

# Spiritual Call

A Continuance of "Macedonian Call"

To be carnally minded is death, but to be  
**SPIRITUALLY** minded is life and peace.  
—Romans 8:6

Walk worthy of the vocation (calling)  
wherewith ye are CALLED.  
—Ephesians 4:1

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## Yes, Jesus is Coming Again and Will End This Wicked World

(First in a Series)

Next to the knowledge that our sins have been washed away through the precious blood of Jesus by being born again of water and of the Spirit, perhaps the most heart-warming doctrine is that that same Jesus whom we serve and for whom we have made sacrifices, will come again and reward us for our faithfulness to Him.

The reason so few preachers are discoursing on this subject is possibly that so many have become fanatics on the subject and tried to foretell the exact time when Jesus would come again, and have made so many mistakes, that it has brought the precious doctrine into disrepute. But we must not let the devil drive us away from all the comforting thoughts given by inspiration concerning the glorious triumph of the Christian faith.

No doubt the reason there is so little real faith today and so much evil among professed Christians, is that we have lost sight of the awful truth that Jesus is coming again to reward the righteous and punish the wicked. In fact John says that very thing in 1 John 3:1-3:

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that *when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* And every man that hath this hope in him *purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*"

When Jesus comes, it will be in great power and great glory. That glory will be so great that we cannot see it with our natural faculties and be unharmed. When Saul of Tarsus saw him on the way to Damascus in his glory, he was smitten with blindness. And so we shall be changed when he comes, so that we shall be able to see him—we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, in all his glory; and we shall be with him through eternity.

If we keep this precious doctrine always before our minds, we are bound to be made better men and women. We know that we can not favorably come into his presence in moral corruption, and hence we shall try to live as he has lived, and as the angels live. The so-called Lord's Prayer, teaches us that "Thy will be done *on earth as it is done in heaven.*" And if we are not earnestly trying to live here like they live in heaven, we shall not enter there. And so "every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure." Losing sight of this great truth, that we must be like him, when he comes, we have failed to purify ourselves. So it certainly follows that if we will keep this glorious doctrine before us, we will stir ourselves to live better lives.

### JESUS ANSWERS THREE GREAT QUESTIONS (Read Matthew 24th and 25th chapters.)

As Jesus and his disciples departed from the temple, they called his attention to the greatness of the buildings. Jews had the idea that being so great and protected by God, those buildings would last till time should be no more; and the disciples received a great shock when he answered, "See ye all these things? Verily I say to you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

As they went up on to the Mount of Olives, from which they could obtain a fine view of the temple and its buildings, it seems they sat down, perhaps to rest, and then it was that Peter and Andrew, and James and John (see Mark 13:3) asked him, "Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

Notice that they ask **THREE** very important questions: 1. When shall Jerusalem be destroyed? 2. What shall be the sign, the manifestation, of thy coming? 3. What shall be the sign of the end of the world?

Jesus answers all three of these questions at once, and as the destruction of Jerusalem is a type of the end of the world and his coming, it is hard to distinguish when he leaves off speaking of one event and starts on the others. However, it does seem that beginning with Matthew 24:29, he is starting his prophecies concerning his coming and the end of the world. We shall pass over the destruction of Jerusalem, and confine ourselves to the questions we are discussing.

Some have wondered why Jesus said "immediately" after the destruction of Jerusalem, these other events would occur. It seems that Jesus is speaking of them from the divine standpoint. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8.) So far as God is concerned man's history is divided into three parts, it seems: 1. That Jesus *will come* to save men from his sins. 2. That Jesus *has come* to save him from his sins. 3. That he has gone away, and *will come AGAIN* to save him from all sin and its consequences. Events that intervene affect man only indirectly. When Jesus has come and God has finished his work with the Jews, "Immediately" after those events the next *great* events are Christ's *second* coming and the end of the world.

When Jesus says, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things are fulfilled," he seems to refer to the race of the Jews. The Greek word for "generation" in Luke 16:8 is used thus, "The children of this world are in their *generation* wiser than the children of light." Here the word means, "kind, class." It was the "kind, class," race, of Jews that would continue to exist till Jesus came again.

### THE WORLD COLLAPSES WHEN JESUS COMES

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days, *shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven.* And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and

then shall ALL the tribes of earth mourn."—Matthew 24:29, 30.

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, and perplexity: the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."—Luke 21:25-27.

We know little about God's method of bringing Nature as we know it, to an end. We know little about what he has immediately in store for it. We know not what he means by the "new heavens and the new earth". But we do know that there will be a collapse when Jesus comes again; that is sufficient for us, and He will attend to HIS business. That warm sun which has brought health and food to man and beast; that moon which has guided men at night as they finished their affairs of the day; and the stars which, as it were, stand afar off and look down at our puny ball as it swings around the sun, and tells us how to get our time—all of these will fall into confusion.

Once before, the earth had a disaster somewhat like this, but by contrast. When God, because of man's sin, sent the flood upon the earth, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the water covered the earth, they had a little taste of what the world will receive when Jesus comes, though the next time it will be by fire. But God then said that as long as the earth remained, there would be seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, and summer and winter. But now it seems the end has come.

"The sea and the waves roaring." Have you stood by the ocean when the great waves were coming in at the time of a storm? They break up over the stone walls built to protect the land, and the continual roar rolls out to the ears of the people at a distance. Perhaps the end will be somewhat like the Galveston disaster with its tidal wave; maybe a volcano arose in the bottom of the ocean and created the big waves; they broke down all levees, and swept over the land, destroying all before them; even ships were carried inland a mile or two; thousands of people were drowned or killed. Suppose such a disaster occurred along all the coasts of the United States at the same time! suppose, all the coasts of the world! What roaring! what confusion! what dismay!

#### THE TERROR IN ALL NATIONS

No wonder all the tribes of the earth will mourn! They will have something to mourn about. They have not lived right, and they know it, and they see that their time has come. It will be somewhat like the great cry in Egypt when there was the death of the first-born son because Pharaoh would not let God's people go. Only, this will not be Egypt only, but all Africa, all Europe, all Asia, all North and South America and the islands of the sea. What a cry will go up from the voices of those who have trampled under foot the Son of God and trifled with God's commands!

"Distress of nations", "perplexity". The nations are distressed now and perplexed with what they have brought on themselves for their sins, but what will it be when God brings retribution on them fully for what they have done. Yes, their hearts will fail them. Men are discouraged now as we see vicious, atheistic Communism conquering China and many other countries of the world, and see Crime conquering countries which are still free from Communism. It makes one sick at heart to listen to the "news" over the radio, for nearly all of it is confusion and strife because of man's sin—murders, rapes of women and little girls,

thefts, robberies and crimes of all descriptions. But what, oh what, will happen when God in his Justice straightens it all up when Jesus comes again!

How would you feel to stand by and see your home burning, with all the things you have saved up, your business files, your social records, your deeds and abstracts, your mementoes of the long ago? How do you suppose the people of Chicago felt when they gathered up what little they could of their belongings and fled from the great fire which destroyed home, business and ALL? Think how the people of Rome felt when the barbarians came down and burned that city which had stood so long and ruled the world! Even Christians were distressed and Augustine wrote his "City of God", to try to show them that the People of God remained, and would remain. But all these are as a drop of water in the ocean, compared with the disaster and dismay which will arise among the nations when Jesus comes again.

Then it will be that the kings of the earth and the great men and the chief captains and the rich men and every bondman and every freeman will hide themselves in the rocks and mountains and cry to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6.)

The cry is now made on every hand for "Social Security," for old age or accident, but what about the Security for the time when accidents have done their worst, or decadent faculties have quit altogether? What about the time when Social Security will end?—When Old Age itself will be no more? When the events which Jesus is portraying will come to pass, "Social Security" will be nothing, but *SOU*L SECURITY will be everything.

When the crash of worlds comes, and the things to which we have given all our time and talent and money, are burned up, oh how our hearts will fail us, and we shall see how simple, how foolish we have been!

#### "LOOK UP, LIFT UP YOUR HEAD"

"And when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."—Luke 21:28.

Let us turn from the terror that shall come upon the wicked people of the nations, to the joy that will come to the righteous ones. What a contrast! No terror here! For the disciples of Jesus have believed him—the true disciples, I mean—and have been looking for and praying for the speedy coming of their Lord. Their day of trial is now over.

Jesus had said to his own brethren, "The world can not hate you, but me it hateth because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil." John 7:7. His true followers rebuke the world and its sin as Jesus did, and they receive the same treatment. Even members of His professed Church will often not receive rebuke but turn on the rebuker and rend him. Jesus consoles his apostles with these words, and the same applies to all faithful ones, "If the world hate you ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John 15:18, 19.

The world-wise people will laugh at the simplicity of us who believe in the inspiration of the Bible, and in the second advent of the Savior to save the righteous and punish the wicked. The passion-led people pity us who try to exercise self-control and let our moderation be known to all men.—"You have no fun like we," they say. Even religious people, who were supposedly God's people, were the ones

even above the world who persecuted Christ and Paul and early Christians. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. Entrenched authority in professed elders, bishops, is often used to exalt themselves and to cast out faithful ones of the Church, as was done by Diotrophes of old. The greatest evil in the world has been usurped religious authority, with its selfishness, heartlessness, tyranny, devilishness. Very few of the great leaders in Christendom have been the humble Christians whom Christ teaches his disciples to be, and often those persecuted as heretics have been the real faithful ones of God. The Lord has permitted such trials to come on his people, for what son is there whom a righteous father chasteneth not? Often these oppressed ones have been discouraged. With humble, yearning hearts they have gone their way. Oftentimes their heads have hung down, as they tried to bear witness for Jesus the Lord.

But now—all is changed, praise the Lord! Jesus has come, for which they have been looking these two thousand years. There will be no more persecutions from the world! No more reproaches by professed Christians who are following men rather than the Lord and his Word! No more ridicule because we have tried to keep ourselves unspotted from the world! No more isolation! for we shall have the true and tried of all nations to associate with through eternity! We shall hear the welcome plaudit, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the inheritance prepared for you from the foundation of the world." We may have no home here, but we shall enter the mansion in the Father's house.

With great joy we hear the Master say to us now concerning these happy events we are contemplating—

*"Look up! lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh!"*

Redemption from sin! Redemption from pain! Redemption from toil and reproach and tyranny and slander and lies. Redemption from all that is evil!

*"One day He's Coming—oh, Glorious Day!"—Song.*

—D. A. SOMMER.

(To be continued)

## The Armour of God

In ancient times it was customary for countries to provide armour for their soldiers. This was for their protection. It made it harder for their enemies to get to a vital spot to inflict a fatal wound.

God has also provided an armour for His people. And if we put it on and keep it on, it is protective enough to make it almost impossible for the enemy to find a vital place to deal us a fatal blow.

Let us look at this armour for a little while. Turn to Eph. 6:10-18. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." You will notice that we are admonished to be strong. Not in sin and wickedness, but IN THE LORD. Not in our own power, but in the power of his might. We would make a poor fight indeed if we were to depend on our own strength. Satan would have us on the run before we had begun to fight. But we must put on the armour that God has provided us. "Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." David put on the armour of Saul, but he took it off. It was the wrong armour. Nothing but the armour of God will protect us. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood (ours is not a carnal warfare), but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, That you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

We must not put on the armour and try to run away. It is not calculated to make speed. When foes arise within the church, or we are assailed from without we must stand firmly for the truth. God cannot use a coward in his army, and he will not protect him. Only those who are willing to stand and fight are in the power of his might and are furnished with his armour. We may fit ourselves out with our human armour as do sectarians of all grades, but our enemy is a wily old foe that knows many ways to penetrate such armour. "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on, the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God."

These are the different pieces of armour that the Christian must wear. They are all necessary for us and we cannot lay any one of them aside. Thus far I have dealt only in generalities, now if you will bear with me I will be a little more specific in order that we may get the ideas I wished to get across to the reader.

1. Our friends invite us to forsake the services of the church and go visiting. If we have on the shield of faith we will refuse to do so, but will tell them kindly but firmly that our first obligations is to our Lord. Remember it is he that cleanses us from sin and gives us a home in heaven, not our friends.

2. Why do we see so many members of the church going to the movies, and other places where they should be ashamed to be seen? Because they have taken off the shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace. The gospel never takes us into such places, nor allows us to get into them as long as we are walking in the teaching of our Master. If we go to a place like that we will have to lay aside a part of the armour.

3. Another place many lose the fight against Satan is in the choice they make in their life companions. A young man or young woman (or an older one) may become infatuated with some one who is nice looking and acts and talks nice; they think that is all there is to be desired in a companion, and they will marry them (make an alliance with the world or sectarianism), and the next thing they know they have been stripped of their armour and are either back in the world or in sectarianism. I know, they think they will not do that, but that is where they are relying on their own armour and the power of their own might. No one ever yet won a victory that way. God wants no compromising or fraternizing with the enemy. Be ye not unequally yoked together with them.—Brotherly, J. A. Collins.

## God is Love

The apostle John in the fourth chapter of his first epistle dwells especially on this subject, the Love of God.

The love of God for Israel is spoken of especially in Deut. 7:7-8 where it says, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in numbers than any people; for you were the fewest of all people. But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep his oath which he swore unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondmen."

In the New Testament we read, That God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, John 3:16. And again in Rom. 5:8. But God commandeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. By these scriptures, and many others,

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we learn what great love God has for mankind. John tells us that God is love. Many teachers stress this passage, and teach that because God is love, and that because his love for man is so great, that he will not bring the terrible punishment on man that he has pronounced on the wicked, but that all will be saved. This is far from the truth. These teachers stress this attribute of God so much that they overlook the other attributes of God. The Bible teaches us that God has other attributes, that he is a just God, it tells of his wrath, and of his vengeance.

In Rom. 2:2 we read, That the judgment of God is according to truth. In Zeph. 3:5, The just Lord is in the midst thereof: he will not do iniquity.

Concerning the wrath of God we read in Rom. 1:18: For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. In John 3:36: He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. In Eph. 5:6: Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. By this we see that those who so overstress the love of God are endeavoring to deceive with vain words.

Regarding the vengeance of God, Paul tells us in Rom. 12:19: Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord.

Also in 2 Thess. 1:7, 8: Paul comforts the Christian with this, And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. By this we learn that not only the wicked, but even those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord, will be subjected to the vengeance of God. Hence it behooves everyone, even those who believe that they are good moral people, to accept God's terms of salvation, and obey them, rather than placing too much trust in the teaching of those who stress the fact that God is love.

Truly God's love is great, wondrously great, for those who love and obey him, but his wrath awaits those who refuse to accept and obey him.

That is a terrible warning as expressed by the writer in the Hebrew letter in Heb. 10:30, 31: For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord, and again the Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.

In conclusion let me urge everyone, who has not named the name of Jesus, that you accept God's terms of forgiveness, and do as Peter said on the day of Pentecost, repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins and arise to walk a new life in the light of God's love, and his promise of eternal salvation.—Fred D. Weed.

## On Warm Middle Ground

When Jesus stood before his judges on the fateful night of his betrayal, Peter was neither beside him to encourage him and to share his fate, nor among those who were accusing him and clamoring for his life. Instead, he was out in the courtyard mingling with people who were taking no active part in the great drama which was being enacted, and warming himself at their fire. He was on safe middle ground. *When the fate of his Lord was in the balance, Peter was not taking sides.*

It has aptly been said that neutrality, in this episode, was raised to the level of drama. It is doubtful if there is any other incident on record which so perfectly portrays the territory between good and evil which the masses of mankind so often occupy. Peter's attitude on this occasion should enable us to see, as few other things can, the despicable attitude of neutrality. But in considering the incident now before us, we shall see Peter.

### ON UNDISPUTED GROUND

A battle was going on within the building where Jesus was, but Peter was out in the courtyard where he did not have to take a definite stand either for or against him; that is what he evidently thought about it. But it is always true, as Jesus had previously pointed out, that "he that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Matt. 12:30).

The ground on which Peter stood is the favorite retreat of the forever-undecided, the warm considering place of those who are unable to make up their minds. Students of human nature tell us that there is no weakness of character which is more disastrous than indecision.

Those who stand on this warm middle ground do not want to take chances; they prefer to play safe. *It seems better in their estimation to see which way the wind is blowing, and then be ready to jump quickly upon the bandwagon.* Not having identified themselves with any cause and having cut no bridges behind them, they can quickly retreat or run this way or that, as circumstances may determine. But contrast this attitude with the attitude of men and women of strong conviction. "By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter: choosing rather to share ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy pleasures of sin for a season; accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he looked unto the recompense of reward" (Heb. 11:24-26; Heb. 11:32-38).

Ruth left no doubt about where she stood (Ruth 1:16, 17). Paul gave up everything for Christ (Phil. 3:7-11), and that is the kind of inspired admonition he gave to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:1-8).

### IN A COMFORTABLE LOCATION

There was a warm fire in the courtyard where Peter was. His surroundings were more pleasant than those in the building where Jesus was on trial. Great issues were at stake, but Peter was not concerned about them. He was thinking of his own welfare. His attitude reminds one of that of Esther who seemingly thought that she was secure in the king's house, and consequently felt that she could do nothing for her people.

*How many people today are willing to wait until the battle is fought before they are willing to identify themselves with the cause involved!* There are people who will not let it be known that they are members of the church as long as the cause is weak; but when it becomes strong and popular they are glad to be known as members.

It is true, so far as the record goes, that Peter did not partake of the ways of those with whom he stood; but neither

did he take his stand with Jesus. He did not want to follow Satan, but he wanted to warm himself by his fireside. Read Psalm 1; 2 Tim. 2:10-13.

### IN A DANGEROUS POSITION

The warm middle ground upon which Peter stood was dangerous because it was there that he was taken unaware. He was off guard; but his case was not different from that of any other who stands in the middle region. No man can afford to wait until the crisis sweeps down upon him before he decides what he should do. There are some moral issues which must be settled before the testing time comes. For example:

1. **One's own integrity.** A person of integrity will not be false to a trust, responsibility, or what he believes to be right. Job was a man of integrity, and so was Paul. The peerless apostle to the Gentiles said, "Herein I exercise myself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men always" (Acts 24:16).

2. **His faith in and loyalty to God.** No one can please God without faith, the kind of faith that will lead one to trust in God (Heb. 11:6); and with Paul he must make it his aim to be well-pleasing unto God (2 Cor. 5:9).

3. **His determination to be governed by principle, rather than by policy.** This is a mighty good way for one to test his faith, and see what kind of mettle is in his make-up.

Having once for all settled this issue for himself, any man is foolish who will deliberately remain in the warm presence of sin and indifference. Such a course is wholly inconsistent with the teaching of Jesus.

When a man has once learned that which he ought to do, and few men who have come under the influence of the gospel can say that they do not know, he can never again stand on the warm middle ground of neutrality without incurring the disfavor of God. "To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).—Leslie G. Thomas in Firm Foundation.

## Should a Stripling Preacher Have More "Authority" Than an Elder?

God has not given details of church government in the New Testament, except that groups should have Elders and Deacons when they have the qualified men. The rest is general principles which must be carried out in harmony with the rest of the New Testament.

An evangelist who starts a little group of disciples, probably baptizing most of them, should certainly look after them till they are able to take care of themselves, just as a woman who gives birth to a child should look after it till it is able to provide for itself.

But there are many groups of disciples which have not been started by evangelists but by plain, common disciples meeting in their own homes and inviting others in, as it seems Priscilla and Aquila did, in the long ago. If such a group decide they might do better and get along among themselves better, if they put themselves under an evangelist, *to whom they could appeal if they failed to agree among themselves*, that might be the part of wisdom and order. But if they found this arrangement destitute of results, *the same power which made the arrangement can break it, and should.*

But there are some who contend that a group without elders is not scriptural unless it is under an evangelist. They can not point to any scripture nor principle of the New

Testament which so teaches, and hence they are making laws where Christ has made none, and are innovators if they press such practice.

In the Apostolic Day disciples were scattered, and went everywhere preaching the word. Now who were over these groups which started in this way and met and worshipped God? There is no evidence that any one was, unless an evangelist started them as Paul did. They had the Christian spirit and were not trying then to lord over God's heritage, as some did later on, and do now.

Apollos evidently heard John the Baptist preach, and was converted to his teaching, and went out over the Roman Empire teaching that Christ was to come, and Priscilla and Aquila took him unto themselves and taught him the word of the Lord more perfectly. No doubt many on the day of Pentecost, too, went out to the many countries from which they came, and took the gospel with them that they had learned at Jerusalem, and groups were started no doubt in hundreds of places in the course of time. There were present at Pentecost Jews and proselytes from Rome, Crete, Mesopotamia, (including Babylon.), Asia Minor, Egypt, etc., and these people were so filled with the good news that no doubt they took it back with them. There is no evidence that the church at Rome, Ephesus, and some other places were established by an apostle or evangelist, but we do know that Priscilla and Aquila had a group in their own houses in these cities. What evangelist was over them? If necessary, Paul or some historian would have mentioned it. In all probability the visitors at Jerusalem from Crete, took the gospel back with them. There is no evidence that Paul established the gospel there. Those who contend that a little group should have an evangelist over it, go to Titus, to whom Paul said that he left him in Crete to set in order things that were wanting, and ordain elders in every city. But disciples who were probably made from the visitors from Crete to Jerusalem on Pentecost, must have existed for 30 years without having any evangelist over them, if our premises are just. Also, the eunuch was baptized, and if he were like nearly all the rest converted in those days, he took the gospel with him, and who was the evangelist appointed over what groups he might have established? This new doctrine would forbid him or any one else from making a group unless there was an evangelist to be put over the group! Such practice would have stifled the spread of the gospel in those days, just as it would today. If some people were thinking more about really converting men and women and less about trying to gain authority over disciples, more *real* Christianity would spread in the earth.

Besides, to take a young inexperienced, perhaps unmarried, man and put him over a group of disciples who are much older and experienced than himself and possibly know more, makes a dictator out of him, for he has more "authority" than an elder, for an elder must share his "authority" with one or more elders, while this young man is a sole dictator of the group, and having more authority than an elder without the qualifications of one. That is downright silliness to advocate such a system.

Why is that some preachers are advocating such practice? There is no doubt that it is to gain control of the churches through these young preachers whom they have trained in their *little theological seminaries*, and whom through plans and schemes they are able to put into such places by false teaching.

But true Christians will still follow the Book, and demand that they give book, chapter and verse, for such newly appointed laws. "We ought to obey God rather than men."

### Some Thoughts from Some Brethren

UNIONVILLE, MO.—Just a few lines to let you know we are still trying in our humble way to serve the Lord in the way he has directed. Bro. Harold Ottwell was here with us from Nov. 16 over Sunday the 20th and gave us some good lessons which were well received, and will do us all good if we will only take heed to his warnings. He doesn't preach to please the people, if the plain gospel fails to please them. We intend to have him back in August, 1950.—L. E. Hodges.

CORONA, CALIF.—Dear Bro. Sommer: We enjoy the Spiritual Call and especially do we enjoy the many good articles written by so many good brothers and sisters in Christ. We have received many good letters from brothers and sisters in the east and we want to thank every one of you. If I failed to answer any of your letters please drop me a card, I will be glad to write you. We were both able to be at the Lord's house this A. M. and listened to Bro. E. G. Johnson preach one of his good sermons. We missed Bro. Johnson while he was at Oildale conducting a 2 weeks Bible study. Homegarden is a small congregation but you will find its members all there with smiles on their faces, when the time is set to meet and serve the Lord. You will find a true Loyal Church Meeting at Homegardens.—Judith B. Stone, 3898 Ellis, Corona, Calif.

#### "A MAN AFTER GODS OWN HEART"

1st Samuel Chap. 13, verse 14. Psalm 89, verse 28. Acts chap. 13, verse 22.

In 1st Samuel, 8 chap. we are told of Israel's desire for a king to rule over them. Samuel was displeased and prayed unto the Lord (ver. 6). The Lord said unto Samuel (ver. 7) Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. Read all of Chapter 8, 1st Samuel, and we can better understand what was in store for Israel's people under an earthly king. Saul was anointed king by Samuel, 10th Chap. 1st verse.

Chapter 13 tells of Saul's disobedience and in verse 14 (Samuel said to him) but now thy Kingdom shall not continue, the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee. (Psalm 89, ver. 20). Read of Saul's further disobedience in Chap. 15, verse 3. Now go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have and spare them not. Read entire chapter. We can learn much to profit by in this present day from verse 22 and 23. Ver. 22—Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of Rams.

In Chapter 16 David is anointed king over Israel, a man approved of God and as we read the history of his reign we are told of his sin against Uriah the Hittite and his punishment. Many other times he sinned but he was "a man after God's own heart." The careful study of Psalm 19 from the 7th to the 14th verses inclusive are good reasons why he found favor with God.

Verse 7. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul, the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

Verse 8. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

Verse 9. The fear of the Lord is clean enduring forever. The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

Verse 10. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honey comb.

Verse 11. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

Verse 12. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Verse 13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

Verse 14. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and My Redeemer.

A plea and a prayer we should all make.—Mary Yowell.

WHAT ABOUT THE SHUT-INS?—Stop and think; do you know any one who because of some lingering disease or other physical defect, is continually kept in-doors. How do such keep their minds occupied? It is well for disciples to visit such now and sing religious songs, or have a little service there. And, you might help them much if they received the Spiritual Call with its exhortations, each month. Also, poor people who can not pay for it. It matters not whether they are Christians or not; they might be benefited. If you have not the means to send the paper, send the names anyway, for we have contributions to the paper which may be used for that purpose. Jesus spent his life helping the down-and-outs—what are WE doing?

WE ARE GETTING ALONG GOOD spiritually and financially at the Wood River church. No apparent reverses. However, this could be a bad sign. There is one thing I pray for and that is for us to keep ourselves in the bond of peace. A few helpful reverses and some persecution might help us live closer to God.—A Disciple.

(These remarks in a private letter contain scriptural warning. When persecution and reverses do come, brethren should know, for they will come some time. They have already come to many faithful disciples, who are now going through the fire, some having been cast out of the church because they stand for truth and righteousness. Let us all pray for such disciples in their trials, that their faith fail not.—Editor.)

WHAT IS GRACE?—In theology the word "grace" has been the hinge of three great historical controversies, and it is still a subject of varied interpretation. In the spiritual sense, it is divine favor or condescension to mankind individually or collectively. In the concrete gospel sense, it is the unmerited love and favor of God in Christ, as shown in the salvation freely provided for mankind (see Eph. 2:9). It may also be described as the divine influence acting within the heart, regenerating, sanctifying and keeping it. Grace brings the peace and joy of assurance. It is the life of the soul, as the soul is the life of the body.—Owen E. Lane, East Alton, Ill.

BROOKFIELD, MO.—Bro. Harold Ottwell and wife, East Alton, Ill., made their first visit to Brookfield over week end of Nov. 20. He preached for the faithful Saturday night, Sunday and Sunday nights. He shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God. We recommend him to the faithful everywhere as we do Bros. D. A. Sommer, J. D. Powers and H. L. Carlton, all who labored with us this year.

A few words to the subscribers of Spiritual Call: Why not all who can send four NEW names with two dollars to Bro. D. A. Sommer and have the paper sent to them for a year. We may never know how much good could be accomplished if 100 would do this, and it would be so little compared with the sacrifice Bro. Sommer is and has made. Please consider this seriously before deciding otherwise.

We were certainly glad to have brethren from Unionville, and Martinstown with us during Bro. Ottwells meeting—come again, brethren, we love the fellowship of those of like precious faith. Brethren, let's all abound more and more in the work of the Lord for the night cometh when no man can work. Yours in the work.—G. R. Blankinship.

LATER—I have just received and read with interest the Spiritual Call for December. The brethren here—Bros. Peavlers', Sturta's, Lewis', Mitchells', Katie Armstrong, and ourselves, are sending 14 names. Enclosed is my check for same, and I wish to do more later. I would like for all new names to read all of your articles on, "Jesus is Coming Again." . . . God alone knows how much good may be accomplished. I pray God my weak appeal for those NEW names may be effective. I have hopes others will join in the effort. I believe Bros. Carlton,

Collins, Ottwell, Robertson, Powers and others will help much in this. Your Brother in Christ—G. R. Blankinship. (Two of these have helped very much the past year, and others have helped a considerable, for which we are very thankful; but we must put forth a strong effort for the coming year, and try to enlist others, if we would accomplish the most for the Lord and keep the paper going as now. Remember NEW names are only fifty cents each in groups, for the time being. We shall have more papers printed for January so as to supply NEW names that come in, with the first issue of the Series. You have never heard from Mrs. Pearle Sommer before, and here is what she writes:

"How many will send in a big list of NEW subscriptions beginning with the first of the year, to get the series of articles of the 2nd Coming of Jesus? Are we doing enough to help and enlighten people?" She and the publisher will be looking for those names. Thank you!

CALIFORNIA—Dear Bro. Sommer: I come to the defense of the truest Christian I have ever known, J. D. Powers. His very precise explanation of God's Word as it is written, was the deciding factor in my life, to come to the Church of Christ, being brought up a Roman Catholic. . . . So that makes Bro. Powers all the more an "apostle" (one sent) of Jesus Christ, because he surely had to drink the bitter cup as did the Master. The Lord Jesus predicted that we must, if we are to follow him; but we are striving for the undiluted truth; we are not to add to nor take from. . . . This dollar is not much but one does the best he can. Thank you, and God bless you for laboring in his vineyard. Sincerely, Your sister in Christ, Anna Boehle.

STOCKTON, CALIF. (Letter) Dear Brother Sommer: Notwithstanding I have suffered misfortune and severe persecutions, as Paul said, I know whom I have believed. Yes, not man but God, as you always teach. . . . We met the next Lord's Day with about 20 present, counting children; the two Lord's Days since we have had about 25 present with three additions, and we are meeting in peace, and thank God, all seem to be happy. . . . I have calls to come East, but as you said last winter, it is hard on a man, especially one of my age, to go from place to place when weather is cold. My health seems to be good so far. Pray for me and all the faithful, and God bless you and yours, is my prayer. J. D. Powers.

NEVADA CITY, CALIF. Dear Bro. Sommer: Our leader passed away this summer, Bro. Scott. Bro. Durrett is a very humble, plain man and good teacher and speaker. He drives up from Roseville, a distance of 35 miles or more each Lord's Day afternoon and speaks twice. He works at his trade (an electrician) for his living. My sister and I only get to attend the afternoon meetings, but seldom fail to do that unless weather or sickness prevent. As near as I am able to judge I consider you are contending for what is scriptural. Just received a tract from Bro. Weed on Close Communion. I heartily agree with his explanation as that is exactly what I think the Bible teaches. Wishing you health and fortitude for the coming year, I remain, Your sister in Christ—Letha Davis. (Others have written us that they endorse that tract. Editor.)

BURLINGTON, IOWA. Dear Brother Sommer: The last Spiritual Call is fine. Had two added to the church this morning. The church here has let the pastor out. I have a young man here learning to preach. He is doing fine. Church here getting along fine. . . . I have stood against this pastor system many years. Your brother in Christ, J. E. Criner.

EAST ALTON, ILL. During the month of November I spent part of my vacation visiting several congregations and found a hearty welcome and groups of happy people, happy because they were worshipping the Lord in spirit and in truth. The wife and I spent a very enjoyable weekend at Brookfield, Mo., and felt a hearty welcome in the home of Bro. and Sister Blankinship. And while at Unionville, Mo., for five days we had one addition and the largest crowds they had ever had. The faithful brethren are growing. Then I spent one week at New-Castle, Ind., and found a fine group of faithful ones. There our meeting closed with an increase each night in attendance. Our largest attendance was 41. We can look for the work to grow there. Harold L. Ottwell.

ARE WE UP TO GOD'S STANDARD?

When Paul penned his letter to the Jews in Palestine, he instructed them in many things, showing how much better the Law of Christ was than the Mosaic law. In every respect it was better. He also showed how much better the faith was of some men under the law of Moses than it was being demonstrated under the Law of Christ, for in Hebrews faith was the standard set by some. In Heb. 11:4 Paul says, "By faith Enoch

was translated that he should not see death, and was not found because God had translated him, for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."

"What is our testimony today? Are we doing the things that will please our God, is our services such as will meet God's approval? Will our attendance at the services please him? Will our love for each other please him? Will our talent be exercised enough to please him? Will our example be such to the believers and unbelievers to be well pleasing. In his sight?

Is our giving. As we have been prospered, been kept to the standard, as he will know? How will our faith stand compared to those whom Paul mentioned here in building for that eternal home? Are we looking for a city? That hath foundation whose builder and make is God?

Are we walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we were called with lowliness and meekness with long suffering forbearing one another in love and endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? Are we looking into that perfect law of liberty enough these days of perilous times, that God might say, well done, unto us.—Harold Ottwell.

I Timothy 1:16

"Howbeit for this cause obtained I mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

Paul was appointed to be a pattern for Christians. In his life and teachings he set forth that we must place Christ above everything in our lives.

He was a pattern in suffering afflictions, in patience, in courage, in the face of opposition and danger, and in steadfastness.

When near the end of his earthly life, he said; "I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

His fight was a good fight, because he fought according to the rules and regulations given him by the Captain of our salvation, Jesus Christ our Lord.

He did not stop when the race was only half over, but continued until the end; and above all things he did not deviate from the truth as he had received it from Jesus Christ.

Nothing discouraged him and nothing drew him away from proclaiming the gospel of the Son of God, which was committed to him.

What a wonderful pattern for us to imitate in our lives. Christians are to be patterns for those about them; Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

The world about us is watching our lives, and if we are followers of Christ and imitators of Paul, they can see it; but judge us, not by our attendance at the Lord's day meetings, but upon over every day living, on our adherence to the principles we profess to believe and follow:

How careful we should always be in our contacts with the world, to so conduct ourselves that they can see that we are sincere in our profession and thereby lead others to glorify God, and obtain a part in the inheritance which God has reserved for all them who love and obey him.

Let us watch ourselves that our influence will be such as to lead others to Christ.—C. D. McCay.

THE BIBLE is the treasure of the poor, the solace of the sick, the support of the dying. While other books may amuse and instruct in a leisure hour, it is the peculiar triumph of that book to create light in the midst of darkness, to alleviate the sorrow which admits no other alleviation, to direct a beam of hope to the heart, which no other topic of consolation can reach, while guilt, despair, and death vanish before its holy inspiration.—Robert Hall.

### Three Important Points

There are three important points in the Christian pilgrimage. Just a few words upon each of them.

The first is.—Setting out on our pilgrimage. Some start out early in life, and some late, but if we start early or late, the important part is that we make the start. Eccl. 12:1. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." It is an unmerited mercy of God's grace, to be moved to take the first step in the Christian course. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, your feet shod with the gospel of peace, taking the shield of faith, and the Sword of the Spirit, the word of God." Read Eph. 6:13 to 17. To the pilgrim who has never made the start I would say, God Speed the day when you make your first start in the Christian journey.

The Second is.—Going forward on our pilgrimage; and this is oftentimes no easy matter. Sometimes we are sorely hindered by the things left behind drawing us back, and sometimes we are frightened by the things ahead in the way of temptations; but we find in God's word we shall not be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. I Cor. 10:13.

When a lion is in the way, we forget that God is able to deliver us from the lion. And, when the wilderness is before us, we remember that he who sent the cloud and pillar of fire to direct his people of old, is our God, and will be our guide unto death. Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward, said the Lord unto Moses, when the sea was before them and Pharaoh's host behind them.

Though death and hell in dread array  
Thy heavenly course withstand  
Go forward pilgrim on thy way  
And gain the promised land.

The third is—Finishing our pilgrimage with joy, and finding the end to be eternal life; and thus is the most important indeed. What trifles and pleasures of this world, compared with the joys that await us over there if we only live faithful to the end. Ought we not to be ashamed to desire them, when we read, 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, I Cor. 2:9.

Let all thy heart and all thy soul  
Amidst thy joys and pains  
Be set on that eternal goal  
Where Christ thy Savior reigns.

—L. E. Hodges.

### "Revivals," "Protracted Meetings"

Among the denominations, there has been the "revival" for several centuries. The word "revival" means "a living again". They used to have great rousing meetings, and many "converts" at the mourner's bench, and in a few months many would be back in the world, and then there would have to be a "revival" to renew them. Churches of Christ have avoided that name, and called their meetings, "protracted meetings". But do you know that they did not have revivals or protracted meetings as we have them, in apostolic days? They made converts, and such were supposed to go to work and not quit and need a revival. Of course, individuals and churches have gone up and down in spiritual zeal, and there will be the real need for "revivals" with many churches.

But let us try to be like the early Christians—*keep right*

*at it the year round.* Many churches think they are dead unless they have a protracted meeting a year, at least. Nowadays even the denominations accomplished little in their revivals, and many churches have discarded them. Even with the truth it is hard to do anything. *It was the individual Christian who did the most in the First Century, and we need to revive that method.* Let's forget about the yearly "protracted meeting", and if possible keep every Christian at work the year round, talking to neighbors, sending them literature, inviting them to the regular meetings to see how God's people carry on their meetings. We should make those meetings really spiritual so that the attendant will wish to come back. Sometimes from one to three hundred dollars is spent in having a "protracted meeting", and possibly there is not a single conversion to Christ. We can use the evangelist when he is near, but let us not become wedded to a system which lacks power today, in its method though not in the things spoken. Too many Christians have put forth an effort to convert sinners through a two weeks' protracted meeting, and then have rested on our oars for the other 50 weeks of the year. Let's read diligently Acts of Apostles, and see what their method was, and then try diligently to reproduce that.

### His Life Was a "Failure" Until ---

He said he was a King's son, but his neighbors and friends and brethren did not believe him.

He did many mighty works and deeds of charity, but still they believed not in his message.

He chose twelve men to go out and tell the world about his work, and teaching, but sometimes their faith failed them.

Many believed on him, but when he pressed them too close with righteousness, they turned away and said, "This is a hard saying."

He sometimes feed thousands of people, and when they continued to clamor for him, he said they were after the loaves and fishes.

He was poor and wandered from village to village teaching his truth; and had not where to lay his head; and was often tired, and hungry and thirsty.

The chief rulers, and elders of the "churches" utterly rejected him, and stirred people against him.

He told the twelve that all would forsake him; but one affirmed positively that he would not, yet did before the night was over.

He was constantly accused falsely, and carping critics were at his heels to pick flaws in his speech.

On false accusations, the rulers of the state, and the elders of the "churches", procured his death, for telling them the truth.

On the cross he was without friends who had deserted him, save a penitent thief.

His life was an utter "failure" so far as earthly accomplishment was concerned.

And yet—

—this being was exactly what he claimed to be;

—he arose from the grave and ascended to heaven and was crowned King;

—he saves from sin all those who desire to be saved;

—and he is coming again as a Judge of the living and dead;

—and he will say to the faithful "Come ye blessed": and to the wicked, "Depart, ye cursed."

And, reader, your life, too, may seem a failure, but if you are faithful as a Christian, it will be a great success as was Christ's.