

IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES.

“**I** AM fearfully and wonderfully made,” wrote the Psalmist of the material body (Ps. 139: 14). “God’s most wonderful creature,” wrote an eminent servant of God. Surely man is; and when, in our consideration of his complex organism, we take in account the various moral and spiritual elements encompassed in the individual we each call “I,” we are lost in a morass of inextricable confusion, aside from the word of God. Every natural man has body, soul and spirit, flesh, mind, conscience, instinct. If he be converted, we must add divine life, with its new nature, and the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Upon this wonderful being light pours from the pages of Scripture, if we “rightly divide the word of truth.” We then begin to understand this “I,” who speaks in a circle—“my” spirit, “my” conscience, “my” soul, “my” body. But our purpose is not abstruse questions: others have searched them out. We would now only consider briefly a few differences which may perplex, but which the Bible makes very plain.

I. The Difference between Nature and the Flesh.

It is very great; for nature is in itself quite good and right, whilst the flesh is wholly evil.

Hunger, thirst, the family and its natural affections, are right and good, and there is no sin in gratifying them in the limits of God’s appointment. All that has been created is good, and every institution of God in nature is good. “Without natural affection” is a sign of man’s deepest downfall. “Forbidding to marry” is one of the signs of the apostasy. Nothing is more a reproach on the use of anything which God

s created for food is proof of "departing from the truth, and giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." What is of nature in man, therefore, and in all the creation around him, in which God has made provision for all his natural needs, is good in itself: indeed, it all testifies of the goodness of God. Had not man's fall led him into all manner of abuses, what a lovely life his would be here, in the hallowed gratification of the various senses given him, for which God has made such varied and abundant provision in creation! What variety for sight, for hearing, for smell, for taste, for touch!

But he is fallen; he has corrupted himself; and by so doing he has made his every member an instrument of unrighteousness. Experience proves this from one end of the earth to the other, and Scripture affirms it plainly and fully in the first chapter of Romans. His highest and noblest instinct, which would have made him turn to the blessed God, his Creator and Benefactor, led him now to make himself gods which suited his passions, that is, idols. "Wherefore God also gave them up," and down he went into the revolting depths described in the word "against nature."

There is no corruption, no violence like that which comes from perverted instinct; and its vices eat out everything naturally noble. If a man steals because he is hungry, he sins; but he is not despised, for he does no violence to nature; but even fallen man, if not a heathen, revolts at unnatural sins. Thus Romans teaches us negatively what we are taught positively in 1 Cor. 11: 14: "Doth not even nature itself rebuke you?" From Romans we learn that to sin against nature is to be outside the pale of civiliza-

tion—a dark, benighted heathen. From Corinthians we learn that children of God are not to ignore the instincts of nature, but to respect her when she speaks; for though her claims be natural and not spiritual, yet are they not evil, but good.

The difference between nature and the flesh is great. Nature teaches affection between parent and child. The flesh is “without natural affection” in either. Nature teaches modesty—the *covered* place—to women; to men, the open, public, ruling, protective place. The flesh denatures both. Nature teaches reverence for higher powers, for age, for special merit. The flesh puts everything down to one common level.

Yet though nature is to teach us, and her instincts are to be obeyed; though sins against her be the blackest of all sins, grace may rise above nature, and set aside her most imperious demands. The apostle Paul was both hungry and thirsty, naked and cold, for Christ's sake, and the gospel's. He could say, moreover, “I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake.” I know some now who deny themselves the ordinary comforts and necessities of life to seek after the souls of their fallen and degraded fellows. The Church of God will be forever indebted to one known to many of us, who, for the Lord's sake, refused the ties and comforts of domestic life. And the Scriptures speak of fasting; but these mortifications of the lawful and natural deeds of the body must be “through the Spirit,” in order to life. Self-will may renounce all it please, and a strong will may renounce much; but if renunciation is not “through the Spirit,” one becomes a Pharisee,

and, so far, a Papist. The flesh is very subtle, and never more deceptive than when it becomes religious. It can be excessively pious when it plays the pious rôle.

There is being "dead to sin" in Scripture, but no being dead to nature, though, as we have seen, a power is brought in which is above it, and out of its sphere. Dying to it is utterly unscriptural and false. It is what God owned, and what He still maintains and owns, as of Him. He asserts it, and even denounces as of Satan what does reject it as created by Him. "Every creature of God is good"—wine and water, meat and marriage; "for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (1 Tim. 4: 4, 5).

II. The Difference between the Body and the Flesh.

"It is a most important truth," said Mr. Darby of this; yet there is the greatest confusion in the minds of many in regard to it. We learn from Col. 2: 23 that we owe the body a certain honor. Men taught the Colossian Christians to treat it harshly, and this the apostle condemned. "The tendency of bodily austerities, instead of being to really subdue and mortify the flesh, is to satisfy and exalt it. Supposing I were to fast seven times a week:—well, I think myself better than the man who does it only six times: it is satisfying the flesh. Supposing it is prayer:—I need not say prayer is the most blessed privilege a man has; but if he says so many prayers, the one who says five is better than the one who says only three: it is satisfying the flesh, though neglecting the body." (J. N. D.) We are to present our bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God;" for, "know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye

have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. 6: 19). On the contrary, the evil principle called "the flesh" is not to be honored in any way, and it is to have "no provision" made for it. Instead of presenting it to God, we are told, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8: 8); and, far from being a temple of God, "no good thing dwells in the flesh" (Rom. 7: 18). "The body may be sanctified to God—may be nourished and used for God—may glorify God; the flesh, never. The body may be the servant of the spirit; not so the flesh, for it is essentially opposed to God." This does not contradict what Paul said, "I keep under my body" (1 Cor. 9: 27). Whatever offended conscience in another he was ready to abstain from. He could deny himself anything for the sake of blessing to others. Such a mind must needs lead to great control over the body, and prevent all tendency to making it an idol.

III. The Difference between Flesh and the Flesh.

We must distinguish also between the two meanings of the word "flesh," for the same word is used in Scripture for the evil principle dwelling within us (Rom. 8: 7-9), and for the body (John 1: 14). "The Word became flesh," we read, "and dwelt among us." "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh;" and "of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came." "To abide in the flesh," wrote the apostle, "is more needful for you" (Phil. 1: 24). This is the outward man, "our earthly tabernacle-house" (2 Cor. 5: 1), to which moral qualities do not attach, but is a condition which passes away. Our Lord partook of this (Heb. 2: 14). It is therefore needless to say there is no sin in it.

In the following verses—"They that are in the

flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8: 8); "make not provision for the flesh" (Rom. 13: 14); "ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5: 16); "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit" (Gal. 5: 17); "when we were in the flesh" (Rom. 7: 5)—the word "flesh" refers to that principle of evil within which was once the governing principle of our lives, but which governs them no longer (Rom. 8: 9). Its whole entity is most loathsome.

In it dwelleth no good thing (Rom. 7: 18).

With it the law of sin is served (Rom. 7: 25).

Its lusts war against the soul (1 Pet. 2: 11).

Its works are corruption and violence (Gal. 5: 19).

Its harvest, corruption (Gal. 6: 8).

To continue in it is to die (Rom. 8: 13).

To be in it is to be in the standing of the Adam; but by grace, through faith, we are taken out of it and given a new standing in Christ. The flesh remains in us "as the old stock in the grafted tree, as a thing hostile to the Spirit, for exercise and humbling profit, so that we may overcome, and have our senses exercised to discern good and evil." It was this, and not wine (which our Lord in the days of His flesh made and drank), that caused Noah's intemperance, and all intemperance since Noah's day (John 2). It was this that made Cain murder Abel; and it is this that has caused every murder since. It was this that *sanctioned* dishonor to parents, not in children, but in men (Mark 7: 10-13). Every form of evil lies at its door.

IV. The Difference between the Old Man and the Flesh.

We must distinguish also between the flesh and the old man; for, while both are irremediably bad,

the flesh remains in us, while the old man we have put off. The Greek word "old" is the same as in Luke 5: 37. Old bottles are for old wine, and the laws and ceremonies of the old dispensation were for the old Adam—man in his old estate. But now there must be a new man in Christ to receive that which He brings. The word "old" means worn out, ancient, fit only to be put off and thrown away. Every little babe born into the world, with the exception of "that holy thing" born of the virgin Mary; every babe from Cain down to the newest baby, is a reproduction of the first Adam. This ancient Adam, this old man, repeated and repeated down through the centuries, is always the same: "Adam . . . begat a son in his own likeness."

"The old man corrupts itself according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4: 22). He is to be put off, and the new man is to be put on. This brings us to

V. The Difference between the New Man and Christ.

The new man is not Christ, though Christ is said to dwell in our hearts by faith; for this "new man . . . is *created*" (Eph. 4: 24). It is a new beginning "in righteousness and holiness of truth." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature"—a new creation.

Let me illustrate: In the city of St. Louis, in August, 1894, a young man disappeared. Suddenly, without warning, he ceased to be seen in any of his accustomed places, by any of his familiar friends. He had been a pleasant, popular young fellow, and his disappearance caused consternation and regret among his gay companions. He had been very fond of the theatre, but he was never seen at the theatre any more—not even on first nights; not when his

favorite player came to town; not on Sundays or week-days; not on holidays; not at matinées; not in the evening. His seat was empty, or filled by some one else. He never came any more.

He had been a convivial young gentleman, but now he could not be found in his old haunts. His friends sought for him; but seek as they would, in all the familiar places, they could never find him. He had disappeared as completely from his old associates and old rendezvous as if he were literally dead.

Just at this time a new young man appeared at the meeting-place of an assembly of Christians. A new young man was making inquiries about Christian walk and the word of God. A new face was seen at the gospel meeting, and a new voice was raised in testimony, prayer, and praise. It was as if a man had suddenly been added to the earth full-grown, and had placed himself in association with this company of Christians.

This was the same individual, body, soul and spirit; but when his soul was saved, he put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man which had been created in Christ Jesus. He entered upon a wholly new sphere of existence. A man was lost to the wine-room, the card-table, the music-hall; a man was gained to the fellowship of worshipers, to the gospel meeting, to the prayer-meeting. "But," you say, "suppose a Christian were to go to a wine-room, were to play cards, to attend the theatre. Is not that the old man come back?" No; he cannot come back. If a man is a Christian, he has put off once and forever the old man with his deeds (Col. 3: 9). But a Christian may, alas, get out of communion with God, and allow again the flesh in

him to act; and we know that the flesh in the Christian is the same as in the unbeliever. It will take pleasure in the same things, whether the individual in which it is be saved or lost. But there is this great difference: there is in the child of God a new nature, a desire for holiness, a love of the Father, a life that is not happy and at home away from God. So when the flesh is allowed to act, the believer is not at rest; his conscience is uneasy, his spirit is disturbed; he is sad at heart, the Holy Spirit is grieved; and, after a longer or shorter time in sin, and perhaps painful discipline, he is restored to God.

An unconverted man is at home and happy in the world—worldliness never disturbs *his* conscience. He may acknowledge that covetousness is unphilosophical, but only a Christian judges it as a sin to be classed with idolatry and drunkenness (1 Cor. 5: 11).

With the old man we are to put off its deeds—anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, vile language, and lying. With the new man we are to put on its deeds too—mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, and charity. We are to be transformed (Rom. 12: 2); and our transformation is by the renewing of our mind: "We all, looking on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image, from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3: 18).

"I am always the conscious 'I' forever; yet an I which does not think of I, but of God, in whom its delight is. It is a wonderful perfection—an absolute delight in what is perfect, but in what is perfect out of ourselves, so that self is morally annihilated, though it always is there personally to enjoy."

E. V. W.

“CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.”

IN view of the rapid and portentous strides made by Christian Science to-day, it behooves Christians to know what is taught by a system which claims to be Christian, to revere the Bible, and to honor Christ.

For those who have neither time nor opportunity to investigate these claims the following quotations have been carefully culled. Unless otherwise stated, they are all from the text-book, “Science and Health, and Key to the Scriptures,” edition of 1909, and are followed by the numbers of page and line.

May the knowledge of what Christian Science is be used of God to the safeguarding of any of His own who may be in danger of becoming ensnared by this “wile of the devil” (Eph. 6: 11).

E. V. W.

“CHRISTIAN SCIENCE” CLAIMS TO BE:

God's gospel—page 11.

The word of God—ed. '01, p. 497.

The Holy Ghost—p. 46, line 30, and p. 43, l. 8.

Divine Science—p. 12, l. 31.

The Comforter—p. 55, l. 29.

• Mind-healing—p. 52, l. 22.

The new wine of the Spirit—ed. '01, p. 8.

The light shining in darkness, which the darkness comprehends not—ed. '01, p. 293.

FROM “ATONEMENT AND EUCHARIST”:

Another's suffering cannot lessen our own liability—p. 40, l. 14.

One sacrifice, however great, is insufficient to pay the debt of sin—p. 23, l. 2.

The atonement requires constant self-immolation on the sinner's part—p. 23, l. 4.

Final deliverance from error is not reached by pinning one's faith without works to another's vicarious effort—p. 22, l. 23.

The eternal Christ, His spiritual selfhood, never suffered—p. 38, l. 23.

HOW “CHRISTIAN SCIENCE” QUOTES THE BIBLE:

“The injunction, ‘Believe, and thou shalt be saved,’ demands self-reliant trustworthiness” —p. 23, l. 28.

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the [seeming] death of His Son”—p. 45, l. 10.

“Jesus was ‘the way’; that is, He marked the way for all men”—p. 46, l. 25.

“CHRISTIAN SCIENCE” LOGIC:

He overcame the world, the flesh, and all error, thus proving their nothingness—p. 39, l. 4.

“CHRISTIAN SCIENCE” BLASPHEMY:

That God-like man—p. 54, l. 29.

At the time when Jesus felt our infirmities He had not conquered all the beliefs of the flesh, or His sense of material life—p. 53, l. 27.

The scourge and the cross awaited the great Teacher. Yet He swerved not, well knowing that to obey the divine order and trust God saves retracing and traversing anew the path from sin to holiness—p. 20, l. 19.

The motherhood of God—ed. '01, p. 500.

“CHRISTIAN SCIENCE” TEACHES:

The soul is not in the body—p. 39, l. 10.

There is no personal devil—p. 16, l. 18; p. 41, l. 32;
p. 46, l. 11.

There is no pleasure in sin—p. 39, l. 32.

There is no pain in Truth—ed. '01, p. 7.

Man is not a mortal, but an immortal—p. 42, l. 28.

There is a Purgatory, or place of probation after
death—p. 36, l. 21.

"A probationary and progressive state beyond
the grave"—p. 46, l. 23.

Our Lord spent a period of probation in the
flesh—p. 35, l. 15.

To have a human father is unnecessary—p. 31,
l. 10.

There should be a discontinuance of the marriage
relation—p. 56, l. 11; p. 57, l. 1; p. 57, l. 27.

Jesus was conceived by the Virgin Mary by the
illumination of her spiritual sense. He was
her ideal—p. 29, l. 17.

The scientific explanation of the atonement is that
suffering is an error of sinful sense which
Truth destroys—p. 23, l. 8.

And all this wicked, blasphemous doctrine deceitfully cloaked
over by the name of "Christian"! [Ed.

TRUTH held in the power of the Spirit delivers us
from self and self-occupation, and engages our
thoughts with Christ. This silences the flesh. A
mind plagued with evil thoughts is plain proof that
we have not been taken up with the riches of God's
grace in Christ Jesus.

divide the truth which we possess. These gifts, Christ, the Head of the Church, has furnished, and will furnish to the end of the Church's stay upon earth.

In the written word of God we possess the mind and will of God for the present and for the future, and for the two spheres of blessing—heaven and earth. It also distinguishes between the blessing of the Jew and of the Gentiles—to be given to each by and by. It gives both the calling and destiny of the Church, which is the body and bride of Christ.

This double form of prophetic ministry it is important to observe. The overlooking of the distinction has confused many minds. The second has ceased. The first abides; and our next article will (D. V.) give it due consideration. A. E. B.

THE BEAUTY OF THE TESTIMONY OF THE CONVERTED THIEF.

(Luke 23.)

HERE is a thief dying for his crimes on a cross beside our Saviour. Within a few hours of his death he judges himself and justifies the Saviour whom all the world had condemned and hanged on the cross.

This thief then turns to the Saviour, in the hour of His deepest anguish and humiliation, and confesses His Lordship and true Kingly glory, and looks on to the establishment of His kingdom here in the place of His rejection. Then he commits himself to the Lord for that day.

Only a little while before he had joined with the

other thief, and with the crowd around the cross, in deriding Him and in railing against Him. But in a short time a marvelous change has taken place in him; and now when everyone is against Christ in the religious world—when men who were enemies were made friends because so perfectly united in their determination to destroy Him—when the orthodox Pharisee and the heterodox Sadducee are united in their condemnation of Him—when the chief priests and other rulers of the nation with the common people united in condemning Him—when His own disciples had fled and forsaken Him, and one of them had betrayed Him—when the secular world was against Him with its king and governor and soldiers; yea, when all the world had cast Him out and condemned Him, then in the face of everyone's judgment, on that solemn occasion was heard the voice of this thief, reversing the whole world's judgment by boldly and fully declaring before all the Saviour's absolutely spotless character, "This Man hath done nothing amiss" (ver. 41).

The perfect grace of Jesus awoke this thief to righteousness. He hears Him praying for His murderers, who, in the hours of His anguish, thinks of others and prays for them; even thinks of His mother and makes provision for her. How high above the creature He appears in this terrible hour; in His thoughtfulness for others; in His calmness and patience!

Across this dark scene faith sees plainly written the proofs of His true Deity; and faith had begun to assert itself in the heart of this thief. In a scene where unbelief sees nothing but that which calls forth scoffing and reproach, his faith sees the outshining of Jesus' Godhead glory. He learns that if

he and his companion will spend their last hours reviling the Saviour, the Saviour will spend His last hours praying for His revilers and murderers!

Who can fathom the depths of that love and pity of God displayed in the Saviour's death on the cross? Is it not enough to break the hard heart of a railing thief, and bow him adoringly at the Saviour's feet? Is it not enough to turn his taunting into praying? his hatred into love?

The last official act in Luke's account is the nailing above the Lord's head His accusation. All that man could do to insult and persecute the Son of God has been done, and the solemn time has come—those hours of darkness when God's wrath against sin comes in unto His holy soul; when the spotless Sufferer is "made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5: 21)—but man could be no spectator now, so all is shrouded in deepest darkness.

But to return a moment to the mighty change which has come over this thief: he rebuked his fellow, saying, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds but this Man hath done nothing amiss."

He has changed his company, and this puts him in sympathy with the Man all the world is against. He is now the godly man rebuking the ungodly. He has the fear of God which drives out the fear of man. He is among the righteous now, and such are "bold as a lion," while "the wicked flee when no man pursueth" (Prov. 28: 1). This puts him in the company of the blessed, for "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord"; and it also makes him wise, for

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Ps. 112:1; Prov. 9:10).

He says, “We receive the due reward of our deeds” and are justly condemned.

This shows that He is in the light of God, for “that which doth make manifest is light” (Eph. 5:13). Conscience is at work and like another before him he owns he is a man of unclean lips.

“But this Man hath done nothing amiss” (ver. 41).

How wonderful and how blessed! He condemns himself and justifies the Saviour. He is one of wisdom’s children; and “Wisdom is justified of all her children” (Luke 7:35).

Moreover, “He said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom” (ver. 42).

He has just confessed His spotless humanity; but in this verse he takes another step forward. He sees in this spotless Man his Lord and King although crowned with thorns and hanging helplessly on the cross, the object of man’s scorn and mockery. In faith he looks on to the time when this Man, hanging on the cross, will come in glory and establish His kingdom in this world, the scene of His humiliation. What wondrous grace in the Saviour’s reply, “Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise!” (ver. 43).

Notice how He answers the desire rather than the expression of it. The Lord has not come in His kingdom yet. But the believing sinner does not need to wait for that, nor is there a long unconscious sleep, as some would teach, in the grave and in separation therefore from the Saviour. “*To-day* shalt thou be *with Me*” is the Saviour’s promise.

Here is the Good Shepherd that went after the

sheep that was lost *until* He found it. On the cross is where He overtakes this hopeless wanderer; and He brings him back, not to man's original blessedness in innocence, but into His glory and likeness, and makes him a joint-heir with Him who is the Heir of all things.

Thus a man that was not only unfit for heaven, but unfit for earth, becomes the companion of the Son of God at once and for all. By what title? He has confessed a title to nothing but judgment in himself. There can be no blessing for him on the ground of his works. He has none but wicked works. This he owns fully.

His exemption from judgment, and title to glory, is that the Saviour there by his side has borne his judgment. His blood becomes his title to glory as well as justification from all his guilt.

“None of the ransomed ever knew

How deep were the waters crossed,

Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through,

Ere He found His sheep that was lost.”

“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprieveable in His sight . . . Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1: 21, 22, 12).

Peter Van Winkle.

are accepted in the Beloved, and eternally linked up with Him. Get the key, and every difficulty vanishes. Sanctification, in the Christian sense, is therefore twofold—absolute and progressive.

(To be continued.)

H. A. I.

ON MINISTRY.

BECAUSE they refuse a man-ordained ministry some of the Lord's people have been thought to believe in a kind of whosoever-will-ministry. This would surely lead to confusion, and God is never the author of this. Man's will is the source of all the confusion in the Church.

From Rome down to the smallest Christian communion, a humanly accredited ministry is the rule. It is no wonder, therefore, if rejecting it seems generally strange. But is human ordination of God? Let the Word instruct us.

We say boldly that the principle of any man or body of men ordaining others to preach or teach in the Christian assembly is foreign to the word of God.* Yet this, as most other perversions of Scripture, is remotely connected with divine principles.

We could not think of God loving the Church here

* It is true the apostles ordained elders among the assemblies, but they were not "gifts." They were for the *oversight and service* of the local gathering—"bishops" for the government of the house of God; and "deacons" to look after the earthly needs, where they lived. It is not *gift* that is required here, but *Christian character*. The bishops must be elders, not young men. Nor have the apostles left to any the authority to ordain these. They have left us something better—a clear delineation in the Word of the character which a Christian must bear to serve as a bishop or a deacon among his brethren.—[Ed.]

without providing in the fullest way for real, divinely-appointed, ministers. But we do not believe He has left the responsibility of furnishing these to the Church.

In order to find God's will in this, we turn to Paul's personal history and teaching. Besides being a pattern sinner and saint, he is also the pattern servant and the minister of the present dispensation, the teacher of the Gentiles. Therefore his own personal history, as well as his teaching, will give us light on this important subject.

We find he was called, fitted, and sent forth by the Lord from glory. Also he tells us distinctly that he was not a man-made apostle. "Paul, an apostle, not of man" (as to source), "nor through man" (as to channel), "but by Jesus Christ," etc. (Gal. 1 : 1). This is not only true of his class of ministers, and of him personally, but in Eph. chap. 4 he places all ministry on the same footing.

There we learn that the Lord, after going to the cross and finishing the work of redemption, ascended up on high and gave gifts unto men. He gave some apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Notice He did not give them in order that the Church or the clergy might make or declare them apostles, prophets, etc. *He* made them such, and then gave them to the Church. Notice also the object: "For the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, unto the edifying of the body of Christ" (ver. 12).

In verse 13 we learn that Christ is to continue the giving of all these ministers "until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the

measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4: 8-15).

How fully He undertakes all that is necessary for the need of His Church as to ministry and ministers. This thirteenth verse teaches that these ministers would be given by Christ as long as there was any need of them—that is, as long as there is the work to be done by the apostle, prophet, evangelist, etc., He would supply them to do it. This explains the reason for not continuing the apostles and prophets down to the present time. They were not needed, as their work in the completion of Scripture is finished.

In Eph. 2: 19, 20, the house of God, the figure of the Church used there, is built upon the "foundation of the apostles and prophets." It does not mean that the apostles and prophets composed the foundation, but that it was their work to lay it. Accordingly we read again, "I have laid the foundation" (1 Cor. 3: 10)—not I am the foundation.

The foundation they laid is the truth concerning the person and work of Christ: and this we have in their written ministry, so that in that sense we have them yet. The Church has all it needs of these gifts in their writings. If the foundation of a building is properly laid, it need never be re-laid. This foundation was properly laid; hence there is no more work for them as such to do. It was their's to com-

plete the word of God and establish Christianity. God has said all He has to say to us in His Word. There is no more Christianity to establish; therefore no more apostles and prophets are given.

But the need of evangelists, pastors and teachers has existed all through the Church's history, and will to the very end. God's house could not be completed without these. We need the evangelists to get the living stones, who are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, . . . and this is the word which by the gospel is *preached* unto you" (1 Pet. 1: 23-25). Then we must have the pastor or shepherd (N. Tr.) to care for these. As long as God's flock is here He will give the shepherds. There will also be the need of teachers as long as there are people to be taught.

We learn in Eph. 4 that the exalted Christ gives gifts to men "for the work of the ministry." A man must have *from Him* the gift of evangelist in order to be one. We have seen that it does not come from man, nor through man. It is not something a man or a company of men can confer. It is not something we can acquire by our own efforts. It is a gift direct from Christ, the Head of the Church, and is not founded upon what man can teach, but upon what Christ *gives*. This is the first step, and no other can be taken until this one has been taken.

I am speaking now of the "*gift*" of teacher, shepherd and evangelist. In one sense, all who are Christ's should be this in their measure, both men and women. Women in their sphere, of course—not in the assembly, for there it would be a dishonor (1 Cor. 14: 35).

The "*gift*" of a prophet was only for a few, yet we read, "Ye may all prophesy," but this in their measure. The "*gift*" then of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher, is special, and "not of man, nor through man, but by Jesus Christ." The notion that an apostle can make an apostle, or an evangelist make an evangelist, comes wholly from man. It is not in the word of God.

We come now to the next step: The *recognition* and *exercise* as well as *sphere* of these gifts. In this the Church has responsibility, and acts with the Holy Spirit, who dwells in the Church.

If one has the gift of an evangelist, in due time it will manifest itself in the conversion of souls. Or if one has a gift to teach, it will soon show itself by the instruction and edification of the saints. It is not enough for one of himself to conclude he has a gift from Christ. The saints must see it too. The proof of one being a teacher is in his ability to "feed the flock" and "sow spiritual things." The Church will soon see if he is "treading out the corn," or "plowing" up the conscience, or "threshing out the wheat" (1 Cor. 9). This is a safeguard, and prevents self-will and keeps out undesirables. It also does away with the need of man's ordination, which is but an invention and an *interference*.

Then, as to the sphere of gift. One may be able to help only in a *local* way in doing the work of an evangelist, or teacher, or pastor; and how valuable are such if there is devotedness and energy. Their work and their walk will gradually determine, and that in the minds of the people of God generally, what is their sphere of labor, whether of a local or a larger kind. Nothing savors of indepen-

dency in the practical working of the Church of God—ministry or any thing else. It is a body "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4: 16). A member of the body out of place always makes trouble. When in place we minister to each other; otherwise, we hinder. This explains some of the difficulties among God's people—difficulties which make them realize their constant dependence and need of prayer. God Himself, and He alone, is our sufficiency. His Word is our guide. His Spirit abides with us. The practical working of the Church is dependent on the owned, recognized, carried out, truth of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

It is easy to see who was off the track in Acts 15: 36-41. Paul and Silas were recommended unto the grace of God by the brethren—an example of the Spirit working in the Church. The others go on without this, but they soon pass out of the history of the Acts. In the end they are restored; brethren who go on in an independent course often are not; and how great the loss, both to them and to the Church.

The flesh may get the upper hand and throw confusion over these principles, but to give them up and adopt some of our own is not the cure. Those who have done this have not fled from trouble nor escaped confusion. Let us hold fast this truth of the headship of Christ, the presence of the Spirit in the Church, and the divine sufficiency of the word of God.

(To be completed in next issue.)

ON MINISTRY.

(Continued from page 242.)

THEN, if it is a question of a *larger sphere*, when it might necessitate the giving up of the means of livelihood, though not necessarily, the same principles apply. When Paul would go forth from Asia into Europe, his larger and proper field as apostle of the Gentiles, we see the local church acting with the Holy Spirit (Acts 13: 1-4). It is worthy of note too that he went forth from Antioch instead of Jerusalem. This is not according to the claims of tradition and clerisy. There is no such thing as a metropolitan church or bishop in the New Testament. Officialism has no place here. This has always very largely abused and overlooked the presence of the Spirit of God in the Church—a truth of transcendent importance. Man, when in his place in the Church, acts only as the Spirit leads, and as His instrument.

According to the principles of clerisy, Paul should have been sent from Jerusalem by Peter and James, who were apostles before him. The Judaizing teachers reproached him because he was not thus sent, and said, for this reason, he was not an accredited apostle. But he tells them that what they reproached him with he gloried in. He was not from James, Peter, or any other man, but from Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead (Gal. 1: 1). In Gal. 1; 2 and in Acts 13, clerisy and independency in ministry are both set aside.

The general notions of ministry abroad are chiefly derived from the teachings of the word of God about the Jewish priesthood. The very idea of a pope and

his clergy came from the pattern of Aaron and his priestly family; but Aaron is the type of Christ as our Great High Priest, and Aaron's family represents the Christian family, for every Christian is a priest. (1 Pet. 2: 5). A man born a priest in Judaism could not act as a priest until he had gone through certain forms. This was all in the hands of the priesthood, and the nation had nothing to do with it. This is all repudiated in Gal. 1; 2.

God allowed Judaism to enter into the Galatian churches at the beginning so that we would not only know what the truth is, but also what it is not. He let us see what was false and foreign to it. Instead of sending Paul up to Jerusalem, God sent him into the desert. He saw James the Lord's brother once, and was with Peter for fifteen days—too short a time to take a course in theology. Nearly all Christian bodies on earth have a Jerusalem to prepare their ministers; the early Church had no such custom.

Instead of Peter giving Paul his mission and authority, he tells us he had to resist him to the face because he was giving up the truth of the gospel; and for the lack of Peter's self-styled successors having some one to continue to resist them, they have long since lost it. Let us look now at Acts 13: 1-4: First, we notice that there was gift, spirituality and devotedness in the church at Antioch. (The Lord's words to Peter in Matt. 16 did not make him the first pope, but they do teach us that He valued spirituality and devotedness.) They were ministering to the Lord, and fasting (vers. 1, 2). They were before God, waiting on Him, with the Holy Spirit as power and intelligence in the Church. While the whole body is not directly spo-

ken of, yet we know from Acts 15: 4 that the church was present on such occasions. This is according to the principles of 1 Cor. 12 and 14. The Spirit here is the one who distributes to each man severally as He wills. His manifestations are all in the Church, and of the Church, even if through a Paul or a Peter. In fact, all gift is *set in the Church*, and is of the Church, as to its exercise. Yet individual responsibility to the Lord is ever maintained.

The Spirit is operating in Acts 13. This is more and more seen in the book of the Acts as the history progresses—"The Holy Spirit said." Who would say He could not give the mind of God now through the written Word as well as then without it? It was because the written Word was incomplete that it had to be supplemented by this direct speaking. On this occasion His word is, "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Would any say that the Spirit could not indicate, and would not indicate, to an assembly of the Lord's people now that He had called to a certain path a certain man or men? "We have first the divine call, which must in some way be repeated wherever profitable labor is to be done after this fashion." (F. W. G.) A divine call will be known to the saints. Then the church is to separate such men to the work whereunto the Spirit has called them. But this is far from the principles of clerisy. Notice it was when they ministered to the Lord and fasted that they got the mind of God.

Through God's loving care we have everything still as at the beginning—"apostles and prophets" in the completed word of God; the Holy Spirit abiding to the end; and the gifts of evangelist, pastor,

and teacher. Besides, in the sense of giving the mind of God from the written Word of God, "all may prophesy," and thus be "unto edification, exhortation, and comfort." That is, they build up, stir up, and bind up.

This assembly at Antioch was devoted, and it is the devoted individuals and companies whom God uses yet. Gift depends largely on devotedness for development. Where there is little devotedness, little gift will be manifested. Where there are devoted individuals and devoted gatherings, the work of the Lord goes forward, and men and women are raised up to do His will and carry His blessing far and near.

In verse 3 we read of more fasting and prayer, and the laying on of hands, and of their letting them go. How suitable and significant! How much trouble we get into from a lack of what we see here! Then they "laid their hands on them." This is the fellowship and identification of the church at Antioch with these two men. We should see more now of what this signifies. But who among us is to do the laying on of hands? There is no more need now of laying hands literally on the heads of such men in order to carry out the truth in the 13th of Acts, than there is of washing the feet literally in order to carry out the truth of the 13th of John. *The thing symbolized* is what we want to see carried out, not the symbol itself. The point in John 13 is the washing from defilement by the water of the Word; and in Acts 13 it is the Church's fellowship and identification with the Lord's work and workmen. It means that they identify themselves with the afflictions of the gospel,

and with the necessities of those whom they own as sent by the Holy Spirit to preach it. What a call there is still for devoted, spiritual, gifted, God-sent men, both for home and abroad!

Are the gatherings of the Lord's people taking up faithfully the responsibilities which are theirs in this matter? What blessed results came from prayer, fasting, and ministering to the saints, spoken of here! They will share in eternity the rewards bestowed by the Lord on His two devoted servants. May the Lord grant us more of this in the gatherings of His people, that we may see more God-sent and God-gifted men going forth from us into His harvest! The harvest is great, and the field is the world. Go with me to that little company of the disciples in the 4th of John, and hear the speaker say again, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields." Then hear Him again: "The harvest is great, but the laborers are few. *Pray ye* therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest."

Look on the multitude to-day, and see it in the same condition that it was when the disciples looked in the day of the 9th of Matthew, famished and fainting in the pursuit of that which does not satisfy because it is not true bread. It may be you will hear Him saying to you, "*Go ye*" (Mark 16: 15). But it is one thing to see the need, and desire to help to meet it, and quite another thing to be called, fitted and sent forth in fellowship with the Lord and with the assembly to serve Him.

May the Lord bless the feeble effort to examine this subject, which is of such great importance!

PETER VAN WINKLE.

CAN CONSISTENT CHRISTIANS MINGLE IN POLITICS?

“**M**EN are apt to think that this world is as God made it, and that all things continue as they were at the creation, only that man has made great progress in prosperity and civilization. Now, in material comforts, none will deny it, though the men of a past age would hardly think our refinements comforts. Men have telegraphs, railroads, automobiles, and flying-machines; but I hardly know in what respect they are the happier for it. It is a question if they have not excited the passions more than they have satisfied them. Children are not more obedient, families not more united, servants not more honest and respectful. Morally speaking, I do not see what the world has gained. It thinks better of itself, and vaunts its powers: I do not know that this is any advance. Christianity, as light come into the world, has made a difference. Men do not do in the light what they do in the dark. But the world is in no sense as God made it. He overrules all, has patience with it; but He never made it as it is. He made paradise, and the world has grown up as it is through man's departure from God. It has been destroyed once since because of its wickedness.

“What is, then, the world? It is a vast system, grown up after man had departed from God, of which Satan is actually, though not by right of course, the god and the prince. It is a system sprung up, in its origin, from man's disobedience and departure from God, and which has turned God out of it, as far as it could, when He came into it in

mercy. It is also a system in which men have been proved in every way. Without law, it became so bad God had to destroy mankind, save eight persons, by the deluge. Under law, man plunged into idolatry. God sent His Son; Him they slew and hanged on a tree.

“And when we look at the principles and motives of the world, are they other than the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life? Do not pleasure, gain, vanity, ambition, govern men? I do not speak of exceptions, but of what characterizes the world. When we speak of men rising in the world, getting on in the world, is it not ambition and gain which are in question? Is there much difference in what Cain did in his city, and what men are now doing in theirs? If a Chinese who had heard a missionary speak of Christ and Christianity came to a “Christian country” to see what it was, would he find the mass of men, the world, governed by other motives than what governed the masses at Nankin, or Peking, or Canton? Would they not be seeking gain, as he would have done there, or pleasure, as they do there, or power and honor, as they do there? What is the world in its motives? A system in which men seek honor one of another, and not the honor which cometh from God only.

“Take Christendom as a whole, and what do we see? Mohammedanism has overrun the eastern part, and popery the western. The north of Europe, and North America, have been delivered from the latter; and what is their state? Overrun with infidelity and popish tendencies. I do not mean to deny that the Spirit of God is active, and that good is done in the midst of all this. I believe it, and

thank God for it. But that is not the world; it is a distinct power, which works in the midst of it.

“It is important to remember that it was at the death of Christ that the devil received the title of *“prince of this world;”* and, as to his religious influence, he is called the god of this world, who blinds the minds of those who believe not. God did not call the devil the prince of this world till He had fully proved and tested it. But when it followed Satan wholly in rejecting His Son, then the name is given to him. When the true Ruler of the world was rejected, then it was plain Satan was its prince.

“In the world the eager pursuit of gain is more ardent than ever, leading to less scruple in acquiring it. Pleasure also holds its sway over men, in defiance of Christ, as it did when there was no such motive to restrain them. War rages as it ever did; conquest and oppression range over a wider sphere than of old; while the nominal power of Christianity, with all men’s boastings, has receded to smaller limits than in the seventh century, when it ruled over known Africa, filled Asia, and was almost the established religion of China.

“The world, then, has been evil from its origin; for the horrors of idolatry cannot be denied. Christianity, then, has been corrupted by man, and has not reformed the world—is actually the seat of its greatest corruption. Commerce, a partial civilizer of men, absorbs them with the lowest of motives—money—and is wholly indifferent to truth and moral elevation: for it, a good man is a man with capital. Education, which also frees from what is gross, has not, with all its pretensions, changed the motives nor ameliorated the morals of men.

“Such, then, is the world, which is attached to its own objects—grandeur, power, pleasure, gain—not to Christ; and thus it is enslaved to him who governs the world by these motives.” J. N. D.

Such is the world as vividly described by an eminent servant of Christ, and it is to the government of this world that we are invited, nay urged, to come and assist. We are urged to help make its laws, to help choose its rulers, to hold office, to mingle in that department of its activities which it freely acknowledges is one of its most evil and corrupt. We are told that Christians ought to be interested in the government of the country to which they belong; that they should take part in politics, in order to purify them; that they ought to vote; that they should help to put good men in power, and to pass better laws; that they should hold office themselves, and use their influence for good.

But what saith the Scriptures? Can we serve the countries in which we live by taking part in their politics, consistently with our character as described in the word of God? Let us see:

In 1 Peter 2: 11 we are called “strangers and pilgrims.” Do strangers take part in the government of the country in which they sojourn? Or do pilgrims make laws for the country through which they pass? Surely not. Are we, then, any less truly foreigners here because it is heaven that is the land of our citizenship (Phil. 3: 20), and the saints are our fellow-citizens? (Eph. 2: 19.) We are told repeatedly (John 15: 19; 17: 14, 16, etc.) that we are “not of the world,” that is, that we are no part of its system. We must needs come in contact with

the world-system as long as we are in the world; but this contact is not *fellowship*. We are to be in the world, but not of it (John 17: 18, 16). We are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world (James 1: 27), for "the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4: 4).

What was the attitude toward politics of Him who left us "an example, that we should follow His steps?" (1 Peter 2: 21). Did He take any interest in the political government of His country? Did He assist in putting into power the civil rulers of Palestine? Did He help reform bad laws and make good ones? Did He take any part at all in politics? No; His conduct was the very reverse.

"In His days the last shadow of Jewish liberty departed, and His country was oppressed beneath the iron gauntlet of Rome. Such a state of things would have thrilled and agitated to its core the breast of the independent citizen, the lover of liberty. In the Gospels we gather only the political changes of the land from the most distant hints of the narrative.

"When occasions occur on which, if politics be right for the Christian, the Saviour must have declared Himself, He uniformly puts them aside. One of His hearers beseeches Him to engage his brother to divide an inheritance with him (Luke 12: 13). Jesus refuses to listen to the matter, or exercise even the lowly power of an arbitrator. 'Man, who made Me a judge or divider over you?' If the Christian's duty is to take the office of judge or divider, Jesus would have taken it, as our perfect example of what is right; but He thrusts away with a firm hand the

political element of the question, and only warns the disciples against covetousness.

“John the Baptist, His own forerunner, the greatest of women born, is slain through the arts of an adulterous princess, and by the orders of an ungodly king. How does Jesus meet the event? Does He lift up His voice against the oppressor and murderer? No. John is imprisoned, but Jesus speaks not of the injustice; he is murdered, but He utters no cry against the cruelty or tyranny of Herod. John’s ‘disciples came and took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus. When Jesus heard of it, He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart’ (Matt. 14: 10-13). John’s followers announce it to the Lord. As pointedly He is silent.

“Take another incident. There were present at that season some that told Him of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices (Luke 13: 1). A politician would have been on fire at this national outrage. Religious antipathies met with political. Here was a field whereon to inveigh against Roman cruelty, and to rouse the Jews against a tyranny that trampled on the true religion. A pagan profaning with bloody hands the worship of the true God!

“What is Jesus’ reply? ‘Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.’ The politics of the question are wholly passed by; the moral and spiritual view of the matter is alone regarded. This is an especial, a most decisive case. Doubtless it made the blood of every native Jew boil with rage; but Jesus drops no word of indignation against the governor’s crime, nor applauds the Galileans as martyrs for their country.

“A question is raised by His countrymen, and referred for His decision—whether it was lawful to give tribute to the Roman emperor or not. This critical question must have drawn out the politician. Involved in it lay the right of the Romans to rule Judæa, and impose taxes at their will. The oppressions of the governor were before His eyes. The Cæsar that swayed the sceptre was profligate, cruel, a murderer. Yet He bids the Jews pay tribute even to an idolater, and though the emperor might apply the money to the support of idolatry.

“Jesus, then, was not a politician. Am I a disciple of His? Neither, then, am I to be one. ‘It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master.’ If Jesus did not intermeddle in civil government, it is because such conduct would not be pleasing to God. Jesus neither acted politically Himself, nor sanctioned it in others. To be engaged in politics, therefore, either as an actor or a speaker, is no part of my duty as a Christian, else the character of Jesus is not perfect. But His perfection is my pattern, and therefore it becomes me to refuse, as pointedly as He did, to mingle in politics.”—F. W. G.

These, the words of another devoted servant and follower of Christ, speak plainly enough, and cannot be refuted. It is said, Christians are the very ones to be in power. But “*the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not*” (1 John 3: 1). Our lives and the world are governed by different principles entirely. The best the world’s law knows is justice. We who stand by mercy before God should be merciful; and the Scriptures are our guide. But as one of the world’s philosophers truly said, “Nothing would excite greater manifestations of contempt and

disgust than the slightest attempt to introduce the authority of Scripture in a political consultation." And this in a so-called "Christian" land.

If it be insisted that Christians are peculiarly fitted to serve the governments because of their superior goodness, we answer, God has ministers of His pleasure who never sinned—the angels. A striking instance of their service is given in the 10th of Daniel. For three full weeks Daniel, his faith sorely tried, continued in fasting and prayer. The angel of God had said, "Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thy heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard." Nevertheless, the answer of God by the angel did not arrive until three weeks after.

Then the angel relates to Daniel how this happened, and the difficulties he had to encounter. It was a question of deciding something at the court of Persia; and those there, who were opposed to an edict for favoring the Jews, could put obstacles to its promulgation. The prince of Persia was opposed to the Jews, but at the end of twenty-one days the angel prevailed against his counsels and came back to Daniel. Thus we learn that if God does not use us as His instruments in politics, He does use some from His legions of angels.

And sometimes He uses the basest of men. Little did Cæsar Augustus know, when he sent out the decree that "a census should be made of all the habitable world" (Luke 2: 1), that he was merely an instrument in the hands of God. Yet so it was. More than seven hundred years before, the prophet Micah had said in the name of Jehovah, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the

thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel." But Mary's home was at Nazareth, in Galilee, and the time was drawing near for the birth of her holy Child; and lo, God constrains the Roman emperor to set the machinery of his empire in motion, that Joseph be compelled, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to go up unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem. What a proof that God still holds the reins of government in His hands, and that He turns the hearts of men whithersoever He will!

What then is a scriptural attitude for a Christian toward the governments of the world? To submit to them, and to pray for them. We are to pay taxes, and submit "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake" (1 Peter 2: 13); and we are to pray for "kings and all that are put in authority" (1 Tim. 2: 2). We are not to despise government, nor to speak evil of dignities, nor bring against them railing accusation (2 Peter 2: 10; Jude 9).

If, then, we refuse to mingle in politics, it is not that we think politics in itself wrong, but that we belong to another country, that is, a heavenly (Heb. 11: 16); and we see that the world is evil (John 17: 15), and rejects the One we love. We wish to be separate from it therefore, and to cast in our lot with *Him*. We are drawn upward, above and beyond this scene, by union with Christ on high; willing to be despised, yea, rather to suffer shame for His name, while we wait for Him to come and take us to that city from whence we shall go no more out.

E. V. W.

THE CONSCIENCE OF MAN

The conscience is that faculty of the soul which judges good and evil. It has been called "the eye of the mind," and is the power of psychic discernment, as the eye is the power of physical vision. But all history declares and everyday life confirms that it alone is not competent to guide man. Like the physical eye, it cannot see in the dark, and is subject to affections that impair, and sometimes annul, its usefulness; with this important difference: the physical eye cannot suffer a serious impairment of its functions without the knowledge of its possessor, whereas the conscience may be so perverted as to call evil good, and good evil, while its unhappy possessor walks in darkness, knowing it not. And when this is the case, havoc is wrought indeed, for "wilful error is limited by the will, but what limit is there to that of which we are unconscious?" Take the notable example of Saul of Tarsus persecuting the church of God. "I thought I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus," he said, "which things also I did" (Acts 26:9). There was conscience; but its possessor was walking in darkness and knew it not until the day he went to Damascus, and saw a light and heard a voice from heaven. He had a good conscience, he said (Acts 23:1), but a good conscience is not enough. It must bow to Him Who is Light, and be guided by the Book called a lamp and a light. "For the Word has authority as well as light. It tests the truth of conscience by giving light, but it speaks with the authority of God. I do not believe in the conscientious-

ness of a man who pleads his conscience against the Word of God."

Eight different states of conscience are mentioned:

Good (1 Peter 3:16).

Good (sic) (Heb. 13:18).

Defiled (Titus 1:15).

Purged (Heb. 9:14).

Pure (2 Tim. 1:3).

Evil (Heb. 10:22).

Seared (1 Tim. 4:2).

Weak (1 Cor. 8:10).

"We trust we have a good conscience" (Heb. 13:6), wrote the apostle, when asking for the prayers of the Hebrew saints. And when he wrote "good" he used, not the ordinary word for good, "agathos," but a word that means "beauty" as well as goodness: "kalos," beautiful and pleasing. How blessed to have a conscience like that! In Titus 1:15 we read of a defiled conscience—the conscience of the defiled and unbelieving to whom nothing is pure, but both mind and conscience defiled. In Hebrews 9:14 we read of a purged conscience. Here the apostle uses a medical term, "katharizo," which means to cleanse. The same word in another form, "katharos," we find in 1 Tim. 3:9 and 2 Tim. 1:3. A pure conscience, one that is clear or clean. In Heb. 10:22 we read of an evil conscience. In 1 Tim 4:2 we find a seared conscience, one branded as with a hot iron. In the 8th chapter of 1 Cor. we find a good deal about a weak conscience; and again the apostle uses a medical term. This time it is "asthenes," a word translated in other places, "sick," "impotent," "without strength," "feeble." Let us read this chapter; there are only thirteen verses.

The subject is, "the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols," v. 4. It seems there were in that day, brethren who were, as yet, not entirely free from the thrall of idolatry out of which they had but lately come. Idols were everywhere, and the sinister belief in them cast its dark shadow across the minds of the weak. The flesh that had been offered in sacrifice to idols was often sold in open market, with nothing to differentiate it from other meat. To the intelligent Christian it was all the same—the idol was nothing, and the meat of sacrifice neither good nor evil. He could sit down in the very temple of the idol and eat a

dinner of flesh, because he had knowledge and liberty. The truth had made him free. But the Holy Spirit had a warning for him; he was to consider his weak brother and act in grace. If a brother without knowledge were to see him who had knowledge eating in an idol's temple, he might do the same thing himself because he was weak. Example would have more power over him than conscience, because his conscience was weak. Thus his weak conscience would become defiled. So St. Paul would have eaten no meat while the world endured, if it had hurt the conscience of a weak brother, though the weak brother were in the wrong.

This chapter has sometimes been taken to prove that whatever I think is wrong, my brother must abstain from; that if a thing offends my conscience my brother must not do it. But it is a totally false thing to make conscience a law. "A law is a thing imposed upon a person, whereas the essence of conscience is that I discern between good and evil in myself, and that becomes a law to me. Law is imposed by a law-giver," not by a weak brother. This chapter is not addressed to him at all. It is an appeal to those who have knowledge, in behalf of one who is in the wrong, who follows others to his own defilement.

The thing imposed upon Adam in the Garden of Eden was neither good nor evil in itself. Obedience to God's command was the test. Neither were the trees, behind which he hid, good or evil in themselves, but he used them to shut God out. The keeping of the Sabbath was neither good nor evil in itself, but it was part of the law. Neither is eating meat good or evil in itself, but I am to walk charitably. Thus I see the important principle that what I renounce for my weak brother's sake must be in itself neither good nor evil. If it is intrinsically good I shall not renounce it. If it be intrinsically evil, I must renounce it for my own sake, not for my brother's, but that I may not sin against God. I cannot give up murder, theft and covetousness for my brother's sake, nor lying, gambling and swearing; for these are sins. But I can give up the use of my piano, bicycle and camera for my brother's sake, or the eating of meat or the drinking of wine, for these are neither good nor evil. Intemperate eating of meat is gluttony,

and that is evil; intemperate drinking of wine is drunkenness, and that is evil.

Eleanor Van Winkle.

LOOK TO HIM*

"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22).

"Me"—"I am God, and there is none else."

Here we have the glory of the Person.

Saved. In this word we have the wonderful result of looking to such a One—salvation.

All. Here we see the scope, the world-wide range, of the call—it is universal.

A **look** is the condition.

A **Saviour-God** is the object.

A full **salvation** is the result.

And invitation is given to all.

What a full gospel! what a remarkable text!

Now, dear reader, pause, and ask yourself—Have I **looked**? Am I **saved**? Make this an intensely personal question. In looking to Christ by faith there is salvation for the soul. It is not by working, nor by feeling, but by looking; that is, by believing. The bitten Israelite looked at the brazen serpent; he lived. The sinner is bidden to believe on the Son of man lifted up; he gets everlasting life. "I am God, and there is none else." No; for "there is none other name given . . . whereby we must be saved." I pray you look not to your fancied merits, your earnest prayers, your charitable actions, your deceitful feelings; salvation is in Christ alone. **Look to Him.** The immediate result is that you are saved.

—J. W. S.

"BE TRUE"*

"Thou must be true thyself,
If thou the truth wouldst teach;
Thy soul must overflow, if thou
Another soul wouldst reach:
It needs the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech.

"Think truly, and thy thoughts
Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed."

—H. Bonar.