it, we are in love to serve one another and not through formality. Any service done or attempted to be done in love, with the desire to do good to one of

the Lord's people, we may be sure has the divine approval and blessing. Let us lose no opportunities of this kind; let us remember the Master's example; let us, like our Master, not merely assume humility or pretend it, but actually have that humility which will permit us to do kindness and services to all with whom we come in contact, and proportionately enjoy this privilege as we find the needy ones to be members of the Lord's body--the Church.

As our Lord said to the disciples, "He that is bathed need not save to wash his feet," even so we may realize that all who are justified and consecrated members of his body have already had the bath, the washing of regeneration, and are already clean through the word spoken unto them. (John 15:3.) Nevertheless, although thus cleansed and sanctified, so long as we are in contact with the world we are liable to a certain degree of earthly defilement, and it especially behooves each one not only to look out for himself but to help one another to get rid of earthly defilements, thus serving his brethren, helping them in the weaknesses, trials and imperfections of the flesh, assisting them to become overcomers. In these respects he is cooperating in the great work of washing the saints' feet, cleansing from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord.--2 Cor. 7:1.

R2201 [col. 2 ¶3 to end]:

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."

This cleansing work which is to be done for one another is in harmony with the injunction, "Keep yourselves in the love of God." They could not get each other into the love of God: that could be attained only in the one way; through the original cleansing of the precious blood, through faith; and no one can thus cleanse us or help us into divine favor, except the Redeemer himself. But he having cleansed us and brought us into divine favor, has commissioned us that we should help one another to "abide in his love" and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. The merit, the way and the privilege are all of God through Christ. The agencies used in applying these to one another are ourselves. "Ye ought also to wash one another's feet;" to help keep each other separate from the world, and clean through the Word he has spoken unto us,--by "the washing of water by the Word;" "building one another up in the most holy faith."

This again reminds us of the Scriptural statement, in reference to the Church perfected and glorified, --"His wife hath made herself ready." (Rev. 19:7.) While the entire arrangement for her wedding robes, the washing of regeneration (justification) and the water for her feet-washing, are all provided for the bride through the agency of the Bridegroom, and she is thus made ready, yet the use of these means, the putting on of her adornment, the embroidering of her robes and the arrangement of the jewels presented to her through the spirit, is left for herself to do; each member of the body co-operating unto the edification of the whole body in love.--1 Thes. 5:11; Rom. 14:19.

It would doubtless be pleasing in the sight of the Master, our Head, that we should have a disposition to help and to reform the world in general, and to wash the vilest of the vile from all their sin; but however praiseworthy such a disposition might be, we are to remember that this is not the command which he has placed before us in our text. His injunction here is not to do general washing of all the unclean, but to do special washing for those whom he already has cleansed, justified, through faith. It is in respect to the fellow-members of his body that he has given this charge; and we emphasize it here, because this fact seems to be very generally overlooked by Christian people, who give their time rather to the outward cleansing, the moral and social uplifting, of those whose hearts have never been washed by the Master, and correspondingly neglect one another, his "feet." Yet, as already seen, preceding, tho it is a great honor to render such a service to one another, the privilege will be properly appreciated and much used only by the truly humble who have much love for the Master.

But, it requires peculiar qualifications to enable us to help each other in this respect; before we can help others to remove the motes out of their eyes, and to cleanse their way of life, in all its little particulars, so that every thought as well as every word and act shall be brought into subjection to the divine will, it is necessary that we have experiences along the same lines ourselves. We must endeavor to get rid of the motes and beams that would obstruct our own vision. We must cultivate purity in our own lives,--in our deeds, words and thoughts. Only as we cultivate the various graces of the spirit,--meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love, can we hope to be specially helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and to get rid of defilements of the world, and the flesh.

To this end it will be found helpful to remember the lesson of Mary in her service to the Lord's literal feet. Many who would reject well-meaning criticisms of conduct, resent well-meant efforts to wash their feet, as interferences with their private business, would be very amenable to the influences of the same person if he approached them with such evidences of true devotion and loving interest as would be symbolized by tears. It is the sympathetic ones who are most successful in helping the various members of the body of Christ out of the difficulties, besetments and defilements incident to the following of the Lord in this present time. Oh, let us study and strive and pray that we may be very successful in obeying the Master's words, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

It will also be a great help and comfort to the fellow members of the body, if in connection with these efforts to help one another in the cleansing of our ways, by taking heed unto the Word of the Lord, we will have with us also some of the precious ointment of sympathetic and, as far as possible, commendatory and encouraging words, and helpful assistance: for all the members of the feet class who

are seeking to walk worthy of the Lord need the ointment of sympathy and encouragement, as offsets to the trials, difficulties and persecutions incident to the "narrow way," coming to them from the great Adversary and his blinded servants.

46. How jealously should we guard and increase this grace of brotherly kindness?

1 Thes. 4:9-10 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

R2196 [col. 1 ¶5, 6]:

Although the Church at Thessalonica was composed of those who in respect to length of Christian experience were but "babes in Christ," yet very evidently the persecution which had come upon them had caused them to grow very rapidly. It was but a year since they had received the gospel, and yet the Apostle witnesses to their rapid development, as evidenced by their love one for the other; and not only love for the company at Thessalonica, but the breadth of their love extending to and manifesting an interest in all of the household of faith throughout the Province of Macedonia. The Apostle declares that this love of the brethren was a manifestation of the fact that they had been "taught of God." This reminds us of the statement of another apostle, "He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen."

One of the first effects of a knowledge of the grace of God in Christ, and of a full, thorough consecration to the Lord, is this love for all fellow-servants--"brethren." Would that the fervency and zeal of first love, both toward the Lord and toward the entire household of faith, might not only continue, but increase with all. But alas! many who start warmly and earnestly grow lukewarm-- become captious, cynical, hypercritical, highminded and self-assertive--and lose much of the simplicity, zeal and humility of their first faith and first love. This is the first attack of the great adversary through the weaknesses of the flesh, to re-ensnare those who have escaped his chains of darkness, and gotten to see some of the glory of God shining through Christ. If they do not resist these temptations, the effect is sure to be not only lukewarmness toward the Lord and his cause and the members of his body, but eventually the cultivation of the fruits of darkness, envy, malice, hatred, strife, instead of the fruits of the spirit of Christ, meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly love and kindness. Hence, the Apostle urges the Church, "We beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more," in love and service one for the other, which imply a growth in all the graces of the Spirit.

47. How may we cultivate brotherly love?

R3090 [col. 1 ¶5-7]:

"And to brotherly kindness, charity"--love. Kindness may be manifested where but little love exists toward the subject of such kindness; but we cannot long persevere in such acts of kindness before a sympathetic interest is awakened; and by and by that interest, continually exercised, deepens into love. And even though the subject may be unlovely in character, the love of sympathy for the fallen and degraded grows, until it becomes tender and solicitous and akin to that of a parent for an erring son.

Peter indeed describes a most amiable character, but who can consider it without feeling that to attain it will be a life-work. It cannot be accomplished in a day, nor a year, but the whole life must be devoted to it; and day by day, if we are faithful, we should realize a measure of growth in grace and of development of Christian character. It is not proper that we know the truth, and are contented to hold it in unrighteousness. We must see to it that the truth is having its legitimate and designed effect upon the character. And if the truth is thus received into good and **honest** hearts, we have the assurance of the Apostle that we shall never fall, and that in due time we shall be received into the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Hence we see the necessity of ever keeping the instructions and precepts of the Lord fresh in our minds, and of drinking deep into its inspiring spirit, although we are already established in the faith. To be established in the faith is one thing, but to be established in Christian character and in all the graces of the spirit is quite another.

R2321 [col. 2 ¶2, 3]:

The broader and clearer our view of the situation, the more will we be able to sympathize with those of our brethren in Christ who by nature are mean, ignoble, selfish, lacking in benevolence of thought and word and conduct. When we realize that God has accepted them,--not because of their good and noble character, but because they admit its deficiencies and because they desire to become reformed, transformed, by the renewing of their minds--then all who have the Lord's mind or spirit will likewise receive them. In proportion as we have the mind of Christ, the holy mind, we will view them from the divine standpoint of sympathy for their weaknesses and ignoble qualities; and instead of condemning them and spurning them and cutting their acquaintance, because they do not come up to the noblest standards, we will desire all the more to help them up and seek kindly to point out to them the matters which they do not clearly see. We will be patient with them as we see them striving to overcome. We will realize that they contend against a mental disease that they have to some extent inherited, and which can only be gradually eradicated.

From this standpoint we will learn to view them and to think of them not according to their flesh, not according to their natural tendencies and dispositions, but according to the spirit, according to the intentions of their minds, according to their covenant with the Lord. Thus, as the Apostle declares, we know each other no longer after the flesh, but after the spirit. Each one who has accepted God's grace under the New Covenant, and become a partaker of the spirit of holiness, and is striving against sin in all its forms,--in thought and word and conduct,--all such are striving for the grand perfection of character of which our dear Redeemer is the only perfect illustration. All such confess themselves imperfect copies of God's dear Son and seek to grow in his likeness. All such are seeking to put away all the works of the flesh and the devil,--not only the grosser evils (murder, theft, etc.), but also the more common elements of an ignoble, perverted nature, anger, malice, hatred, strife, etc. And all these are seeking to put on more and more the complete armor of God, and to resist sin; and to cultivate in themselves the same mind which was also in Christ Jesus,--meekness, patience, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, love.

R3435 [col. 1 ¶4, 5]:

Reversing the foregoing order, and considering the way in which the brethren are to comfort the Church, we note that it is as the channels of the holy Spirit, and as the mouthpieces of the Word of God. No one is competent to be a comforter unless he

already has received comfort from God. So to speak, the Lord's people begin receiving their comfort from the time they accept the assurances of God's Word respecting his love and mercy, as exhibited in Christ Jesus, in that he died for our sins. In their appropriation of this divine favor to themselves by faith, they had their first taste of comfort--peace, joy, blessing. As they then proceeded and learned the way of the Lord more perfectly, the door of access into a still further grace was opened unto them--the grace of invitation to joint-heirship with Christ in the Kingdom, and its glorious work of comforting and uplifting mankind in general. (`Rom. 5:2`.) And as this door of favor was entered, additional comfort, additional joy, additional peace and blessing were added and understood and appreciated. And then, as the favored ones progressed under the ministries of the Truth, supplied by the holy Spirit, and became more and more able to rightly divide the Word of Truth, and to appreciate the different features of it, in the same proportion their faith grew stronger, and their comforts and joys multiplied through increasing and deepening knowledge of the Lord and of his plan.

Furthermore, as they behold in the glass of the divine Word the glory of the Lord, the reflected light of his glorious character illuminating their hearts and enabling them to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine love, it brings still increasing confidence and comfort. And every one of these steps of progress, rightly received, and every additional element of character developed prepares the favored one for the exercise of his privilege of being a **comforter** to others. True, it was his duty and privilege to begin to comfort others as soon as he received the first elements of comfort himself, and to continue distributing the comforts as they came to him. Indeed, we know both from experience and from the Word that unless he thus made use of the favors and blessings, and showed his appreciation of the grace of God by shining it forth upon others, his light thus being obscured would grow dim and eventually be extinguished. But the point we wish to impress is that ability to be a comforter depends upon growth in grace and knowledge, for none but those who themselves are comforted can dispense this grace to others

R2824 [col. 1 ¶1]:

Our Lord's answer shows us how intimately he stands related with all those who are truly his; those who touch his saints touch him, for are they not, as the Apostle declares, "members in particular of the body of Christ?" He is indeed, "the Head of the Church, which is his body," and the ascended Head feels for and cares for and is interested in even the weakest and humblest of those whom he recognizes as truly his. If we remember this it will be a great help to us in the midst of trials and persecutions--the thought that we are "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ," that "as he was, so are we in this world," and that while we are in the flesh, Christ is in the flesh, and that this will continue until the last members, even the feet members of the body, shall have suffered and have entered into glory. Let us remember this also, and specially, if at any time we are tempted to deal harshly or speak rudely or think unkindly of any of the "brethren." Let us consider that as we, with all our weaknesses and unwilling imperfections, are the Lord's members and subjects of his interest and care, so also are all of the brethren; and that inasmuch as we do, or do not do, to one of the least of his brethren, we do, or do not do, to him. If this thought of the intimate relationship between the head and the members could be always fresh before our minds, how favorable would be the influence; how often we would improve the opportunity, not only of suffering, as the body of Christ, but of suffering with the fellow members, and assisting in bearing

their burdens. "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren."--1 John 3:16; Heb. 2:11; Col. 1:24.

R2242 [col. 1 ¶5]:

Let us remember, however, that this condition of perfect love is not to be attained in a moment, but is to be the **result** of the experiences of the present life, in obedience to the divine counsel. However, the degree of success and rapidity in cultivating this spirit depends very largely upon our zeal, and the heed which we give to the great Counselor. Those who have given themselves wholly to the Lord and who have been accepted of him, have doubtless even from the beginning of their new life in Christ known considerable of this devotional love for God and for his people, which should increase daily. But the devotional flame which at the beginning of the Christian's experience is fearful and merely seeks the Lord for safety, may by and by reach such a development that it cries out to God, "Oh Lord, I delight to do thy will. Gladly will I toil and suffer, or bear thy reproaches, and serve thy people; if thus I may know that I am pleasing and acceptable to thee!" This is the right spirit, and this spirit should continue all the way down to the close of the battle. But such will find testings and trials by the way, to prove how deep and how sincere is their spirit of love: and where it is genuine, where the good seed of the divine truth has fallen into an honest heart, it will grow, it will thrive upon trials, disappointments; and against every opposition it will bring forth in life a fruitage of good works, of service for the Lord and for his people,-- which may be large or small according to the opportunities enjoyed by all the "overcomers."

48. What additional thoughts are found in Topical Index of "Heavenly Manna," under "Love One Another"?