

March 29

By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8

AS members of the fallen race we were incapable of doing any work which our holy God could accept... Our present standing,

therefore, as New Creatures, is not the result of anything that the old creature did, or could have done. It is not of ourselves; it is the gift of God. This lesson must be thoroughly appreciated, else we will be continually in danger of falling. ...So far from considering the New Creature as an evolution

of the old creature, the apostle would have us understand distinctly that it is a new and separate creation. We were created in Christ Jesus, God's workmanship--prepared for good works, but not by good works. Z. '03-90 R3166:4

R4493 "The forgiveness of our sins, our reconciliation to the Father, must be purely and solely upon the grounds of Jesus' merit and sacrifice -- his ransom sacrifice...

This grace, this forgiveness, this reconciliation, is what we Scripturally term "justification by faith" -- not by works! However, after being justified by faith, after being reckoned of God as freed from Adamic imperfection, through the applied merit of our Redeemer, we are on a new footing entirely, where we may do works acceptable to God, and, more than this, where we are required to do those works... When we responded to the Divine "call" and entered into a covenant of sacrifice with Christ (Psalm 50:5) to be dead with him, to suffer with him, and when the holy Spirit was received as God's acceptance of this contract, thenceforth works, self-denials, sufferings, faithful endurance, were expected, yea, were required.

Everyone who thus becomes a branch in the True Vine obtains a possession without works, without merit of his own; but, having become a branch, it is required of him that he should bring forth fruit. Did not our Lord explain this matter, saying, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away (cuts it off from fellowship in the Vine); and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:1,2.) So our justification was through faith a free gift from God through Christ Jesus our Lord; but from the moment of our sanctification it has been our privilege to bring forth fruit and to labor while it is called today and to be servants and ambassadors of God...

There is, therefore, according to the Scriptures, in God's sight a labor, a work, a sacrifice, possible for the Church and a merit in the faithful performance thereof. Of

our Lord Jesus it is written, "A body hast thou prepared me" for the suffering of death." (Heb. 10:5)... The Body of Jesus, specially prepared for the sacrifice, was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. Our bodies are made holy and acceptable to God, not actually, nor by a covenant, nor by a mediator, but by a Redeemer, "through faith in his blood."

The merit in our Lord was that of the willing mind, the obedient heart which delighted to do the Father's will, in the perfect body in which it was tested to "obedience even unto death, even to the death of the cross." With us also, the thing that is meritorious in the sight of the Father is the willing mind, the obedient heart, though in an imperfect body, reckoned perfect through faith in the precious blood. We are assured that our trial, our testing, will not be according to our flesh, but according to our renewed wills, minds, hearts."

R3165 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

--EPH. 2:1-10.--MARCH 22.--

Golden Text--"By grace are ye saved through faith."--Eph. 2:8.

IT WAS from his Roman prison that the Apostle Paul wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians, one of the most beautiful of all his letters to the churches; full of deep spiritual instruction. Its keynote is "in Christ," this expression, or its equivalents, occurring at least twenty times in this Epistle. As the first chapter points out that the Church is *chosen in Christ Jesus*, so our lesson shows that we have life in Christ alone; and, subsequently, the Epistle shows that all of God's blessings and favors toward his people are solely upon consideration that they are *in Christ Jesus* --members of the body of Christ, members of the New Creation. None can get clear-cut, distinct appreciation of the Apostle's meaning except those who clearly differentiate between the Church and the world, and discern their different hopes, built upon different promises; and perceive that in God's plan only the Church is being dealt with at the present time--that the world's hope is future, and very different from that of the Church, now being called as the body of Christ, "members in particular."

Our lesson opens with a dark picture, delineating the condition of the whole world through the fall; a condition of sin and worldliness under the power of Satan; in disobedience to God, under divine sentence of death, which has already operated to the extent of corruption in matters moral, mental and physical. The whole world, although creatures of God, and thus in a general sense his offspring, or children, ceased to be children of his favor, and became "children of wrath," through sin. The Apostle points out to the Ephesians that this had once been their wretched and terrible condition in common with the rest of mankind. How true is the picture even today! But let it be remembered that this is not merely the picture of the villains and outlaws of the world, but a picture of the world as a whole, including its very best representatives. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." All are "children of wrath"; all are more or less under the power and control of the great Adversary; all are more or less controlled by the spirit of disobedience common to the whole world of mankind.

The only exceptions to this rule are the few who, like those addressed at Ephesus, have escaped this bondage, this corruption, this death state, this condition of alienation from God;--and surely these are few today, as they were in all but a "little flock" in the days of the Lord and at the time the Apostle wrote these words.

But the Apostle passes on to note what a great change came to the saints at Ephesus, on their acceptance of the Gospel; and how glad we are that a similar change has come to all who have become the Lord's saints, from that day to the present time! The experience of passing from death to life is the same in every instance, although the circumstances connected with the transformation may vary considerably. The steps of grace by which the Lord delivered us from being children of wrath and under power of the Adversary are set forth by the Apostle in the succeeding verses. Let us trace these steps, and note to what extent we have taken them, and to what extent our experiences correspond to those which the Apostle delineates.

Our recovery did not begin with something in ourselves, --good resolutions, good works, etc. We did not improve ourselves, and thus commend ourselves to God: on the contrary, God was the prime mover in our release and recovery. He was inspired to give us aid by the benevolence of his character, for he is "rich in mercy." He is rich in all of his attributes, rich in wisdom, rich in justice, rich in power, rich in love; but it is with the attribute of love and its corresponding benevolence, or mercy that the Apostle is here dealing. How necessary it is for us to get this thought of God's richness of mercy well rooted and grounded in our hearts--that we may never doubt his generosity, his kindness, his sympathy, his mercy toward all those who desire and seek to know and to do his will! We need great faith in our heavenly Father, and it is only as we come to a clear knowledge of his glorious plan through the Word that we can exercise such a confidence in his love and mercy. The Adversary evidently desires that we should misunderstand our Creator, and, hence, has in every way possible sought to misrepresent his character and his plan;--and so successfully has he done so that at this very moment 999 out of every 1000 of those who profess his name are moved by fear of an eternity of torture, rather than by love for him and appreciation of his love for them.

The Apostle assures us that God had great love for us, even when we were dead in sins--when we were corrupt. It is difficult for us to think of God's greatness, purity and splendor of character, and of man's fallen condition--his corruption, mental, moral and physical--and then to understand how the holy Jehovah could have love

for his fallen creatures. We may be sure that it was not the love of affection, such as he has for us now, as his sons, newly begotten of the spirit, but merely the love of sympathy. He beheld our miserable condition, and realized that an offer of release from our corruption, and of return to holiness and harmony with himself, would be joyfully appreciated and accepted by some--let us hope, by many;--and it was, undoubtedly, in view of such a response to his goodness and mercy that our Creator opened up for the world of mankind "a new way of life," in and through the Lord Jesus and his redemptive work.

But although this sympathetic love was toward the whole world, it has not yet been made generally known--it has not yet been practically exercised toward the world, but only toward a comparatively small proportion of the whole. Here and there the message has been sent to a special class--to those who have "an ear to hear"--the remainder being left for the present, to be dealt with later. (Isa. 35:5.) It is to those who had the "ear to hear", and who hearing, have responded and laid hold upon the grace of God in Christ, that the Apostle is now writing. He calls attention to the blessing of such an experience. He does not here differentiate between those who have taken merely the first step of faith and obedience unto *justification*, and those who have gone on and taken also the second step of *full consecration* to the Lord, "even unto death"; but addresses the latter class only --those who, having made a full consecration to the Lord of their justified selves, have been begotten of the spirit, quickened and energized by that spirit as members of the body of Christ. The Apostle here interjects in parenthesis (2:5) a reminder that all this blessing has come to us, not of our worthiness, nor of our work, but by divine "grace are ye saved"; we reached this position in the new life, this reckoned saved position, by faith;--delivered from the sentence of sin, saved from the darkness and delusion of the Adversary,* saved from the wrath of God, and brought, instead, into his loving favor. Oh, how great is the salvation which accompanies a complete conversion and full consecration to the Lord! What a wonderful change it brings to us, in thought, in word and in act! And yet this is only the beginning of our salvation, or what the Apostle elsewhere speaks of as being "saved by *hope*." (Rom. 8:24.) While thus saved by grace now, we are still waiting for a further salvation, by grace--"for the grace [salvation] that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"--the First Resurrection.

All that, by the Lord's grace, we shall ultimately have through the "change" of the resurrection as members of the body of Christ--all the heavenly things, including full fellowship and communion with the Father and with our Lord--are reckoned as having their beginning in the present life. He, therefore, who knows not such a beginning of the new life, and its holy spirit now, has no reason whatever to believe that he has been begotten of the holy spirit--that he is a new creature in Christ. These new creatures are reckoned as having been raised up out of the state of sin and death into a new condition of life, and love of righteousness. Symbolically, they are ushered into the Holy of the Tabernacle, where they have the light of the Golden Lampstand, and partake of the spiritual Shewbread, and may offer the spiritual Incense to God, and have fellowship with him "in Christ Jesus"--as members of the *Ecclesia*, "the Church which is *his body*." This is a figurative resurrection from the dead--a figure and earnest of the real resurrection from the dead which shall come to each of these if they prove loyal to God and faithful to their covenant as members of the body of Christ--to be dead with their Head, that they may also live with him, through participation in his

resurrection. --Rom. 6:5,8.

Counting the new life as beginning now--counting ourselves as members of the New Creation, which by and by is to be glorified, we ask ourselves with the Apostle, What great thing must God work, then, in us and for us, eventually, if present foretastes of his goodness and grace are so superlatively grand? The Apostle answers such a query (vs. 7) assuring us that "in the ages to come God will show forth the *exceeding riches* of his grace through [in] his kindness toward us [who are] in Christ Jesus." He does not attempt to tell us what these riches will amount to. He would have us see that God is rich in mercy, rich in grace, and rich in every other grand and estimable quality, and he would have us trust that so rich a Father will do for his adopted children "exceeding abundantly more than we could ask or think." Indeed, he assures us elsewhere that it is impossible for him to explain or for us to comprehend "the riches of our inheritance." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of *man* the things which God hath prepared for them that loved him; but God hath revealed them unto *us* by his spirit."--1 Cor. 2:9,10; Eph. 3:19.

Nevertheless, the revelation by his spirit is only an approximate one. We cannot clearly discern those unseen things, we cannot comprehend them with our finite natural minds. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be;" but with the new mind we can, even though but vaguely, grasp the thought of our Heavenly Father's riches of grace and love, and can draw analogies from the things of this present life, and thus gain some idea of the glorious things which await us. As we see our heavenly Father's provision for the natural man,--a little lower than the angels,--as we look at the beautiful flowers of earth, and taste of its delicious fruits, it is but another step for the consecrated heart to realize that the rich Father who planned so beneficently for his human sons, and who permits so many of these blessings to come to mankind, even in its fallen condition, is no less rich in love and mercy toward his spiritual sons, and will make abundant provision for them also. And that as he has provided harmonies of music for the natural ear, and pleasant odors and flavors and scenes for the senses of the natural man, so, only on a more exalted plane, there will be gratifications for all the high qualities of heart and of mind for the New Creation;--there will be what will correspond to the present beauties of nature, but higher and grander, for those who shall gain the new nature. There will be that which will correspond to the flowers and the birds, the fields and the trees, the mountains and the valleys. There will be that which will correspond to the most delightful gratifications of the eye, the ear, the nose and the mouth, and to the most pleasurable thrills of the heart. Thus does faith, based upon a knowledge of the riches of grace and love in our heavenly Father, enable the new creature to see the things invisible and to rejoice in the wonderful things only partially disclosed at the present time.

From this exalted position and favor and fellowship with God, associated in the heavenlies in Christ, we are enabled by faith to rejoice in those promises of our Father's Word, which assure us that we shall be permitted to cooperate with him in the great work of the next age, the Millennial Age, in showing forth his praises, in lifting up so many as will of the world of mankind out of their present fallen condition,--up to full restitution of that which was lost in Adam and redeemed by Christ.

We notice (vss. 8-10) how carefully the Apostle seeks to guard us against the thought that any of these blessings have come to us on account of our own merit. He reiterates, "By grace are ye saved through faith." And if by grace, no longer of works, as he elsewhere points out. (Rom. 11:6.) If of works it would not be of grace. ⁽¹⁾ As members of the fallen race we were incapable of doing any work which our holy God could accept--we were dead, corrupted, foul, under condemnation as children of wrath, when he had mercy upon us, and opened up the way of life. Our present standing, therefore, as new creatures, is not the result of anything that the old creature did, or could have done. It is not of ourselves; it is a gift of God. This lesson must be thoroughly appreciated, else we will be continually in danger of falling. The grace is not of ourselves, certainly, and we

* The Apostle was a firm believer in a personal devil, and a Bible study of his teachings on this subject would be profitable to many of the Lord's people in the present time, when, through Christian Science and other deceptive teachings, the very existence of the Adversary is being denied, and thus many are the more exposed to his wiles and deceptions. Note the following references to Satan by the Apostles: Acts 13:10; 26:18; Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 5:5; 7:5; 2 Cor. 2:11; 11:14; Eph. 4:27; 6:11; 1 Thess. 2:18; 2 Thess. 2:9; 1 Tim. 1:20; 3:6,7; 5:15; 2 Tim. 2:26. Our Lord also frequently referred to the Adversary: Matt. 4:10; 12:26; 25:41; Mark 4:15; 8:33; Luke 10:18; 22:31; John 8:44; 14:30.

⁽¹⁾ Mar. 29 Manna, Eph. 2:8

may say also that although *we exercised* some faith at the beginning (else we could never have come to him at all, to accept his favors), yet the faith by which we were enabled to accomplish our consecration even unto death, and thus to become new creatures in Christ, was not of ourselves--we had no such faith when God laid hold upon us. He developed in us that faith by the revelations of his love, through his promises, through his Word.

If our present standing were the result of our own efforts or "works," there would probably be some room for boasting;--it would imply that we were not so fallen that we could not have lifted ourselves out of the miry clay of sin,--on the line of the Evolution Theory. But such theories are not recognized in the divine Word and must not be recognized by any who would maintain their standing as new creatures *in Christ*. On the contrary, so far from considering the New Creature as an evolution of the old creature, the Apostle would have us understand distinctly that it is a new and separate creation. We were created in Christ Jesus, God's workmanship--prepared for

good works, but not *by* good works.

The Apostle assures us that God foreordained that this New Creation should progress in good works. To become new creatures in Christ we gladly surrendered our all to the Lord, that we might know his will and do it; and having accepted us in Christ, he informs us that it is his good pleasure that our entire life should be renewed, that we should discard entirely from our hearts, our minds, our wills, everything sinful, everything unholy, and that so far as possible our mortal bodies should be brought into subjection to our new minds, and that we should walk in newness of life, even on this side the veil--thus giving evidence of our sincerity, developing character and becoming meet "for the inheritance of the saints in light," in glory. Whoever is not disposed to walk in the Lord's ways of holiness and opposition to sin, and in cultivation of the mind, the spirit of the Lord, the holy spirit, surely deceives himself, if he thinks he has passed from death unto life, and that he is a new creature in Christ Jesus.

R4377 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

"YOU HATH HE QUICKENED"

--JAMES 2:14-26.--MAY 30.--

Golden Text:--"Faith without works is dead."--V. 20.

MANY have supposed doctrinal conflict between St. Paul and St. James, the former holding *faith* as the important feature of Christianity, the latter insisting that *works* take precedence. More or less this conflict of thought has come down the ages and is with us to-day. We hold that there was no such conflict between the Apostles, and that the subject, rightly understood to-day, leaves no room for disputation. St. Paul insists that the Law Covenant was a Covenant of works, and that none could be justified under it, because none could do perfect works, and that, therefore, all Jews were under condemnation. He points out that the original Abrahamic Covenant was better and superior to the Law Covenant, because its provisions did not require perfect works, impossible to the fallen man, but instead tested him along another line--the line of his *faith*. St. Paul did not mean, and did not say, that works were valueless in God's sight; but, realizing that the Jews, trusting in their special Law Covenant, already laid more stress upon works than upon faith, he pressed upon their attention the fact that with Spiritual Israelites of the Isaac class, heirs of the original Sarah Covenant, faith must be regarded as the standard. Under it whoever would attain the proper kind of faith would be acceptable to God. That Covenant does not declare for faith without works, but it does indicate a proper development of faith as necessary--something beyond the initial belief that "God is and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him."--Heb. 11:6.

Faith is a matter of steps and development; and only the developed faith could possibly bring to us the blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant. This would imply *works*, to the extent that they would be possible, as in attestation of the *faith*. Nevertheless, none of us can be justified by works, because our best works are imperfect. Our judgment, our test, in its last analysis is, "According to thy *faith* be it unto thee." (Matt. 9:29.) St. James possibly noticed a tendency in some to go to the opposite extreme in the matter of faith, and to ignore works entirely. He does not claim that any could do works that would justify them before God, but merely insists that if the right kind of faith be developed in the heart it will surely bear fruit and make an outward manifestation, according to circumstances. Undoubtedly this is a sound position and one fully in accord with our Lord's words, "By their fruits ye shall know them." --Matt. 7:16.

Coming to an orchard filled with fruit, we may quickly discern the various kinds of trees by their fruits. So with the Christian. If he professes faith in Christ we are willing to acknowledge him as a brother, but "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;" hence, we look for evidences of the Lord's Spirit, disposition, character, in all those who profess to be his "members," "brethren." (Rom. 8:9.) If we see little of the Lord's Spirit (disposition) we are inclined to next inquire how long the brother has known the Lord and professed consecration to him. We thus sometimes find "babes in Christ," who, for the time they have had a knowledge of him,

should be more developed and have a larger measure of his Spirit. We should be on guard against considering such, in any sense of the word, suitable teachers or exemplars.

On the contrary, we may very speedily discern the Spirit of Christ in some--their gentleness, meekness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. And if, as sometimes, these qualities be quickly developed in some who have only recently come to a knowledge of the Truth, we may the more rejoice with the fruit-bearer. However young in years, the fruit-bearing quality, the heart development, would indicate such to be possibly one of the "Elder" brethren--even though, because a novice, the Church may not yet consider it due time to advance him formally to an official position as an "Elder."

THE BEGETTING, THEN THE QUICKENING

In other words, the teachings of St. Paul and St. James may be fully harmonized by remembering the words of the former, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1.) After the sinner, dead in trespasses and under condemnation, has, by the grace of God, heard of Christ and has accepted his share of the redemptive work by *faith*, he is "justified by faith," before he has had any time to bring forth works or fruitage of any kind. Then if, following the Lord's leading and instruction, he presented himself a living sacrifice to the Lord to take up his cross and follow in the footsteps of Jesus, the acceptance of his sacrifice by the Father meant his begetting to a new nature--to the spirit plane as a "New Creature." If the begetting spirit be not lost, if it do not die, a transformation work will progress. By and by a *quicken*ing or activity will result from the indwelling of the holy Spirit in the mortal body. If this process continues, ultimately the "New Creature" will be perfected and ready for birth on the spirit plane--by resurrection. Thus our Lord in his resurrection was the First-Born of many brethren, and we, his brethren, will be "born from the dead" in due time, if faithful. But if the spark of life perish, we become castaways and will experience no resurrection birth.

From this standpoint we are ready to discern that the beginning of God's leading with us is along the lines of *faith*, and that it is to our *faith* that the promises of God appeal, and that by these "exceeding great and precious promises," touching our faith, energizing our faith, God works in us, first to will, and later to do, his good pleasure. To *will* to do right is of primary importance and is wholly of faith. The doing, which results from this faith, is God's operation through it and corresponds to the "quickening" of the natural birth. The period of the quickening may come sooner or later, but the strength, the vigor, of the unborn infant is usually estimated by the degree of quickening manifested. And so it is with the Christian. When his faith shall have developed sufficiently, the degree of his activity in obedience to God in the service of the Truth and righteousness and the brethren will indicate the strength or the weakness of his spiritual development.

Self-examination along this line is very proper. If we have heard, seen, tasted, of the grace of God and enjoyed it, and if no desire to serve our gracious Father or to assist others to the same blessings that we enjoy has been manifested, it implies that our spiritual vitality is very weak and in danger of perishing. But if, on the contrary, we find ourselves burning with fervency of love for the Lord, and with appreciation of his great Plan of Salvation, and are consumed with a desire to tell the good tidings to others for their blessing, strengthening, upbuilding and participation in the Divine faith, it should encourage us. We should notice, too, that Jesus specially loved and favored the more zealous, vigorous and energetic of the apostles, Peter, James, John, and, we may be sure, Paul also.

BE YE WARMED AND FILLED

St. James presses his point and endeavors to awaken some who have a measure of *faith*, but who have not gone on to the *quicken*ing degree. He asks what profit there would be for us to say that we have faith if we do not have works to correspond--to attest the faith, however imperfect the works would be. He asks (R. V.), "Can that faith save him?" We answer, No. As St. Paul declares, It is the *faith that works* by love that counts. But it is the faith that counts, and not the works; because the faith can be perfect, complete; but perfection of works is impossible to us, because we have this treasure of the New Nature in an earthen vessel.

Illustrating this point he suggests that to tell a poor brother of our faith that God will help him and to send him away without relief, when it is within our power to relieve him, would not be such a faith as God would approve. It would rather signify that we had deceived our own selves. It would profit us nothing. So faith that has no works, of any kind or degree, cannot be called a living faith, because, as yet, it has given no evidence of life--it has shown no quickening.

St. James clearly attests his thought, saying, "A man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." Again he points to the special feature of the Jewish faith in one God in contrast with the beliefs of the heathen in many gods. He says to the Jewish brethren, "You boast in having knowledge of the one living and true God, but surely this is not the extent of your faith in this direction; because the devils believe and tremble. Oh, foolish man, faith without works is barren. It can never bring you life, birth." A faith that will not develop obedience, in harmony with ability, is, therefore, unavailing during this Gospel Age, even as imperfect works failed to justify to life under the Law Covenant.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF FAITH AND WORKS

Note the case of Abraham, the "father of the faithful." It is written that he believed God, and that his *faith* was counted to him for righteousness. But how much faith is required and to what extent is it involved in works? St. James points out that God placed a crucial test upon Abraham's *faith*, which would have proven it inefficient, if it had not developed to the quickened stage of *works* of obedience. It was years after the promise had been made, and Isaac, the seed of promise, was grown to young manhood, when God commanded that he should be sacrificed upon the altar--thus prefiguring how The Christ, the true Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29), must all have the testing of faith to the point of obedience, even unto death--sacrificial death.

Then, fearful that he had given an example of so lofty a faith and obedience as would discourage us, St. James picks out and holds up before us another illustration of faith and works--that of Rahab the harlot. She had *faith* in God, but it would not have availed her if it had not developed to the degree of activity and helpful service, risking her own interests temporarily for the assistance of the spies. Manifestly she would never have had such works without faith--and it is the *faith* that is specially pleasing to the Lord. But the faith would not have been pleasing to the Lord, had it not led up to works

in accord. Thus we see how *works* have to do with our justification, in conjunction with our *faith*, which is the foundation of our works.

THE BODY WITHOUT THE SPIRIT

St. James summarizes this thought, saying, "As the body without the spirit of life is dead, even so faith without works is dead." Some might think that the writer of these words had erred in likening the body to faith and the spirit of life to works, supposing that the illustration should be reversed, namely, to compare the body to works and the spirit of life to faith. But St. James has expressed the matter properly. A body must be had before any spirit of life could come into it. So a *faith* must exist before it can be quickened into activity. But the quickening is absolutely necessary ere we could have our birth of the spirit in the First Resurrection.

Notwithstanding all that we have written on this subject, especially in *Studies*, Vol. VI., some of the dear friends occasionally write us in perplexity, desirous of knowing what course they should pursue, in respect to brethren (and sometimes prominent brethren) whose works do not correspond with their professions of faith. For instance, a letter recently received noted the fact that one prominent in the Truth at whose residence the meetings were usually held, has a weakness for intoxicating liquors. They feared that if the meetings were removed from his home he would not attend them elsewhere. They desired to know the Lord's will respecting their course of action.

We were glad to note their love for the brother and also their solicitation for the Truth, lest his weakness might bring the cause of Christ to a measure of dishonor. We advised that the erring one be still treated as a brother, for his weakness may be of heredity and much against his own will; but we also advised that one thus weak should not in any sense of the word be set forth to the world as a prominent representative of the Truth; that so doing would dishonor the Truth and also be injurious to the brother, who might come to feel that his weakness was conceded by the brethren to be justifiable, and thus encouraged he might fail to put forth the necessary energy--fail to allow his *faith* to work in him, to rule him, to control his mortal flesh, as the Scriptures require.

With full sympathy and brotherly love it is our belief that the brother is not being helped by the course pursued; that it would be better for him if the dear friends would give him loving reproofs and remove the meeting from his home. If he has any of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of meekness and love of the brethren, such a course would be a most helpful reproof, setting before him, and before all, the high standards of Christian deportment. Is it claimed that this might lead him to antagonize the Truth? We answer that the Scriptures forewarn us that our Gospel is a "savor of life unto life, and of death unto death." (2 Cor. 2:16.) Our whole responsibility is in doing the Lord's will in the kindest, most gentle, most loving manner possible, yet with that force and positiveness which will impress a lesson upon those who are amenable to our influence and the influence of the Lord through us.

We have just received a letter from a dear Sister who has been connected with and deeply interested in the Truth for years. She writes us that she is only now awakening to a realization of the wonderful privileges that are hers in connection with the Harvest work, and of "showing forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." This dear Sister is only now becoming thoroughly *quicken*ed, energized with the Truth. The good features to result may be expected, not only in the bringing of others into a knowledge of the Truth, but also a bringing of her own heart into full harmony with the Lord and to greater character likeness to him, in the manifestation of the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. This quickening came in conjunction with the endeavors of the Sister to live up to all the various features of The Vow. We hope to hear from others similarly blessed and energized to good works for the Lord, the brethren and the Truth.

R1720 "Faith, to be a conquering power in us, must go deeper than the head: it must go into the heart, and thus permeate and energize the whole being, bringing not only the outward conduct but every thought into subjection to Christ. Then indeed will faith impel to action, to works which clearly manifest it; for "faith without works is dead."