

November 10

Love....rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth. 1 Corinthians 13:6

ARE the principles of right and wrong so firmly fixed in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with the right and so opposed to the wrong that I would not en-

LOVE REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY

R1330 "Love... rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth [has no pleasure in either hearing or telling evil tidings, or in evil of any kind, but delights in God's truth and in its fruitage of developed holiness]."

SM284 "He who has the spirit of love will have no satisfaction in the adversities coming upon those who are even his enemies; for "Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." He who has the spirit of love regulating his heart, his words, his thoughts, his actions, the Apostle declares will be ready to "bear all things" and ready to believe everything that is favorable and all that is possible of good, and will be disposed to hope always for the best outcome in respect to all with whom he may have to do. He will be ready also to "endure all things," to submit to many unkindnesses and to credit these largely to weakness or poor judgment or fallen nature."

F406-407 "Love "seeketh not that which is not her own"—does not covet the honors or wealth or fame of others, but delights to see them blessed, and would rather add to than detract from these blessings. Love "is not easily provoked," even to render just recompenses: remembering the present distress of the entire race through the fall, it is sympathetic rather than angry. Love "thinketh no evil"; it not only will not invent and imagine evil, but is so disposed to give the benefit of any doubt that "evil surmisings" are foreign to it. (Compare 1Tim. 6:4.) Love "rejoiceth not with iniquity, but rejoices with the Truth [rightness]": hence, it would delight to uncover and make known noble words or acts, but would take no pleasure in, but avoid, exposing ignoble words or deeds. Love "covereth all things," as with a mantle of sympathy—for nothing and nobody is perfect, so as to stand full inspection...

But if to tell uncomplimentary truth is to violate the Law of Love and the Golden Rule, what shall we say of the still more disreputable, still more unlovely, still more criminal habit...that of telling about others disreputable things not positively known to be the truth. Oh shame! shame! that any of the Lord's people should so overlook the Lord's instruction, "speak evil of no man"; and that any but the merest babes and novices in the Law of Love should so misunderstand its message—that any without the most indubitable proofs at the mouth of two or three witnesses, and then reluctantly, should even believe evil of a brother or a neighbor, much less to repeat it—to slander him upon suspicion or hearsay evidence!"

BUT REJOICETH IN THE TRUTH

R4919 "Have I the Love that is sincere, that "rejoiceth not in iniquity [in-equity], but rejoiceth in the Truth"?..."

The Love of God...is based upon fixed principles which should, *day by day*, be

courage the wrong, but must condemn it, even if it brought advantage to me? Am I so in accord with right, with truth, that I could not avoid rejoicing in the Truth and in its prosperity, even to the upsetting of some of my preconceived opinions, or to the disadvantage of some of my earthly interests?

more distinctly discerned and always *firmly adhered* to at any cost. However profitable error might be, Love could take no part in it and could not desire the reward of evil. But it does take pleasure in the Truth—truth upon every subject, and especially in the Truth of Divine revelation, however unpopular the Truth may be; however much persecution its advocacy may involve; however much it may cost the loss of the friendship of this world and of those who are blinded by the god of this world. The spirit of Love has such an affinity for the Truth that it rejoices to share loss, persecution, distress or whatever may come against the Truth or its servants. In the Lord's estimate it is all the same whether we are ashamed of Him or ashamed of His Word; and of all such He declares that He will be ashamed when He comes to be glorified in His saints."

R753 "We are not to decide what is truth and what error by our prejudices and preferences, but by the Word; not by our general impression as to what the Word teaches, nor by a fragment of it imperfectly remembered, but by a careful examination of the text and context.

Any teacher who does not cite the text upon which he bases an argument claimed to be scriptural, is unworthy the name of teacher or expounder, and his products are unworthy of study. Those who do quote should be carefully examined, not only to ascertain that the Word of God is handled honestly and fairly, but also to impress the truth, upon the reader's heart.

Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity (Psa. 133:1); but truth and error, light and darkness are *not brethren*, they are implacable and everlasting foes, and have been ever since error was born—for truth is eternal. And while the children of light and truth must from their very nature, love and sympathize with men as members of a common race, and whensoever they can may do them good, yet they should not sympathize in their course of error with those who have become children of darkness and whose influence is opposed to the truth. Hence, though we would not injure a hair of their heads, and would not even attempt to restrain their liberty in presenting error (because the time for *binding* evil has not yet fully come), yet we should be bold for the truth; we *must not shun* to declare the truth and show the error, else we are unworthy a place or name among those called "the children of the light."

And this is the course marked out as the true path of love. Love to God is above all, and love to God's word Jesus puts next (Mark 8:38). The apostle claims that true love not only "rejoiceth in the truth," but it "*rejoiceth not in iniquity*." (1 Cor. 13:6). He teaches that those exercised by true love should "have *no fellowship* with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather REPROVE them." Eph. 5:8 and 11."

The love of God, which the apostle is here describing as the spirit of the Lord's people, is a love which is far above selfishness, and is based upon fixed principles which should, day by day, be more and more distinctly discerned, and always firmly adhered to at any cost. Z. '03-57 R3151:3

(Rom 12:9 KJV) "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."

(Prov 17:15 KJV) "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD."

R4895 "*Let love be without dissimulation.*" St. Paul had already explained the necessity for love, but now he puts us on guard against a merely feigned love, which would only outwardly appear kind and polite. The true spirit of love, the holy spirit, will not be a dissimulating one, a hypocritical one; the love will be genuine, heart-felt, as well as mouth-expressed. This love is to be toward God and toward all, in proportion as they are God-like, or striving to be so. It is to be a love of that which is good, right, pure, true.

"*Abhor that which is evil.*" We are not merely to *avoid doing* that which is evil, not merely to have no love or affinity for evil, but more than these, we are to *hate*, to *abhor* evil. As the love for God and for all things true and pure and making for righteousness is to be cultivated, so the abhorrence of sin and impurity of every kind is to be cultivated. Thus, the stronger we become in Christian character the more intense will become our love for the good, the pure and the true; and the more intense will be our opposition to the untrue, the impure, the sinful. The more we learn of the beautiful harmonies of this heavenly grace of love, and the more they become the melodies of our own hearts, the more distressing and repugnant and abhorrent will sin and selfishness, "the spirit of the world," be to us; just as discords in music grate upon our ears in proportion to our knowledge and appreciation of musical harmonies.

As holiness and sin are opposites, so our feeling toward these must be represented by the sentiments of love and hatred. To grow cool in love for righteousness is to lose some of the abhorrence for sin. Let us, therefore, cultivate in ourselves hatred for sin, selfishness, impurity and every evil way, that we may find it the easier to cultivate in our hearts the beautiful graces of the Spirit.

Only in our *minds* have the old things passed away and all things become new. Actually, this change will be accomplished when we become spirit beings. Meantime, if we shall be counted worthy of a place in the First Resurrection, it is required of us that we shall demonstrate our willingness of mind, our earnest desire, to be all that the Lord would have us be. In no way can this be better demonstrated to the Lord or prove more helpful to ourselves than in keeping a strict surveillance of our hearts and of our thoughts."

R4894 "The new will must regulate what we shall eat, what we shall wear; in fact, it must be the ruling power over everything after we have become New Creatures, begotten of the Holy Spirit; for we have elect-

ed a new Head. The change of headship is an instantaneous work. There was a time when we were on the other side of the question. Finally we decided to come on the Lord's side, and accepted Him as our Head. At the moment we accepted the change the will of the flesh was put out of control and the new will installed in power. Then we became New Creatures. But we were undeveloped in character...

It gradually makes change after change, and thus the renewing work, the transforming work, goes on, the new mind gaining more control and bringing the thoughts, words and deeds under the supervision and direction of the Lord. As we come to know God better, we come to see His will better. More and more we come to see things from the Divine viewpoint and to regulate every word and every act of our life therefrom.

Through knowledge, as well as in knowledge, the New Creature is renewed or refreshed, built up, made strong. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. What the old mind had was the wisdom of this world. What the New Creature receives is the wisdom of God. The development of the different powers of the new Mind is a gradual work, dependent upon knowledge. With the new will the knowledge becomes the energizing and strengthening power, and finds opportunities by which the New Creature can accomplish its purpose. This knowledge is that which cometh from above. It is not merely the knowing how many chapters there are in the Bible, nor how many verses there are in the Bible and being able to quote them; but by the various providences of God in life, it is to come to such a knowledge of God that it is sufficient for His will to be made clear to us, to insure obedience. Our knowledge is increased in proportion as we give heed to the things which God has spoken; in proportion as we set our affections on things above and not on things on the earth."

R2202 "THE SUM OF ALL GRACES..."

In the Christian, an outward manifestation of patience, meekness, etc., is not sufficient either in God's sight or in his own sight. These graces of the spirit must be produced by the spirit of Love, filling and expanding within his own heart...

A naturally rough, uncouth, depraved disposition may require a long time, after the grace of divine Love enters the heart, before that grace is manifest in all the words and thoughts and acts of the outward man. Others, on the contrary, of more gentle birth and cultured training, may without the grace of God within have many of the outward refinements. None but he that readeth the heart is competent therefore to judge as to who have and who have not received this grace, and of the degree of its development in their hearts: but each one may judge for himself, and each one begotten by this holy spirit, Love, should seek to let its light so shine out, through all the avenues of communication with his fellow-creatures, as to glorify our Father in heaven and "show forth the glories of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Perfect Love is patient with the weaknesses and imperfections of those who give any evidence of good intentions. More than this, it is patient even with those who are out of the way, and that oppose themselves to righteousness, realizing that the whole

world is more or less under the influence of the great adversary who, as the Apostle declares, blinds the minds of the masses. This manifestation of Love was very prominent in our Lord Jesus: how patient was he with his opponents. Let us heed the Apostle's words:-- "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied [in well-doing and patience] and faint in your minds."--Heb. 12:3.

Perfect Love is kind in its methods. It not only seeks to do good to others, but seeks to do it in the kindest possible manner. And who has not discovered that the manner and tone have much to do with every affair of life. In proportion as perfect Love is attained the effort of the heart will be to have every word and act, like the thought which prompts them, full of kindness. It is well to remember the motto of the old Quaker,--"I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it, nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

Perfect Love is generous and has no place for envy, which, on the contrary, springs from a perverted nature -- from selfishness. Love on the contrary rejoices with them that rejoice, in the prosperity of every good work and word...

Perfect Love is humble--"vaunteth not itself." It does not sound a trumpet before it. Its good deeds are not done to be seen of men, but would be done just the same if no one saw or knew but God only...

Perfect Love is courteous--"doth not behave itself unseemly"... The one secret of politeness is to love. A gentleman is one who does things gently, with love."

Perfect Love is unselfish--"seeketh not her own" interests, exclusively... In bargaining they would have an interest also in the welfare of the one from whom they bought or to whom they sold. They would not wish to take advantage of a neighbor...

Perfect Love is good tempered--"not easily provoked" to anger. Among the evils abounding and very common to-day, is this one of ill-temper, fretfulness, bad humor, touchiness, quickness to take offence... Every heart filled with the Lord's spirit must oppose this disposition to evil in his flesh, and must wage a good warfare against it. It will not do to say, "It is my way;" for all the ways of the fallen nature are bad: it is the business of the new nature to overcome the old nature in this as well as other works of the flesh and the devil: and few show to our friends and households more than this the power of the grace of Love. This grace as it grows should make every child of God sweet tempered.

Perfect Love is guileless--"thinketh no evil." It seeks to interpret the conduct of others charitably. If pure and good intentioned itself, it prefers, and so far as possible endeavors, to view the words and conduct of others from the same standpoint. It does not treasure up animosities and suspicions, nor manufacture a chain of circumstantial proofs of evil intentions out of trivial affairs. Some one has wisely remarked that "faults are thick where love is thin." Love makes all possible allowance for errors of judgment, rather than to impugn the motives of the heart.

Perfect Love is sincere--"rejoiceth not in iniquity." It is grieved by evils wherever

encountered, sympathizes with all who fall into evil, or who are beset by temptations. In this respect Love prompts to an opposite course of action from that of Balaam, who "loved the reward of iniquity." Balaam, it will be remembered, feared the Lord, and as his prophet could not think of doing otherwise than according to the strict letter of the Lord's injunction; but he did not have the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of Love; and hence, when a reward was offered him if he would curse Israel, he was willing (in order to secure the reward) to conform to the evil proposition in spirit, in intention, while outwardly refraining from saying aught except as the Lord indicated. So, there are some amongst Christians who have a respect for the letter of the divine word through fear, but who lack the holy spirit of Love, and who by reason of a perverted love for wealth, etc., are willing to engage in various practices which come as near to the injury of the Lord's cause as is possible, without openly opposing him. Some of these Balaams are in the ministry and for the sake of salary, and the maintenance of their positions, and the friendship of wealthy Balaks, are willing to preach doctrines which they do not believe (respecting eternal torment, etc.), and in various ways to cast stumbling blocks before spiritual Israel. (Num. 22:7; 31:16; Rev. 2:14.) The Apostle mentions these Balaams as being specially represented by false teachers in the nominal Church.--See 2 Pet. 2:15; Jude 11; Rev. 2:14.

Every one who is seeking to develop in his heart the holy spirit, perfect love, should guard carefully this point of sincerity of motive as well as uprightness of conduct. The least suggestion of rejoicing at the fall of any person or thing that in any degree represents righteousness and goodness, is to be deplored and overcome. Perfect Love rejoiceth not in iniquity under any circumstances or conditions, and would have no sympathy but only sorrow in the fall of another, even if it should mean his own advancement.

Perfect Love "rejoiceth in the truth." However profitable error might be, Love could take no part in it, and could not desire the reward of evil. But it does take pleasure in the truth--truth upon every subject, and especially in the truth of divine revelation; however unpopular the truth may be; however much persecution its advocacy may involve; however much it may cause the loss of the friendship of this world and of those who are blinded by the god of this world. The spirit of Love has such an affinity for the truth that it rejoices to share loss, persecution, distress or whatever may come against the truth and its servants. In the Lord's estimate it is all the same whether we are ashamed of him or ashamed of his Word, and of all such he declares that he will be ashamed when he comes to be glorified in his saints.

Perfect Love "beareth all things." It is both willing and able to endure for the cause of God--reproaches, reproofs, insults, losses, misrepresentations and even death. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith"--the very center and life of which faith is the holy spirit of Love to the Lord and to them that are his, and sympathetically for the world...

Perfect Love "believeth all things." It is not suspicious, but on the contrary disposed to be trustful. It acts on the principle that it

is better if necessary to be deceived a hundred times, than to go through life soured by a distrustful suspicious mind--far better than to wrongly accuse or suspicion even one person unjustly. This is the merciful disposition as applied to thoughts, and of it the Master said, "Blessed are the merciful, they shall obtain mercy." The unmerciful, evil-thinking mind is father to unmerciful conduct toward others.

Perfect Love "hopeth all things." It is

not easily discouraged. This is the secret of Love's perseverance; having learned of God, and having become a partaker of his spirit of holiness, it trusts in him and hopes undismayed for the fulfilment of his gracious Covenant, however dark the immediate surroundings. This hopeful element of Love is one of the striking features in the perseverance of the saints, enabling them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Its hopeful quality hinders it from being easily offend-

ed, or easily stopped in the work of the Lord. Where others would be discouraged and put to flight, the spirit of Love gives endurance, that we may war a good warfare, and please the Captain of our salvation. Love's hopefulness knows no despair, for its anchorage enters into that which is beyond the veil, and is firmly fastened to the Rock of Ages."

R3150 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

"LOVE IS THE PRINCIPAL THING"

--1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13.--FEBRUARY 22.--

"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

IN THE preceding chapter the Apostle has recounted the various "gifts" of the holy spirit conferred upon the early Church for its establishment and development. He closes the chapter with the exhortation that while esteeming all of these gifts, each member of the Church should covet earnestly the superior ones; and then he adds, "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way"--something still better than any of those gifts of the holy spirit. Our lesson pertains to this more excellent ambition which should actuate every child of God; viz., the acquisition and development of the spirit of love, the spirit of the Lord. In proportion as we have the mind of Christ, in proportion as the holy spirit dwells in us and abounds, in that same proportion our love abounds.

There are different kinds of love, however, and the Apostle is here not speaking of general love, but of one particular kind, which belongs to God, and to the New Creation begotten of him. There is an animal love, such as the brute creation exercises toward its young, a love which frequently leads to the sacrifice of life in its devotion. This same kind of love inheres in the natural man, even in his fallen condition. It is all more or less selfish love,--ready, perhaps, at times to rob others that it might lavish good things upon those it favors. This is not the love which the Apostle describes, nor is he addressing his language to the natural man. He addresses the New Creation, informing them that the natural man will not be able to receive, to appreciate, to comply with, that which he presents. In order to a clear comprehension of this love, and a hearty acceptance of it as the rule of life, it is apparently necessary that we be "begotten" from above.

It seems impossible to describe love itself; the best we can do is to describe its conduct. Those who possess a love with such characteristics are able to appreciate it, but not able otherwise to explain it--it is of God, god-likeness in the heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts--supervising all the human attributes and seeking fully to control them.

Before describing the operation of love the Apostle impresses upon us its importance, assuring us that if we possess the very choicest of the "gifts" already explained, and do not have therewith love, we will still lack the evidence of our being New Creatures in Christ Jesus. We should be merely "sounding brass or cymbal" --making a noise, but having no acceptable feeling or virtue in ourselves in connection with our words. He assures us thus that ability to speak fluently on gospel themes, even, might not be a proof of our relationship to the Lord as New Creatures. The Apostle's declaration is introduced with an "if," which might be challenged, to a certain extent, by the assertion that no one could speak forth with power, with force, the gospel of God's dear Son unless he possessed the spirit of love. Although we have all met public speakers who could deliver very beautiful essays, we have generally perceived a hollowness in their teaching unless they spoke from the heart, prompted by love of the truth,--not by love of applause, nor for love of money.

Amongst the gifts, prophecy or oratory was one which the Apostle commended. Knowledge of mysteries of God is also commended, and large faith is reckoned amongst the chief of the Christian requirements; yet the Apostle declares that if he possessed all of these in their fullest measure, and love were absent, he would be nothing,--a mere cipher--not a member of the New Creation at all, since love is the very spirit of the begetting to the new nature. What a wonderful test this is! let us each apply it to himself. Whether I am something or nothing in God's estimation is to be measured by my love for him, for his brethren, for his cause, for the world in general, and even for my enemies, --rather than by my knowledge or fame or oratory. Yet we are not to understand that one could have a knowledge of the deep mysteries of God without having been begotten by the holy spirit of love; for the deep things of God knoweth no man, but by the spirit of God; but one might lose the spirit before losing the knowledge it brought him. In the measurement of charac-

ter, therefore, we are to put love first, and to consider it the chief test of our nearness and acceptance to the Lord.

The Apostle next takes another line of argument: his hearers already understood benevolence, alms-giving to the needy, to be commendable; and to impress upon them the importance of having love as the controlling principle of their hearts, the Apostle declares that if he should give all of his goods to feed the poor--keeping nothing back--and yet do this without proper love as the mainspring to the conduct, it would profit him nothing. He goes still further and declares, that even if he should become a martyr, and be burned at the stake, it would not bring him the blessed reward sought, unless that martyrdom were prompted, impelled, by love.

But it may be inquired, How could anyone practise such self-denial, such sacrifice, such faith, etc., and yet be without love? It is not our thought that they could practise these and be devoid of love; that there must be some measure of love. We understand the Apostle to make this strong statement of the case in order to show us that our almsgiving, our sacrifices, our knowledge, our teaching, are acceptable to the Lord and appreciated by him, only to the extent that they have love behind them. If love enters slightly into them, then they are slightly appreciated; if love enters largely into them, then God appreciates them largely. If they are prompted wholly by love, then God accepts them fully. If love be only a part of the motive power behind our conduct as New Creatures, it implies that other motives are active in us, tending to neutralize in the Lord's esteem even services and sacrifices performed in his name and upon worthy objects. Let us be on guard against these neutralizing influences, and earnestly seek to be whole-hearted, full of love;-- that our every service of the Lord and of the brethren and of the truth be from a pure heart, free from personal ambition, pride, etc.

Having given us such a conception of the importance of love, the Apostle proceeds to describe what it is and what it is not--how it operates, and how it does not operate or conduct itself. Let us each make a practical application of this matter to himself, and inquire within: Have I such a love, especially for the household of faith, as leads me to suffer considerable and for a long time, and yet to be kind? How quickly do I get offended? If very quickly it surely indicates that I have very little of the spirit of the Lord,--love. If I am disposed to resent the trifling wrongs of life,-- if I have the spirit of resentment, am disposed to render evil for evil, and railing for railing,--it marks my deficiency in this greatest of all the graces, so essential to my ultimate passing, as an overcomer, the divine inspection.

Of our heavenly Father it is said that "he is kind to the unthankful." Have I this spirit of kindness-- his spirit? Am I kind to my friends? gentle? courteous? Have I this mark of love pervading my actions and words and thoughts--that I think of and am considerate of others? that I feel and manifest kindness toward them in word, in look, in act? A Christian, above all others, should be kind, courteous, gentle, in his home, in his place of business, in the Church--everywhere. With the child of God this patience and kindness are not merely put on, as grapes might be tied to a thorn-bush, but, on the contrary, they are the *fruits* of the spirit--growths from or results of having come into fellowship with God, learned of him, received of his spirit of holiness, spirit of love.

Have I the love that envieth not, so that I can see others prosper and rejoice in their prosperity, even if for the time my own affairs be not so prosperous? This is generosity, the very opposite of jealousy and envy. The root of envy is selfishness: envy will not grow upon the root of love. Love envies not, but rejoices in the prosperity of all that is good.

Have I the love that vaunteth not itself?--the love that tends to humility, that is not boastful, not puffed up? Some one has truly said, that "love saves a man from making a fool of himself by consequential conduct, and by thrusting himself into positions which

betray his incompetence." Boasting--over self-esteem --has led many a man not only into folly, but sometimes into gross sins, in his endeavor to make good his boasts. The spirit of the Lord is a spirit of a sound mind, which not only seeks generously to esteem others, but also soberly to estimate oneself, and not to be puffed up.

Have I the love which does not behave itself unseemly --discourteously, impolitely? Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. The secret of politeness is either a surface polishing or love in the heart. As Christians we are to have the heart-love, which will prompt us to acts of kindness and courtesy, not only in the household of faith, but in our homes and in our dealings with the world.

Have I the love that seeketh not her own merely? --that might even be willing to let some of her own rights be sacrificed in the interests of others?--or have I the selfishness which not only demands my own rights on every occasion, but which demands those rights regardless of the convenience, comfort and rights of others? To have love in this particular means that we will be on guard against taking any unjust advantage of others, and to prefer rather to suffer a wrong than to do a wrong,--to suffer an injustice than to do injustice.

Have I the love which is not easily provoked? Indeed, the original omits the word "easily," and gives rather the thought that love does not become irritated, roused to anger. Love enables its possessor to see both sides of a question; it makes of him a veritable philosopher; it gives him the spirit of a sound mind. He perceives that exasperation and violent anger are unbecoming and worse than that, injurious, not only toward those against whom they may be directed, but injurious in their effect also upon his own heart and body. There may be times when love will need to be firm, almost to sternness and inflexibility, where principles are involved, where valuable lessons are to be inculcated; and this might come under the head of anger, using that word in a proper sense in regard to a righteous indignation, exercised *for a loving purpose*, for doing good--but then only for a time. If justly angry we should see to it that we sin not, even with our lips or in our hearts, in which at no time may we entertain any but loving and generous sentiments toward those who are our enemies, or toward those of our friends whom we would assist or instruct or correct.

To be easily provoked is to have a bad temper, to get worked up into a passion, where evil looks and evil words and angry sentiments are involved. This is wholly contrary to the spirit of love, and whoever is on the Lord's side and seeking to be pleasing to him and to attain to an overcomer's position should jealously guard himself against this general besetment of our day. Those begotten of the holy spirit should all be good tempered. In no way can we better show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light than by the exhibition of the spirit of love in the daily affairs of life.

Have I the spirit of love which thinketh no evil? --which is guileless, not suspicious of evil or looking for faults in others, or attributing to them evil motives? It is an old adage that "faults are thick where love is thin."

The Revised Version presents a slightly different thought here--"Taketh not account of evil"--does not charge up the wrong against the evil-doer, as if waiting for an apology or a restitution or an opportunity to "get even." But while love passes over offenses and takes no account of them, holding no grudges, this would not mean that love would necessarily treat evil-doers in precisely the same manner that it would treat its friends. It might be proper or necessary, even, to take some notice of the offenses to the extent of not manifesting the same cordiality as before, but no hatred, malice or strife should be manifested--nothing but kindness and gentleness, leaving the door of opportunity open for a full reconciliation as soon as possible; doing all that could be done to promote a reconciliation and evincing a willingness to forgive and forget the wrong.

Have I the love which rejoices not in iniquity (inequity) but rejoices in the truth? ⁽¹⁾Are the principles of right and wrong so firmly

fixed in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with the right and so opposed to the wrong that I would not encourage the right, but must condemn it, even if it brought advantage to me? Am I so in accord with right, with truth, that I could not avoid rejoicing in the truth and in its prosperity, even to the upsetting of some of my preconceived opinions, or to the disadvantage of some of my earthly interests? The love of God which the Apostle is here describing as the spirit of the Lord's people, is a love which is far above all selfishness, and is based upon fixed principles which should, day by day, be more and more distinctly discerned, and always firmly adhered to at any cost.

Have I the love that beareth all things?--that is impregnable against the assaults of evil? that resists evil, impurity, sin and everything contrary to love? Have I the love that believeth all things? that is unwilling to impute evil to another unless forced so to do, by indisputable evidences?--that would rather believe good than evil about everybody?--that would take no pleasure in hearing evil, but would be disposed to resent it? Have I the love that hopeth all things, that perseveres under unfavorable conditions, and continues to hope for and to labor for those who need my assistance? Have I the love that endureth all things?-- that is, that continues to hope for the best in regard to all and to strive for the best, and that with perseverance --not easily discouraged?

As disciples or pupils of Christ, we are in his school, and the great lesson which he is teaching us day by day, and the lesson which we must learn thoroughly if we would attain the mark of the prize of our high calling in all its various features and ramifications, is the lesson of Love. It takes hold upon and relates to all the words and thoughts and doings of our daily lives. As the poet has said,

"As every lovely hue is light,--
so every grace is love."

Next the Apostle points out that as love is the most excellent thing, so is it the most enduring. The gift of prophecy would pass away; the value and necessity for speaking with other tongues would cease; and all knowledge of the present time, imperfect as it is, must surely cease to be valuable when the perfections of the new dispensation are fully ushered in. The very best informed now know only in part; but when perfection shall be attained in the Kingdom, and under its ministration, all the partial and imperfect conditions of the present time will have been superseded, and only the one thing may surely be said to endure and be everlasting,--and that one thing is Love.

An illustration of the growth which we must expect as between the present knowledge and attainments and those of the future, is of the child and the growth to manhood. Another illustration is seeing obscurely in one of the old-time mirrors, which gave but imperfect reflections. With the perfections of the new condition we will see perfectly, know perfectly, understand perfectly. Just so the gifts which were in the early Church were very suitable to it, as fitted to its infantile condition; but as it would develop to maturity the value of those "gifts" would diminish, and they would be no more; but higher developments of divine favor were to be expected, faith, hope and love. All three of these the Church of God is to cultivate, and to esteem as *fruits* of the spirit, far above the *gifts* of the spirit,-- and the greatest of these three is Love.

Love also is the most enduring; for will not faith practically come to an end when we shall see and know thoroughly? And will not hope practically be at an end when we shall reach the fruition of all our hopes and be possessors of the fulness of our heavenly Father's promises? Love, however, will never fail, even as it had no beginning. God is love, and since he was without beginning, so love was without beginning; because it is his character, his disposition; and as he endureth forever, so love will endure forever. Whoever, therefore, learns thoroughly the lessons of this present time in the school of Christ, and thus becomes well stocked with this wonderful grace of love, lays up treasures which may be his to all eternity--a great blessing to himself and to all with whom he comes in contact now; and a blessing to the world to which he will be permitted to minister during the Millennium;--a blessing everlasting, because it is a seal of divine approval.

⁽¹⁾ Nov. 10 Manna, 1Cor. 13:6

R2481 The Col 3:14 bond: "Arrayed in these glorious qualities of heart, -- compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patient endurance, forbearance and forgiveness, -- he adds, "And *above* all these put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." Love is thus pictured as the "girdle" which binds and holds in place the folds of the robe of

Christ's righteousness, with its various graces. In other words, the Apostle would have us see that forbearance, meekness, patience, etc., must not be matters of courtesy merely, or matters of policy merely, but however much they might partake of these qualities at the beginning, the wearers will not be perfected in heart, not be fit for the king-

dom, until they have reached the place where these various graces of their wills, or intentions, are bound to them by the cords of love--love for the Lord, love for righteousness, love for the "brethren," and sympathetic love for the whole groaning creation. Love is indeed the bond of perfectness, the very spirit of the Lord."