

January 1

O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of His praise to be heard: which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved. Psalm 66:8,9

THANKS be to God that His grace has preserved us, "kept us from falling,"

NEW YEARS RESOLUTION CONSIDERATIONS

(Eph 6:13 KJV) "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

R2275 "The evil day here referred to is this Day of the Lord, in which we are now living, wherein every man's work shall be tried, so as by fire. These are the "perilous times" of which the Apostle forewarned the Church—times peculiarly perilous to Christian faith, because of the many subtle and delusive forms of error now springing up to intercept the progress of the truth. But God's provision for his saints is equal to the emergency of the perilous hour. Never before this "evil day" was it possible for the saints to put on the whole armor of God; and never before was it needed... The time is shortly coming when it will be impossible to stand without it."

R4930 "Every now and then we are brought to a realization that many of those who rejoice considerably in the Truth have but an imperfect knowledge of it--they are not rooted, grounded, established and built up in the Truth; they are not able to "rightly divide the Word of Truth"; they are not workmen who need never be ashamed in discussing the Truth with others.

Some of these, deficient in their knowledge of the Truth, are mere babes, beginners, who have not yet had a full opportunity for study. Some of them have read Vol. I and have skimmed over the other volumes. They perhaps learned of the classes for Bible study, and, attending them and discussing with the brethren and hearing some discourses, seemed to assume that they knew the teachings of the entire six volumes as though they had read them, studied them.

This is a great mistake; more, it is a *serious* mistake, because we are in the time when each and all must expect to be special-

through another year--that so many of us are still of one heart and of one mind in respect to His Word and its service! When we remember that the Adversary is to be permitted to bring "strong delusions" upon the Lord's people for the very purpose of sifting out all not truly His (2Thessalonians

ly tried and tested. And those who have only a partial understanding of the Divine Plan--those who have only a part of the provided armor, will find it difficult, if not impossible, to stand in this evil day the assaults of the world, the flesh and the Adversary. If they have proper zeal for the Lord and a proper love for the Plan, they should manifest that zeal by thorough and persevering study of the volumes. They cannot afford to do less."

LEAKY VESSELS

R4930 "We find also that some of the dear friends who read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES years ago, and not recently, imagine that they remember their contents, when in reality they are quite ignorant of many of their teachings. We all have leaky, earthen vessels and the precious treasure of Divine Truth soon exhausts unless we keep replenishing... Such of our readers as have not read the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES this year can scarcely appreciate how much they probably have lost of what they originally learned therein."

METHODS OF READING / STUDYING THE VOLUMES

R4685 "We might remark that quite a number of the friends in the Truth are making it a rule to read twelve pages of the SCRIPTURES STUDIES a day, and that we do not know one who has been following this course and making use of the various means of grace the Lord has provided (Dawn and testimony meetings and Sunday meetings and Pilgrim meetings and the Berean lessons, Manna text, etc.), who has gone out of the truth. We know a great many who, on the contrary, have been of the opinion that they knew these things long ago, while in fact they do not know half of what they did know -- they have forgotten more than half of what they read and they are those who are now stumbling -- going into outer darkness."

R3125 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0) NEW YEAR GREETINGS, 1903

^[1]THANKS BE TO GOD that his grace has preserved us, "kept us from falling," through another year!--that so many of us are still of one heart and of one mind in respect to his Word and its service! Our appreciation must be increased by the remembrance that every testimony of the Word is to the effect that the close of the "harvest" time is to be a time of special testing to all professing to be the Lord's people;--"every man's work shall be tried so as by fire." When we remember that the Adversary is to be permitted to bring "strong delusions" upon the Lord's people for the very purpose of sifting out all not truly his,--that they may believe lies and depart from the truth and be condemned as unworthy;-- because they received not the truth in *the love of it*" (2 Thess. 2:10-12)--it surely should call forth our thanks to God that the opening of another year finds us still standing fast,--appreciating the truth and in full accord

2:10-12), it should surely call forth our thanks to God that the opening of another year finds us still standing fast,--appreciating the Truth, and in full accord with all the divine appointments by which He has kept us from falling. Z. '03-3R3125:2

1) Reading/Studying 12 pages a day: The planned completion is 9 months if it is done consistently -- leaving 3 months for other studies or for missed reading, etc.

2) Reading/Studying 9 pages a day: The planned completion is still less than twelve months. There would be approximately 10 days to spare.

ARMOR MUST BE PUT ON INDIVIDUALLY

(1 Th 5:21 KJV) "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

B171-172 "While many may prefer to take a statement without the trouble of verifying it from the Scriptures, this will not be the case with the real truth-seeker."

R4685 "In reading them the first time, and perhaps the second time, and before we would accept anything as being our own personal faith and conviction, we would say, 'I will not take it because these studies say so; I wish to see what the Bible says.' And so we would study the Scriptures in the light of these SCRIPTURE STUDIES; we would prove every point, or disprove it, as the case might be. We would be satisfied with nothing less than a thorough investigation of the Bible from this standpoint.

If, after doing that, we should find the books to be in accord with the Bible, then we would think we were logical in saying, 'I will not need to go through that process now every time that I read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES, for I have looked up those texts of Scripture and know certainly that the New Testament proves all those points.' If, at the same time, in any future reading, we should come to a place where something did not seem clear to us and we thought of some Scripture which seemed not as harmonious with it as we had previously thought, we would think it our duty to refer at once to the Scriptures..."

with all the divine appointments by which he has kept us from falling.

The Apostle reminds us that rejoicings do not belong as properly to him that putteth on the armor as to him who, having fought the good fight to the finish, shall lay aside the armor and put on robes of glory in the First Resurrection. (1 Kings 20:11; 2 Tim. 4:7,8.) Consequently we must not stop too long even to rejoice that we are what we are by the grace of God, but must go on! The new year is surely full of blessings for the *faithful*, according to all the precious promises of our Father's Word. We must grasp these afresh, allowing the Lord's faithfulness of the past to establish our trust the more firmly for the future. Without faith as the trolley to connect us with the current of divine power we will fail to "go on unto perfection."

"Faith can firmly trust Him,--come what may."

Love, too, should be stimulated by a retrospective glance;--discerning the mercies of the Lord toward us should enthrust us with loving zeal for Him and his. "We love him because he first loved

^[1] Jan 1 Manna, Psa. 66:8-9

us!" We seek to do those things pleasing to our Lord because we love him, and in proportion as we love him we will delight in such obedience and service,--even at the cost of self-sacrifice.

Good resolutions and the reexamination of our ideal and standards of life are appropriate at this season, too. Not that the fully consecrated can add to their consecration--for, if proper, it included our all. Not, either, that we should have an annual round up when we would seek pardon and start out afresh--as typical Israel did each "Day of Atonement" at the beginning of their new year. Spiritual Israelites, rather, are to live a daily, an hourly life of nearness to the High-Priest. The *blood* of the ⁽²⁾New Covenant is to be continually invoked for the cleansing of the slightest defilement of conscience, that thus the wedding garment of our Lord's imputed righteousness may not become bedraggled, but that the slightest spot being re-

moved, we may have it "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

Nevertheless, self-examinations and good resolutions have a value at this season in particular. That reviews of business; taking account of stocks; ascertaining the profits and the losses of the year; etc., are profitable in respect to worldly affairs, all will admit; and the much more important affairs of the soul--the ascertainment of gains and losses as New Creatures and how and when and where these came to us in the constant battle with the world, the flesh and the devil, will surely profit all who make such reckonings with an eye single to the pleasuring of the Lord.

Let us, then, set our spiritual aims, ambitions and endeavors still nearer to the perfect divine standard; remembering the while our Lord's words, "Without me ye can do nothing," let us be strong and courageous in the strength which he supplies and promises to increase as we are able and willing to accept it.

⁽²⁾ Please see Volume 6 Forward clarifications on New Covenant.

R1485 "JANUARY 1, 1893 RETROSPECTIVE AND PROSPECTIVE

"At the threshold of each new year it seems but natural to look about us--backward at the year just gone, and forward to the year drawing on--reviewing our conflicts and God's mercies past and, with hope as our telescope, prospecting the future.

From your letters and otherwise, dear readers, fellow-servants of our King and fellow-heirs of his glory, we know something of the trials temporal and spiritual which have bestrewn your paths; but we know much more of how the grace of God has blessed you all spiritually through Christ. And we earnestly trust that, with us of the TOWER Office, you can apply to yourselves the words of the poet--

"Looking back, I praise the way
God has led me, led me day by day."

Our day is peculiar in many respects. Not only is it a day of blessings, advantages and conveniences beyond any other, but it is a day of dissatisfaction and discontent beyond any other. Not only is it a day of greater light and understanding respecting the Lord's plan, but it is a day in which the great Enemy of the truth is permitted to spread before the awakening nominal and real Church more sophisticated delusions in the name of "new light" than ever before. Not only is it true that a man or woman has five times the opportunity for usefulness in God's service, ever before enjoyed, but it is also true that business, worldly pleasure and ambition are five times as active and powerful to keep us back from this possible usefulness. It behooves us, therefore, not only to get awake to our present privileges, blessings and opportunities, but to keep awake to them. He who does not realize that this will require a constant battle with selfishness, within and without--with the World, the Flesh and the Devil--is very liable to fall into the snare in learning of it.

Nevertheless it is possible, even now, for the intelligent Christian to have absolute contentment, to escape the errors of our day

and to keep himself actively in the love and service of God. This blessing, with the peace that passeth all understanding, is, however, only for the few: for those whose faith is resting in the perfect work of Christ--in the ransom which he gave--and who are fully consecrated, heart and body, to the Master's will and work and way in every matter. Such he does not leave in darkness and doubt in this day when the hearts of the worldly-wise are "failing them for fear and for looking after those things coming upon the earth," but to them are fulfilled the promises --"He will show you things to come;" "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"--free from the bondage of error, free from the bondage of fear, and from those other bondages of creeds of men and of social and religious societies into which fear is driving many under the plea of "Union."

But while we do well, dear friends, to remember gratefully the mercies of the past year and to rejoice in the grace sufficient with which it was so richly supplied, it is wise for us to look carefully to our steps for the year beginning. While we did not fall last year, some did. Our trials and testings may be more severe during the year beginning, and unless we feel our own insufficiency and look to our Master continually, we shall be liable to depart from humility, to become puffed up with pride and haughtiness, the sure precursors of a fall. And again, if we look merely to our own weaknesses we will become so discouraged as to yield readily to the adversary's assaults. Our only safe position will be to feel humble and to realize our insufficiency, but to trust implicitly and always to him who has promised that he will never leave us, nor forsake us. (If there be any breach between us, if any leaving and forsaking, it will be on our part, not his.) We can safely trust our all to him who assures us that "All things shall work together for good to them that love God (with all their hearts)--to those called according to his purpose." We need have no

fear of the ultimate results, so long as we find *our wills* fully submitted to our Master's will, and our hands and thoughts filled with his work. We may have full confidence, and may rest in peace upon the promise, "He will not suffer you to be tempted *above that ye are able*, but will, with the temptation, provide also a way of escape."

"Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist [by standing] steadfast in *the faith*, knowing that similar afflictions are being accomplished in your brethren in the world."--1 Pet. 5:8.

The more we realize that we are in the harvest --the winnowing and testing time--the more we should each seek to follow the Apostle's advice, "Make straight paths for your feet lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." Each of us has learned some of his weak or vulnerable points of character, and each should seek, not only to strengthen these weak points but also specially to fortify himself against temptations and besetments of the adversary upon those weakest points, lest he thereby be turned out of the straight and narrow way.

This means a circumspection of your affairs in general: home affairs, business affairs, all, should be ordered and systematized with a view to protect your own weak points to the Lord's praise and to the good of yourself and others. See that your heart is fully given up to the King, and then, with the wisdom which he will supply those who seek it, divide your time and talents among your various duties so as to spend and be spent more to the honor of the Lord and to the service of his truth, and you will find yourself liberally repaid in spiritual favors.

We suggest to all WATCH TOWER readers as a motto and watch-word for 1893 the words of the great Apostle Paul--

"*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your deeds be done in love.*"--1 Cor. 16:13,14..

R3695 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0) ALEGHENY, PA., JANUARY 1, 1906 THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

THE dawn of another new year is properly a time for solemn reflections, both retrospective and prospective. In the retrospect how abundant is the cause for thanksgiving! We who have been blessed with the richest favors of divine grace in that knowledge of divine truth which reveals to us the high privilege of becoming sons and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven

for the called and chosen and faithful according to his purpose, have a never-failing cause for deepest gratitude. Great indeed was the favor which revealed to us the hope of everlasting life as justified, human sons of God--of full restitution to the divine favor and likeness, as was at first possessed by our father Adam. And great was our joy when first, by faith, we appropriated this precious promise and realized that legally, through merit of the precious blood of

Christ shed for our redemption, we had passed from death unto life, and that in God's appointed time the everlasting treasure with all its attendant glory and blessing would be ours. But beyond even this are the "exceeding great and precious promises" to those of this justified class who have been called, according to God's purpose, to become the bride and joint-heir of his dear Son.

Then, in addition to all these blessings of hope and promise, was the blessed realization during all the year, and with some of us for many years past, that though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, as the Psalmist aptly represents the present life, our blessed Shepherd's rod and staff have been our comfort and our safeguard. How often has the friendly crook of the Shepherd's staff stayed us from wandering off into bypaths and kept us in the narrow way; how his chastening rod has from time to time aroused us from dreamy lethargy and urged us on our way. And at such times we have recalled the comforting words: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons."-- Heb. 12:5-8.

"THOU SPREADST MY TABLE IN THE MIDST OF ENEMIES"

Spiritually, we have feasted on the bounties of divine favor; while in things temporal, under whatsoever circumstances we have been placed, having the assurance that *all things* work together for good to them that love God, we have realized that godliness with contentment is great gain, having promise of the life that now is [so long as God wills to have us remain here], and also of that which is to come. Wherefore, we can and do most heartily "offer unto God thanksgiving." And shall we not render unto him, not only the praise of our lips, but also the incense of truly consecrated lives, throughout the year upon which we are just entering? Dearly beloved, consecrate yourselves anew to the Lord today --not in the sense of invalidating the consecration made once for all, possibly many years ago, but rather in the sense of re-affirming and emphasizing that covenant. Tell the dear Lord that you consider yourselves entirely his, and that it is still your purpose to keep your all upon the altar of sacrifice during this new year and until it is wholly consumed in his service. Then let us proceed with studious care from day to day to pay these, our vows of full consecration, unto the Most High.

As we look back and with sorrow view the imperfections of even our best efforts, and then forward and see the lion-like difficulties that seem to obstruct our onward course, we will need greatly to reinforce our waning courage with the special promises of divine grace to help in every time of need. We have the blessed assurance that "the Lord will give strength unto his people." "Call upon me in the day of trouble," he says, "and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." As soldiers under our great Captain, we have enlisted in no uncertain struggle, except our own faint-heartedness or unfaithfulness should make it so. We are fully supplied with the whole armor of God, and will be amply protected against all the fiery darts of the adversary if we accept it and carefully buckle it on; we are forewarned of all the snares and dangers that beset our onward way, so that we may avoid and overcome them; we are fully informed as to the policy and course of the Captain under whose banner we have enlisted, and of the part we are to take under his leading. We have his constant presence with us, even to the end of our course. His inspiring voice may always be heard above the clash and din of battle--Fear not, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom! Be of good cheer; I have overcome! Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid! Greater is he that is for you than all they that be against you. If we are weak and incline to faint-heartedness we have only to remember the blessed promise, "The Lord will give strength unto his people;" and by our faithfulness in the service we shall glorify God and he will deliver us gloriously from all our foes, both seen and unseen.

HOW SHALL WE PAY OUR VOWS?

This is an important question with all the truly consecrated, and one surely of paramount importance. Let us consider, then, that when we consecrated ourselves fully to the Lord, we thereby signified that we would hold nothing back for self. That consecration included all our possessions, our time, our physical energies and our mental attainments. And it implied the sacrifice of all our former earthly ambitions, hopes and aims, so that we should no longer pursue them to any extent. This, and nothing less, is what our vow of full consecration signifies. But it signifies, further, that these possessions or personal qualifications, which the Lord terms talents, are

not only to be released from the service of the worldly ambitions, etc., but that they are to be so released, not for aimless inactivity, but for the purpose of being utilized in an opposite direction--in the service of God, of his plan and of his children.

In the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30) the Lord illustrated very clearly how we are expected to pay our vows of consecration to the Most High. He says: "It is like a man who, intending to travel, called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to each according to his respective capacity; and straightway took his journey."

TO EACH ACCORDING TO ABILITY

This master had important and valuable interests to leave in charge of his servants; and as these servants had all engaged to serve him, he had a right to expect of them a sincere and faithful interest in the work. Yet he did not expect more of them than they were severally able to accomplish. He rightly expected larger returns from the one who had five talents than from those who had one or two talents. And in the reckoning, it will be observed that the servant who had doubled his two talents was just as highly commended as the one who had doubled his five. The reply to each was the same--"Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." And had the servant with the one talent been similarly faithful he would have received the very same commendation. Notice also that the parable does not represent the obligations of the world of mankind in the use of their talents, but merely of "his own servants"-- the consecrated believers only. And notice also that no servant was left without some talent of usefulness and responsibility. Each servant had *at least* one talent; and for the right use of that one talent he was just as accountable to his master as were those who had more.

But the professed servant with the one talent was unfaithful to his master, and yet he evidently wanted to be considered a servant still, and probably thought he was worthy of commendation and reward for not perverting his Lord's money to other uses. He had taken good care of the talent; he had not turned it in opposition to the Lord, but he had simply buried it--failed to use it. At the reckoning time, he who had received the one talent said, "Lord, I knew thee, that thou art an exacting man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not scattered. And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast thine own."

"His Lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not scattered; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers; and then at my coming I should have received mine own with interest." It will be observed that this servant was not what men would generally call wicked. He was simply an idler, willing, if he could, to draw a servant's approval and compensation, but lacking any real, active interest in his master's business. He had no ill will toward his master; he was probably very glad that the other servants kept the business from going to wreck and ruin; he did nothing to hinder them from using their talents, but he did not feel the responsibility he had assumed in becoming a "servant," nor take a proper interest in his master's affairs. Yet, as a faithless, slothful servant, he was really a covenant-breaker, and therefore "wicked" and certainly unfit to be trusted with still greater responsibilities on the master's return.

But let us remember that this was not a real case: it was simply a parable used to illustrate real cases. And if the illustration fits your individual case, let it not lose its effect upon you. The very object of the parable is to arouse such to a sense of their short-comings, and to recover them from the lethargy into which they have relaxed, by reminding them of their responsibilities. Activity in the Lord's service to the full extent of our ability or talents is what the Lord has a right to expect of all who profess to be his servants; and it is what he does expect. Therefore, if you have but one talent, do not bury it, but cultivate and use it; do what you can, and all you can, in the great work to which we have already consecrated our lives.

MUCH GIVEN, MUCH REQUIRED

And those who have several talents, let them see to it that they too are faithful to the extent of their abilities, not being content to do merely what the one-talented man can do or ought to do. Such a one would not be a good and faithful servant, and could not expect the Master's approving "Well done!" His approval will be given to those only who are faithful to the extent of their opportunity.

Those who find the truth and make the consecration before they

are encumbered with the cares of this life, who have no families dependent upon them and who have a reasonable degree of health, have at least two talents--time and health--which can and ought to be utilized in the service to the best possible advantage. Then there are those who have a money talent, or a business talent, and such should consider how these are being used. Are they largely swallowed up in luxuries, or a superabundance of the good things of this life, for either self or family? Or are they being laid up as treasures upon earth--in banks, store-houses and investment securities, to enrich and to cultivate the spirit of pride in friends or children, and for them to quarrel over after you are dead?

Our talents for use in the Lord's service consist of all those things and opportunities which are over and above what we need for the necessary and reasonable maintenance of ourselves or our families, if we have families, and the reasonable provision against distress in case of a sudden calamity or approaching old age, etc. Aside from these, all we have should be in active service, be they many talents or few. If we have five talents and are using only one or two, how can we expect the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant"? Did we not covenant to give and to use *all* for him?--all our money, all our time, all our influence, all our mental activity, all our physical ability? How faithful have we been during the past year? How do we stand at the bar of our own judgment? And how faithful will we be during the coming year? After providing things decent and honest for ourselves and those dependent upon us, let us judiciously appropriate our talents to what we profess to consider the chief business of life. Here are the testing points of true loyalty and devotion. Let us ponder them well, and not lightly set them aside.

FORMER OPPORTUNITIES LOST

But observe further what the Lord has to say about this "wicked and slothful servant." He says: "Take the talent from him and give it unto him which hath ten talents; for unto every one that hath [made use of his talents] shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not [made use of his talent] shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into *outer darkness*: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The outer darkness here referred to is in contrast with the inner light of the holy place of favor and communion and instruction from God, symbolized in the Tabernacle. The testing comes on the return of the Master. Then the faithful servants shall enter into fuller joys and privileges and blessings, while the unfaithful will go into the outer darkness of error and ignorance concerning God's plans and ways, which envelops the world in general, and their neglected opportunities for more abundant service will go as a reward to those who are already earnest and active, and whose earnest and faithful labors will in due time be abundantly rewarded.

As we thus view our Lord's teaching, we see that our only security as sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ is in activity in the service of the truth. Well, says one, I see very few doing that. Very true: only a few will do it. But that precious few are the Lord's jewels. Are you one of them? Ah, that is the point to be considered. No matter how few they are, or whether you ever saw or knew of any such, that does not alter the conditions of our calling. "This is the way: walk ye in it." One, at least, has trodden it before. Look for his foot-prints and follow him, and "He will give strength unto his people," even though they walk alone, as he did, without the cheering companionship of fellow-travelers.

"LO, I AM WITH YOU"

But think not that you are traveling alone in this narrow way. The Lord has now a consecrated people, a faithful band of servants who, with every talent consecrated, are steadily pursuing their course in the narrow way. We know some of them by name and by character and by their steady and progressive activity in the blessed work. Not many of them have five talents, but a good many have two or three, and some only one. Quietly and unobtrusively they go about from day to day preaching the wonderful words of life, and God is with them and is leading them on. Their hearts are full of joy and hope and they are kept securely amidst all the perils of this evil day. None are so clear in their apprehension and appreciation of truth as those who are fully enlisted in its service. Let all who would run the race successfully look well to their zeal and activity in the Lord's work. If we bury our one or our many talents under a weight of worldly cares and encumbrances which might be avoided or set aside; if we bury them under worldly ambitions for either self or family-- whether this be by wasting consecrated time upon science, philosophy, music or art; or upon business, politics or pleasures; or

in pampering pride and appetite --then as unfaithful servants we will sooner or later go into outer darkness, by being caught in some of the snares of this "evil day," and will be led farther and farther into error and away from truth.

Mark well that it is not a case of such unfaithful servants being *liable* to get into outer darkness, into error: it is a case of *must*. The Master's orders are peremptory and decisive: "*Cast* the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." The light now shining is *not* for the unfaithful, but for the faithful servants; and no matter how clearly the unfaithful may have seen and understood the deep things of God, and no matter how he may have enjoyed them, if he has not loved them so as to serve them and sacrifice his conveniences for them, he is unworthy of them and *must* go out into the outer darkness of the world in general. With these as with the world the disappointment of theories and plans in the great time of trouble will ere long bring the weeping and gnashing of teeth foretold.

FAITHFULNESS IMPLIES ACTIVITY

It is indeed a notable fact that in no single case have we seen one drift away from the truth into the snares of these perilous times who was very active and fully enlisted in the Lord's work, whose one aim and endeavor was to herald the truth and to bless others with it. To such the Lord says, "My grace is sufficient for thee"--"Ye shall never fall, for so an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Let us, then, dearly beloved, have for our watchword during the year the word "devotion," and let each of us write upon his heart the gracious promise-- "The Lord will give *strength* unto his people." Let us be faithfully "his people," and let us earnestly desire and faithfully use the *strength* promised. Faithful is he that hath promised, who also will do it. So, then, if you lack the strength to use faithfully your talent, the fault is yours, not God's. You either have not his service close enough at heart or else do not make use of the strength he provides. "The Lord will give strength unto *his people*"-- his trusting, faithful servants--those who are using to his praise the talents consecrated to their Master, however many or few those talents may be.

1906 / "God Bless You" / 1906

Our New Year's greeting is, "God bless you." It applies primarily to those nearest and dearest in the bonds of Christian fellowship in Present Truth; secondarily, to all who trust in the precious blood, in the merit of which alone there is forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God and a basis of Christian brotherhood; thirdly, to the world in general, still blind and deaf to God's great salvation, but heirs of the great oath-bound covenant, "in due time;" fourthly, to those who oppose us and say all manner of evil against us, falsely, for Christ's sake--because we are heralds of his truth and grace.

For all of these our wish is God's blessing, which, if received, maketh truly rich, and addeth no sorrow. If for our enemies and the world in general we pray opening of the eyes of understanding, surely with the Apostle we may offer the same prayer also for all the "brethren" and for ourself--a wider opening of our eyes of understanding. The Apostle's words are, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father...that ye may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge."-- Eph. 3:14-19.

We suggest as our motto for 1906 the words upon the motto cards designed by Sister Seibert (advertised in our issue of Nov. 15 last), viz., "In Due Time."

"In Due Time"

--I TIM. 2:6--

"Be patient, therefore, brethren."

We hope that the motto cards representing these sentiments so fully will be in all of our homes to assist us in the development of the grace of Patience, without which other graces of the Spirit cannot be matured. We cannot pack and mail a single motto for less than 10c, but conclude to offer 5 in a tube, postpaid, for 25c, to the intent that all may have them. We can endure many things with patience if we can but keep in memory that "in due time" that which is perfect will have come, ushering us into the joys of our Lord, and establishing peace on earth and good will among men.

May this be your best year in Christian progress so far!
