

October 12

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. Matthew 6:28

OUR Lord calls attention to how such simple things in nature should be studied, be *considered*. The lessons to be learned in connection with all the affairs of life will be helpful to such as approach the study from

the right standpoint, of faith in the Creator, and a realization that He is necessarily the embodiment and representative of the very highest and very noblest qualities of which the human mind could conceive;-- that He is perfect in Justice, perfect in Wisdom, perfect in Power, perfect in Love....The heart that thus *considers* makes progress, grows

in grace, in knowledge, in love. The heart that fails to *consider* the little things fails to be able to appreciate the larger things, and thus is hindered from a proper consideration of God and from a proper appreciation of His plan, and thus from a proper appreciation of His character. Z.'04-37,38 R3313:2

R5219 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

TRAINING FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE KINGDOM

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow."--Matthew 6:28.

IN THE Sermon on the Mount, the Master is teaching His disciples certain important lessons. He is not teaching the world, but those who had come to Him, especially desiring to be taught, desiring to be His disciples. He points out to them that if they would be His disciples, thenceforth their main object in life would be to seek to become members of the Kingdom of God. He Himself is to be the great King; and an elect, choice number from the world are to be associated with Him in that Kingdom. When this election is completed, that Kingdom will be established. Then the blessing of all the world will follow under that Kingdom, in harmony with the promise made to Abraham, "In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

These, then, who aspire to be members of the Kingdom class should make this the chief aim and object of life: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"; that is to say, the righteousness necessary to attain a place in that Kingdom. And all things necessary are promised to be supplied to such aspirants and seekers. Our Lord did not promise rich clothing, fine houses, ease or luxury; nor could we suppose that these would be specially helpful.

Certain training is necessary for membership in the Kingdom. God, the great Husbandman in one picture, the great Overseer in another, would supervise the affairs of each member; and all things would be made to work together for their good. If they needed experience in trials, difficulties and privations, He would see to it that they got those experiences. If they were proud, they would get experiences that would humble them. If they were rude, they would have experiences that would make them polite. It is necessary for them to have these experiences; for if they did not learn at all, they would never get the inheritance to which they have become heirs.

LESSONS IN EVERY EXPERIENCE OF LIFE

The Master took note of the fact that the majority of people are full of the cares of this present life--what they shall eat, what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed. He saw that many of the poor were distressed, not knowing, perhaps, whence the next meal would come. If such were the Lord's people, they should exercise faith. If the Father permitted His children to be in these difficulties, He saw that there was some good lesson for them to learn. They were to seek to learn that lesson, and not to fret about their condition.

This did not mean that His followers were to be negligent, to care nothing about their appearance or about what they should eat. This is not the way to do; but while appreciating the beauties of nature, of dress, etc., they were to have faith in their Heavenly Father and to realize that the luxuries of life might not be the best for them. But they were to be content--knowing that all things would work out good to those who were rightly exercised.

This matter of taking anxious thought for food and clothing is not confined to the poor. Some of the middle class, as they rise to wealth, find themselves engrossed with the cares of this life, eating, drinking and dressing--saying to themselves, What shall I wear this time, or that time, etc.? Eating and drinking and dressing seem to be the engrossing thoughts of both rich and poor.

The Lord's people are to be content with such things as they have. They are to seek to provide things honest and decent. But honest and decent things are not extravagant things. The Lord's people are not to be inclined to use money in self-gratification. As they look about and see others of the Lord's children, they see that they must not take too many of these blessings for themselves, but that they should use their money with economy. They should use their

money as a part of their stewardship, and know that they are to give an *account* of it.

We are to seek first of all the interests of the Kingdom. If the interests of the Kingdom need money, we would feel guilty if we should use the Lord's consecrated money in self-gratification. Presumably this is the reason that the Lord has left the interests of the Kingdom in a condition of semi-poverty--in order that His people may forward the interests of that Kingdom. Our God is very rich. All the gold and silver are His, and the cattle on a thousand hills; and if it was for the interests of the Kingdom class, He would forward them money in abundance. Things are left as they are, then, that we may practise economy, may have an opportunity of denying ourselves present blessings for the interests of the Kingdom.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE LILIES

In this connection, our text comes in, illustrating the thought by the lily of the field. Indigenous to the soil, it has those things provided which are necessary for its development. The Lord did not choose a hot-house plant, dependent upon the horticulturist, but He chose a flower from the field. That flower grows under those conditions because the great Protector has arranged for its interest.

This does not mean for the plant to be idle; for if it were idle, it would die. The bulb is continually sending up nourishment to its stalks. It is not idle by any means. But does the plant do this by worrying? No. It merely uses the opportunities that come to it. It merely exercises its functions by the laws of its nature.

God makes provision for the lily in its native soil; and as it grows in its beauty, "even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." So is it to be with God's children. When the Father begets us as His children and we are placed under present conditions, we may be sure that He who so placed us made the necessary arrangements for us; that He is not unwise; that He has not put us in conditions that are unfavorable for us. They are all of Divine arrangement.

If we move ourselves out of these conditions, we may be responsible in some degree, but as long as we exercise no will of our own to take ourselves out of His providential care, we may be sure that all things will be overruled to work for good to us. If we then seek to adorn ourselves with all the graces of the Holy Spirit, and if we use the opportunities that are in our immediate grasp, we shall be using the means for our own development.

The lily has a right to use everything within its power for its own nourishment. So it is our right and our duty to use the means within our power for beautifying our characters and for our spiritual nourishment, knowing that He who began the good work in us is able to complete it unto the Day of Jesus Christ.

DEVOUT CONTEMPLATION OF THE DIVINE CHARACTER HELPFUL

^[2]Our Lord calls attention to how such simple things in nature should be studied, be considered. The lessons to be learned in connection with all the affairs of life will be helpful to such as approach the study from the right standpoint of faith in the Creator, and a realization that He is necessarily the embodiment and representative of the very highest and very noblest qualities of which the human mind could conceive--perfect in Justice, perfect in Wisdom, perfect in Power, perfect in Love.

^[2] Same as Oct. 12 Manna

The heart that thus considers, makes progress, grows in grace, in knowledge, in love. The heart that fails to consider the little things, is hindered from a proper consideration of God and from a

proper appreciation of His Plan, and thus from a proper appreciation of His Character.

R5874 LESSON OF THE LILIES "*Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.*"--Matthew 6:28.

FEAR and anxiety are amongst the most serious foes of our human family. They wear upon the gray matter of the brain; they produce nervous exhaustion and are very injurious to health. For those who would seek to walk in the Divine path which God has marked out for the Gospel Church, fear and anxiety are special hindrances. The Savior had this fact in mind when he spoke thus to His disciples. He would have His followers to be without worry, to be restful of heart. But He would not have them be without carefulness. There is a carefulness which is entirely proper, yea, necessary, on our part, but not this extreme worry--this inability to enjoy the blessings of the present moment because of thoughts, fears, respecting tomorrow. When the Apostle said (Philippians 4:6), "Be careful for nothing," he was not referring to a proper care and sense of responsibility, but to an anxiety which would rob the soul of rest and peace, and which would indicate a lack of faith in the Lord and in His care for His people. The word rendered "careful" here is from a Greek word meaning *over anxious*.

In giving a forceful lesson to His disciples on trustfulness in God, the Master used the illustration of the lilies of the field. The lilies of Palestine are quite common--rather a small flower, many of them red. They persist, live, grow, notwithstanding that no special provision is made for their cultivation, and that they are trodden down by those who pass through the fields. Yet they develop and mature and blossom, and have an exquisite organism, which microscopic examination shows is very beautiful. Jesus declared that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. There is a perfection in the texture of a flower that is wonderful. The finest clothing cannot approximate the delicate structure of the flower, created by an Infinite Hand.

The lesson seems to be that although the flowers may be in an unfavorable envi-

ronment, unable to do for themselves or to take any anxious thought in the matter, nevertheless, God's providence has so arranged for them that they thrive and become very beautiful. These lilies did not look up and wish that they might become great trees, nor wish that they might climb up higher in the world and nearer the sun, as do the vines. On the contrary, they were content with the lot chosen for them by their Infinite Creator.--Matthew 6:30.

THE LESSON OF TRUST IMPERATIVE

And so God's people are to take a lesson from the lilies. They too are to be content with the Lord's arrangement for them--as the poet expresses it:

"Content whatever lot I see,

Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

In proportion as we approximate this condition it will give us peace and rest of mind. We are not to worry, and not to be slothful, but are to be diligent, "fervent in spirit serving the Lord," doing with our might what our hands find to do. When doing this, we are to be content and trustful that He will work out all things for our good. He wishes us to learn this important lesson of trust.

Those who neglect to learn this lesson will be unprepared for the great work God has in mind for our future under Messiah's Kingdom. God will not have any in that Kingdom, we are sure, who are not full of trust. As the flowers flourish under God's providential care, so are all of His people to flourish--to grow in knowledge and beauty of spirit, in beauty of character. And this is not accomplished by some great things that they do, but by the spirit in which they meet the little things, the every day experiences of life. God's people are to grow steadily, though unobtrusively.

The lily would always have a humble place; it would never be great like a tree. So it is with us here in the flesh. And the Lord puts each one in the place He designs for him. We shall learn better the lessons for the future by being placed under humble conditions now, where we may grow, where

our entire loyalty to the Father's will may be fully tested, where all the beauties of our character may be the most fully developed."

R5990"ONE OF THE MASTER'S FORCEFUL AND BEAUTIFUL LESSONS" "*Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.*"--Matthew 6:28...

Since we have given our hearts to the Lord we are not to be worried, anxious, about the things of the present life. Nor are we to be over-anxious regarding our spiritual growth. We are simply to do our best, and trust the growing to Him. But we are to be particularly engaged respecting the things God has promised us as New Creatures in Christ, that we may make our calling and election sure and attain to the glories which our Father has in reservation for those who love Him. If we give our attention to these things, the Master assures us, the Heavenly Father will so supervise our affairs that we shall not lack any necessity of a spiritual kind or of an earthly kind...

REST AND PEACE IN PERFECT TRUST

God knows all about our circumstances. If we need to be transplanted to another place, into a different kind or soil, where our new nature can better thrive and expand, or where our reasonable, temporal needs can be better obtained, He can arrange for it. He knows just what is good for us, best for us, temporally and spiritually. It is our part to look for His leadings, not attempting to take the helm into our own hands, nor concluding that the Lord will never change our conditions, etc. If it is best for us that they shall be changed, He will change them, if we trust in Him; and surely, if we are His children, it is *His* will that we desire, not our own! Will this not mean sometimes strong tests of faith and endurance, if the conditions of our lot are painful and hard to bear? It may be such; but if the Lord's providence does not for a time offer a way of escape, we may be sure that the test will prove one of the "all things" that will work out our good, if we submit sweetly to His will and wait."

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"MY PEOPLE DO NOT CONSIDER"

"*Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding.*"--2 Tim. 2:7.

CONSIDER--reflect, think, study, ponder. Whatever may be said of the heathen religions and of churchianity in respect to their requiring little thought, little study, this is not the case with the religion of the Bible. It is not a religion of credulity-- "shut your eyes and open your mouth," and swallow what is put therein. True, it is a religion of faith;-- but a faith based upon reasonable evidences--a knowledge of God, whose plan and character it reveals. Hence it is that the Scriptures invite the faithful to *consider*, to search, to prove, saying, "Come, let us reason together." And it is worthy of note that all the false systems of religion and churchianity, misnamed Christianity, to a large extent reverse this scriptural order, endeavoring to obtain harmony, union, on a basis of comparative ignorance, rather than on a basis of growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Truth.

As we see this to be true today in nominal spiritual Israel, so we find it was true in olden times in fleshly Israel, to whom the Lord declares,--"The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people *do not consider*." (Isa. 1:3.) We

are not to understand the Lord to mean that the Jews had no knowledge of him whose sacrifices and ceremonial law and worship had their daily attention: neither should we be understood to imply that nominal Christians, who in various ways manifest some respect and reverence for the Lord, are wholly ignorant of him. The thought is rather that God's professed people today, as in olden times, while knowing something about their Creator and Redeemer, do not *know him* in the sense of being really acquainted with his character. In many respects they worship a strange God, because they have failed to get rightly, thoroughly, acquainted with him. Such an acquaintance can only be obtained along the line suggested in our text: by giving heed, by *considering*, reflecting, studying the revelation which God has made respecting himself. Not that the Scriptures give us a detailed description of our Creator; but, rather, by revealing to us his plans, they permit us through an understanding of the divine plans to have an understanding of the divine character which those plans exemplify and illustrate. As a man is known by his works, so God is known by his works. Whoever, therefore, would know God--

appreciate the divine character-- must come to such a knowledge through an acquaintance with the divine plan which God is outworking.

Satan, the great adversary, seems to understand this matter thoroughly, and employs his arts of deception to hinder men from appreciating the divine plan, and thus to hinder an appreciation of the divine character --to prevent a real knowledge of God. He has been successful, marvelously so, as the Apostle declares, along these lines. The God of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not,--lest the glorious light of the goodness of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, should shine into their hearts. (2 Cor. 4:4,6.) It is impossible for him to hinder all knowledge and all appreciation of the Creator, because the quality of reverence is deeply engraven in the natural man who, though fallen and deranged, nevertheless instinctively looks for a God to worship. Satan's work, therefore, is and has been the blinding and deceiving men,-- many of whom, as the Apostle declares, are feeling after God, if haply they might find him.--Acts 17:27.

The adversary's success in blinding mankind would not be so easily accomplished were it not that he persuades men not to reason upon religious subjects;--that upon every other subject than religion, thought, consideration, reasoning, are advisable, but that on religious subjects, credulity, mistaken for faith, is the safe, the wise, the acceptable course. So great has been his success that we find not only the heathen world in ignorance, and superstitious upon religious matters, but that the same principles, in a lighter form, prevail in Christendom --not only amongst Catholics but also amongst Protestants. The remedy for this general evil must be sought and found by all who would be saints, overcomers, --every one of whom must know the Lord not merely theoretically but actually, through a knowledge of his character by a knowledge of his plan.

Let us note how the Scriptures urge God's people to *consider*. They are to consider the natural things of the Lord's provision, as they touch with these in the course of human life, and are to read in them certain great lessons respecting the Creator. For instance, notice our Lord's statements, "*Consider* the lilies of the field." (Matt. 6:28.) "*Consider* the ravens." (Luke 12:24.)^[3] Our Lord calls attention to how such simple things in nature should be studied, be *considered*. The lessons to be learned in connection with all the affairs of life will be helpful to such as approach the study from the right standpoint, of faith in the Creator, and a realization that he is necessarily the embodiment and representative of the very highest and very noblest qualities of which the human mind could conceive;--that he is perfect in Justice, perfect in Wisdom, perfect in Power, perfect in Love. From this standpoint of faith we can learn a great lesson from *considering* the lilies. Their beauty teaches us that the Lord has a keen appreciation of the beautiful, and the fact that it comes to them without their toiling or spinning, teaches us that God is abundantly able to produce the beautiful without our aid, and that if necessary he could likewise clothe us miraculously. It teaches, further, that since he has not thus made provision for our necessities, it must be because he has seen (as the Word declares) that the experiences of life in the development of the resources of nature, in providing for our own needs, will be helpful to us.

As we *consider* the ravens and sparrows, and note how the Lord has made provision for their necessities without barns for the winter time, it teaches us that his power and wisdom could similarly, if necessary, provide for the necessities of his people, miraculously or otherwise; and that in leaving humanity more subject to the vicissitudes of life than the little birds, the Lord doubtless intends thus to instruct mankind and to develop its reasoning faculties in respect to life's interests and necessary provisions, and in a manner that will be more helpful to him, better calculated for his development than would such a provision as is made for the dumb brutes. Faith can learn in all the affairs of life lessons of divine wisdom, and may assure itself reasonably, in harmony with the Lord's suggestion, that human beings are much more valuable than many sparrows, many ravens, many lilies, in God's sight; and that we may therefore more reasonably trust to his goodness and his interest in human affairs.

Thus *considering*, and looking through the little affairs of life, and noting the divine character as revealed in them, the mind is prepared for the still greater revelation of God's goodness set forth in his Word, which assures of his sympathy for humanity in its fallen condition, and of his willingness to assist in man's recovery from sin and death along lines in harmony with justice and love. *Considering*, from this standpoint, the love of God revealed through his Son Jesus commends itself at once to our hearts as being in full accord with what we find to be his general character--justice, wisdom, love.^[4] The heart that thus *considers* makes progress, grows in grace, in knowledge, in love. The heart that fails to *consider* the little things fails to be able to appreciate the larger things, and thus is hindered from a proper consideration of God and from a proper appreciation of his plan, and thus from a proper appreciation of his character.

It is David, the prophet, who exclaims, "When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers!" (Psalm 8:3.) To the Prophet, whose mind was rightly directed and who *considered* these things, "day unto day uttered speech and night unto night showed forth knowledge;" and as a result King David--before the Gospel dispensation, before the giving of the holy Spirit of adoption, before the coming of the inestimable blessings which are ours today--gained a large appreciation of his Creator, which became to him an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. The large conception of the divine character gained from the consideration of the divine work, even as seen in nature, brought the prophet-king near to God, in humility, in veneration, in love.

But if such a consideration of the heavens and the things of nature are profitable and helpful, how much more profitable is the consideration of the still higher things revealed to the Gospel Church through the holy Spirit since Pentecost. The Apostle Paul calls our attention in this direction saying, "*Consider* the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." (Heb. 3:1.) But how few of those who read the Scriptures have ever followed the Apostle's suggestion? how few have ever *considered* Jesus from the standpoint suggested, --as the Church's Apostle or special teacher sent of God to specially guide and instruct the Church, and as the church's High Priest to whom the faithful occupy the relationship of under priests? Had more *consideration* been given by the Lord's people to these matters, a larger number would undoubtedly be much farther advanced than they are today, in the knowledge and love of God. They would have seen that if Christ is a special teacher, a special High Priest of the Church, and the Church his special pupils, brethren and under priests, then there must be, according to the Scriptures, at some future time, a still greater blessing in which both High Priests and under priests will be the agents of God in blessing all the families of the earth.

Again the Apostle speaks of the high spiritual things which we are to *consider*, after we have taken our first lessons in considering the natural things, the lilies, ravens, heavens, etc., saying, "*Consider* him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Heb. 12:3.)^[5] Alas, how many of God's true children become weary and faint in their minds, and are in danger of losing the chief prize because they have failed to think upon, to study out, to comprehend, to *consider* the Lord and what he faithfully endured of opposition. As they would *consider* his perfection and how, as represented in him, the light shined in darkness and was not appreciated, so they would expect that the light shining from them would not be appreciated either.--(John 1:5.) As they would *consider* how the Lord suffered in every sense unjustly and for righteousness' sake, and then would reflect that their own conduct, even though well meant, is imperfect, it would strengthen them to endure hardness as good soldiers, and not to be weary in well doing, and not to faint under opposition. It would enable them to realize what the Scriptures plainly declare, namely, that experiences and testings are necessary to the Lord's people and if rightly received these all work out everlasting blessings.

Such consideration of the Lord and what he endured and the re-

^[3] 1/2 Oct. 12 Manna, Mat. 6:28

^[4] 1/2 Oct. 12 Manna

^[5] Oct. 5 Manna, Heb. 12:3

flection and realization of their own imperfections while seeking to walk in his footsteps, would tend to bring them not only to appreciation of the Lord's sympathy for his people and his grace toward them in covering from his sight their unwilling imperfections, but additionally, this consideration would lead to sympathy for their fellows in the narrow way. The Apostle intimates the propriety of such reflections, saying, "Consider one another to provoke [incite, inspire] unto love and good works."--(Heb. 10:24.) Oh, how much the Lord's people need to remember this injunction, if they would have proper forbearance and love one toward another,--to consider one another's sacrifice, to think of each other's imperfections, peculiarities or good qualities, as the case may be. With the Christian brother consideration always means to think kindly, charitably, even of the blemishes which love cannot hide. These blemishes are not to be considered lest they sour our hearts and arouse in our minds an opposition to one another; nor are they to be considered as an excuse for gossip or slander. The Apostle explains that we are to consider one another with a view to ascertaining how we can be most helpful to each

R4802 "CONSIDER HIM LEST YE BE WEARIED" "*Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*"

TO "CONSIDER HIM" seems to be to take note of, to have in mind, to reflect upon and not to easily forget how our Lord endured various trials and oppositions of sinners against himself... When trying experiences came to him, he did not consider them as being merely from the individual with whom they originated, but as being, on the other hand, under the supervision of the Father. If, therefore, the Father permitted such experiences to come to him, he was bound to prove his loyalty by patient endurance. As he said, "*The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*"--John 18:11.

So it is with us, Spiritual Israel, "*The Lord your God proveth you.*" (Deut. 13:3.) In proportion as we are able to take our Lord's viewpoint in our experiences in life, we may be calm. If the Father permits trying experiences for our testing, or for the testing or proving of others, in ways we may not understand, it is for us to rejoice to have his will done. The poet has beautifully expressed this thought when he says:--

"My times are in thy hands,
My God, I wish them there."

R3985 "PERFECTING OUR HOLINESS..."

"Be ye perfect, even as your father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.) At the same time our Lord knew well that in the present life, under present conditions, and acting through our present mortal bodies, it would be an absolute impossibility for any one of his followers to ever attain perfection in the sense or degree that the Father is perfect. Nevertheless it was proper that our Lord should give the perfect standard or pattern just as the school-book sets before the child a copper-plate engraving showing the perfect, the desirable standard of writing, not with the expectation that the child will ever succeed in exactly copying the engraving, but with the desire that the child shall improve itself by attempts at copying...

The Christian who according to the flesh is deficient in veneration will have greater difficulty along this line of perfecting holiness than one who has naturally large veneration. A great deal of reverence for God and holy things is surely a great aid

other in the narrow way, most edifying, most strengthening, most inspiring.

But now another matter: Looking back to our text we find that the Apostle has united in it two thoughts: first, the necessity of considering; second, the necessity of having divine assistance in order to the reaching of a right understanding. "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding."

The natural man may assent to a great deal of what we have here written; yet in some particulars it will be beyond his grasp. It is only for those who approach the study of the divine will from the right direction-- only for those who *consider* from the standpoint of the school of Christ, learning of him--only such have the divine assistance which the Apostle mentions, the understanding which comes from the Lord. It requires faith in God and his Word in order to be able to rightly appreciate either the natural or the spiritual things which are ours, and to feed thereon in our hearts and to grow strong thereby in our characters.

in our appreciation of the Lord's wonderful greatness and wisdom, power, justice, love; and the greater our appreciation of him, the higher our esteem of the pattern set before us, the better undoubtedly will be our success in the copying of it."

R3737 "The copy which we are to consider and follow is that of our heavenly Father... The fact that this endeavor would not bring perfect results could only redound in blessings upon us, by bringing us to a realization of our own imperfections and of our need of the covering of our dear Redeemer's robe of righteousness, until the time shall come when in the first resurrection change we shall be made like him, see him as he is, share his glory, and be able to perfectly reflect, as he does, the heavenly Father's perfection. Meantime all of our shortcomings that are unintentional are graciously covered from the Father's sight with the merit of our Redeemer, who stands as our pledge or guaranty that our endeavors to follow the copy are sincere, of the heart. The Lord will judge us worthy or unworthy of the resurrection--not according to the flesh, but--according to the endeavors of our hearts as New Creatures.

THE OLD COPY-BOOK

Years ago it was the custom in the public schools to furnish the children with ruled copy-books, with copper-plate engraved lessons at the top of each page. The lesson to the pupil was the copying of those perfect characters. Every modest child must certainly have felt abashed, timid, when receiving one of those lessons, from the realization that it could not produce characters that could at all compare with the copy. It was, however, explained that...following the lines of the copy it would become more and more expert...

In a majority of cases it was found that the best copy of the original was found on the first line, and that the work became poorer and poorer toward the end of the page. So it is with many in the school of Christ--the great Teacher perceives that their first endeavors to copy God-likeness at the beginning of their Christian experience was more successful than their subsequent attempts. Why? The answer is the same in both cases. The child neglected to look at the copy and merely looked at its own imperfect efforts...

Let us, then, begin afresh, on a new

page as it were, to copy the character-likeness of our perfect Father in heaven. Let us no longer look at ourselves and our past attainments, but, as the Apostle says, "Forgetting the things that are behind and pressing on toward the things that are before..."

(Gal 6:9 KJV) "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

R5710 Golden text: "*And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint.*" "*Pray without ceasing.*" -- Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17...

"PRAY IN FAITH, NOTHING DOUBTING

The Lord in the lesson under consideration, tells us that we must not "faint," the word faint being used in the sense of faint-heartedness--"Consider Jesus,...lest ye be weary and faint in your minds"; "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." We may ask for more of the Holy Spirit, feeling that we need grace along some particular line. For instance, we may feel that we need more patience. While praying for patience, we should not say, "I shall never be patient; I was not born that way!" But we are to expect our prayer along this line to be *answered*. We are to ask and then wait for the patience, continuing our petition, knowing that the patience will come, if we strive for it in harmony with our prayers."

R5854 "Our...heart intention must become more and more crystallized, fixed, in the way of righteousness."

R5246 "We show our loyalty to God by giving attention to His Word, that we may know what is His will. The more we study God's Word, the more we receive the spirit of the Truth, and the more we appreciate it. And in proportion as we understand God's regulations and desire to be guided by them, our hearts will become purified. Then the more care shall we take of our hands, what they shall do; and of our tongues, what they shall say. Thus we shall keep our hearts--submit our wills to the will of God."

R2203 "The measure of our appreciation of divine Love will be the measure of our zeal in conforming our characters to the divine pattern."