

to go to the supper went in with him and this ended the admittance—"The door was shut." Since the King came in we believe that the inspection of the guests has been in process. Now is an important time—a testing time. Who will be cast "into outer darkness"—the world's condition, on account of denying the Lord's having bought them—taking off the wedding garment? "Who shall be able to stand?"—be accounted worthy, as his bride to "stand before the Son of Man." Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand."

In answer to questions of those anxious to be at the Marriage Supper, we would say: If you heard the call, i. e., the gospel invitation to the feast of good things God has prepared, and having heard, if you accepted and commenced to feast upon the promises before the call ceased by the shutting of the door (Oct. 2d, 1881), then, we understand the Scriptures to teach that you have yet opportunity to make your calling and election sure—even to the highest position as the Bride of the Lamb. Even now in the hour of inspection, let us lay aside every weight, and every besetment of earth, and run with patience the race for the prize of our high calling.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Ques. Please let me know by what name you people call yourselves? What denomination?

Ans. We are strictly unsectarian, and consequently recognize no sectarian name, believing with Paul, (read 1 Cor. 3:1-4) that where one saith I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, or I am a Baptist, or I a Methodist, etc., it is an evidence of carnality, and consequently in opposition to the Spirit of Christ. Did Paul or Apollos die for us? If so, let us call ourselves theirs. Were we baptized into the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, or other denominational churches? If so, we are members of it, and should be properly recognized by those names. But if we were baptized into the one body or church of which Jesus is the one and only Head, then we are members in particular of his body, and the only name appropriate would be his; Scripturally called the "Church of Christ," "Christians," "Church of the first born," and such like general names. Again we would remark that ours is the only Scriptural basis of Christian union, viz: We have no creed (fence) to bind us together or to keep others out of our company. The Bible is our only standard, and its teachings our only creed, and recognizing the progressive character of the unfolding of Scriptural truths, we are ready and prepared to add to or modify our creed (faith—belief) as we get increase of light from our Standard.

We are in fellowship with all Christians in whom we can recognize the Spirit of Christ, and especially with those who recognize the Bible as the only standard. We do not require, therefore, that all shall see, just as we do in order to be called Christians; realizing that growth in both grace and knowledge is a gradual process. Nor do we see reason to expect that any but the watchmen of Zion will "see eye to eye" (Isa. 52:8.) until that which is perfect is come, when "that which is in part shall be done away." (1 Cor. 13:10.)

If all Christians were to thus free themselves of prescribed creeds, and study the Word of God without denominational bias, truth and knowledge and real Christian fellowship and unity, would result. The Spirit of the Head would pervade the unfettered members of the body, and sectarian pride would vanish. Thus we believe, thus we practice, and thus we teach. It becomes our duty to denounce sectarianism and the God-dishonoring creeds of men which while contradicting each other, unite in misrepresenting God's Word and character. Because these are bonds which hinder God's children from rendering him the homage due unto his name, hinder their knowing him, hinder their worshipping in spirit and in truth, and also hinder them from enjoying that joy and peace which their Father designed they should have. We "cry aloud and spare not."

Because we believe sectarianism to be a snare of the devil, and in opposition both to God and his saints, therefore we labor to set them free, and bring them into the liberty of Christ. That this has been so accounted before the present day by holy men of God, we quote you from the words of JOHN BUNYAN, whose name is a household word, and one of whose books has been more read than any other ever written except the Bible—"Pilgrim's Progress." He wrote:—

"Since you would know by what name I would be distinguished from others, I tell you I would be, and hope I am, a Christian; and choose, if God should count me worthy, to be called a christian, a believer, or other such name which is approved by the Holy Ghost. And as for those factious (or sect) titles of Anabaptist, Presbyterian, Independent, or the like, I conclude that they came neither from Antioch nor from Jerusalem, but from Hell and Babylon, for they tend to divisions: you may know them by their fruits."

JOHN BUNYAN.

John Bunyan was a Christian whose creed was the Bible. (He was commonly called a "Baptist," though, then, and in a few Baptist churches now, the Bible is the only written confession of faith.) He was imprisoned in Bedford jail by the English Church in 1660, because he thus believed. It was while there imprisoned that he wrote of "Pilgrim."

Ques. Was not the typical perfection of the Jews the perfecting of the human, to which their sacrifices pointed?

Ans. The sacrifices and people and reconciliation, were all alike typical of the real sacrifices, all people, and the reconciling of the world. To re-concile is to harmonize again. It of course means a reconciling of two already existent beings—God and man. Because of the ransom and reconciliation, man is to be liberated from death and restored to perfection. This certainly involves no change of either God's or man's nature. Hence, we argue that the benefit of Christ's ransom is to men restitution of what was once possessed—perfect manhood. The change of nature (to become new creatures) is only made during this age, and results from self-sacrifice after justification.

Dear Brother R. I have not been a reader long and cannot understand how you harmonize, the article in the Dec. No., "The Blessed Dead," with "The Door Was Shut," article which appeared in a previous number of the Tower. Please explain.

Ans. To our understanding, all who died previously to Oct. 2nd, '81, passed into a "sleep," or "unclothed" condition to wait for this time, when the sleeping should be awakened in resurrection by their Lord, or the unclothed be clothed upon of their spiritual body—their house from heaven. It has not been a blessing to die and thus fall asleep; but now since we live to the time when we may step from the earthly tabernacle into the heavenly (spiritual) body, without a moment's sleep, it is a blessing. To be thus "changed in a moment"—not unclothed for an instant, but translated from the natural to the spiritual condition instantly, is a privilege never before enjoyed. Since this glorious time is come, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth," (Rev. 14:13,) because as Paul expresses it, they may now be "clothed upon with their house which is from heaven." (2 Cor. 5:1-4.)

The human is to die—the earthly form must be laid off, as Jesus our pattern showed us (2 Pet. 1:14) but the new life hid with Christ will not die, though it slept until now. Now we understand that the exaltation of the members of the Christ who were asleep has taken place, and the exaltation of those who are alive and remain, is due; and the remaining members of the body will, each in his turn soon experience that glorious change, from his sleep to the perfection of life as immortal spiritual beings like himself—by investing or clothing them with their house from heaven. Thus it may readily be seen that we the living, left over unto the presence do not precede the sleeping ones, but they rise first: Then we shall be changed in a moment to the same immortal condition—like unto Christ's glorious body. As did Jesus so must we all, fully lose humanity, putting off this "tabernacle even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed." (2 Pet. 1:4.) This tabernacle—the flesh. It was consecrated to death and must fully die, but we, the new creatures who inhabit these bodies, do not die and will not need even to sleep, but instantly we shall become more alive than ever; or as Paul says, have "mortality swallowed up of life."

We tarry only as the mouthpieces—Priests of God, to sound the trumpet notes of truth until the white robed Levites (advanced justified believers) learn to sing the song of restitution and the fullness of salvation, purchased through the precious blood of Christ. (2 Chron. 5:12-14.)

The door which shut was not the door into the kingdom, but the door into the guest-chamber—to the feast. (See article on Feasts.) We understand that though the marriage is not yet accomplished, it is just about to be. The present moments are occupied by the Bride in making herself ready, and no more guests are now admitted.

Ques. If the door to the "high calling" is now closed what should we say to any who now say, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" If we are mouth-pieces of the Spirit, we should have a word of the Lord for them—what?

Ans. If it be one who had already consecrated himself