

A Faith To Live By

And here is another challenge:

“The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday. We say by virtue of her divine mission, because He who called Himself the ‘Lord of the Sabbath,’ endowed her with His own power to teach, ‘He that hears you, hears Me. Commanded all who believe in Him to hear her, under penalty of being placed with the ‘heathen and publican’; and promised to be with her to the end of the world. She holds her charter as teacher from Him—a charter as infallible as perpetual. The Protestant world at its birth (in the Reformation of the sixteenth century) found the Christian Sabbath too strongly entrenched to run counter to its existence; it was therefore placed under the necessity of acquiescing in the arrangement, thus implying the church’s right to change the day, for over three hundred years. The Christian Sabbath is therefore to this day the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church as spouse of the Holy Ghost, without a word of remonstrance from the Protestant world.” -The Catholic Mirror (Baltimore, Md.), Sept. 23, 1893.

We believe that these statements from recognized Catholic sources are sufficient to prove the point made, that the Roman Catholic Church not only admits that it has changed the law of God with reference to the Sabbath commandment, but is proud of the fact, and claims that it has done so by divine authority. The church rather chides the Protestants for keeping the first day of the week, for which there is no Scriptural authority, but only the edict of the Catholic Church, when the Protestants claim to accept the Bible and the Bible only. It would appear to us that the Catholic Church is a great deal more consistent than are the Protestant churches in this matter. For how can Protestants stand for the Bible and the Bible only and yet accept and obey the voice of the Catholic Church instead of that of Christ? In doing so, Protestants certainly “fondly contradict themselves, by keeping Sunday strictly, and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same church.”

Protestants Agree

At this point it might be interesting to hear what Protestant denominations have to say on this question. Do they recognize the truthfulness of the presentation made by the Roman Catholic Church? Do they know of the claims it makes, and do they acknowledge them? As long ago as the Protestant Reformation, this was incorporated in the Augsburg Confession:

“They [the Catholics] allege to have changed the Sabbath into Sunday, the Lord’s day, contrary to the Ten Commandments as it appears; neither is there any example more boasted of than the changing of the Sabbath day. Great, say they, is the power and authority of the church, since it dispensed with one of the ten commandments.” - Augsburg Confession, Art. XXVIII.

The following quotations from writers belonging to different Protestant denominations all present the same testimony:

“It is quite clear that, however rigidly, or devoutly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath. The Sabbath was founded on a specific, divine command. We can plead no such command for the obligation to observe Sunday.... There is not a single sentence in the New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday.”-R. W. DALE, MA (Congregationalist), *The Ten Commandments*, pp. 106, 107. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1871.

A Faith To Live By

“There is no word, no hint, in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday. Into the rest of Sunday no divine law enters. The observance of Ash Wednesday or Lent stands on exactly the same footing as the observance of Sunday.”-CANON EYTON (Church of England), *The Ten Commandments*, pp. 62-65. London: Triffiner & Co., 1894.

“And where are we told in Scripture that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day. The reason why we keep the first day of- the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because the Bible, but because the church, has enjoined it.”-REV. ISAAC WILLIAMS, BD (Church of England), *Plain Sermons on the Catechism*, Vol. 1, pp. 334-336. London: Rivingtons, 1882-

“It is impossible to extort such a sense from the words of the commandment; seeing that the reason for which the commandment itself was originally given, namely, as a memorial of God’s having rested from the creation of the world, cannot be transferred from the seventh day to the first. Nor can any new motive be substituted in its place, whether the resurrection of our Lord or any other, without the sanction of a divine commandment.” – “*The Christian Doctrine*,” book 2, chap. 7; in *Prose Works of John Milton*, Vol. V, p. 70. London: Henry G. Bohn, 1853.

“For if we under the gospel are to regulate the time of our public worship by the prescriptions of the Ten Commandments, it will surely be far safer to observe the seventh day, according to the express commandment of God, that on the authority of mere human conjecture to adopt the first.”-JOHN MILTON, *A Treatise on Christian Doctrine*; cited in *The Literature of the Sabbath Question*, Robert Cox, Vol. 11, p. 54. Edinburgh: Maclachlan and Stewart, 1865.

This presents the matter before us in its true light. We do not see how, in face of this testimony, anyone can fail to see the lasting obligation of the seventh-day Sabbath.

The Masterpiece of Creation

AS a boy I remember sitting looking into a mirror and wondering who I was. I knew my name, I knew my parents, my brothers, and my sisters, and they all knew me. But that did not satisfy me. Who was I? Where did I come from? Who or what was the real ‘I’ anyway?

This question bothered me for years. I did my best to solve the riddle of existence but did not get very far. I knew I had a body. But if “I” had a body, then the body was not the real personality; for “I” had a body. Who was the ‘I’ that had the body? I also had a head, limbs, brains, heart. I had all these things, but who was the “I” that had them? After a while I gave up. I could not solve the problem.

In school I learned that I was not the only one who was puzzled about the mystery of existence and the human soul. All through the ages men have tried to find who they are, where they came from, and where they are going. And they have not made much progress. They know very little more now than they did a few thousand years ago about human existence, human destiny, the human soul. They are still interested in these subjects, but have so far been unable to fathom the depth of personality. True, progress has been made in the study of psychology, psychoanalysis, and kindred subjects. Men know a great deal more than they did of human behavior and the vagaries of the mind. But the abysmal depths of human consciousness have eluded the keenest minds.

A Faith To Live By

I suppose the truth is that as man can never by reasoning find out God, neither can he find out man. Apart from divine revelation men will ever remain in ignorance of some of the deepest things of life, and will stand baffled before manifestations which they cannot understand. Only God knows the whole truth, and we may know truth only as God reveals it and has given us powers to grasp and believe His revelation.

I was brought up to believe that man had an immortal soul. This was not definitely told to me. It was simply taken for granted. I knew of a few persons who had their doubts about the immortality of the soul, but I decided that they were probably mentally deficient, for everybody "knew" that man was immortal. This, was so evident that it needed no proof. The body might die, but the soul never. That would live on forever and ever.

Then came the years of my skepticism, when I began to doubt everything. Perhaps there was no God such as I had taken for granted, and perhaps there was no such thing as an immortal soul or Immortality. After some time I came back to my belief in a personal God; and with the question of God settled, other things that had been shrouded in fog and uncertainty became clear.

But the question of the immortal soul still bothered me. Did men have, did all men have, did I have, an immortal soul? The more I thought of it, the more afraid I was of the implications inherent in such a doctrine. It seemed to have such tremendous consequences that I could hardly see how God, whom I had learned to know and love, and in whose wisdom I had implicit confidence, could create man in such a way and with such a nature that he could never die, never cease to exist; that though man should decide to defy God, yet God Himself could never blot him out of existence.

If a man was not thought worthy of eternal life, God had no way of disposing of him. He must live on forever in suffering. The universe would never cease to resound with the curses of the damned; the saved would forever be conscious of the fact that some of their loved ones were suffering the tortures of hell, while they were trying to enjoy heaven. The universe would never be clean; there would always be a plague spot holding unnumbered millions of tortured souls who had been brought into existence without their consent, and were now denied the privilege of cessation of existence. It seemed to me that God Himself would become tired of hell after a while and wish that there were some way of making an end to the dreadful spectacle. But God Himself could not do that. He had made men immortal, incapable of dying; and now He must make the best of it. Throughout eternity hell must exist; curses, blasphemies, cries of agony must fill the air. And God must stand helpless. He started it, but is unable to stop it. Man has an immortal soul; and this one act of God has so limited Him that He must bear its consequences forever. So I reasoned.

In my thinking I had no trouble with the destiny and future bliss of the righteous. It seemed perfectly clear and consistent to me that God should place man on trial in this world below. Give him a taste of life and of its possibilities, and then give him eternal life if he desired it enough to abide by the conditions upon which it might be had. That seemed eminently fair and just. That such people as were in harmony with God and His government should be selected and in the world to come form a happy family whose delight would be do the will of God, seemed an ideal arrangement and gave purpose and direction to life here. Man was destined to something higher than merely this earth life. If he obeyed God, if he really loved life he would be permitted to live forever.

But the future existence of the wicked was different. Dreadful were the tales of their suffering

A Faith To Live By

as recounted in sermon and pamphlet. The wildest imagination of man seemed incapable of portraying the horrors that awaited the impenitent. And the most dreadful of all was the assurance that there would never be any surcease. As long as God Himself existed, men would suffer.

Modern Teaching

Lest some may think that we are exaggerating the teaching of this doctrine, we call the reader's attention to a little work of about 450 pages called Tracts for Spiritual Reading, published by the Excelsior Publishing House, New York City. It is designed for the youth and little children, and contains the approbation by Vicar General William Teacher:

"I have carefully read over this little volume for children and have found nothing whatever in it contrary to the doctrines of holy faith, but, on the contrary, a great deal to charm, instruct, and edify our youthful classes, for whose benefit it has been written."

One section of thirty pages is headed "The Terrible judgment," and another of thirty-two pages is called "The Sight of Hell." From the latter we quote:

' "In hell there are not two or three hundred prisoners only. Millions on millions are shut up there. They are tormented with the most frightful pains. These dreadful pains make them furious. The fury gives them strength, such as we never saw." - Page 5.

"Look at the floor of hell. It is red hot like red hot iron. Streams of burning pitch and sulfur run through it. Isaiah 34. The floor blazes up to the roof. Look at the walls, the enormous stones are red hot; sparks of fire are always falling down from them. Lift up your eyes to the roof of hell; it is like a sheet of blazing fire. Take a spark out of the kitchen fire, throw it into the sea, and it will go out. Take a little spark out of hell, less than a pinhead, throw it into the ocean, it will not go out. In one moment it would dry up all the waters of the ocean, and set the whole world in a blaze." - Pages 6, 7.

"Listen to the tremendous, the horrible uproar of millions of tormented creatures mad with the fury of hell. Oh, the screams of fear, the groaning of horror, the yells of rage, the cries of pain, the shouts of agony, the shrieks of despair of millions on millions. There you hear them roaring like lions, hissing like serpents, howling like dogs, and wailing like dragons. There you hear the gnashing of teeth and the fearful blasphemies of the devils. Above all, you hear the roaring of the thunders of God's anger, which shakes hell to its foundations. But there is another sound!" -Page 8.

"There is in hell a sound like that of many waters. It is as if all the rivers and oceans of the world were pouring themselves with a great splash down on the floor of hell. Is it then really the sound of waters? It is. Are the rivers and oceans of the earth pouring themselves into hell? No. What is it then? It is the sound of oceans of tears running from the countless millions of eyes. They cry night and day. They cry forever and ever. They cry because the sulphurous smoke torments their eyes. They cry because they are in darkness. They cry because they have lost the beautiful heaven. They cry because the sharp fire burns them.

"Little child, it is better to cry one tear of repentance now than to cry millions of tears in hell."
Pages 8, 9.

A Faith To Live By

“The devil gave job one ‘Stroke, only one stroke. That one stroke was so terrible that it covered all his body with sores and ulcers. That one stroke made job look so frightful that his friends did not recognize him. That one stroke was so terrible that for seven days and seven nights his friends did not speak a word, but sat crying, and wondering, and thinking what a terrible stroke the devil can give.

“Little child, if you go to hell, there will be a devil at your side to strike you. He will go on striking you every minute forever and ever, without ever stopping. The first stroke will make your body as bad as the body of Job, covered from head to foot with sores and ulcers. The second stroke will make your body twice as bad as the body of Job. The third stroke will make your body three times as bad as the body of Job. The fourth stroke will make your body four times as bad as the body of Job. How, then, will your body be after the devil has been striking it every moment for a hundred million of years with out stopping?” -Page 13

“Come into this room. You see it is very small. But see, in the midst of it there is a girl, perhaps about eighteen years old. What a terrible dress she has on -her dress is made of fire. On her head she wears a bonnet of fire. It is pressed down close all over her head; it burns her head; it burns into the skin: it scorches the bone of the skull and makes it smoke. The red-hot fiery heat goes into the brain and melts it.” -Page 17.

“Look into this little prison. In the middle of it there is a boy, a young man. He is silent; despair is on him. He stands straight up. His eyes are burning like two burning coals. Two long flames come out of his ears. His breathing is difficult. Sometimes he opens his mouth, and breath of blazing fire rolls out of it. But listen! There is a sound just like that of a kettle boiling. Is it really a kettle which is boiling? No; then what is it? Hear what it is. The blood is boiling in the scalded veins of that boy. The brain is boiling and bubbling in his head. The marrow is boiling in his bones.” - Page 20.

“See! it is a pitiful sight. The little child is in this red-hot oven. Hear how it screams to come out. See how it turns and twists itself about in the fire. It beats its head against the roof of the oven. It stamps its little feet on the floor of the oven. You can see on the face of this little child what you see on the faces of all in hell-despair, desperate and horrible! “-Ibid.

This forbidding picture of God is taken, not from a book published in the Dark Ages, but one which is available today in the bookstores. If the reader has the courage to read more of the same kind-and still worse-let him procure the book and read it for himself. But we do not recommend it.

This misleading doctrine has its root in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. If man has an immortal soul; if he is incapable of dying; if when the body dies, the soul still lives on, then such conditions as portrayed in the quotations above are possible. The question of the nature of man is therefore an important one, and not merely a dry theological speculation. just what does the Bible teach on this subject?

Does Man Have an Immortal Soul?

While the Bible is not given to philosophy as such, it definitely raises a question regarding the nature of man and what his final end will be. Note how the psalmist introduces this subject:

“When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou has

A Faith To Live By

ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visits him? For Thou has made him a little lower than the angels, and has crowned him with glory and honor. Thou made him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands. Thou has put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, Yea, and the beasts of the field. The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth." Psalms 8:3-9.

The psalmist was evidently impressed with the insignificance of man as compared to creation in general. He mentions the heavens, the moon, and the stars, the mighty works of God, and then asks the question, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visits him?"

However, he also appreciates that man, though small in comparison with the universe, occupies a unique position in the plan of God; that God is "mindful of him" and "visits him." He declares that man is but a little lower than the angels, and that God has crowned him with glory and honor, and given him dominion over His works. All things are put under his feet. As the psalmist thinks of this, he exclaims, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!"

These statements give to man a very high position. He is God-made: "Thou has made him." He is king and ruler of the brute creation and but a little below the angels. From this we draw the conclusion that God made man a being fit to associate with Him. The Bible gives a straightforward, simple account of how man came to be. Let us look at this record a little more in detail.

"The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Genesis 2:7. This took place on the sixth day of creation. On each of the preceding days God had done His work. He had created light; He had made a firmament in the midst of the waters and called it heaven. He had collected all the waters into one place and had let the dry land appear; He had commanded the earth to bring forth grass and herbs yielding seed and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind. He had set lights in the firmament of heaven to be for signs and for seasons and for days and for years. He had made two great lights to rule the day and the night; He had created fishes, birds, and other living creatures. Then He finished His work by creating man.

Man was God's masterpiece. When He created the fishes, merely said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly." When He created other living creatures, He said, "Let the earth bring forth." But when He came to man, He followed a different procedure. As though He were counseling with someone, He said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Genesis 1:26. "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." Genesis 1:27.

God did not merely say, "Let there be a man." He "formed man of the dust of the ground." To form is "to make or construct out of existing material, to shape or fashion with the hand or tool, to give shape, to mold, to put into a particular or specified form." All God's other created works He had spoken into existence; but man He formed and fashioned with His own hands. When God had thus formed man, he was perfect in every detail, except one, the most important of all. He was without life. So God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

Man differs from the animals in that he walks upright. His physical constitution in general, however, cannot be said to be of a higher order than that of animals. Many of these live longer than man, have better sight, better hearing, greater strength, and, greater endurance. While no animal has any organ that begins to compare with the human hand in dexterity, flexibility, and general usefulness,

A Faith To Live By

on the whole it cannot be contended that man is superior to animals in physical structure.

We may next inquire if the breath of life which was given to man was different from the breath of life given to the beasts. In this connection it is interesting to note that the words used in Genesis 2:7, God breathed into man's nostrils "the breath of life," are the same words used in Genesis 7:15, where the animals are said to enter "into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life." This is also emphasized in verses 21 and 22, where the statement is made that in the Flood all flesh died upon the Earth, "both of fowl and of cattle, and of beasts, and of every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth, and every man; all in whose nostrils was the breath of life."

When the breath of life was breathed into Adam's nostrils, he became a living soul. When the breath of life entered the animals, did they also become living souls? To this the Bible gives an affirmative answer. A careful reading of the first chapter of Genesis, verses 20, 21, 24, and 30, will disclose these statements: "the moving creature that hath life," "every living creature," "the living creature," "everything that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is life." The original Hebrew language here in each instance gives "nephesh chayyah," which means "living soul," as is also noted in the margin of verse 30. Referring to this reading, we find that "to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is a living soul, I have given every green herb for meat." The same expression is used of the beasts in Genesis 2:19. We refer the reader also to Genesis 9:10, 12, 15, 16, and Leviticus 11:46. In these verses the term "living creatures" is used, but in each instance the original is "living souls," the same words that refer to man in Genesis 2:7.

In the Image of God

If men have or are "living souls". the same as animals, is there, then, no difference between man and beast? Yes, a most profound difference. Let no one draw any unwarranted conclusions from what has so far been presented. It is true that man has a body composed of the same material as the animals; it is true that they as well as man receive their life from God. It is true that they are spoken of as living souls; but when we have said this, we are far from having told the whole story. In some respects man is as high above brute creation as heaven is above the earth. Man was created in the image of God and the beasts were not. This constitutes a difference that can hardly be exaggerated. As God is above man, so is man above brute creation. Man is not God, but he is made in the image of God.

When the statement is made that man is created in the image of God this refers to three particular aspects: the physical, the intellectual, and the spiritual.

The physical aspects of man's likeness to God are, of course, the least important. We are not unmindful of the fact that we are not warranted in making God in the image of man; for it is not God who is made in man's image, but man who is made in God's image.

We believe, however, that man has a kinship to God even in physical appearance. As the son is like the Father, so we may believe that man is like God. We are, therefore, not surprised when the prophet in a vision of God likens Him to "the appearance of a man." Ezekiel 1:26. We would not press this point too much, but believe it warrants us in believing that man may claim a likeness to God in appearance.

When we come to consider man as an intellectual being the difference between man and the

A Faith To Live By

beasts of the field becomes very apparent. Man is spoken of as being “renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.” Colossians 3:10. This affirms that man is intellectually in the image of God. As far as is known at present, man is the only earth creature that can reason and think. This statement may be disputed by some, and we admit that there are instances where the difference between animal instinct and man’s reasoning seems very small indeed. We believe it true, however, that no indisputable case of reasoning has ever been discovered in any of the lower creatures.

Man is an intellectual being, capable of measuring the depths of the heavens as well as of exploring his own soul. He is not only conscious, but self-conscious. He can examine himself and sound the purity of his motives. He bridges the chasms and tunnels the mountains. He chains the lightning and utilizes the mighty forces of nature. He builds machines that, like a bird, fly through the air, and, like a fish, descend to the deep. He parts asunder continents, and harnesses the mighty waterfalls. He speaks, and his voice is heard around the world; he commands, and the earth gives forth its treasure. He weighs the suns in a balance and marshals -electrons to do his bidding. He discovers the timetable of the stars and delves into the secrets of nature’s laboratory. Truly, he is but little below the angels; yet he is only a child of the dust-created in the image of God, but formed of clay. We are safe in saying that in the intellectual realm there is an impassible gulf between man and. beasts. Man’s mind is never at rest. However far he ma) advance, he still finds heights ahead which he feels compelled to surmount. Blind instinct may lead animals to do what appear to be heroic deeds; but man apparently is the only creature who, for the pure love of adventure, honor, or ambition, attempts the seemingly impossible and endures untold privation in the attempt.

But great as is man’s intellectual superiority over the brute creation, this does not constitute the greatest difference. This we find in his spiritual nature, in his capacity for knowing and appreciating God.

In the Realm of the Spirit

IN the spiritual nature of man is found the greatest difference between him and the lower creation. It is in this that he is most like God: “Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Ephesians 4:24. Note, man “after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” This means that man is cr6ted with a desire to emulate God in these respects.

“God is a Spirit,” says Christ, “and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” John 4:24. This text reveals God’s inmost nature. “God is spirit,” as the original reads. If there be doubt in the mind of any about the thinking or reasoning ability of animals, there can be no doubt of their total lack of spiritual qualities. We cannot think of an ape as having any spiritual conception, nor can we think of a cat endowed with moral virtues. No dog ever returned the bone he stole from the butcher. Animals are neither moral nor immoral. Such qualities are not predicated of the brutes. Beauty, virtue, and holiness are entirely foreign to them. Man alone has capacity for God; he is a partaker of the divine nature. (2 Peter 1:4.)

It is in the spiritual realm that man is most like God. The attributes of love, kindness, justice, mercy, compassion, and tenderness are qualities found in man as in God, though, of course, in a lesser, an imperfect, degree. It is because of these spiritual possibilities that men may be raised above present earthly conditions and become fit companions for the angels in light.

God made man with the power of choice, with freedom of will. He can choose and determine

A Faith To Live By

his course of conduct and direct his energy toward carrying out his determination. In the power of choice lies man's destiny. It was the choice of Adam in the Garden of Eden that brought sin into the world. As a man can thus will to sin, he can also will to do right. The will is the deciding factor in man. It is that which determines his eternal destiny.

This will is God-given. The Lord considered freedom of choice so important that He was willing to run the risk of having man transgress His commandments rather than to deprive him of this freedom. The Creator could have made a being incapable of doing wrong. However, such a being would be less than a man. God could have restrained Adam as he was about to eat of the fruit. He chose not to do so. He knew what would be the consequences both to Adam and to Himself. To Adam it meant death; to God it meant the sacrifice of His only Son. That God gave His Son, and that the Son gave Himself, is an indication of the value which God places upon the freedom of will.

The great value of will lies in its ability to choose between moral values. This is distinctly a human trait and does not belong to any of the lower creatures. We do not hold them morally responsible. Moral values have no meaning whatever as applied to the brute creation.

With freedom of the will comes moral responsibility. A man is able to order his own life, and is responsible for the choices which he makes. He may misuse his freedom of will, but he must take the consequences. He may also order his life in conformity to the will of God and receive a reward. We hold that in this-man's moral choice-lies his greatest opportunity and his most solemn responsibility. In this respect he is not merely different in degree from the beasts of the field, but he is different in kind. There is no likeness here, no comparison, only contrast. Man is as far above the beasts as heaven is above earth.

If man is created in the image of God, and God is immortal, is not man also immortal? This question deserves consideration.

Spirit and Soul

Though man is created in the image of God and God is immortal, it is not necessarily true that man therefore is immortal. God is omniscient-He knows all things; but man, though created in the image of God, is not omniscient. God is everywhere present; man is not. God is all-powerful; man is not. God is spirit; man is not. Therefore, we cannot conclude that since God is immortal, man is also immortal because he is created in His image.

The Hebrew word for spirit is ruach. It occurs in the Old Testament 442 times. It is translated by sixteen different English words, such as "spirit," 232 times; "mind," 97 times; "breath," 28 times; also-anger," smell, blast, courage, "air." Its equivalent in Greek is pneuma, which will be found in the New Testament 385 times. This is translated by four different English words: "life," "spirit," "ghost," and "wind." The Hebrew of the Old Testament has one other word from which "spirit" is translated-n'shahmah. This word occurs 24 times, and is translated five different ways: "inspiration," "breath & blast," "spirit," and "soul."

It will thus be seen that these words have many different meanings. Should one insist that "spirit" means only wind, he could cite many passages in proof of his contention. Should he decide that it means "mind," there would be 97 texts to sustain him. It is therefore clear that no narrow or partial

A Faith To Live By

view will suffice as an adequate explanation. As the two words are used more than 1,700 times, it would be a colossal task to examine all of them critically. This we shall not attempt to do, as neither space nor time would permit it. All we can do here is to record the results.

“Spirit” is the breath of life, which in the beginning was breathed into Adam’s nostrils, causing him to become a living soul. It is the principle of life from God, imparted to man and beast alike. (Genesis 2:7; 7:15, 21, 22) It is “the universal principle imparting life from the Creator.” It is to man what steam is to an engine. It is as the current of electricity that causes the motor to operate. It is impersonal, powerful, God-given.

“Soul,” on the other hand, is not impersonal, but individual. It might be said to be the principle of life as embodied in an individual. While it is used of any animate being whether human or animal, it denotes individual life as differentiated from the mere principle of life.

It is interesting to note that of the 851 times “spirit” is used in the Bible, though translated in more than forty different ways, 762 times the translation accords with the above definition of the impersonal, universal principle of life, while of the 850 times that “soul” is used, 770 are in harmony with the definition of individual personal existence.

In these definitions we are in harmony with most Biblical authorities. Thus Jacobus, in A Standard

Bible Dictionary, says: “The word ‘soul’ stands for the principle of life as embodied in individuals, while ‘spirit’ is the same principle as cause underlying the constituted life.”

Hastings’ one-volume Dictionary of the Bible says that “soul” is used in the Old Testament “for any animated being, whether human or animal,” while “spirit” “is the universal principle imparting life from the Creator.”

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia says under “soul”: “The ‘spirit’ (pneuma) is the out breathing of God into the creature, the life-principle derived from God. The ‘soul’ (psuchd) is man’s individual possession, that which distinguishes one man from another and from inanimate nature.”

These definitions we accept as true and Biblical. The spirit is the impersonal principle of life, universal life, given to all, man and beasts alike. (Genesis 7:21, 22) The soul, however, is not impersonal, but stands for one individual as distinct from another.

Though soul is referred to 850 times in the Bible, not once is immortality predicated of it. Inspiration has 850 opportunities to speak of the “immortal” soul, if such indeed were the soul of man. But, as stated, not once is the soul mentioned in any connection whatsoever with the thought of immortality.

The Bible tells us that God “only hath immortality.” 1 Timothy 6:16. It also tells us that man is “mortal and that “this mortal must put on immortality Job 4:17; 1 Corinthians 15:53. It states that the gift of God is eternal life,” and that only “he that has the Son hath life.” Romans 6:23; 1 John 5:12.

In view of this, we are on solid Biblical ground when we state that the Bible knows nothing of an immortal soul. It does, however, definitely promise eternal life to whosoever will believe in Christ.

A Faith To Live By

There is nothing clearer in the Bible than, the promise of everlasting life to the believer: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. The time is coming when those who have been faithful shall receive the immortality which is brought to light in the gospel. (Romans 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:10.)

We are firm believers in eternal life. We believe that the saints of God shall be with Him forever in the next world, and that there shall be no end either to life or to joy in the hereafter. When we therefore discuss the matter of the immortal soul and find it nonexistent, we wish to make it very clear that we believe in immortality, in eternal life, a life that measures with God's own. Christ came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. We want to emphasize that there is no promise that is dearer to us than that of life unending and everlasting, in the presence of God.

This matter of eternal life, however, is altogether different from a belief in an immortal soul, in some undying principle that is incorporated into man's being and makes him incapable of death. This is an unbiblical conception of the eternal life which is the heritage of the believer.

This brings us again to the matter of the nature of man. Man was created in the image of God, physically, intellectually, and morally. He appears upon the earth, lives a short time, and then passes on. What shall be his destiny? We have learned that he came from God, created by the Almighty. We have learned that there are capacities in him for understanding and appreciating God and all that is holy and good and true and that God has endowed him with the will to choose the right or the wrong. We have also learned that man may gain eternal life if he desires it enough to abide by the rules of that life. But now the question comes, What happens to men at death? Where do they go? Do they become angels, or spirits, or what?

Who Are the Spirits?

THERE are those who believe that men, when they depart this life, become spirits, that they lead a shadowy existence, but are able to communicate with men on earth, and that men are able to communicate with them. This, of course, is built upon the theory of the immortal soul, which is the foundation of spiritualism. Spirit mediums claim to have communication with the dead, to talk with them, and to receive messages from them.

Such claims are entirely and completely false. No one has or can have any communication whatever with the dead, for the simple reason that "the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun." Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6.

"Man lies down, and rises not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Job 14:12.

In harmony with this, Christ speaks of death as a sleep. "Our friend Lazarus sleeps," He said; "but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." John 11: 11. When the disciples misunderstood this and thought that Christ was speaking of natural sleep, Jesus plainly said, "Lazarus. is dead." Verse 14. In like manner Paul speaks of death as a sleep when he says, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

A Faith To Live By

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." 1 Thessalonians 4:13-15.

It would certainly be most unfortunate if the teachings of spiritualism were true. Consider this: A person dies, and, according to the popular theology of the day, goes to heaven. There he enjoys eternal bliss and is a companion of the angels in light. But at the same time he is subject to the call of spiritualists on earth. He is suddenly summoned to leave heaven and appear at some s6ance where a few persons have gathered to see the manifestation; he is asked to lift tables; to answer by rapping a certain number of times; to answer inane, oftentimes silly, questions, most of them trivial and personal. At the request of some medium he must appear as often as wanted, and serve as the attraction at some cheap performance to which he would not lend his influence were he alive. The whole process seems unthinkable.

The Witch of Endor

God does not treat His saints that way. Yet men quote the Bible in support of such blasphemy, calling attention to the experience of the witch of Endor, in which the prophet Samuel is supposed to have appeared. A careful reading of the account recorded in the twenty-eighth chapter of the first book of Samuel will yield these results:

Saul, the king of Israel, had departed from God. Because of this God had rejected him and made David king in his stead. The Philistines, the ancient enemies of Israel, were gathered together in battle against Saul, who, when he saw the host arrayed for battle. "was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled." Verse 5. As Saul had forsaken God, so God had forsaken him, and when he attempted to inquire of the Lord what he should do, "the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets." Verse 6. His old and faithful counselor, the prophet Samuel, was dead, and he had no one else to whom he could turn in his distress.

In his perplexity he thought of the necromancers, the wizards, and those who had familiar spirits, who claimed to have communication with the dead. Might he receive help from them? Quickly he commanded his servants, "Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her." Verse 7. The servants informed the king that they knew of such a woman who lived at Endor. Saul disguised himself, took two men with him, and in the darkness of the night arrived at the woman's dwelling and commanded her to bring up the one whom he should name. (Verse 8.)

The witch was assured by Saul that no ill should befall her, as he demanded, "Bring me up Samuel." Verse 11. As she attempted to obey the command of the king-he had not made known his identity to her-she was evidently informed by the spirit with which she was communicating that the man before her was Saul, the king. At this she became afraid, for witches had supposedly been prohibited from plying their trade, and what she was doing was unlawful punishable by death. "Why has thou deceived me?" she cried, "for thou art Saul" Verse 12. The king told her not to be afraid, but to inform him of what she had seen. She replied, "I saw gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man comes up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself." Verses 13, 14.

A Faith To Live By

After this Saul had a conversation with the supposed Samuel, who complained, "Why has thou disquieted me, to bring me up?" Verse 15. Saul was told plainly that the kingdom had been taken away from him and given to David, and that by "tomorrow" Saul and his sons would be with Samuel. This is a typical seance. Let us examine it.

The woman did not say that it was Samuel she saw. She said, "I saw gods ascending out of the earth." Nor are we told that Saul saw Samuel, or that he saw anything. He asked the woman, "What saw thou?" When the woman said she saw gods ascending out of the earth, Saul concluded that it must be Samuel. But the woman did not say so, and Saul did not see the apparition himself.

If this were in truth Samuel, then he did not come down from heaven. What the woman saw was gods "ascending out of the earth," and the supposed Samuel himself said, "Why has thou disquieted me to bring me up?" He was not in heaven. He was in the nether regions.

Would the real Samuel be likely to warn the witch first of all that it was King Saul who was visiting her, and thus put her on her guard against him? For be it remembered that according to God's command, "Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land." Verse 3. The penalty for witchcraft was death, and now the purported Samuel attempts to shield the woman from possible punishment! Would the Lord's prophet appear at the demand of a witch who was doing an unlawful thing, punishable by death? Would Samuel lend his influence to nullify God's decree?

God's command was, "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God." Leviticus 19:31. "Thou shall not suffer a witch to live." Exodus 22:15. Are we supposed to believe that God would send one of His prophets to appear at the call of a witch, when He had definitely declared that His people were to have nothing to do with such, "to be defiled by them?" and had commanded that they be killed? If God really sent Samuel to the dwelling of the witch to communicate with Saul, then He did so contrary to His express statement that He would not answer him, "neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets." 1 Samuel 28:6. We may safely conclude that the apparition, or whatever the woman saw, was not Samuel.

In any event, whatever the woman saw, came up "out of the earth." If Samuel was in heaven when called, did he descend to the earth, then go down into the earth that he might ascend "out of the earth"? Such would be nonsense. Apparently the supposed Samuel was not pleased with being called, for he complained, "Why has thou disquieted me?" Without doubt we would all complain if we were in heaven and then suddenly received a call to appear at some disreputable witch's house to "perform" for a Godforsaken company of unbelievers, to help make a living for a woman acting in defiance of God's command. Certainly God had no part in this affair.

The Spirits of Devils

If the real Samuel did not appear to the witch at Endor, what did appear? Did nothing at all happen, and was it all an illusion of the mind? By no means. Something or somebody did appear, but it was not Samuel, or any other departed human being. We have already noted that "the dead know not anything," that they are unconscious and do not know what is happening on earth. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6) If this is so, what really did take place at the seance? The same thing that happens at every true spiritualistic performance. Evil spirits, fallen angels, who are well acquainted with what goes on here on the earth, who know many of the secrets of which men think they only have knowledge, impersonate

A Faith To Live By

departed men and women for the sole purpose of deceiving and ensnaring souls, and leading them to destruction. If it is possible for Satan to appear as “an angel of light,” is it any wonder that his angels also have power to transform themselves into the likeness of departed friends? (2 Corinthians 11:14, 15)

It is well at this time to heed the admonition of the prophet of old. “When they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isaiah 8:19, 20.

Spirits that appear at seances are merely “spirits of devils” which have come to deceive men. They may at times reveal secrets which only a few persons know; however, they do this to deceive, and with no intent to impart information. But most people have an insatiable desire to know the future; the mysterious appeals to them. Satan knows this and is making the most of it. Even in this enlightened age every city has its complement of mediums. Thousands and even millions consult them and are thus led on to the path of destruction.

We would not give the impression that every medium has intercourse with some spirit. Much of what goes under the name of spiritualism is cheap trickery and deceit, based on the principle of sleight-of-hand performance. Such “mediums” have been exposed again and again. It is safe to say that nine-tenths of all supposed seances are frauds and nothing but frauds.

I have seen many of these mediums’ tricks duplicated by clever magicians. But Satan can take advantage of even this. For if some of the tricks can be performed by sleight-of-hand artists, may not all of them be done in the same way? And so people fail to understand that there are real spirit performances at which the devil himself has charge, and supernatural things really do take place. We all need to be on our guard. Satan will deceive the very elect if that be possible. (Matthew 24:24) He will even cause fire to “come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,” and thus he deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast.” Revelation 13:13,14.

In view of all this, it is well for us to know what the Bible teaches concerning the dead, and also what it teaches concerning evil spirits. Thus we will be enabled to stand when the test comes, and will not be deceived.

Prayer and Meditation

IN its highest exercise, prayer is communion. This needs to be emphasized, for to many Christians prayer is merely a means of getting something from God. They feel their lack in certain respects. What easier way is there than to ask God for what they need? Has not God promised to supply that which we lack? As a result of this way of thinking, many prayers consist mostly of asking for things—some of them good, some not so good, some positively harmful. To such people God is the Source of supply, the great Giver, the inexhaustible Fountain of gifts. All they need to do is ask, and God will do the rest. They measure their Christianity by the answers they receive to their petitions, and feel that their prayers are not effective when the request is denied. They are continually asking for something, and they believe that God does or should answer their requests. Like the prodigal son, they pray, “Father, give me.” Luke 15:12.

A Faith To Live By

It cannot be denied that prayers of petition-asking for things-are a legitimate form of prayer. We shall always need to ask God for the things we desire. But it is to be emphasized that prayers of petition must not become the prevailing form of prayer. Prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and adoration must always have the pre-eminence. Submissiveness to the will of God, complete dedication to Him, and thorough consecration would indicate the form prayers should take. When our prayers are changed from an effort to get God to do what we want Him to do to an intense desire to find out what God wants us to do for Him, our prayers will not so often take the form of asking merely for things and demanding that God forthwith give them to us.

Indeed, it would be better for most of us to cease asking for things for a while and concentrate our entire efforts on learning what God wants us to have, to do, or to be. When we find this out, we are on sure ground. Then we can ask of Him what we feel we need, confident that His will is to be done. The great problem confronting us is to find out God's will, and then search our hearts to make sure that we really want His will to be our will.

Someone has said that prayers are an effort on the part of the petitioner to have God change His mind. Many are making no effort to find out what God wants, although they are very clear on what they want. Their prayer is really, "Thy will be changed," not, "Thy will be done." They are struggling with God. They are agonizing in prayer. They are demanding of Him that which they believe should be done. It does not occur to them that the first thing to find out is, Does God really want me to have the thing that I so much desire? Is it for my good? Is it God's will? Has the time come for it to be done? Is there something I must do first? Am I really willing to submit everything to God, so that if He does not give me what I desire, I will be satisfied and-thank Him for what He does give; or am I really more intent on getting what I want than I am on ascertaining God's will?

It may be well to enumerate some things that prayer is not. It is not a substitute for work. A Christian confronted with a hard problem has a right to ask God's help and-expect that He will respond. But this does not excuse him from hard, taxing labor. God will strengthen the intellect, He will invigorate the mind; but He will not accept prayer as a substitute for mental effort or give to those who are slothful. Such as are capable of learning the multiplication table and have the opportunity to do so must not shun ,the effort necessary, trusting that God. will do for them that which will make mental exertion unnecessary. In most cases work and prayer go, together. Neither one is sufficient in itself.

The aim of prayer is not merely to get God to do something we want. Some apply worldly methods and have a worldly philosophy in their approach to prayer. They have learned that as far as the world is concerned, to get anything out of God they must "go after it." They act as though God were not willing to grant their petition without a great deal of coaxing, and seem to believe that by persistency and wheedling they can get out of Him that which He would not otherwise give them. No one can get out of God that which he desires, merely by continually annoying Him. Wheedling, coaxing, cajoling, teasing, annoying-mere persistency-do not avail with God.

The impression must not prevail, however, that there is no such thing as wrestling in prayer, or that we need only mention to God once and for all what we want and it will be forthcoming. Prayer is not quite so simple as that. No, there is need of agonizing, prevailing prayer-prayer that goes to the heart of things and is not satisfied till lives and conditions are changed. Jesus prayed all night; Jacob wrestled with the Angel; Daniel sought the Lord with prayer and fasting; Paul besought the Lord again and again. We need not fewer prayers, but more. And we need to learn to pray in faith. This, perhaps, is

the vital point.

Let God Speak

Prayer is not monologue. It may be audible, or it may be the unspoken desire of the soul. 'In either case ideal prayer is communion. Some pray at length, informing God of things of which He is already aware. They call His attention to many matters that need correction. They seem to believe that He is in danger of forgetting certain things that need to be done, and their prayers take the form of reminding Him of His duty. Having done this, they feel that they have done their duty. They have "said their prayers" and with an "Amen" their "conversation" stops. It has been a monologue entirely. They hope that God will use judiciously the information which they have conveyed to Him, and that He will do something about the matters concerning which they have prayed.

Many consider prayer a one-way communication, man speaking to God. Yet this is not the highest form of prayer; for as stated above, ideal prayer is communion. In true prayer God speaks to man just as truly as man speaks to God. True friendship will not last long where one does all the speaking. In our prayers we too often do all the talking and expect God to do all the listening. And yet, may it not be possible that He would like to communicate with us as well as we with Him? This He often does by bringing certain scriptures to our remembrance. Is it too much to believe that after we have offered an earnest prayer which we believe God in heaven has heard, He might wish to say a word to us? Is it not possible that after we have said "Amen," God may be on the point of communicating with us; but we rise from our knees and do not give Him a chance to speak? We hang up the receiver, as it were. We "ring off." Can it be conceived that the true Christian is forever speaking to God and that God has no message for him? It must grieve the Father to be denied the chance to communicate with us just at the moment when He is ready to do so. It would seem that after this has happened several times, He can come to no other conclusion than that we are not very eager to have communion with Him. We merely "say" our prayers, and when we have finished, we walk away. Such prayers surely cannot be all that God means by "communion."

Let us repeat; prayer is communion. It is more than conversation; it is intimate fellowship. It is an exchange of views and ideas. It presupposes sympathetic understanding and confidence. It need not always be accompanied by words. Silence may be more eloquent than torrents of oratory. It is rather a kind of friendship grounded in quiet confidence and assurance, unaccompanied by spectacular demonstrations, or outbursts.

Meditation

Meditation is a vital ingredient of prayer. It may almost be said to be its better part. And yet it is mostly neglected. We appear before God, present our petition, and depart. Next time, we do the same. We keep God informed in regard to our status, tell Him of some things that need attention, and having thus delivered ourselves, we close the interview. This is repeated day after day, but it cannot be said to be a very satisfactory experience. Is there nothing better? There must be.

The psalms, especially those of David, sound the depths of Christian feeling. David passed through some soul-harrowing experiences. Once he was fleeing from Saul into the wilderness. There he penned the sixty-third Psalm. It is the cry of a soul longing for God, for a deeper knowledge of Him and acquaintance with Him, especially in prayer. David was evidently not satisfied with his prayer

A Faith To Live By

experience. God seemed far away. He did not answer. David experienced the feeling of seeming to address nobody, in an empty room. Yet he longed for God. His soul thirsted for the living God. Was there no way in which he could get into real communion with Him?

Then David learned the real meaning and method of prayer. Of this he speaks in Psalms 63:5, 6: "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips: when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches." Note the wording: "My soul shall be satisfied when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches." David had prayed before. Now to prayer he adds meditation, and says that when he does this his "soul shall be satisfied. To him it is as "marrow and fatness," and he praises God "with joyful lips." At last his soul is satisfied.

This record is of great encouragement to us. Many, like David, cry out for the living God. They are not satisfied. They believe that there must be something better than they are experiencing. David found it. Can they not do the same?

"My soul shall be satisfied." How wonderful to have the soul hunger satisfied! It was when David added meditation to prayer that he could at last say that his soul was satisfied. It may be that we shall have the same experience. Most Christians remember God. They pray. In fact, it may be said, and rightly, that no one can be a child of God and not pray. But not many are practiced in the art of meditation. They pray, but they do not meditate. Yet one is as important as the other.

Most Christians are too busy to meditate. Their work makes too many demands upon them. They rush from one thing to another and have little time to commune with their own souls or with God.

Yet how much is lost to themselves and to the world because of lack of meditation! No soul can rush into the presence of God and out again and expect to enjoy communion with Him. The peace that passes understanding does not dwell in a restless heart. "Take time to be holy," is more than a mere sentiment. It takes time to commune with God, time to be holy. "Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah!" Psalms 4:4. The last statement needs special emphasis. "Be still." We are too restless. We need to learn quietness with God. We need to be still.

Wait Before God

"My soul, wait thou in silence for God only." Psalms 62:5, A.R.V. Let these words sink deep into each reader's consciousness. "My soul"-this is addressed to every Christian - "Wait thou in silence for God." This is a command and also a promise. Wait in silence. Wait in silence for God. Wait thou in silence for God. Wait thou in silence for God only. And the one who waits in silence for God only, at His invitation, will not be disappointed. He will be satisfied.

What a wonderful invitation this is! You have prayed, you have poured out your heart to Him who alone understands. Do not say "Amen" and walk off. Give God an opportunity. Wait for Him. Wait in silence. Wait for Him only. He has invited you to wait. Let your whole soul be intent upon Him. It may be that God, through the still, small voice, will make Himself known. Wait in silence upon Him.

To some Christians this is no new doctrine. They know what it is to commune with God. They have had precious seasons alone with Him. They have learned to wait in silence. And precious have been

A Faith To Live By

the revelations which have come to them.

To others, however, this listening side of prayer may be a new experience. They have learned to pray, but they have not learned to wait in silence upon God. Meditation as a part of prayer has not been important to them. They have conceived of prayer as a certain form of words reverently addressed to the Father in heaven. With their "Amen" the communion is at an end. God does not intend it thus. Amen may mean the end of man's speaking, but it should not be the end of the interview. God invites us to wait in silence. He may wish to speak, or He may not. In any event, we are to wait.

Many are inclined to speak too much. We have all had experience with persons who come ostensibly to seek counsel, but who in reality come only to present their own views. They seem eager for the interview; yet there is small opportunity to give any counsel, for they occupy the time themselves and seem satisfied when they have presented their story. If some measure of agreement with their view is elicited, they are content.

So it is, too often, with prayer. The most important part is not our speaking to God, but God's speaking to us., True, our Father loves to have us pray. Our prayers are music to Him. And yet, would it not be well to give Him an opportunity to communicate with us?, Would it not be well for us to have a listening attitude? Would it not be well for us to do exactly what we are counseled to do, "wait . . . in silence for God only"? Surely He will not let us wait in vain.

There is always danger of going to extremes. There are those who reject or think lightly of the instruction given in the Bible and depend almost wholly on impressions. Such persons are in great danger. We believe that God will lead those who are willing to be led, but we believe also that such leading will always be in harmony with His revealed will, and will not in any way contradict the, written Word, Wonderful as is the privilege of communing with God, and wonderful as is the privilege of meditation, there is danger of their misuse.

Especially should the younger Christians be on their guard. Only long experience in the things of God, backed by a life of obedience to His will, enables one to judge the processes of the mind. Satan is ever near to suggest his own thoughts, and spiritual discernment is needed to recognize the voice speaking. This, however, should not cause even young Christians to omit meditation. Far from it. God is ever near to help and guide, and we may believe that the quiet hour spent with Him will yield large results for the kingdom. We are only issuing a warning to such as I would be led by a voice speaking to the soul and neglect the voice speaking through the Word.

Our prayers are only a mockery unless we, from a sincere heart, abstain from sin and dedicate ourselves entirely to God. Prayer must have sincerity as a foundation and background. It must be grounded in repentance and godly sorrow for sin. It must be evidenced by confession and restitution. A prayer thus conditioned will not remain unanswered. God is true to His word.

The Unjust Judge

In the parable of the unjust judge Christ by contrast shows what God is not, and also teaches other precious lessons. The parable was primarily given to teach the lesson of faith and perseverance in prayer.

A Faith To Live By

“He spoke a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubles me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall not God avenge His own elect which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them. I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man comes, shall He find faith on the earth?” Luke 18:1-8.

The word “avenge” has nothing to do with “revenge,” but is rather an appeal for justice. Having lost her husband the widow had been taken advantage of, and she had appealed for justice. The judge was a hard man; he feared neither God nor man, and for a while would do nothing for her. Then, because she annoyed him and wearied him, he at last heard her petition and gave her justice. She wore him out. She got what she wanted, not because of any change in the judge’s attitude toward her case, but simply that he might be rid of her continual coming. She wearied him, and he gave her justice.

The first lesson Christ wants us to learn is that if it is possible to get justice from a man who is positively unjust, by the simple expedient of troubling him, should it not be much easier to get justice from God, who is willing to help and eager to avenge us of our adversary? He wants us to know that God is ready and waiting to come to our rescue; and that if He delays, it is not for the reason which prompted the unjust judge to delay his answer.

God Works in His Mysterious Way

Is it true that sometimes when we pray God does not seem to hear? We must all admit that this is the case. Are we to keep on praying? Yes, the parable was given to teach “that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” God is eager to help, and will do so at the first opportunity. In the meantime we are not to give up. He has heard our prayer. He is even now “working on the case.” Let us be patient, confident that in due time the answer will come. God has not forgotten us. He has good reasons for not answering immediately, which it may not be best to reveal at the time. This is a most important lesson and one which must be mastered if we are to have a successful Christian experience.

It is well for us to bear in mind that God “sees not as man sees” and that there is always a just and loving reason behind all His workings. Suppose we are praying for the conversion of some friend. We have prayed a month, a year, ten years, and yet God has not heard our prayer. What is the reason?

There are some things which God cannot do because He has limited Himself. He does not compel a man to serve Him against His will. When we pray to God to convert a man, we must remember that the exercise of the will is the most precious right which He has bestowed upon mankind. And that He Himself respects it. He could not violate it and be God. We are therefore asking Him to do the impossible if we ask Him to convert a man and expect Him to use force in bringing the conversion about. God cannot do this. It would violate the very principles on which the gospel is founded.

What, then, can God do that He is not already doing, when such a request is presented to Him? Much in every way, if—and note this if—if you are willing to co-operate with Him. God has not given to angels the work of preaching the gospel. While there are many things which angels can do, this is not their work. It is reserved for man; man alone has in his own experience felt the power of sin and the

A Faith To Live By

greater power of salvation from sin. Man can help man as the angels are unable to do even if they were given permission. God is therefore handicapped by His own limitation of Himself until He has a man to co-operate with Him.

Therefore when you pray for the conversion of a person, you demonstrate to God that at last someone is interested in the same person He has been interested in since his birth. That someone is you. You prayed for the person. Are you enough interested in him to do something else for him? If you are sincere and willing to do your share, God will immediately set you to work. As you think, as you meditate, as you seek for ways to reach the person for whom you have prayed, God will help, God will advise, God will put means at your disposal that will aid you. Angels will minister as they could not minister before-in short, all the resources of heaven are at your command. You are a laborer "together with God." You two are working and planning together for the salvation of a soul. You are not merely working for God, you are working with Him. The difference is vital.

Thus effective prayer forms a partnership between the one who prays and God. As truly as two friends may counsel together, so may God. And a praying person have communion. They have a common objective, they are working for the same end. All that can be done is being done. If the person prayed for will not yield, God Himself can do nothing. A person who chooses to be lost will at last have his way.

There are misapprehensions of God's method of work that should have consideration. When we say that He does not force the will of anyone, we are stating the truth. But some draw from this the conclusion that God simply sits afar off, unconcerned; that if a man will turn to Him, well and good, but if he will not, God has no further responsibility. This is not true.

God is vitally interested in the conversion of every man and woman on the face of the earth. It is not His will that, any shall perish. He longs for all to come to repentance and have everlasting life. He so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son for its salvation; He still loves the world and every man in it to the extent that there is nothing short of the actual forcing of the will which He will not do to save a man. He will correct, He will punish, He will hedge up the way, but He will not compel.

When at last a man is lost, it is from his own choice; God cannot be blamed. There is nothing that He has not done that could be done. "What could have been done more to My vineyard," He asks, "that I have not done in it?" Isaiah 5:4. "In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction." Jeremiah 2:30. God had punished Israel. They had not heeded His rebukes. It was of no use to add more stripes. "Why should you be stricken any more?" He asks. "You will revolt more and more." Isaiah 1:5. Sadly He acknowledges that if He punishes more, they will only become more rebellious.

We must therefore banish from our minds the idea that God will not do everything possible to save a man, even to very severe punishment. God must do this, so that no one can ever say that He has not done all that can be done, but primarily because of His great love for sinning humanity. If there is any way of saving a man, God will save him.

Peace With God

THEREFORE being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 5: 1. "He is our peace." Ephesians 2:14. Israel of old was invited to celebrate the fact that their

A Faith To Live By

sins were forgiven, and that they were restored to favor with God. This celebration included the parents, son and daughter, manservant and maidservant, as well as the Levite. All sat down at the table of the Lord and rejoiced together "in the hope of the glory of God." In like manner we are to "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Romans 5:11.

Few appreciate or rejoice in the peace of God as they should. Though the reason may be in many cases a lack of appreciation of what God has done for them, many times there are those who fail to understand that it is their right and privilege to be happy in their religion. They live in the shadow of the cross, rather than in its sunshine. They feel that there is something wrong in being happy, that to smile is inappropriate, and that even innocent laughter is sacrilegious. They carry the burden of the world on their shoulders and feel that to spend an hour in recreation is not only a waste of time, but is definitely sinful. They are good Christians, but not happy ones. If they had been living in the days of Christ and following Him, they would have questioned the advisability of going to the marriage feast "in Cana of Galilee." They might even be perplexed about Christ's eating and drinking with sinners. With John's disciples they would have been fasting and praying often. (Luke 5:29-35.)

This is written with full appreciation of the times in which we are living. If there was ever a period when seriousness and sobriety should characterize the work and conduct of Christians, this is such a period. In view of the approaching crisis, what manner of men ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness! (2 Peter 3:11) All frivolity and lightness should be put aside, and solemnity should take possession of every earthly element. Great and momentous events are moving on apace. This is no time for trifling and pettiness. The King is at the door!

These conditions, however, should not cause us to lose sight of the fact that we are children of the King, that our sins are forgiven, and that we have a right to be happy and rejoice. The work of God in the earth must be finished, and we are to have a part in this task, but after all, it is God who must finish His work. Many talk and act as if they were carrying this full responsibility, that though God may help, it is really for them to do the work. Even in their prayers they often remind God of what He should do, fearful that He may forget some things that are on their hearts. These are good people, anxious to do the right thing at all times, but they have not learned to cast their burdens on the Lord. They are doing their best to carry the load, and though groaning beneath the burden, are determined not to give up. They struggle on and are getting much done. They are valuable workers, and the Lord loves them dearly.

But they are lacking in some essentials, and are not getting much joy out of their Christianity. They work, but they are not very happy about it. They are Marthas who toil incessantly, but leave out the one thing needful. They look disapprovingly at the Marys and make their complaint to the Lord. They do not understand how Christ can take Mary's part, when to their mind she ought to be rebuked. They think others are not doing their share. (Luke 10:38-42) Christians should be a happy people, even in the midst of the most solemn events. And why not? Their sins are forgiven. They have peace with God. They are justified, sanctified, saved. God has placed a new song in their mouths. They are children of the Most High. They are walking with God. They are happy in the love of God.

Christians should be careful not to forget their heritage. Said Christ: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27.

Yet the hearts of many are troubled. They are afraid. They are worrying. Some dear one is

A Faith To Live By

outside the fold of the church, and they are trying to “pray him in.” They leave no stone unturned in their efforts to encompass his salvation. And they do not leave God out of the reckoning. They pray to Him. They entreat Him. They pray as though God needs prodding. And at last the dear one turns to the heavenly Father. How happy they are! Now they can rest. Now their work is done, their task is accomplished.

Does it ever occur to such persons that God is as much interested in the dear one’s conversion as they are-yes, more than they possibly could be? Does it ever occur to them that long before they began to pray and to work, God planned and worked for the loved one’s salvation; that He is doing and has done all that possibly can be done? That instead of their taking over God’s work and imploring Him to help them, it would be better if they recognized the work as God’s responsibility, not theirs, and co-operated with Him? The moment such realization comes to an anxious one, peace comes. He will not work less or pray less, but the emphasis will shift. He will begin to pray in faith. If we believe God is really at work, if we believe He is interested in men’s salvation, we will pray more than ever, but we will leave the responsibility with Him.

‘There is no higher bliss possible than to have the peace of God in the heart. It is the legacy Christ left us. “Peace I leave with you,” He says. Wonderful words. “My peace I give unto you.” John 14:27. His peace is that quiet assurance that comes from confidence in God. At the time Christ spoke these words, He was nearing the cross. Golgotha was before Him. But He did not waver. His heart was filled with peace and assurance. He knew Him in whom He trusted. And He rested in the knowledge that God knew the way. That same peace He bequeaths to us. It means oneness with the Father, fellowship, communion. It means quiet, joy, rest, contentment. It means faith, love, hope. In it there is no fear, worry, or anxiety. Whoever possesses it has that which passes understanding. He has a source of strength not dependent upon circumstances. He is in tune with God.

Seven Sabbaths

THERE have been many noteworthy Sabbaths on earth, days which, in view of the great things they commemorate, might be called epoch-making Sabbaths. We shall call attention to two of these in the past out of many that could be selected-and to five in the future. They are all of special import and connected with great events.

The First Sabbath. This was the Sabbath of the creation week, the first Sabbath this earth ever saw. God had ended His work. He had appraised it, and found it “very good.” Now the Sabbath was drawing near, the sun was sinking, and holy time was about to begin.

What a Sabbath that first Sabbath must have been to Adam and Eve! They had been created on the sixth day of the week; they had walked through Eden hand in hand, viewing the things God had made for them, and had witnessed their first sunset. How beautiful, how glorious, how wonderful all must have seemed to them-God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; angels as their companions; their wonderful estate, their work, their home. All was glorious-the whole creation was praising God.

Though Adam lived to be nearly a thousand years old, it may confidently be asserted that he never forgot that first Sabbath. Heaven and earth were united, God and man were one; all was holiness, beauty, peace.

A Faith To Live By

The Second Sabbath. Contrast the first Sabbath with the second-after sin entered the earth, which had been perfect as it came from the hand of the Creator. What a difference! Sin has come. Adam and Eve have been driven out of the Garden of Eden. No longer will they hear God's footsteps or meet Him in the quiet evening. Angels are guarding the way to the tree of life, and sinful man and woman are shut out of Paradise, now to earn their bread in the sweat of their face.

That Sabbath must also have remained in Adam's memory as long as life lasted. He must have told his descendants again and again of the time he was in the garden and also of the time when he was shut out. He must have warned them of the fearful cost of disobedience and cautioned them to be careful to heed God's commands even in small things. Adam had learned his lesson, but the result of his sin continued to curse the world even though he had repented. Fearful has been the history of man since his fall. That first sin brought murder in the next generation, and within seven generations men's hearts were only evil continually. Thank God that we are nearing the time when sin shall be no more.

The Third Sabbath. Six thousand years have passed since that fateful second Sabbath. We are now nearing the last Sabbath that this old world will ever see before the Son of man comes in the clouds of heaven. When that day will come, no one knows; but it is nearing. It is coming surely; and some Sabbath will be the last Sabbath.

What a day it will be! All the signs of Christ's coming have been fulfilled. Men have taken their stand for or against His message of salvation. Wonderful signs and portents have appeared; the plagues have been and are still falling; God's people are passing through the time of Jacob's trouble, and the supreme hour is at hand. Some of God's faithful ones are in secret recesses of the mountains; some are in the caves of the earth; some are incarcerated within prison walls. The time has been set for the execution of all who will not worship the beast or his image. (Revelation 13:15) It is a time of fearful anguish for God's people. They cry day and night unto Him for deliverance. But He delays answer until the appointed time shall come.

What a solemn Sabbath that last Sabbath on earth will be! We know that God will deliver His people, but there will be little to point to that last Sabbath as evidence that they will be saved. With job they will say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Job 13:15. But whatever the outcome, they will be faithful to God. Death may stare them in the face but, nothing daunted, they will maintain their faith until the end. That last Sabbath will be a most solemn, one, a day of deep heart searching and earnest prayer.

The Fourth Sabbath. This is the Sabbath following the last Sabbath on earth. And again, what a Sabbath that will be! The resurrection has taken place; the Lord has come; loved ones who have been separated by death are reunited, and all are on the way to heaven. Their trials are past, their labors are ended; at last they are safe. And only the Sabbath before they were down on the earth, face to face with the powers of hell. They were threatened with death, they were imprisoned, they were suffering, they were in soul anguish.

But now all is changed. They are free; they are happy; they are saved; they are on the way to glory, away from all that has held them down and hindered them in their journey along the heavenward way. O happy day!

The Fifth Sabbath. What a Sabbath that first Sabbath in heaven will be! To the saints it will seem

A Faith To Live By

like a dream. All will be so much more glorious and wonderful than even the most vivid imagination has been able to picture. There is the throne. There is God. There is the Lamb. There are all the saints of all ages. Their trials are ended; their warfare is accomplished. They shall hunger no more; neither shall they thirst. The sun shall not light upon them, and no plague shall come near their dwelling in this holy place. Those from whom they have been separated will be there, and nevermore shall there be any parting or tears or sorrow. All shall be joy, everlasting joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee. Glorious day!

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” We will exclaim, Is it real? Am I really saved? Am I in heaven? That first Sabbath in heaven will be almost too much for us. Is this what Paul calls an “eternal weight of glory”? 2 Corinthians 4:17. It will seem too good to be true.

For one thousand years we will enjoy the hospitality of the angels in heaven. We will become acquainted with them. We will learn of the many times angels have been our guardians and protectors here on earth, of the part they have played in our salvation, and of their loving watch care over us.

We will not fear death any more; there will be no sickness, no funerals, no heartaches, no parting.

What a wonderful experience it will be to meet the saints of all ages, the prophets, priests, and kings, the martyrs, the heroes of old, the mighty men of God! Peter and James and John; Moses, Abraham, Isaiah; Ezekiel, Noah, Adam! That first Sabbath in heaven will be joy unalloyed and it will continue through all the coming years as we meet from Sabbath to Sabbath to worship God!

Then we shall see His face, that wonderful, beautiful, loving, tender face. We shall see those hands that were wounded for us; we shall hear that voice that will thrill the soul; we shall look upon Him who was bruised for our iniquities and wounded for our transgressions. And as He leads us by the still waters, as He restores our soul, our cup will run over. At last we shall be satisfied as we awake in His likeness, and He shall be satisfied as He sees in us the result of the travail of His soul. What a wonderful day that first Sabbath in heaven will be!

The Sixth Sabbath. Between the first Sabbath in heaven and the next Sabbath which we shall consider, lie a thousand years. These years are ordinarily spoken of as the millennium, which the saints will spend in heaven, and after which they will take permanent possession of their new home on this earth.

The thousand years spent in heaven span a most interesting and important period in the long history of the controversy between good and evil, for it is the time of the judgment, when those who have rejected the offer of mercy will have to give an account of the things done in the body. It is the day of judgment that long-looked-for and dreaded day, when men shall be arraigned before the judge of all the earth and receive their just deserts.

For the saints it will be a solemn and not altogether pleasant time, for they will have a part in the judgment and must help to decide the cases of the wicked dead as they come up in review. This participation of the saints in the judgment is God's way of making heaven safe for all in the days to come. He could arbitrarily mete out judgment-and the judgment would be just-to all who have neglected to accept His great salvation. In a moment of time He could decide every case should He so desire, but such a decision might involve results that would not be best. Let us explain.

A Faith To Live By

There are some, there are many, that will not be saved. Some of these Will be relatives, friends, acquaintances. We had hoped that they would be saved, but now they are lost. Why? God wants us to know why, so that no question will ever arise in the mind of any as to the justice of what has beer! done. The only, or the best, way is to let the saints have a part in the judgment. They will then have all the facts of each case clearly before them. No doubt of God's justice, based on lack of understanding or knowledge, will ever arise in their minds; for they have thoroughly examined each record and have themselves had a part in the final decision. This participation safeguards the whole proceeding. We stated that in some respects this will not be pleasant work. Even to God this is a "strange work." Isaiah 28:21. But it is a work that must be done, and the saints will faithfully do their part in it.

After the judgment is finished, come the final scenes. The second resurrection takes place. All the wicked from all ages are raised from the dead. (Revelation 20:5) The saints with the holy city, New Jerusalem, come down from God out of heaven to a place prepared for this occasion. As the city comes down, the wicked surround it; but fire from God consumes them, and at last sin and sinners are no more. (Revelation 20:9) The destruction of sin has taken place; the earth and the universe are free of it. Eden is restored, and once more God will dwell with men on the earth made new.

"Behold," He says, "I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Isaiah 65:17. We are not told how God will make it new. We know how God created it in the beginning. He spoke and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast. In six days He made heaven and earth and all that in them is. Will He do the same thing again? We do not know; we are not told. But we do know that the Sabbath will be restored, and that it will be kept on the earth made new. (Isaiah 66:23) If this is so, some Sabbath will be the first Sabbath that we will spend on the new earth.

What a Sabbath that will be! At last the saints are in their own home. At last sin has been destroyed, root and branch. Nevermore will there be anything to hurt or destroy in all the dominions of God. "The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." Revelation 21:3-5. The first Sabbath on the new earth! Wonderful day.

The Seventh Sabbath. All these Sabbaths have been and will be important. But there is one more that may be even more important for us as we face today. It is this Sabbath, this coming Sabbath, this present week end. How much blessing and inspiration may it not hold for all of us? Are we ready for the heavenly kingdom? Are we at peace with God? Are we ready for the things that we know of a surety are coming on the earth? If not, let us make this the most important Sabbath of all by giving ourselves to God, by rededicating our all to Him. Let us all unite in such a consecration.

The Courage of Conviction

WE all despise a coward, even though we ourselves do not always measure up to the standard we have set for others. Indeed, many persons do not understand what true courage is, a lack of comprehension which is not surprising; for at times there is so little difference between courage and foolhardiness, between a hero and a fool, that the distinction is hardly discernible. A man may span the

A Faith To Live By

ocean for the first time in a small airplane. If he has the good luck to get through, he is acclaimed a hero. If a spark plug fails and he goes down into the ocean, he is merely another fool who thought he could make it. The difference in this case is merely a spark plug. Many are the men who have confessed that the deed of heroism which they have performed was grounded in fear. They were in a tight place-scared out of their wits, as we say. They were saved almost miraculously and came out heroes, to their own astonishment.

This does not mean that there are not heroes, real heroes, who knew the risk they were running and deliberately chose their course, conscious that they had little chance of success. Such people, however, say very little of their accomplishment; it is hard to get them to talk about it at all. They are of an altogether different caliber from those who, feted, featured, acclaimed as superior beings, actually enjoy the Worship accorded them. These have their reward.

I asked a soldier once what was the hardest thing he had to do in the first World War. I expected him to mention some dark night when he was commanded to go "over the top." But no; he told me that he faced the hardest thing one day when his company was detailed to attack the enemy. In so doing they had to cross no man's land under fire. A barrage was laid ahead of them, and they were told to march at exactly such a pace, no faster. If they did, they would run into their own fire, which was just ahead of them. The men advanced with equal distance between them. This soldier said that he never felt so much like running in his life. He did not care which way, just so he could run! To proceed slowly under such conditions required more courage than he had ever before been called upon to exercise.

The soldier who in the heat of battle performs heroic' deeds of valor should be given due credit. The scientist who deliberately permits himself to be inoculated with poisonous virus to demonstrate theories that will save thousands of lives, is no less a hero. It is not what one does in the heat of a sudden excitement that demonstrates the greatest courage. It is the man who quietly thinks things through, who counts the cost and then goes ahead, who in reality is courageous. It is not the man without fear who is greatest; it is the man who fears but still advances.

An Experiment in Psychology

One of my teachers in a certain university told the class about a barber who in a fit of insanity slashed the throat of a customer whom he was shaving. The man, was reclining in his chair; the barber had put a hot towel over his face. Suddenly an uncontrollable desire to do the horrible deed had come over him. He was declared insane, put in the hospital, and later transferred to the prison, as it was considered unsafe to allow him to resume his occupation.

One of the physicians in the prison felt sure that this man could be rehabilitated under proper treatment. But this, he believed, would have to include an opportunity to shave a man under like circumstances to those under which the tragedy had occurred. If he once more was permitted to wield a razor, if he once more had a customer in a chair and had the opportunity to slash his throat, but resisted the temptation to do so, the doctor thought he would get a hold on himself again.

He felt sure that his theory was correct, but to carry it into effect was a more difficult matter. Who would want to sit in a barber's chair, have his face and eyes covered with a hot towel, hear the barber stop the razor preparatory to shaving, and lie perfectly calm and still-which would be the requirements -to give the man a fair chance? The doctor decided that he himself would have to go

A Faith To Live By

through with the experiment, as no one else would care to run such a risk.

And so he did. It would take more courage than I possess, I am sure, to lie down in a chair and hear a barber of that kind sharpen his razor. I do not think I could lie still. In any event I would be sure to peek, and that would very likely spoil the experiment. The physician, however, did his part, and the man was fully restored. The teacher, a man of high reputation, vouched for the truthfulness of this story. For sustained courage the intrepid explorer, the devoted missionary, the conscientious scientist, ranks high; in many cases, indeed, his courage is of a much higher order than that which is the result of a sudden impulse brought about by momentary excitement. Under certain excitement, such as martial music, the example of others, or mob psychology, men have been induced to start on a course of action to which they never would have agreed if they had calmly counted the cost. Having started, they feel impelled to go on, even against their better judgment. If the path they have chosen leads to glory, they become heroes. But it is debatable how much credit should be given to the result of a sudden decision. It is the well-thought-out plan, the deliberate decision, the calmly planned adventure that counts most in eventual value.

There are thousands of unsung heroes who rank with the world's renowned, but remain unknown. What shall we say of the bereaved mother who, undaunted, faces the future with her little ones; of the parents who willingly and cheerfully give their son or daughter to mission service; of the aged father and mother who uncomplainingly "carry on" after the dread word has arrived that they will never see their beloved again? To the youth it may seem to be only another adventure to start for college. But father and mother look beyond the immediate departure. They know that four years will soon pass; and after the four years comes graduation; then the beginning of the lifework, and they will never have their son or daughter at home again as in former years. The parents see all this, and for them the first departure for college is a solemn occasion. It takes courage of the highest order to send a boy or a girl to school. It costs money, yes, but it costs more than that.

Self-control

Physical courage is not the highest kind of courage. It is never the exhibition of power that is most impressive; it is the control of power; it is mighty power under mighty control. It is no glory for a man of strength to knock down an aged person even under provocation. It is the highest kind of glory for that man to control himself when he knows, and others know, that he has the power of retaliation. Christ was never so impressive as when men spat in His face as He stood on trial before Caiaphas; as when He was scourged and bound, but stood silent and unmoved, knowing that at His call legions of angels from before His Father's throne would-come to His rescue. Perfect composure, quiet dignity, unruffled temper! What a man was the Lord Jesus!

Peter was a valiant man. He was not afraid to use the sword even though he knew he was hopelessly outnumbered. And yet what a coward he was! When that maiden in the courtyard asked him whether he had been with Jesus, he basely refused to admit that he understood what she was saying. (Matthew 26:69, 70) When another maid repeated the query he denied with an oath that he even knew Jesus; and finally, cursing and swearing, he reaffirmed his declaration that he did not know the prisoner. All this time Jesus was standing before His judges, on trial for His life. If ever He needed help, He needed it then; yet at this crucial moment Peter failed Him.

Many of us are not unlike Peter. We have a certain kind of courage; but we lack spiritual,

A Faith To Live By

intellectual, moral courage. A sneer, a little ridicule, a look, makes cowards of us. We lack the courage to stand alone. We lack the courage to be different from those around us; we lack the courage to let others know who we are and where we stand. When we are questioned about our religion, we answer that we are Protestants, instead of stating the fact that we are Seventh day Adventists; in social gatherings we say and do things of which we are ashamed later. The young man in the Army needs courage of a high order to fulfill his duty to his country in time of war, but he will often find that the first few days after induction into the armed service take more courage than he will ever need later when he faces the enemy. Will he be true to his convictions? Will he let all know modestly but definitely where he stands on Sabbath observance and other things which will make him stand out from the crowd? Will he respectfully appear before his superior officers and there manfully but with Christian courtesy explain his position? The soldier who does this saves himself much grief later on. But let him come short in moral courage the first few days, and he has a long, hard road before him.

A Compromise of Principle

In the first World War some of our young men were together in a certain regiment. They declared themselves noncombatants, and immediately became the butt of ridicule of the other men. Life was made miserable for them, and they were subjected to all kinds of indignities. At last they felt that they could stand it no longer. As noncombatants they could not fight, but they felt that some of their tormentors would greatly profit by a lesson in boxing. One of our boys was reasonably proficient in this art; he went to their superior officer, told him how they were being tormented, and requested permission to "lay out" the chief offender. While the officer did not give permission, he agreed to wink at what might happen; and so in due time the leader of the tormentors was "laid out." A few days after this happened I arrived. The boys told me their story, and also their dilemma. For how could they explain how a Christian, a noncombatant, could fight? I helped as much as I could, but before long the fighter was inducted into a combatant unit and lost his previous status.

There are times when it is easier to fight than to suffer insult. Yet which acts the part of a true Christian—the one who patiently bears mockery, insult, and even stripes; or the one who strikes out against his tormentor and fells him to the ground? The answer is obvious.

What the world needs is not more heroes of the flashy kind, but men and women with the courage of their convictions, who cannot be bought or sold, who cannot be intimidated, who will stand like a rock for principle, and will be true to duty though the heavens fall. Firmness without obstinacy; courage without braggadocio; conviction without offensiveness; patience without weakness; faith without presumption; religion without hypocrisy; justice without partiality; love without dissimulation; charity without condescension; liberality without ostentation. What a world this would be if we had a group of young men and young women who would, by the grace of Christ, try out such a program.

"I see your point," says one. "You mean to say that I know what is right and that I should have the courage of my convictions and do it. In short, since I believe that Seventh-day Adventists have the true interpretation of the Bible, I should become an Adventist. The truth is that I would have been one long ago if I did not know that there are those in your church who make a high profession, but who come far short of living up to what they believe. There are too many hypocrites in the Adventist Church."

To this last statement we agree. Too many hypocrites? One is too many, and we regret that

A Faith To Live By

there is even one. There ought not to be any. But why stay out of the church because there are those in the church who are not what they ought to be? Christ had a Judas among the twelve disciples, and some of the rest were rather weak. The argument of those who say they will not join a church because there are hypocrites in it, would have kept them out of Christ's company when He was on earth. One hypocrite in twelve is a rather large percentage, but that is what Christ had. The Adventist Church is not that bad. We believe that we can truthfully say that the fact that Adventists keep the Sabbath is a mighty factor in keeping out of the church those who otherwise might join for the loaves and the fishes. We have our share of hypocrites, of weaklings, of those who are no honor to the cause of God, but we also believe that our system of records tends to give us, a larger percentage of active church members than any other communion. There can be no honest reason for anyone's remaining outside the church because there are those in the church who are not worthy to belong.

Let everyone who knows the truth of God for this last day and generation have the courage of his convictions. We need men and women, young men and women, who love the third angel's message and who love the Lord, who will band together to help finish His work in the earth. Now is the time for all to break every hindering band and cast aside every impeding weight, to arise and run with zeal and Christian patience the race that is set before us, to finish God's work. We need the help of everyone. That includes you!

The Spirit of Prophecy

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS have a prophet. Her name is Mrs. E. G. White. She has written many books, and all Adventists revere them as they do the Bible, some even more. She is dead now, but they still follow her, and believe that all that she has written is inspired. Better look out before you join something that you don't know much about."

This was the information and advice given to a young woman who was interested in some evangelistic meetings I had been holding, and who was on the point of accepting the Adventist faith. While

this information did not accomplish all that the adviser had in mind, it was a definite shock to the young woman to discover that Adventists held such views, and that they had a Bible other than the one she had been taught to believe is the Word of God. She frankly stated her difficulty to me, and this admission led to a study of the attitude of Adventists toward Mrs. White and her writings.

Protestants take their stand on the Bible, and the Bible only. Lutherans have their "symbolical books"; Methodists have their "Discipline"; Episcopalians have their prayer books; but none of these takes the place of the Bible in their estimation, and this is as it should be. The Bible, and the Bible only, is the platform of Protestants.

On this platform Seventh-day Adventists also stand. They have the Bible and the Bible only, and no other book or set of books can ever take its place. In their estimation the Bible stands supreme. Whoever holds any other view is not a true Adventist.

Where, then, do Mrs. E. G. White and her writings come in? Is there a Mrs. White? Who is or was she? How did she come to be regarded as a special messenger of God? What evidence is there to justify the belief that her writings are any better than a thousand other books or articles written by

A Faith To Live By

Christians who have done much good in this world? These and many other questions crowd into the mind of a person who for the first time stands face to face with the problem of deciding whether her communications are special messages from God to the remnant church for this time.

For, be it remembered, Seventh-day Adventists do recognize the prophetic gift in Mrs. E. G. White, and they believe that the Lord has used her as His special messenger to the people. They believe that her writings are indited by the Spirit of God, and that while they in no sense constitute another Bible, they do contain instruction that is not only valuable but essential for these last days of earth's history.

The church recognizes, however, that belief in such a spiritual gift is not something that can be commanded, but must be a matter of personal conviction based upon evidence after investigation. Acceptance of the writings of Mrs. White is, therefore, not made a test of church fellowship, and is not placed on the level of belief and faith in Scripture or any of the other cardinal points of faith. In this Seventh day Adventists believe that they are taking the true Protestant stand, making the Bible, and the Bible only, the norm of doctrine.

It is not the purpose here to go into detail concerning the life or writings of Mrs. E. G. White. Born at Gorham, Maine, November 26, 1827, she early felt called of God to bear her testimony for Him in the old Methodist experience meetings. She was deeply moved under the preaching of the advent message during the years 1840-44, and because of her acceptance of the Adventist view, she, with her parents, was disfellowshipped from the Methodist Church. With the rest of the advent believers she passed through the great disappointment in 1843-44, but retained her faith in God, and was used mightily by Him to encourage and strengthen such believers as were ready to renounce their faith after the disappointment. In 1846 she was united in marriage with James White, and together they labored for the scattered flock of advent believers, building them into a compact and united company, and were largely instrumental in founding the present Seventh-day Adventist denomination, which today numbers more than half a million.

Besides rearing a family, Mrs. White traveled extensively with her husband, and also wrote prodigiously. She died in 1915 at the age of eighty-seven years and was laid to rest in Oak Hill Cemetery in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Mrs. White's formal education was limited. An early accident made formal schooling inadvisable if not impossible, and she was mostly self-taught. She was an omnivorous reader and was well read on a wide variety of subjects. Her chief interest was the Bible, of course, and she was an apt student of the Sacred Word, as her writings abundantly testify. Her mind was keen and active, even to old age, and the contribution she made to Biblical knowledge is of untold value both to the student of exegesis and to the more casual reader. The wisest and most profound researchers have found her writings a source of information that has caused them to marvel at her formal knowledge as well as her deep spiritual insight.

Mrs. White was constantly engaged in writing, and book after book came from her pen. More than two score of these volumes, some of them nearly a thousand pages in length, have been published. This does not include her contributions to periodicals, which in volume are nearly equal to her books. We marvel that one lifetime was sufficient for the production of such a colossal amount of literary matter. It should of course be remembered that what she wrote was not fiction, but largely solid

A Faith To Live By

the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.” Revelation 13:15. From this it can be seen that the war is one unto death. “As many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”

This beast “causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Verses 16, 17.

It is significant that in this last struggle there should be reference made to a mark, and that if a man does not receive the mark, he will be able neither to buy nor to sell. We know that God’s people will have a seal in their foreheads. (Revelation 7:3) This seal is called “the seal of the living God.” Verse 2. In the fourteenth chapter of this prophetic book the 144,000 are said to have the Father’s name written in their foreheads. (Verse 1.) A seal must naturally have the name of the owner of the seal engraved on it, and as this seal is the seal of the living God, we accept the view that the seal and the name of God are the same, or rather, that the seal contains the name.

When we discussed the Sabbath, we called attention to a power that claims not only to have changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday, but also to have had divine authority for doing so. And the very fact that this power has changed the Sabbath and that the change is accepted by the Protestant church in general is cited as proof of its right to change the commands of God. This man-made Sabbath is the mark of the beast as opposed to the Sabbath of the Lord, which is the seal of God.

When Satan makes his last stand to oppose the people of God, he goes to “make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17. Thus those who keep all the commandments have the seal of the living God in their foreheads, and have the Father’s name written there. The others who disregard the fourth commandment also have a mark in their foreheads. It does not require great insight to understand that these two marks are connected with the law of God, one as the seal of God and the other as the mark of the apostate power. Thus the Christian world is divided between those who keep the commandments and those who do not. The observance of the Sabbath constitutes the dividing line. It is on this battle front that the last struggle will be fought.

It should not be thought, however that the struggle is, confined to the mere matter of a day; that is, whether the seventh day or the first day is the one to be observed as a day of worship. There is more involved than that. The roots of the controversy lie much deeper. They touch the question of evolution, of inspiration, of the integrity of the Word of God, of Modernism, or Fundamentalism, of the plan of salvation, of the sacrifice of the cross, of the government of God itself. The final choice made in view of these considerations decides the destiny of man and of mankind.

Four hundred years ago a young monk decided to take his stand on the Word of God, whatever the cost. Tradition had been his guide, but henceforth the Word of God and the Word of God only would be his lodestar. Whether he ever said the words attributed to him or not, the sentiment is surely his and that of a large body of Christians today: “Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me.” “Here I stand,” he said, placing his hand on the Bible. And the “Bible and the Bible only” has from that time been the rallying, cry of true Protestants. When that ceases to be the case, Protestantism ceases to be.

We believe that the time has come for a new Protestant movement, one that will rally Bible

A Faith To Live By

believers in all churches and societies, and unite them in one body for the defense of the faith. Men have made void the law of God. It is time for Him to work. From one end of the earth to the other the call must sound. Protestantism has deserted its standards. A new Protestantism must arise.

Following Christ

Christ's word, "There shall be one fold, and one Shepherd," will be fulfilled before the end of time. John 10:16. There are now many folds, and there are honest believers in all of them. This will not continue to be the case. The call will sound: "Come out of her, My people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues." Revelation 18:4. God will gather His own into one fold, and when the final struggle comes, there will be no doubt regarding where each stands. The people thus called out will keep the commandments of God-all of them-and have the faith of Jesus. (Revelation 14:12)

The question may be asked whether it is possible to unite all the true saints of God in one body. Which creed is to be accepted? What unifying factor will bind them together? Since so many different denominations are now in existence, is it unreasonable to conclude that there can never be a call sounded that will be strong enough to draw these diverse elements into one body?

Says Christ: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.- John 10:16. Note: "They-shall hear My voice." As the Good Shepherd, Christ goes before the sheep. They follow Him. In these few words Christianity is summed up. "He goes before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice." Verse 4. Christianity is just that simple. To follow Christ is all the theology anyone needs for salvation. On that platform all Christians can unite. And as one follows Christ, and another follows Him, the two will walk together. And as all follow Him, there will be one fold and one Shepherd.

Will this ideal ever come to fruition in this earth? We believe so. As the nominal churches depart more and more from the faith of the living God, there will be those in every communion who are longing for consolation in Israel. They will see hundreds of churches with thousands of believers, each church holding a faith different from the others, and yet with people in it who are truly trying to serve God. They will be perplexed and wonder what they are to do and what they are to believe. In their perplexity these true children of God will turn to the Word, and it will suddenly dawn upon them, as though it were a new revelation, that Christ is the way, the truth, and the light, and that all they need to do is to follow Him and every problem will be solved. When they realize this, these men will break with every earthly tie and set out to follow the Lamb whither so ever He leads, and to their astonishment they will find that others are pursuing the same course. On the simple program and creed of following the Lamb, they will unite in divine fellowship, and God will set His seal of approval upon them. They follow the Lamb; they have the Father's name written upon their foreheads; the Lord owns them as His; they are sealed for eternity.

It is against this company that the wrath of Satan -will be directed. It is against them that he will make war. And the struggle will be fierce in its intensity. The decree at last will be issued that whoever will not worship according to the command of the "beast" shall be killed. (Revelation 13:15)

Then will come the time of Jacob's trouble. Satan will be determined to test the people of God to the utmost, and if possible to make them sin. If he should succeed, he would gain an important point;

A Faith To Live By

for God has determined to show His power in this very people. In and through them He intends to give a demonstration to the world of what the gospel can do for humanity.

In this company God stands justified. He has proved by them that His law can be kept under the most adverse circumstances. He has disproved Satan's assertion that He is unjust in demanding that men keep His law. God is vindicated. Satan is defeated. The controversy is ended. All that remains is the balancing of accounts. And then-after the judgment is ended-comes the reign of God, unending, glorious. God speed that day!

What Heaven Will Be Like

MANY people are not interested in heaven or in the future, for they know little about it, and what they know does not increase their desire to have any part in it. From their viewpoint they are not to be blamed. The preachers have not "sold" heaven to them; they do not know much about it themselves, and they are unable to convince the-common man that the future is worth what they say it costs.

Too' many have a hazy conception of what the hereafter will be. As a boy I thought heaven was a kind of old people's home. There the weary were at rest; there congregations would never break up-as the hymn had it. This did not appeal to me. The sermons I heard were generally too long, and if heaven was a place where congregations never broke up-what a place it must be! Go to church always, to sit still through an unending sermon; and the rest of the time, if there was any, to rest with all the other weary souls, was not a very inviting picture. That kind of heaven did not appeal to a boy who was not weary, who did not want to sit down, but was anxious to be up and doing. I was not interested in being good so that I could go to heaven.

I had a cousin, Charles, who died when I was about twelve years of age. We agreed on few things, and many were the quarrels and fights we had. But now that he was dead, I was sorry-a little, anyway. The preacher spoke about his having gone to heaven and about how he was enjoying the bliss of the saved. I had my doubts about this, for we had some unsettled scores, and he had no right to go to heaven until these were squared. But apparently he was in heaven and there was nothing I could do about it. However, upon further reflection I decided that might be all right. I was going out to play ball as soon as I could get away from church, but Charles could not go. He was in heaven, and there they did not play ball, but went to meeting all the time and had to sit still. Charles loved to play ball. Thus I was satisfied in part. It served him right to go to heaven; he ought to have had one more good whipping, but going to heaven was a fair substitute. I was sure that he would have a miserable time going to church while I was out playing.

A boy's foolish and irreverent thoughts, you will say. Yes, but is it not a travesty on religion that a boy could imbibe such thoughts about heaven from the prevailing opinions of his elders and the preachers? Surely the boy was not nearly so much to blame as were his teachers.

But what about heaven? What about the future life? It should be noted that when we speak of heaven, we have in mind more than the term itself might suggest. For the truth is that while the saints will go to heaven and be with Christ there during the millennium, their permanent home will be the earth made new, the same earth that in the beginning was given to Adam and Eve. "The meek shall inherit the earth." Psalms 37: 11. When we therefore speak of heaven, we use this as a convenient term

and have in mind the future life, whether in heaven during the millennium or on the earth made new.

The Earth Is Our Home

The fact that the earth will be our permanent home seems to me to give a clue to the nature of our future existence. God made Adam and Eve real beings and gave them a real home. The trees in the garden were real trees; the animals were real animals; the flowers, real flowers. Had sin never come in, Adam and his children after him would have continued this real existence till this day. There would then never have arisen any question regarding the so-called future state. It would merely be a continued existence on the plane that God originally intended. Sin has come in, and God's original plan has been delayed, or interrupted. But in the earth made new, life will be resumed and lived as God originally planned it for man.

If we admit that Adam and Eve were real beings and that the way God originally made man was the way He intended him to continue, we shall have solved many problems regarding the future. Shall we know each other then? is a question often asked. Well, why not? Adam certainly knew his wife and she knew him. Death has intervened since then, but it has only been as a dream, or a sleep, as the Bible calls it. When Adam and Eve awake, will they not know each other? Would it not be a strange heaven if we knew no one there? That could never be. Paul was certain that he would know others and that he himself would also be known. (1 Corinthians 13:12)

It is hard to understand how anyone could ever have conceived the idea that we would not know each other in the future state. If you have ever gone to a social gathering where you knew no one, you recall how uncomfortable you were because you were not acquainted. I am sure that if I should know no one in heaven, and no one would know me, I would be very lonesome indeed. I want my friends there. I want to know them. I want them to recognize me. I want to talk over many things with them. Much of the joy of heaven will be the privilege of associating with those we have here known and loved. Take that pleasure away and much will be lost.

Will we remember anything that has taken place here on earth? Surely. While there are many things which we will wish to forget-which we will be happy to forget-there are a thousand things that will ever be fresh in our memory. The former things that had to do with sin and disappointment will be of the past and forgotten; the things of the spirit, the things of the kingdom-those which have to do with the gospel and salvation-will never be erased from mind. Would it not be regrettable if the memory of our conversion were blotted out? Or if those whom we have been instrumental in bringing to Christ should forget their blessed experience and not even be able to thank the ones who were used of Christ to bring them the light? If the experience of conversion were ever to fade from the memory, we would be unable to give any reason for being in heaven. We would not be able to thank Christ for that which our minds could not recall. We would be sinners saved by grace, but would not know it. Such a thing could never be. Our memories are all that will connect us with our earth life. Let all evil and sin be forgotten; but let the blessed experiences of the gospel be deeply and ineradicably impressed upon the mind.

Older people who have lived a full life are likely to think of heaven in terms of rest, and the Bible does so speak of it. Younger people are not so much interested in rest. They want activity. They have no wish for an afternoon nap; they have little desire just to sit still; they are full of energy. In this respect, how will life be in the hereafter?

A Faith To Live By

Nothing is more tiresome and monotonous than inactivity. We may all want rest, but we do not want too much of it. To be doomed to inactivity for a year would be torture to most people. They may have no objection to a period of rest; but having had that, they are ready to go to work. So it must be in heaven.

Never Grow Old

Will there be old people in heaven? No, thank God, there will be no old people there. There will be many whom we have considered old, but they have learned the lessons of life, and now they are young again, ever to stay so. Blessed experience! They will no longer have to sit in the corner, neglected by the thoughtless young; they will no longer have to shrink into the background; they will no longer feel in the way; they will no longer be treated as non-composements and relegated to a small, cheerless, out-of-the-way room. They are young and happy; they "belong" in a very definite way.

No, there will be no old people in heaven; nor will there be any sick, or infirm, or crippled. What a blessing! No sorrow, no pain, no infirmity. No parting, no death, no war. Peace, blessed peace; friendship; sweet communion; love; happiness supreme: "My cup runs over."

"A man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses." Luke 12:15. Never was a truer statement made than this. Life is not things; yet how often we make it so. With many it is things, things, things-more and more of them. And they apply the same principle to heaven. It is the "things" there in which they are interested. But life is not things. Moreover, life, even eternal life, is not mere extended existence. It is not how long a man lives that counts; it is how much he lives, how deeply he lives, that is important.

. Eternal life, therefore, is not merely existence in finitely prolonged; it is not having a great many things, even though these things may be good in themselves. What, then, is eternal life? It is friendship, love, hope faith. It is sacrifice, unselfishness, understanding. It is impartation, work, giving. It is purity, joy, worship. It is these, and much more, all summed in that which cannot be bought with money-in short, the character of God.

We cannot imagine that the future life will be one of self-satisfied ease. The highest joy we have in this world is in service, in doing something for others. Can this be any less our joy in the world to come? If the Bible is true; if there are other worlds than this; if there are myriads of angels who "Desire to look into" the deep things of God; if it is true that "principalities and powers in heavenly places" (the angels) are to have imparted to them "by the church the manifold wisdom of God"; then it is clear that there will be a work to do in the hereafter for those who here on earth have wrought with Christ in the salvation of souls and who have been saved by the abounding grace of God. (1 Peter 1:12; Ephesians 3:10.) Having had experiences that are denied even the angels, they are prepared to enter with Christ into the most holy place, and in the ages to come they will find their delight in serving. As they serve, their capacity for service, for learning, for teaching, and for spreading abroad the praises of Him who has called them from darkness into His marvelous light, will constantly enlarge.

No, heaven is not a place of selfish ease where the saints will enjoy the fruits of labor past. There is no busier place than heaven at the present time; and in ages to come it will not be a place of inactivity. There will be nothing unreal about it. We shall find there a real God and Savior, a real home, the earth made new and even more glorious than it was in the beginning - real people, real work, real

A Faith To Live By

life.

But we have not finished our task. There are some things-and vital things they are-that still remain to be said, but we must wait a little while to say them. In the meantime, farewell. Be of good courage. God has given us a wonderful truth. Be faithful to it. Maranatha.