

## "IF YE BE CHRIST'S"

"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:29.

These words were addressed by the inspired Apostle to Christians, and they apply with equal force to the same class today. He does not say—"If ye be Jews;" although like all the early Christian churches, those of Galatia were no doubt composed in good proportion of Hebrews of various tribes. That was not the ground, or condition, upon which they might consider themselves *heirs* of the promise made to Abraham.

Neither does he say—"If ye be Anglo-Israelites." He knew nothing about such kinship according to the flesh having anything whatever to do with a joint-heirship in the promise. Quite to the contrary indeed: for under divine inspiration he tells us—

"Though the number of the *children of Israel* be as the sand of the sea, a *remnant* [only] shall be saved [from their blindness predicted.]" "For they stumbled at that stumbling stone;" and "*the Gentiles*, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to the righteousness which is by faith." "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ [if by losing this joint-heirship myself I might gain it] for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, *who are Israelites*."—Rom. 9:27, 32, 30, 2-4.

Still discussing the blindness of Israel and their fall from divine favor, which opened the door of favor to the Gentiles, the Apostle assures us that the vessels of God's mercy prepared unto glory are "*us* whom he hath called, not of Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." (Rom. 9:23, 24.) "Israel [as a nation, the twelve tribes] hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. 11:7.

Keeping up the same discussion he asks, "Have they [the fleshly seed] stumbled that they should fall [utterly]?" He answers "God forbid: but rather that through their fall [as the natural seed to which the promise first was made] salvation is come to the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy."

And it has had, and will yet more have, this effect. Since the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, Israel no longer goes after Baal, Moloch and other idolatries. That people seem to be growing more and more *jealous* of Christianity, and are now claiming and quoting Jesus as a Jew, as shown in our issue of Apr. 15, page 114, and June 11, page 162.

Thus "the fall of them [is] the riches of the world; and the diminishing of them [the selecting of only a few, a *remnant* from them results in] the enriching of the Gentiles [proportionately—Gal. 3:14.] And if the cutting off of that people resulted in such blessing to others, how much greater blessings may we expect as a result of Israel's ultimate full regathering to God as a result of the jealousy? (Rom. 11:12.) Blindness in part [*temporary* blindness] has happened unto Israel [—except the remnant which accepted Christ; and that blindness will last] *until* the fulness of [the completeness of the elect church, selected from] the Gentiles be come in. And so [thus or then] all Israel shall be saved [from the blindness which happened to them eighteen centuries ago]: as it is written. There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer [Christ, the Head, and his Church, the body], and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob [Israel after the flesh]. For this is my covenant [agreement] with them when I shall take away their sins."—Verses 25-27.

Satisfied that the Apostle did not in our text refer to *all* Israel that stumbled and that is to be saved from blindness by and by, nor to their children according to the flesh, lost or found, we settle it in our minds that the Apostle meant the words of our text to apply to consecrated believers in Christ, only: for whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, all who are in Christ Jesus are *one*; joint-heirs of the promise made to Abraham.—Rom. 10:12; Gal. 3:28.

But notice, again, very particularly, the words of our text. The Apostle begins the statement with that small but very significant word, *if*: "If ye be Christ's." It was not sufficient

to be known as a regular attendant of one of the congregations of believers in Galatia—a brother in good standing with fellow-Christians and of good moral character. Nor did it avail anything that the great Apostle Paul recognized those congregations of believers in Galatia as “brethren” and “sons of God.” (Gal. 3:15, 26; 4:6, 12, 31; 5:11, 13; 6:1, 18) Notwithstanding all this, the inspired writer says, “if.”

To “be Christ’s,” therefore, evidently means a great deal more than faith, respectability and good endorsement. It means to *belong* to Christ;—to be his, body, soul and spirit;—to be his today and forever; his servant, to do his *will* in his *way* and at his *time*; when convenient and pleasurable, and when inconvenient, painful and difficult.

It means, furthermore, that we cannot *belong* to anyone else in this complete sense, for no man can serve two masters. Here comes in a difficulty for those who *belong* to secret or other societies. The laws, professions and customs of these are almost certain to conflict with or infringe upon a *full* consecration to Christ. They profess some things which Christ condemns, and if we would speak as his oracles we would offend. Their laws and customs are worldly, or at least conformed to this world, and our Master has laid down as his law that we be not conformed to this world, but that we be “transformed by the renewing of our minds—proving [ascertaining] the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” These societies inculcate the wisdom of pleasing the world: our Master tells all that are *his*, “Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of this world.” “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” In a word he says to us, “Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.” “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.”

These observations apply as truly to religious societies, churches, etc., as to others: indeed, more so, because the latter affect to represent Christ and to speak for him, which, surely, they have no right or authority to do; for our Master still speaks to those that are his through the Gospels and the words of his inspired Twelve Apostles. See article on “The Twelve Apostles.” in *TOWER*, May 1, '93, p. 131.

Almost all denominations have formulated Confessions of Faith to which all who *belong* to them either directly or indirectly give assent. And these uniformly conflict with the doctrines of Christ. They demand consecrated time and money, as well as name and influence, for these, which are false doctrines, and hence in opposition to Christ’s doctrines. If we “be Christ’s” *only* and *fully*, we cannot compromise with the world, nor with its policy and spirit amongst Christ’s disciples. Not to compromisers, but to “overcomers.” Christ’s very own, is given the promise of a share with him in his throne as fellow-members of the Seed of Abraham and heirs according to that promise or covenant.

Finally, and most important of all, the Christian must learn that, “if he be Christ’s” servant and disciple, he is *not his own*;—not his servant to do his own will in his own way and time, nor his own teacher to make *his own* theology and code of laws and philosophies. He is simply a disciple or pupil in the school of Christ, under instruction upon every subject;—he is a know-nothing, a fool, according to the wisdom of this world, in order that he may gain the true, heavenly wisdom. He is to be emptied of self in every sense, that he may “be Christ’s” completely—dead to self, and alive toward God through Jesus Christ, his Lord.

## “ONCE IN GRACE ALWAYS IN GRACE”

That monstrous doctrine of “eternal torment,” a blasphemy on the name and character of Jehovah God, has led God’s people to some very illogical conclusions on other subjects as well; amongst others, to the view that whoever becomes a true child of God can never become a “castaway” from divine favor. Thus does Satan use the *fear* of torment to hinder love to God, while he operates reversely, through the same fear, upon the minds of the same people to make them feel secure and careless, though they so dread God that true love is impossible.

The human mind is so constituted that it can by sophistry or false reasoning convince itself of error: hence the only safe position for any of us is to have absolutely no will or preference of our own, and thus to come to the Word of God free from all prejudice, intent simply upon knowing his will and plan: otherwise we are in constant danger of deceiving ourselves into whatever view we *prefer*; for “the heart is deceitful above all things.”

Of course the Scriptures are appealed to as proof of this theory, that all are forever safe and sure of heaven who have been begotten of the spirit of truth. Hence we should examine carefully the Scriptures bearing upon this question, that we be not deceived. We read:—

Few such? Ah! yes; and this the Master foretold us, saying, “Fear not, *little flock*, it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

“Not my own, but saved by Jesus,  
Who redeemed me by his blood,  
Gladly I accept the message;  
I belong to Christ, the Lord.

“Not my own! to Christ, my Saviour,  
I, believing, trust my soul;  
Everything to him committed,  
While eternal ages roll.

“Not my own! my time, my talent,  
Freely all to Christ I bring,  
To be used in joyful service  
For the glory of my King.

“Not my own! Oh, not my own!  
Jesus, I belong to thee!  
All I have and all I hope for,  
Thine for all eternity.”

But what is it to be “Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise” made to Abraham?

The promise made to Abraham was the first distinct statement of the Gospel of which we have any record. It reads, “In thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” This was *good tidings* to Abraham, as it would be indeed to all who have generous, godlike hearts; and hence the Apostle says that “God preached the *Gospel* beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’”

This Gospel is still beforehand, in the sense that all the families of the earth have not yet been blest; but it may be said to be a *present* Gospel to the few who now have “ears to hear,”—to appreciate it.

To hear it fully and clearly is to appreciate the fact that a Millennium of blessing was provided for by the death of Christ as man’s ransom or substitute, and that consequently a blessing is to come to *all the families of the earth*. This blessing will consist of a full opportunity to know God and to come into harmony with him under the conditions of the New Covenant (sealed with the precious blood), and thus to have everlasting life.

To those who appreciate this Gospel, and who thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead [legally], and that we who live [through Christ’s promise and work] should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him who loved us and died for us;—to these the Lord makes known the exceeding riches of his grace, and offers a share with him in that work of blessing all the families of the earth, *because* they appreciate his work. And the further they go in obedience, self-denial and self-sacrifice in his service, the more he communicates of his gracious, loving plan, whose lengths and breadths and heights and depths are far beyond the comprehension of the natural man; but God reveals them by his spirit to those who are “Christ’s.”—2 Cor. 5:14, 15; 1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

(1) “Whosoever is born [begotten] of God doth not commit sin; for [or because] his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born [begotten] of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.”—1 John 3:9, 10.

(2) Whosoever is born [begotten] of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth [catcheth] him not.”—1 John 5:18.

(3) “Being born [begotten] again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”—1 Pet. 1:23.

(4) “No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”—John 6:44, 37.

(5) “My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all: and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand” —John 10:29.

(6) “Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.”—Rom. 8:29.

(7) “The Lord knoweth them that are his” —2 Tim. 2:19.

(8) “It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”—Phil. 2:13.

(9) "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. 1:10, 11.

(10) "To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."—1 Cor. 5:5.

The first four of these texts are supposed to teach that at our conversion we get from God an atom of himself, the seed of the new being; and this seed is presumed to be indestructible, incorruptible, unimpaired. It is claimed that although this seed may lie dormant awhile, or be hindered from development by a sinful course of life, it will ultimately, surely develop into a true and noble spiritual being.

But these texts do not so teach. They do not teach that the new nature, begotten by the holy seed, the truth, cannot corrupt, cannot die;—that the convert cannot fall from grace. The contrary is the suggestion and lesson of the figure used—natural begetting. It shows us the possibility of misconception, miscarriage, still-birth, etc., after the spiritual begetting as after the natural begetting. Thus the figure used contradicts the theory sought to be built upon it.

They do teach, that if our begetting is genuine, it must be a begetting or inspiring by the *truth*, and not by *error*; and that if we are really begotten by God's precious promises to new hopes, and new ambitions, and a new course of living, our natural preference for sin (by reason of the fall) having given place to a preference for righteousness, we cannot sin (wilfully);—and to them that are accepted in Christ nothing is reckoned sin that is contrary to their will. *uncontrollable* weaknesses, resulting from the fall, being covered from God's sight by the *ransom*.—Rom. 4:7, 8.

Hence, if any man sin (wilfully, intentionally), it is a sign that at that time he is not begotten of God by the Word of truth. If he ever were begotten to a holy, consecrated will, the seed of truth must have died; for so long as it remains he could not take pleasure in *wilful disobedience*.

The truth-seed itself is incorruptible, but not so the newness of life begotten by it. The truth may be let slip, and leave us as though we had not known it. "We have this treasure [the spirit of the truth and the new wills begotten of it] in earthen vessels," as the Apostle says. (2 Cor. 4:7.) And our earthen vessels are all more or less cracked by the fall, so that we are unable to contain or to retain a full measure of the spirit of the truth,—with all the daubing and patching we can do; at best they are leaky vessels. Therefore, the Apostle again says, "We ought to give the more earnest heed lest we should let these things slip [leak out]."

The possibility of *falling away*, after having come into full fellowship with the Lord and been reckoned members of his "body," is very clearly taught by our Lord as well as by the apostles. In fact, the only ones in danger of falling away from divine favor are those who have been lifted up to that favor, and not the world still groveling in sin, "without God and without hope." The Apostle Paul says,

"If *we* [the consecrated church] sin wilfully, after that we have received a knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins [*we* having enjoyed our share of grace under the one sacrifice], but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall *devour* [not preserve, nor purify, but destroy such wilful sinners as] the adversaries [of God]."—Heb. 10:26, 27.

Again, he declares. It is impossible to renew unto repentance those once enlightened, who have been made partakers of the holy Spirit, etc., if they shall fall away. (Heb. 6:4-8.) But so infatuated and so deceived by their own hearts are those whose views we criticise, that to these words they reply, Yes, but the Apostle says *if*; whereas he knew that they could not fall away, and is merely citing an impossible case. Such people can only be left to the blindness which their own wilfulness and prejudice has induced. Whoever can read this citation, and still claim that the Apostle was teaching the impossibility of Christians falling from divine favor, is surely lacking either in intelligence or conscientiousness; and it would be useless for us to try to convince him. For he who could and would so distort the divine record would have no difficulty in getting rid of any arguments we or others might frame.

The Apostle Peter speaks of this same class, saying, "For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ [*i. e.*, by being "begotten by the Word of God"], they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been *better* for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have

known it [been "begotten by the Word of God"] to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."—2 Pet. 2:20-22.

Our Lord taught the same lesson in his parables. He represented the state of the justified who backslide, by a man out of whom the devil had been cast and which, returning, found the heart swept and garnished, but unoccupied, and, entering in with others, made "the last end of that man worse than the first."—Matt. 12:43-45.

In the parable of the wedding guests (Matt. 22:11-13) the Lord shows one (who represents a class), who evidently came in among the others, clothed in the provided "wedding garment," and who was fully recognized as a guest and "friend" by the host *until* he removed the garment [which typifies Christ's imputed robe of righteousness]; and then he was cast out of the special light and favor into the outer darkness from which he originally came in.

In the parable of the sower our Lord shows how the good seed (the Word of God that liveth and abideth forever) might be received upon stony ground and sprout into being, and that new being afterward die, and how the same good, incorruptible seed in other cases is choked by the thorns of worldly business, pleasure and ambition.—Matt. 13:3-9, 18-23.

In the parable of the vine (John 15:1-8) he shows that one may be begotten by the Word of God, and even become a member of the elect church, the *true* vine, and be recognized as such by the husbandman, God, and that yet, if he fail to bring forth the fruits of the spirit, he will in due time be cut off from that elect church or *true* vine. For the present state of our membership is not final, but a probationary one,—His "house are we, *if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.*" (Heb. 3:6.) We are justified by God's grace and called to be his sons, and "*he is faithful that promised.*" (Heb. 10:23.) If there be failure or unfaithfulness, it will be on our part. Hence in receiving us as sons he is taking us at our Covenant: and whoever becomes a "castaway" must become such of his own *wilful* act.

Our Lord mentions some such whom he will disown, saying, Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not done many wonderful works in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils?

Again, he tells us of one fully recognized as a servant and entrusted with a talent for service, who, because unfaithful, will have it taken from him and be himself cast into outer darkness: not because he never was a real servant, but because, being really a servant, he proved unfaithful.—Matt. 25:14-28.

Let us now glance at the other texts cited to prove this theory that a true Christian cannot fall from divine favor.

The fourth is a simple statement that the Word and providence of God alone can draw men to Christ, the Life-giver, and that Christ will not refuse any coming as the result of such a drawing. It says not one word about his holding men who come so that they cannot go from him again, crucify him afresh and do despite to the spirit of God's favor.

The fifth text merely asserts God's willingness and ability to shield and keep all who desire to be kept—who abide under the shadow of the Almighty. It does not at all imply an imprisonment of those in God's care, so that they cannot go from him as they came to him, by the exercise of their own *free* wills.

The sixth text merely mentions that the class foreknown to the Lord as those who will be joint-heirs with Christ, he has foreordained must have characters like that of Christ—must be copies of him. See Z. W. TOWER, Feb. 1, '94.

The seventh text declares that God cannot be deceived. He knows those who become his, by being begotten by the Word, and he knows equally well whenever any lose the spirit of the truth and cease to will and to do according to his good pleasure.

The eighth text shows our continual dependence upon the Lord, not only for our first impulses toward holiness when we are *begotten* by his Word to newness of life, but also when we need the encouragement and promptings to deeds of righteousness which his exceeding great and precious promises continually inspire. God's Word is "the power of God unto salvation [by which he works in us first to will aright and then to do right] to every one that believeth"—receiving the spirit of that Word into good and honest hearts.—Compare 1 Pet. 1:23 with 2 Pet. 1:4 and Rom. 1:16.

The ninth text shows that our continuance in safety depends upon our own course of conduct after God has done his part through his Word and providences; if then we *do these things*, if we cultivate the spirit of Christ and are "not

barren nor unfruitful," but "give diligence to *make our calling and election sure*," then, under such conditions, we "shall never fall;" for God will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation provide a way of escape.—See TOWER, Oct. 15, '92.

The tenth text is the only one that gives even a slight support to the doctrine claimed. Here one of the begotten or consecrated church has committed sin; not necessarily a wilful sin, but quite probably in part at least a sin of ignorance; the transgressor was probably a "babe" in Christ and in the knowledge of the divine will, or had mistaken the liberty wherewith Christ makes free for license to sin, or both. At all events, the Apostle's language indicates that his case was not a *hopeless* one, as it would have been had the sinner transgressed against *full* light and knowledge, *wilfully*. For the same Apostle declares that such cannot be renewed unto repentance.—Heb. 6:4-6. Compare 1 John 5:16.

The Apostle would show the church the importance of prompt and decisive action to correct such an error. The wrong-doer should not be temporized with, nor coaxed and advised, nor remonstrated against, but should be promptly dis-fellowshipped by all the pure-minded, refused all recognition and all privileges of fellowship, no matter what his professions or knowledge or talents: thus left to the world and the devil for fellowship, he would be the more likely to see his condition and reform. That in the case mentioned the man did not have a *bad spirit*, but still had some love for God and his people and a desire for spiritual things, is shown by the Apostle's words, "That the *spirit* may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." If his spirit had been bad, the Apostle would not suggest its being saved—all that is evil must be destroyed. This man's spirit was good—his will was to do God's will, but from some cause he did not allow the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word work in him to *do right*. The purity of the church demanded that he be dealt with rigorously; and his own future depended upon whether or not the animal nature which was ruling him should be mortified—put to death.—Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5.

The mortifying of the flesh implies that we cease to do evil and learn to do well; becoming dead as to sin, but alive unto righteousness. Only those who attain to such conditions will *ever* have everlasting life upon *any* plane of being.

But there are two ways of reaching the same end. The more desirable and more noble of the two is this; viz., after justification and peace with God, by faith in the great atonement, we should consider ourselves as bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, and hence no longer our own, and should present our bodies living sacrifices to the service of the Lord—to be used, not according to our former will of the flesh, but according to the will (the Lord's will) to which we have been begotten by the word of truth. Such will not fulfil the desires of the flesh—sacrificed and reckoned dead, but the desires of their new spirit. The mind of Christ dwelling in them richly will control them more and more, and accomplish the sacrifice of the flesh in God's service. The class who so do, during this Gospel age, are called "Overcomers;" and to them will be fulfilled all the richest of God's promises; and, as joint-heirs with Christ, they shall inherit all things. These are in all a "little flock," because their path is a narrow one.

The other way of reaching the same result, viz., of becoming dead to sin and alive toward righteousness is followed by many; but it is an ignoble way, an unsatisfactory way and in every sense undesirable. It is this: After gaining justification and peace through Christ, to make a covenant of self-sacrifice, and then by yielding to temptations and weaknesses to fail to overcome; and yet to hold tightly to the Lord, at the same time not resisting the desires of the flesh—not crucifying the flesh with its affections and desires, *good* and *bad*. This is the attitude of the majority of truly consecrated Christians—they are seeking to serve God and mammon, to please self and worldly friends as well as the Lord, some going to one extreme and some to another. The result of their course is that they please nobody. The world endures them, but despises their religious aspirations as "cant," and themselves as hypocrites. They are always dissatisfied with themselves, feeling conscience-smitten that they are violating the spirit of their consecration. They do not please the Lord, but he has pity on them. He sees that if right-doing were *just as easy* as wrong-doing, this class would choose

the right; and in sympathetic pity he does for them the only thing that can be done further. He delivers them to Satan; he permits the great enemy of righteousness to attack them;—he permits their cherished ambitions to ensnare them and pinch them, their idols to fall, their earthly sweets to turn to bitterness, until, heart-sick and disappointed, the spirit may turn fully to the Lord, not an "overcomer," not a sacrifice, but one in whom the *flesh* has been *destroyed* by bitter experience, crying,

"I have sought the world around,  
Peace and comfort nowhere found.  
Now to Christ my spirit turns,  
Turns a fugitive unblest."

But such a result is by no means a certainty; instead of the buffetings and troubles turning the heart to the Lord, it may and often does result in utter loss of the spirit of Christ and a total cutting off and destruction of the unfruitful branch.

The Apostle says, "that the spirit *may* be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The result is at best an uncertainty—it may or may not be saved ultimately. The only way to save such as will not sacrifice is to put them through troubles which will destroy the flesh and develop the spirit; and this heroic remedy the Lord applies.

This is the secret of much of the *trouble* through which God's people pass:—they are not overcomers, and he is putting them through troublous experiences to destroy the will of the flesh and its control of them as "new creatures," and save them from their old selves. For the "great company" (mentioned in Rev. 7:9, 10) refers not merely to some of this class now living, who, because not overcomers, not self-sacrificers, will not be saved from the great "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation," but go into it and "have their portion with the hypocrites" and the world, in order that they may have the love of fleshly things—worldly ambitions, etc.—entirely burned out: it refers as well to a similar class passing through trouble during all this Gospel age. To those *rightly exercised* a reward, a blessing, will be granted and everlasting life—although all such will lose the great prize to which all called in this age might attain, with far less pain and trouble, if obedient to their covenant,—self-sacrificers. But, if, notwithstanding this discipline and experience, any still choose to live after the flesh, the Apostle's warning is that such "*shall die*" (Rom. 8:13); and he refers to the second death evidently, because the first death (Adamic death) passed upon *all*.

But let it not be forgotten that the "overcomers" also "suffer," pass through "fiery trials" and "endure a great fight of afflictions," partly in their own persons and partly in their fellowship with others misused. (See Heb. 10:33, 34) There is a difference, however, a great difference between these sufferings of the *sacrificers* and those sufferings previously mentioned, of the class having their flesh *destroyed*. The sufferings of the self-sacrificing class are for godliness, for righteousness' sake, and in the interest of the Lord, his people and his truth, directly or indirectly: and such sufferings are accompanied by a joy and peace which make them, however severe, to appear but "light afflictions" and "but for a moment." (Compare Acts 16:22-25; 2 Cor. 4:17; Rom. 8:18; Acts 5:41) But joy and rejoicing are properly lacking in the sufferings for correction in righteousness, and for unfaithfulness to the covenant of self-sacrificers: the *destruction* of the flesh is therefore doubly painful; and for every reason those who have been called to suffer with Christ as joint-sacrificers, and by and by to be his joint-heirs, should lay aside every hindrance and weight and run in the race, that they may make their calling and election sure and win the prize.

In this tenth text, therefore, there is nothing to indicate that all who obtain the grace of God will never fall from it: it does, however, show God's long suffering mercy, his unwillingness that *any should perish* in whom an acceptable character can be developed at any cost.

In conclusion, then, we exhort you, "that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (2 Cor. 6:1; Heb. 4:1) The crown of life is promised to those who shall prove themselves faithful even unto death.—Compare Ezek. 33:13, 14; Rev. 2:10, 11, 26; 3:5.

## RELIGION IN AMERICA: A JAPANESE VIEW

The *Nation's Friend*, a leading Japanese monthly published at Tokio, has a paper by Professor K. Ukita of the Doshisha College on "Religion in America," which has been translated

for *The New York Independent*. Professor Ukita studied at Yale University for a period of two years, and he gives his opinion as the result of personal observation.

Mr. Ukita noticed that the lower classes in America do not attend church. This is not a phenomenon of one district only. After noticing the real condition of society, he found that there is a proper cause for this phenomenon. There is a custom in America of restricting the seats in the religious temples; they are sold to certain persons, and, even in the churches with free seats, it is generally the custom to take up collections for the maintenance of the services; and, moreover, it is the custom for ladies to wear fine dresses. Such being the custom, those who have not much money and wear coarse clothes are ashamed to enter the churches. Civilization is progressing, but it shows no mercy to the laborer. The Gospel is preached, but the laborers cannot hear it. Ah! the words, "Blessed are the poor," and "The Gospel is preached to the poor," are no longer true; they are simply recorded in a Bible which is chained to the pulpit. In some extreme cases the Christian church excludes poor people from coming into the church. The Gospel of the Saviour has become an almost exclusive possession of the rich and middle classes.

The people by whom the present church is organized are capitalists and people of the middle class. The day when they meet with people of the lower class is not on the Sabbath when the all-loving and merciful God and Christ are remembered. Although they give money to the church on Sunday, on the week-days they do not remember the golden words of Christ; they only know the economical principle—buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest market.

It is not proper to say that those outside of the church

are not Christians. There are many people who make the true God and Christ their moral ideal, and yet who do not attend church. Even among the lower class of people whose names are not written on the church-rolls, there are many who hold the same ideal. In one society in New York, when a speaker pronounces the word church, the audience hiss, but when he speaks the name of Christ they applaud; so that it is clear that the present church has lost its power to attract men, and especially to attract the heart of the lower classes. But this is not a sign of the decline of Christianity. This fact simply shows that the creed and system hitherto prevailing are antiquated and do not keep pace with the general current of the nineteenth century.

If the Christian church cannot reform its creed and system very radically, it may come to stand in the same position in the coming revolution as it did in the time of the French Revolution. It is true that the church in America is separated from the state; but, on the other hand, it makes a league with the capitalists, and the rich organize a church by themselves and the poor by themselves. Although there is no difference of Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, and even no difference of race in the kingdom of heaven, the present church in America not only refuses to allow the poor to come in, but it is a fact that the white people and the black are opposing each other. The great future revolution of the world will be not merely religious and political but also a great social revolution, consisting of economical and race reformation.

—*Literary Digest.*

## DISINTEGRATION IN THE CHURCH OF ROME

### ORGANIZING AN INDEPENDENT CHURCH

A proclamation inviting the discontented Roman Catholics and Catholics other than Roman in the United States to unite has been issued in Cleveland. It is signed by Rev. A. F. Kolaszewski, president, and M. A. Chrostowski, secretary of the Polish National Church Committee. They headed the revolt from St. Stanislaus' Roman Catholic church in that city, which led to the establishment of an independent church on Fremont street. They propose not to limit the movement to any nationality, but to bring together all who desire to enter the independent fold. Fifty thousand copies of the proclamation will be distributed through the country, and in a short time a convention of delegates representing Polish congregations throughout the country will be held. After this convention has organized a new denomination, discontents of other nationalities will be invited to join it. The proclamation reads:

#### PROCLAMATION OF THE POLISH NATIONAL CHURCH COMMITTEE OF THE CATHOLICS IN THE UNITED STATES

Fellow citizens and co-religionists: The Poles of the United States, and all who have found out from years of bitter experience what a curse to their national interests, to their enlightenment and progress, their allegiance to the church of Rome is, have decided to throw away the hateful yoke covered with moss of ages of fanaticism and tyranny. Therefore, they have decided to establish the Polish Independent Catholic Church of America. Our religion, our faith, will remain essentially the same; but we want to be our own masters relative to the management of our worldly affairs. The principles laid down for the establishment of the Independent Catholic Church are as follows:—

First. All the church property belongs to the congregation, and not the bishops.

Second. The congregations will elect their own priests, or approve the ones sent by the bishop.

Third. The congregations will exercise perfect freedom in regard to the education of their children. There should be no compulsion in regard to the sending of their children to parochial schools. The parochial schools should be furnished with American textbooks and the American system of teaching.

Fourth. Perfect freedom of the press.

These are the principles laid down by us for the establishment of an Independent Catholic Church in this country. We have already, upon these principles, established one church in Cleveland, O. Others are being organized in Baltimore, Chicago, Buffalo, Nanticoke and Reading, Pa. In a few years hence we are sure of having an independent congregation in every Polish settlement in this country. But our aim is broader still. We do not want to confine this work of reform to our nationality alone. We want to spread it all over the country; we want to reach every catholic citizen of the United States whose heart beats for freedom and who is opposed to the tyranny and fanaticism on which the church of Rome is founded. For the purpose of carrying on the propaganda of religious freedom among the Poles, the Polish National

Church Committee was elected. This committee was authorized to confer with the catholics of this country, composed of other nationalities. This committee, representing about 125,000 Poles who are worshiping already in the independent spirit, makes an appeal to you, fellow citizens and co-religionists, and invites you to join in the movement. We have not the least doubt that many thousands of American catholics—Bohemian, German, Irishmen, Frenchmen, and others—are dissatisfied with the arbitrary rulings of the church of Rome, which is represented in this country by the whimsical, despotic, and shallow-minded American bishops. We have not the least doubt that many of you are opposed to the church property being owned exclusively by the bishops. This is simply absurd. This only shows to what degree extends the greed for money of our high church officials.

We have no doubt, also, that you would be willing to have for your spiritual adviser a priest who would really care for his flock, and not for the bishop's interests, as it is at present. We draw the example from the state of matters existing among us. In our Polish congregations we have had many examples where our priests were treated in most unjust, most cruel, most diabolical manner by their superiors, the bishops. And we know that the only reason for this was that the priest really cared for the good of his flock, and did not want to enrich the bishop at the expense of his congregation. We presume that more or less the same state of things exists among all the catholics in this country. Therefore, when we say that we want the election of the priest to be reserved for the congregation—if not exclusively, then partially, at least—we are sure we touch the keynote of the question. Then come the schools. The superiority in everything of the public schools formed on the American system of school teaching is so apparent to everybody that we will not dwell upon this subject at all.

So, fellow citizens and co-religionists, you can plainly see that we do not wish to change our faith—our denomination. We wish to remain as we are, catholics, but we want our church, just as all the institutions in this country are, to be governed by the spirit of freedom. We want it to be governed by the free and glorious Constitution of the United States. We will remain catholics, but the worldly affairs of our own church will be solely and exclusively in our own hands. We do not want to organize any other congregations but the catholic, but they must be self-governed, dictated to by the majority of the people, and not by the arbitrary bishop, despotic Satolli, or infallible pope of Rome.

These are our principles, and they sooner or later will be recognized as a religious standard by all the noble, thinking catholics of America.

On the road to the great religious freedom and deliverance, however, we will find many hard obstacles. The church of Rome is great and powerful even in this country. While the centuries passed away it remained the same, unchanged and unmoved, and now it is even more grim, fanatical and

arbitrary than centuries ago. Its power, as hundreds of years ago, is founded upon ignorance, superstition and fanaticism, and there is small wonder that even in this country it is so great. This church of Rome will do its utmost to stop our work of reform. It will beg, it will pray, or it will curse and excommunicate, or it will strain every nerve in its gigantic body to stop or crush us to the dust.

Fellow citizens and brother catholics! United we would stand—withstand all the onslaughts of this mighty enemy of freedom—divided, separated, we would fall, accomplish nothing, or very little, at the end. We invite, therefore, most earnestly, every one of you who thinks more or less the same as we do, to join in this grand stride for religious liberty. Instead of having a committee composed of one nationality for the carrying on of this propaganda, we must have a national American church committee, composed of all nationalities, with different branches—that is, Polish, Bohemian, German, Irish, and others. To bring about this we must first have a convention, where all the plans for the future work of reform will be discussed and the above committee organized. Therefore, we invite all who will take interest in this proclamation to come to a convention which we propose to hold in Cleveland for the purpose of discussing all the matters pertaining to the establishment of the independent catholic church in America. We propose the city of Cleveland for the place of convention, because in this city the great movement was first begun a year ago. In this city, too, we have already established an independent catholic congregation, known as the congregation of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This congregation, in spite of the excommunication by the bishop of the Cleveland diocese, in spite of the repeated appeals by Satolli, whose despotical and whimsical inclinations are best shown by his order expelling all the saloonkeepers from the catholic societies, grows larger every day, gaining new members. We beg of all of you who are willing to take part in this great convention to notify of your intention one of the following officers of our committee, who, after the list of those ready to participate will be more or less completed, will name the clerk of the convention.

All the newspapers in the country desirous of helping this good work along, we beg to copy this proclamation.

### MISSIONARY LIFE

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—The following is a copy of a letter recently received by a friend of mine from another old, intimate, personal friend, who is now in India as missionary for the Baptists. It illustrates wonderfully the blind gropings of the spiritual leaders of nominal Christendom. (Italics his.)

Yours in Christian love, F. B. UTLEY.  
India, May 22nd, '94.

My Dear Friend:—Every time I open my writing case, your letter is seen by me. I was very glad to get it and to learn so much of Y. M. C. A. work in Ontario. Every one who writes makes some such statement as follows:—"Well, I need not tell you of Y. M. C. A. affairs, as others will have written you on that subject;" and between them all they keep me well in the dark.

A good many people in writing the missionary, too, imagine they must assume a commiserating air, or rather *tone*, and talk of self-sacrifice, burden, and all sorts of sentiment. I know people at home look on the foreign mission field as a horrible pit, into which, amid the supplications of home friends for his safety, the heroic missionary descends with only a forlorn hope of being spared to ascend again. And I know the missionaries largely like to have it so. But, as a matter of fact, it is one of the highest deceptions in all creation; and a very rude shock my wife and self received when we came to Madras, and afterwards to our own fellow-missionaries in Cocauade, Tuni, etc., and saw the comfort they lived in. [See Z. W. TOWER for January 1, '92.] Don't misunderstand me—the missionary has as much right (and certainly *more need*) to live comfortably as the workers at home; but my contention is that the *truth* should be told, and a

In the name of the Polish National Church Committee,  
Rev. A. F. Kolaszewski, Pres.,  
M. A. Chrostowski, Secretary.

### THE REVOLT SPREADING

A large Catholic congregation in Baltimore, Md., known as The Church of the Holy Rosary, and numbering about three thousand members, has decided to follow the example set at Detroit and Cleveland;—organize an Independent church, place its affairs in the hands of a committee, engage its own pastor, etc. Two of its members were sent as a committee to Cleveland to investigate the conduct of affairs there, and made a glowing report of the success of the movement. They report that about thirty priests are ready to accept positions as soon as they are offered. It was to prevent just such a movement and keep peace in the Roman Catholic family that Satolli was sent here as the representative of the pope. His mission was only partially successful in the healing of the McGlynn schism. A similar Independent Catholic movement is on foot in Europe.

### A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION EFFECTED

In harmony with the foregoing a general Convention met at Cleveland on Aug. 20, at which were delegates from congregations of Polish Catholic secessionists in fourteen cities of the U. S.—those of Baltimore, Cleveland, Detroit, St. Louis and Buffalo being the largest. The latter was reported by its delegates as 8000 strong.

Archbishop Vilatte was chosen the head of the new church; and while some favored a name indicating the Polish origin of the new denomination, it was finally decided that as Catholics of all nationalities would be invited to join it the name should be, *The American Catholic Church*.

A resolution renouncing forever allegiance to the pope of Rome was voted down,—the Archbishop declaring, "We will always recognize the primacy of the pope. That does not imply that we believe in his infallibility or supremacy. The pope is nothing, but we respect him for his primacy."

Archbishop Vilatte in a speech said, "We are met together to exclaim, 'Great is the truth, and it shall prevail.' We are met to proclaim all over the land, 'Beware of despotism, if you love liberty.' The American Catholic Church will be composed of different nationalities."

little of the sentimental rubbish which pervades, at times, even that unique denominational paper which is published in T—— should be "sat on."

I am not in the least to be pitied here or commiserated with. Why, on Saturday evenings lately I have been literally *howling* with delight. People are coming in in large numbers, young men sit down and hear me through attentively. Then we lack nothing, have abundance of food, a house suited to the hard climate, and plenty of servants to do the running for us. We live not like niggers here: we live and dress as Europeans, and are looked up to by the people; though our truth is not believed. And in these days of fast and cheap travel we may entertain a reasonable *expectation*, if the Lord will, of going home at fair intervals in life to see old faces and places. If I'm spared to come home ever, I'll tell up mission life *as it is*, or else forever hold my peace. The church is very ripe for judgment. The world is uneasy. Europe is an armed camp. Society shakes in its shoes—the clay and iron has proved itself thoroughly wanting in cohesive qualities, as per the divine Record. The Jews, God's heritage, are casting longing eyes toward the city of David, and God is certainly drawing attention to the ancient land in ways that are marvelous—railways, increased commerce, amazing immigration, increasing fertility, all around us expectancy of a great something, the world cannot tell what. What does it mean? Is he, the Beloved, at the doors? At any rate, it becomes us to gird up our loins as men who wait for their Lord.

Yours in the one body, and in hope of his coming,

F. W. G——

### "UPON THIS GENERATION"

"That upon you may come all the *righteous* blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you,

All these things shall come upon this generation."—Matt. 23:35, 36.

At first glance it appears unjust on God's part to thus visit punishment for the sins of the parents upon their children, centuries after. Nor can we suppose that the evil-doers—Cain and his successors—would be excused from further responsibility even after their children had suffered, for it would be as unjust to let the real culprit go free of punish-

ment as it would be to punish him and his children both for the same sins. Neither of these unjust and unreasonable views can be the proper explanation of these, our Lord's words.

The thought is this,—That generation (the one in which our Lord lived) had so many advantages over every generation, in general intelligence, as well as from the special teachings

of Christ and his followers, that its responsibility was only proportionate. As it had more advantages than all previous generations combined, so the punishment for its course of sin must in justice be all and more than equivalent to the punishments visited upon past transgressions all combined.

But let us not confuse these national and generational judgments with individual judgments. They were distinct. For instance, a certain immediate judgment came upon Cain for the murder of his brother; and so with every crime there seems to go a certain amount of *present-life* punishment, entirely distinct from the future retribution. What "stripes" may yet be due to Cain we cannot surely know, except that it will be "a just recompense." And so in the case before us in our text, only the immediate and visible consequences of sin are referred to. The outward and immediate consequences of the rejection and murder of Christ would be, and properly, more severe than all the outward and immediate punishments of all previous transgressions against God's people combined.

This statement in no way involves the *future* retribution of the people of that generation. In that future retribution they will not be judged nationally, nor as a generation, but each individual will be held responsible for his own conduct in proportion as he transgressed against the light; and each, through the merit of the "ransom for all," will be offered a credit proportionate to the weaknesses he had sustained from the fall. These conclusions are sustained by the words of the Apostle Peter.—Acts 2:23, 37-40.

Our Lord's statement in our text was corroborated by the Apostle Paul, who declared, "wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" (1 Thes. 2:16); confirming the Prophet Daniel's words, "He shall make it desolate until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." (Dan. 9:27.) And secular history estimates the trouble which came upon Israel, upon that generation, within forty years of our Lord's utterance above quoted, as the most awful that had thus far occurred amongst men;—attesting the correctness of our Lord's prediction.

## ANOTHER BRANCH OF THE WORK

The Editor receives frequent urgent requests to visit various little groups and preach, especially for the benefit of outsiders who might be awakened. We are obliged to decline these invitations—for the present at least—believing that the general work of the Tower office which demands our attention is still more important, because it is for a larger number. Besides, it is a part of your work and privilege to tell the glad tidings *wisely* and *lovingly* to your fellow Christians and neighbors who have not yet learned the present truth. Love for them and for the truth and of the Lord's approval should take you into Y. M. C. A. meetings, Class meetings and Prayer meetings regularly to scatter the truth by word or by printed page, or as best you can—but always wisely and lovingly, so as not to stumble and offend, but to bless.

But realizing that *you* may need help in preparation for such work of ministry, we have arranged lately to have several brethren travel, some giving a part, and some all of their time in visiting *you* for the purpose of building you up in the truth and in its spirit.

We have sought to choose for this work brethren of (1) unexceptional character, polished with the truth; (2) of *meekness*—that they might not be puffed up and thus be injured themselves, while seeking to help you; (3) of *clear* conception of the Lord's great plan and fully imbued with its spirit; (4) of *ability* to impart the truth to others in its own power and simplicity (not necessarily orators); (5) of *known* fidelity to the ransom; (6) of humble mind who seek *not* to preach themselves, but Christ—not to air their own knowledge but his Word in its simplicity and power; (7) students of the Word, of cultivated thought, well founded and settled;—not wondering *novices*—not teachers of speculations and fancies, nor of Anglo-Israelism, socialism, politics, astronomical theories, etc., but (8) teachers of the One Lord, one faith and one baptism—the one Gospel authorized by and based upon the one sacrifice, given once for all.

But when we remember that Israel according to the flesh was a typical people, and that God's promises to them, dealings with them and judgments upon them were typical or illustrative of similar promises, dealings and judgments, but on a wider and grander scale, made to the Gospel church—the antitypical people of God, the true Israel—we are led to expect similar things upon the closing generation of the Gospel age. And we find it predicted of these two houses of Israel, by God through his prophets, that only a remnant, "little flock," from each will prove worthy, while the majority will stumble; and that upon them will come an awful trouble in the end of the Gospel age, "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation."—Dan. 12:1.

As not all Israelites were Israelites indeed, so not all Christians in name are Christians indeed. As the true Israelites were gathered out of, or separated from, nominal Israel, first in spirit or intent and afterward literally, before the great trouble came, so here, in the end of this age, there must be a separation of true wheat from tare imitations, first in spirit and afterward actually, so that they be not partakers of the plagues or troubles predicted.—Rev. 18:4.

And as a punishment equivalent to all other punishments combined for shedding of righteous blood was exacted of the closing generation of typical Israel, just so it will be with the closing generation of this Gospel age;—the present generation. The knowledge and advantages every way of the present generation, above those of all previous generations, make its responsibility correspondingly great; and its penalty for hardness of heart, unreadiness to receive the Lord and his kingdom, and resistance of the truth, now shining out upon every side as never before, is to be *equivalent* to the combined judgments upon all who have despised, rejected and persecuted God's people, throughout the age. And thus we read, that when Babylon's fall is complete, after God's people, heeding his voice, have come out of her, then, in her overthrow, will be found—"the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." (Rev. 18:24) No wonder, then, that her fall will mean a great "time of trouble!"

If any of these Brethren come your way they will introduce themselves by showing a printed and signed certificate from the *Watch Tower Tract Society* (renewed yearly); whereupon we are sure they will be granted the leadership of the meetings. Nevertheless *prove* all things they may say by the only infallible authority—the Word of God. Should you deem their teachings in conflict with the Word in any particular, the differences should be promptly and clearly stated in a letter to the WATCH TOWER. The question would receive attention either by letter or, if of general interest, would be treated in the TOWER.

Some of these brethren are so situated as to be able to give fragments of their time to this work, and that free of expense to the *Tract Fund*; others will receive some assistance; and still others, giving all of their time, will be wholly at the expense of the *Tract Fund*;—a portion of your "Good Hopes" donations to the Tract Fund being thus used for the benefit of yourself and others. We desire to divest the truth of all subserviency to money and begging—often so injurious to such work. And consequently let it be understood from the first that collections or other solicitations of money are neither authorized nor approved by this Society.

This branch of the work is only an experiment and we shall watch for results and for the Lord's further leading. While you and the colporteurs and the *O. T. Tracts* and the *Dawns* are arousing attention and interest, and the TOWER and you are strengthening and upbuilding the "body," this new feature should further assist in the same great work;—the bride making herself ready for joint-heirship with the bridegroom.—Rev. 19:7.

Of course all cannot be visited; and it is purposed that for the present it will be unwise to stop at any place having less than *five* TOWER subscribers; for we esteem that any one at all interested in present truth will want the TOWER; as its terms make it possible for all to be on our list.

## JESUS AT JACOB'S WELL

III. QUAR., LESSON XII., SEPT. 16, JOHN 4:9-26.

*Golden Text*—"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."—John 4:14.

As we read these gracious words of the Master, and especially his reply to the woman's reference to the Messiah, the hope of Israel—"I that speak unto thee am he"—our hearts also thrill with a solemn gladness; for the blessings

of his advent and the water of life which he gives have come to us also.

Several points in this lesson are worthy of special notice. (1) Observe the simple condescension of the Lord in thus endeavoring to make plain the way of life to one who had strayed far from the path of rectitude; (2) the natural and

earnest manner of introducing the subject and pointing the lesson; and (3) the teaching.

He offers the water of life—the refreshing hope of life through faith in him as the Redeemer, which hope would be like a perennial well-spring continually rising up in her heart. (Verse 14.) So it is now; but by and by when the hopes of the believing church are realized and God's kingdom is fully established, these wells will flow together, and a mighty river of the water of life will come forth from underneath the throne of God for the refreshment of all who will partake of it.—Rev. 22:1.

Then—in that Millennial age of glory and blessing—all who worship God will worship him in the spirit of the truth.—Ver. 24.

We who have partaken of the water of life and truth which Christ has furnished us can truly say, It satisfies our longing souls as nothing else could do. And those who are drinking of it have no cravings for the vain philosophies of men which make void the Word of God. We are still drinking; but according to our Lord's words we shall soon be satisfied (Matt. 5:6)—when we awake in his likeness, in the first resurrection—Psa. 17:15; Phil. 3:11.