

Daily
Heavenly
Manna

PROFITABLE DAILY TITHING

"Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to contain it." (Mal. 3:10)

If Christians allow the rush and crush of selfish ambition to deprive them of their daily portion of heavenly food, they must not be surprised, if they grow spiritually leaner day by day, and if "the peace of God" gives place in their hearts to the discontent which is growing in the world, notwithstanding the multiplication of our comforts and privileges. Let us remember the exhortation, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:6). Our first edition of "Manna" 20,000 met with far better success than we had dared hope for; and we have been greatly encouraged by the kind words of its many friends far and near. Some call it their "Heavenly Breakfast Food" and tell that they feast upon its lessons as regularly as the sun rises. Surely the little tithe of time daily spent in partaking of its morsels of heavenly counsel cannot fail to profit all who partake. The day opened with such meditations is sure to be the better spent and more profitable. The heart thus turned to holy thoughts is much less likely to go aside from right paths than otherwise. "The wisdom that cometh from above" is thus gradually and easily assimilable, and cannot fail to bear some good fruit in the hearts of the saints, and to awaken reverence in the worldly.

Every Christian who sees this book is sure to be interested and to want a copy for his own breakfast table. And as it is published, not for profit but to do good, we have put the price so low as to bring it within the reach of all. We do our friends and neighbors a valuable service when we call the "Manna" to their attention and assure them that it is merely Christian-not denominational. Some use them as birthday presents and holiday gifts; others anxious to extend their good influence, purchase them by the quantity and sell them at a slight advance to cover their time and car fare. All are welcome to engage in this service of love to the extent of their opportunity and ability. The book will last a life-time, and can be used year after year, for the sacred message never grows old, but is line upon line, precept upon precept.

Your Brother and servant,
C.T. RUSSELL

January

January 1

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

THANKS be to God that His grace has preserved us, "kept us from falling," through another year:--that so many of us are still of one heart and of one mind in respect to His Word and its service! When we remember that the Adversary is to be permitted to bring "strong delusions" upon the Lord's people for the very purpose of sifting out all not truly His (*2 Thessalonians 2:10-12*), it should surely call forth our thanks to God that the opening of another year finds us still standing fast,--appreciating the Truth, and in full accord with all the divine appointments by which He has kept us from falling. *Z.'03-3 R3125:2*

January 2

Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. 1 Corinthians 6:19,20

AT the opening of the new year, what lesson could be more important to us than this one, that we are not our own, but belong to another; that we are not therefore, to seek to please ourselves, but to please Him; nor to seek to serve self, but to serve Him; nor to seek to obey self-will, but on the contrary His will? This means holiness in the most absolute and comprehensive sense of the word (not only separation from sin to righteousness, but separation from *self* to the will of God in Christ). *Z.'97-35 R2099:4*

January 3

Pray without ceasing. 1 Thessalonians 5:17

WHATEVER might be our natural inclinations with reference to definiteness and persistency in prayer, we must take our instructions from the Scriptures; and overcoming our natural predilections, we must as "little children" and as "dear children" conform our views and conduct to the instruction which is from above. Let us all, therefore, remember the words, "ask (in My name), and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."--**John 16:24**. The Heavenly Father has multiplied mercies, blessings and providences in store for His obedient and faithful children ***who will ask for them. Z.'96-162 R2005:5***

January 4

Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord. Psalm 27:14

TIME is an important element in all God's plans: we are not, therefore, to be disappointed when the test of endurance is applied while the blessings we crave tarry long. God took time to frame the world and to fit it for human habitation; time to give the world its necessary experience with evil; time to prepare for the advent of Christ as the world's Redeemer; time for the preparation of the Church to share in His glorious reign; and time must be allowed for the shaping and adjusting of the individual affairs of His people. God has not forgotten when the answers to our prayers seem to tarry long. He who heeds the sparrow's fall and numbers the very hairs of our heads is not indifferent to the faintest call or the smallest necessity of His humblest child. ***Z.'95-20 R1760:1***

January 5

***The reproaches of them that reproached Thee
fell on Me. Romans 15:3***

LET us see to it that we bear the reproaches of Christ as He bore them,--with pity and prayer for the erring and depraved, if perchance God may grant them repentance; and with humble fortitude esteeming it a privilege to prove our devotion to the Lord by enduring hardness in His service as good soldiers. He was not surprised by the exhibitions of human depravity: He knew that He was in an unfriendly world bound by sin and largely under the dominion of the prince of darkness, and therefore He expected reproaches, taunts and persecutions, all of which He endured patiently while His great loving heart, almost unmindful of its own sufferings, was full of pity and loving concern for others. **Z. '96-83 R1964:5**

January 6

***So teach us to number our days, that we may
apply our hearts unto wisdom. Psalm 90:12***

THE Christian, in numbering his days, does not do so with a doleful or disconsolate sentiment, although he does so with sobriety. He counts the days as they go as so many blessings, so many privileges, so many opportunities to "show forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light," to render assistance to others in the pilgrim journey, and to develop in himself more and more of the character pleasing in the sight of God,--to become more and more a copy of God's dear Son. **Z. '01-333 R2896:6**

January 7

Speak evil of no man. Titus 3:2

IF once the soldiers of the cross would get the proper thought, that slander and evil speaking are assassinations of the character of another, and that defamation is robbery of another's good name, the sooner they will see this matter in its truly awful light as it must appear in the Lord's sight; and once seeing the matter from this true, divine standpoint must awaken the new creature to the greatest activity possible in the overcoming of such works of the flesh and of the devil. Each will seek to purge out the old leaven of malice and envy and strife and crookedness and evil speaking, that he may be pure in heart, a copy of the Lord. ***Z. '03-425 R3275:5***

January 8

See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. 1 Thessalonians 5:15

ACCORDING to the Scriptural standard, the elect church of Christ should be the most polished, the most refined, the most polite, the most generous, the most kind of all the people in the world;--and should be all these in the most absolute sense; not in the mere sense of an outward form and appearance of kindness, gentleness, etc., so common in the world; but a gentleness, a kindness, proceeding from the heart, proceeding from an appreciation of the Lord's spirit and the spirit of the Truth, the spirit of love, and the spirit of justice, also. ***Z. '01-297 R2879:3***

January 9

Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? 1 Corinthians 4:7

ALL of the Lord's consecrated people should realize that they have come into the present grace and truth, not by their own wisdom nor by the wisdom of others, but through the wisdom and grace of the Lord. The same thought should be entertained by all who serve the Church of God as ministers, servants in any department, in any manner responsible to the Lord for their position in the household of faith, and their opportunities to serve as the Lord's mouthpieces should be felt and confessed. But failure to confess it implies a failure rightly to appreciate it. **Z. '03-430 R3278:2**

January 10

Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. James 5:10

THE right path is still the "narrow path" of *self*-abasement and *self*-denial--the path of meekness and humility: and it will require as much effort and grace to walk it this year as last, or possibly more; for the more we grow in grace and knowledge, the stronger will be the temptations to be boastful, puffed up, heady, high-minded; and the higher we climb in faith and hope and love and activity in the Lord's service, the more the great Adversary will oppose our progress, and the more his emissaries will slander, backbite, and generally seek to injure us. **Z. '95-3 R1751:3**

January 11

His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. Jeremiah 20:9

LET us who are privileged to remain to this time of favor, blessing and enlightenment give glory to the Lord, and see to it that the loving disposition of John is manifested in us, and also his energy, his zeal; for while he is called the loving disciple we are to remember also that he was, because of his impetuous zeal, styled, with his brother, Boanerges--son of thunder. Let us be full of energy, full of sacrifices which love prompts, that we may glorify the Lord in our bodies and spirits which are His. **Z.'01-151 R2808:5**

January 12

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Galatians 6:1

LET us learn well this lesson of reproofing others very gently, very considerately, kindly, by a hint rather than a direct charge and detail of the wrong--by an inquiry respecting the **present** condition of their hearts rather than respecting a **former** condition, in which we know they have erred. We are to be less careful for the punishments that will follow wrongdoings than for the recovery of the erring one out of the error of his way. We are not to attempt to judge and punish one another for misdeeds, but rather to remember that all this is in the hands of the Lord;--we are not in any sense of the word to avenge ourselves or to give chastisement or recompense for evil. **Z.'01-150 R2807:6**

January 13

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 1 John 2:1

IF we find that through lack of faith or weakness of the flesh a wrong step has been taken, contrary to the Lord's will and our best spiritual interests, no time should be lost in retracing the steps and in calling upon the Lord. We have an altar consecrated with the precious blood of Christ, far superior every way to that which Abraham consecrated with the blood of typical animals, and the apostle exhorts us, "Let us come boldly [courageously--full of faith] to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need."--*Hebrews 4:16*
Z.'01-233 R2848:3

January 14

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air. 1 Corinthians 9:26

IT will be found a great help to the weaknesses of the fallen nature to have understandingly made a full consecration of the will,--a full enlistment of every power and talent of mind and of body. He who takes this proper view of his consecration to the Lord and enlistment in the Lord's army, realizes that he has nothing more to give to the Lord, and hence, whatever struggle of the will he may have is all ended when he has finally decided--"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." How important it is, therefore, that all the soldiers realize that the term of the enlistment is until death, and that there is no room for even considering any suggestion to withdraw from the battle and cease even for an hour to fight the good fight of faith. *Z.'03-421 R3273:4*

January 15

What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Micah 6:8

THAT these are very reasonable requirements will be conceded by all. That God could not require less from those whom He is educating for the future judging of the world, is evident: and yet, all three of these qualities specified through the prophet, are comprehended in the one word Love. Love requires that we shall deal justly with our neighbors, with the brethren, with our families, with ourselves; that we shall seek to cultivate our appreciation of the rights of others,--their physical rights, their moral and intellectual rights, their liberties; and that, appreciating these, we shall in no sense of the word seek to abridge or deny them. ***Z.'02-172 R3020:6***

January 16

Instant in prayer. Romans 12:12

WHAT a blessed privilege, dear fellow-disciples of the Lord, is ours, to be instant in prayer, to pray always--to lift up our hearts and minds to God at any time and in any place and to realize thus daily and hourly that the Father and our dear Lord Jesus continually abide with us. And then, when the active duties of the day have been performed under His eye and supervision, or at any time when the soul realizes its necessity, how precious is the privilege of entering into our closets and there, alone with God, unburdening our hearts. ***Z.'95-215 R1866:1***

January 17

Keep yourselves in the love of God. Jude 21

WE may daily and hourly keep ourselves in the Lord's love by obedience to, and a growing love for, the principles of righteousness. And we are to rejoice in every experience of life,--its trials, difficulties, sorrows, disappointments, etc., no less than in its pleasures, if by any or all of these means the Lord shall instruct us and give us clearer insight into our own deficiencies, and a still clearer insight into that perfect law of liberty and love which He has established, and to which He requires our full and loyal heart-submission.

Z.'02-173 R3021:6

January 18

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord. Romans 12:11

LET all who would run the race successfully look well to their zeal and activity in the Lord's work. If we bury our one or many talents under a weight of worldly cares and encumbrances which might be avoided or set aside; if we bury them under worldly ambitions for either self or family--whether this be by wasting consecrated time upon science, philosophy, music or art, or upon business, politics or pleasures, or in pampering pride and appetite--then as unfaithful servants we will sooner or later go into outer darkness. ***Z.'91-9 R1282:5***

January 19

O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Psalm 119:97

IT is a great privilege for Christians to study the Lord's Word, yet a great deal of study is done to no purpose. Study which is not put into *practice* is worse than a waste of time....Every reasonable opportunity should be used by the Lord's people to obtain a knowledge of the divine plan--even to the extent of sacrificing; but the child of the Lord will be particular to see that it is his *own* conveniences and comforts that he is sacrificing, and not chiefly the conveniences and comforts of others. The Bible study which is done merely at the expense of others is a sign of selfishness rather than a sign of a rich indwelling of the Lord's spirit of love. *Z.'99-156 R2488:3*

January 20

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? Hebrews 12:7

CHARACTER cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant: at first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love; frequent watering with the showers of His grace; much cultivating through the applied knowledge of His character as a good foundation for faith and inspiration to obedience; and then when thus developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness. And, little by little, as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, beauty and grace, until it is finally fixed, developed, established, perfected --through suffering. *Z.'95-107 R1807:4*

January 21

If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. Matthew 16:24

CROSS-BEARING is closely related to self-denial, and yet a distinction between them may be noted. Self-denial relates more particularly to passive obedience and endurance for the Lord's sake; cross-bearing has to do more especially with activities in the Lord's service, which we find to be contrary to our natural inclinations. Faithfulness in self-denial means courage and zeal; cross-bearing means victory, overcoming. Our self-denials may be victories in our own hearts, of which others may know nothing, and of which they should know nothing, if we desire to have the fullness of the Lord's blessing. Our cross-bearing, however, may be seen to some extent at least, by those who are in close contact with us, and especially by those who are walking in the same "narrow way." ***Z. '00-118 R2616:2***

January 22

Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord. Psalm 31:24

IT would seem as though the Adversary at times attempted to discourage us by making us think that the trials and difficulties of the "narrow way" of sacrifice will be unavailing anyhow, and that we might as well give up....And what course should we pursue at such a time? We should follow the example of our Lord, and seek the Father's face, anxious to know whether or not our interests are all right with Him; anxious for some assurances that while the world may hate us, and say all manner of evil against us falsely, we still have His approval; anxious for some fresh assurance that it will be well with us, that the Lord will grant us a part in the better resurrection to life eternal. ***Z. '01-79 R2774:6***

January 23

Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God. 1 Corinthians 7:24

DUTIES may at times seem to conflict, but they do not really do so. A Christian's first duty is his hearty acknowledgment of his Creator and Lord, in all his ways. His second duty, if he be a husband and father, is toward his wife and children; or if she be a wife and mother, it is toward her husband and children.... The marriage contract, by divine arrangement, comes in as a first mortgage upon every husband's time and upon every wife's time--the demands of this mortgage must be reasonably met before anything can be properly done to or for outsiders. ***Z.'99-155 R2488:3***

January 24

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart. Proverbs 3:3

WHILE justice is the first feature of the commandment of love, it is not the end of its requirements: it requires that, going beyond strict justice, our love shall prompt us to the exercise of mercy and forgiveness. And in thus exercising mercy we are again but copying divine love....Hence, in our dealings with others who, like ourselves, are fallen and imperfect, we are to remember this feature and not only be just toward them but, additionally, to be merciful, generous, kind, even to the unthankful,--that thus we may be children of our Father in heaven. ***Z.'02-171 R3020:6***

January 25

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Matthew 6:34

OUR Lord assures us that if the main thought of our hearts is His service and the promotion of righteousness and an attainment of the Kingdom which God has promised to them that love Him, then we need carry no anxious cares respecting the future. As His disciples we will have trials and tribulations enough, day by day, and will need daily to lean upon the Bridegroom's arm as we seek to walk the narrow way. Sufficient for each day will be the evil of itself: and thanks be to God also, we have the promise that daily His grace shall be sufficient for us. **Z.'98-44 R2260:4**

January 26

When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance. Matthew 6:16

FASTING is specially commendable to the Lord's people at times when they find themselves lacking in spirituality and exposed to severe temptations from the world, the flesh and the devil; for by impoverishing the physical force and vitality, it may assist the full-blooded and impulsive to self-control in every direction. We believe that a majority of Christians would be helped by occasional fasting--a very plain diet for a season, if not total abstinence. But fastings, to be seen and known of men or to be conjured up in our own minds as marks of piety on our part, would be injurious indeed, and lead to spiritual pride and hypocrisy, which would far outweigh their advantages to us in the way of self-restraint. **Z.'98-45 R2260:5**

January 27

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Proverbs 4:23

IT is not sufficient that we acknowledge sin in its various forms to be evil, and that we resolve that we will strive against it because it is under the Lord's ban. In addition to this we are to root out of our hearts every *longing*, every *desire* for everything not thoroughly approved by the Lord. Oh, what a cleansing this would mean in the hearts and lives, and especially in the thoughts, of many who have named the name of Christ! Many who fail to note this point find themselves continually beset by temptations, because, while outwardly avoiding gross immoralities, they secretly harbor sympathies for things condemned --*desiring* that they might have them, if only they were not forbidden. **Z.'99-140 R2480:5**

January 28

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels. Revelation 3:5

THE faithful overcomers watch and keep their garments unspotted from the world.... "They have not defiled their garments," they have "kept their garments unspotted from the world." They have not been willing to permit sin to contaminate them and to separate them from the Lord, but have quickly applied for and obtained the precious blood to remove every stain. They are so heartily opposed to sin and so earnest about the keeping of this garment unspotted that the Adversary gets no hold upon them--"the wicked one catcheth them not." All this indicates a full submission of their wills to the will of Christ--they are "dead with Him," and hence could not willingly practice sin. **Z.'97-161 R2161:1**

January 29

The fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Psalm 111:10

THIS is the only proper attitude of the creature toward the Creator, the Author of our being, and the Creator, Preserver and Lord of the whole universe. When He speaks, therefore, our ears should be reverently attentive to His voice, and every power alert to do His bidding. Our safety, our happiness, and that nobility of character which prompts to love and gratitude, and which promptly and wisely heeds instruction and advances in knowledge and wisdom, all depend primarily upon our supreme reverence for the Lord. And therefore the Lord would foster and cultivate in us that becoming, filial reverence that is due to His name. ***Z. '96-155 R2002:3***

January 30

Jesus spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Luke 18:1

IN coming to God we need have no fear that He is too busy with other matters of greater importance, or that He is weary of our coming to Him repeatedly with things of small importance. It was to assure us against this very thing that our Lord spoke the parable of the importunate widow, who was heard and answered on account of her importunity. In so doing we evince both the earnestness of our desires and our faith that our prayers will be answered, if we faint not from lack of faith or zeal when the answer is delayed, as often it must necessarily be, since time is an important element in all God's work. ***Z. '95-214 R1865:4***

January 31

The meek will He guide in judgment; and the meek will He teach His way. Psalm 25:9

SUCH a disposition is essential to those who would receive the wisdom which cometh from above. They must have a humble appreciation of their own deficiencies and lack of wisdom, else they cannot receive freely, heartily, the wisdom which God is pleased to grant in the present time only to those who are in the attitude of heart to receive it. And it will be seen also that this humility of mind is essential as a basis for the spirit of a sound mind--for who is in a proper condition to think justly, reasonably, impartially, except first of all he have a humble disposition? Hence we must agree that humility is a primary element in the disposition or mind of Christ. **Z. '00-68 R2585:5**

February

February 1

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. Isaiah 30:21

IF we have come to the forks of the road--to some crisis in our experience--and know not whether to turn to the right or to the left, we should stop at once and listen to the voice. Or, in other words, we should turn at once to the Word of the Lord, and by pondering its precepts and principles, and its illustrations bearing on the perplexing subject, seek to learn the will of the Lord, asking also the leading of His Spirit, and endeavoring to bring the mind into a loving, submissive and trustful attitude. **Z.'95-6 R1753:2**

February 2

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die. Romans 8:13

WHAT is it to live after the flesh? We answer, It is to live after, in conformity to, and in gratification of, the inclinations and cravings of the fallen human nature. And it is the easiest thing possible to do this. All we have to do is just listlessly to abandon ourselves to the current of our old nature, and cease to strive against it. As soon as we do this, we begin to float down the stream, and by and by we find the current more and more rapid and resistance more and more difficult. **Z.'95-8 R1748:3**

February 3

My son, attend to My words; incline thine ear unto My sayings. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

Proverbs 4:20,22

FEW recognize the influence of the mind over the body. God has so organized our beings that pure, noble, holy thoughts in general have not only an elevating and ennobling effect upon the mental and moral constitution, but an invigorating influence upon the physical system. And, on the contrary, every unclean, ignoble, unchaste, unholy thought (as well as act) has a direct effect not only toward debasement of mind and morals, but toward the germination of seeds of disease already in the constitution of the fallen race. *Z.'96-180 R2014:6*

February 4

Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. Revelation 18:4

WHOEVER are worthy the name, "My people," will hear and obey the Lord's voice and come out of Babylon and "receive not of her plagues"; because their obedience in fleeing out as soon as they see Babylon's real condition will prove that they were never in real accord with her sins. Those who *remain* after seeing Babylon and her blasphemous doctrines in the light now shining are reckoned as endorsing the blasphemies and deserving the "plagues" most thoroughly--as much or more than the "tare" class of Babylonians, because they have greater light.

Z.'00-3 R2553:3

February 5

This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification. 1 Thessalonians 4:3

COMING to the Scriptures to ascertain *God's will*, we find that the great *work* which God asks of us is not work for others, but work in ourselves, subduing, conquering, ruling self. Everything else, therefore--our service for the household of faith, and our doing good unto all men, by home and foreign missions, etc.--is subservient to this most important work within. For, as the apostle by inspiration declares, though we should preach the gospel eloquently to others, and though we should give all our goods to feed the poor, or become martyrs for a good cause, *without love*, the Spirit of Christ and the Father, developed in us as the ruling principle of life, we would be *nothing*, from the divine standpoint. *Z.'99-4 R2412:1*

February 6

Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another. Psalm 75:6,7

WE may have desires and aspirations for usefulness which will never be gratified. The Lord may see that we could not bear the exaltation and honor which we seek. He knows far better than we do what is for our good, and so He would have us rest contented in His providence, not idle, but diligent; not careless, but watchful; not indifferent, but full of intense, earnest longing to do the will of God; yet patient under restraint, and content to be neglected and forgotten, remembering that "they also serve who only stand and wait," and that the Lord in His own well-chosen hour can lead us forth to fulfil His purposes of grace. *Z.'95-11 R1756:5*

February 7

Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Romans 13:10

HE who finds his heart not in harmony with this law of the New Covenant, love--mercy, kindness, gentleness, goodness--lacks the evidence or *proof* that he is in any sense of the word accepted as a son of God, and a joint-heir with Christ. If we have not love in our hearts for the brethren, and love of gentleness and benevolence toward all men, and even toward the brute creation, we have not the spirit which will carry us through in making the sacrifices necessary under present conditions. It will only be a question of time with such when the power of pride or vain-glory, holding them in the way of sacrifice, will snap asunder, and selfishness take full control.

Z.'98-201 R2330:2

February 8

O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? Matthew 14:31

WHAT must be done to overcome this lack of faith, and to have an increase of faith? We answer that, like the apostles of old, we should pray, "Lord, increase our faith." And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, each should cultivate faith in his own heart: (a) By refreshing his memory continually with the divine promises, becoming very familiar with these in the Father's Word, (b) He should seek more and more to remember that, having made his covenant with the Lord, these promises are his, and in his heart and with his lips he should claim them as his before the Lord in prayer with thanksgiving. He should claim them in his own thoughts, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren.

Z.'00-170 R2642:6

February 9

Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. Psalm 116:7

THE Christian's *habit of thought* has much indeed to do with his spiritual progress or retrogression, as it is also an index of his spiritual state; and good habits of thought need to be carefully cultivated. By "habit of thought" we mean that normal condition to which the mind habitually returns in the moments of mental leisure. While engaged in the active duties of life we must of necessity bend our mental energies to the work in hand, for if we do anything merely mechanically and without concentrating thought upon it we cannot do it well; yet even here Christian principle, well established in the character, will unconsciously guide. But when the strain of labor and care are lifted for a time, the established habit of thought, like the needle to the pole, should quickly return to its rest in God. ***Z.'95-250 R1885:5***

February 10

Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

EVERY Christian should strive to be a pattern worthy of imitation--a pattern of earnest, faithful endeavor to copy Christ in his daily life, and of active zeal in His service. Patterns of perfection, of the ultimate moral glory and beauty of holiness, we cannot expect to be in the present life. Such a pattern we have only in Christ our Lord. In no such sense did Paul ever say, Follow me, or Follow us; but he did say, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." (***1 Corinthians 11:1***) The apostle was a grand example of earnest endeavor to attain perfection, but not of the ultimate perfection which was in Christ only; and it is his zeal and intense earnestness in striving to copy Christ and to accomplish His will that we should imitate. ***Z.'95-251 R1886:1***

February 11

Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. Matthew 5:11,12

OPPOSITION and persecution are the inevitable concomitants of activity in the service of God, and they should be met with reason and candor; and when these fail of their purpose, then, with solemn warnings of the dangers of such a course, the wilful opposer should be left to pursue his own course while we turn to others with the message of salvation. In the opposition which our Lord incurred and the manner in which He met it, there are valuable lessons for all who are similarly tried. *Z. '94-368 R1736:6*

February 12

Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. James 1:4

NOT a step of progress can be gained without the exercise of this grace of patience; and not one of the graces more beautifully adorns the Christian character, or wins the approval of the world's conscience, or glorifies the God of all grace whose truth inspires it. It is long-suffering meekness earnestly striving to stem the tide of human imperfection and weakness, and endeavoring with painstaking care to regain the divine likeness; it is slow to wrath and plenteous in mercy; it is quick to perceive the paths of truth and righteousness, and prompt to walk in them; it is mindful of its own imperfections and sympathetic with the imperfections and shortcomings of others. *Z. '93-295 R3090:2*

February 13

Love thinketh no evil. 1 Corinthians 13:5

WHOEVER neglects the Lord's commands along this line of "evil surmisings" weaves a web for his own ensnarement, however "circumspectly" he may walk as respects other matters; for a heart impregnated with doubt and suspicion toward fellow creatures is more than half prepared to doubt God: the spirit of sourness and bitterness is at war with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love. Either the one or the other will conquer. The wrong spirit must be gotten rid of, or it will defile the new creature and make of him a "castaway." On the contrary, if the new nature conquer, as an "overcomer," it will be along this line: if evil surmisings are overcome, half the battle against present difficulties and besetments is won. **Z. '98-84 R3594:2**

February 14

By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Matthew 12:37

ALL our words are taken by the Lord as an index of our hearts. If our words are rebellious, or disloyal, or frivolous, or flippant, or unkind, unthankful, unholy or impure, the heart is judged accordingly, on the principle that, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."... That as imperfect beings we may always be perfect in word and deed is not possible. Despite our best endeavors we will sometimes err in word as well as in deed, yet the perfect mastery of our words and ways is the thing to be sought by vigilant and faithful effort. **Z. '96-32 R1938:1**

February 15

Whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. 1 John 2:5

THE test is *obedience*. In proportion as we keep the Lord's Word, in like proportion the love of God is perfected in us; for if we have received the mind of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the effect will be to cause us to both will and do His good pleasure--to the extent of our ability. And this ability should be continually on the increase year by year. And altho we may not hope to be perfected until we shall be "changed" and be granted our new resurrection bodies, nevertheless all the while we may keep so closely in touch with the Lord in the spirit of our minds that we may have continual fellowship with Him. *Z. '97-312 R2236:5*

February 16

Through honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; ...giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed. 2 Corinthians 6:8,3

WHILE in the discharge of duty to the best of our ability and when apparently we have the Lord's blessing and favor upon us and our affairs in a most marked degree, suddenly trouble may arise, adversity come, the powers of darkness seem to triumph, and for a moment we may be apparently culprits in the judgment of our fellowmen, and apparently forsaken by divine providence. Such experiences, doubtless, are needful to us; for though we may sing:--

"I would rather walk in the dark with God,

Than go alone in the light,"

yet this might be but an empty boast unless we were put through the trying experiences which would develop such faith, such trust, as would hold to the Lord's hand, and trust divine providence in the darkest hour. *Z. '01-314 R2886:3*

February 17

Take My yoke upon you,...for My yoke is easy, and My burden is light. Matthew 11:29,30

THOSE who wear this yoke have the assurances of the divine Word that all things are working together for good to them; that the heavier the burden that may be attached, the greater will be the blessing and the reward by and by; the more severe the experiences during the present time, the brighter shall be the glory, and the brighter shall be their character, and the more sure shall they be of being fitted and polished for the heavenly Kingdom. From this standpoint every burden is light, because our yoke is appreciated, and is so easy, so reasonable: and additionally it is so light because the Lord is with us in this yoke. *Z.'00-137 R2625:5*

February 18

The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Deuteronomy 13:3

THE Kingdom is only intended for those who by God's grace shall at heart become like to the Lord Jesus, in that they will love the Lord with all their hearts, with all their souls, and be able to say, "Not my will, but Thy will, O Lord, be done." No other condition than this of full submission to the Lord can make us acceptable for the Kingdom; for no other condition represents full self-submission and full love to God. And let us not forget that all the heavenly things which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," God hath reserved for them that love Him supremely. *Z.'98-40 R2258:2*

February 19

Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unfaithful nothing is pure; but both their mind and conscience are defiled: they profess to have known God, but by their works they renounce Him, being abominable and disobedient, and as to every good work worthless. Titus 1:15,16 (Diaglott)

WHAT a terrible condition this is, and how careful all the Lord's people should be, not only to have pure hearts, pure minds, but also to keep their consciences very tender, in close accord with the Word of the Lord. This condition can only be maintained by judging ourselves, and that strictly and frequently, by the standard which God has given us, His law of love.

"I want the first approach to feel
Of pride or fond desire;
To catch the wandering of my will,
And quench the kindling fire."

Z.'99-214 R2516:6

February 20

If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue,...this man's religion is vain. James 1:26

BECAUSE the tongue is the index of the heart, because "out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh," therefore the unbridled tongue, speaking selfishly, enviously, bitterly, boastfully, slanderously, proves that the heart from whose fullness these overflow is unsanctified, unholy, grievously lacking of the spirit of Christ--hence, whatever religion it may have attained is thus far vain, as that heart is not saved, nor in a salvable condition....The Good Physician has pointed out antidotes for soul-poisoning--medicines which, if properly taken according to directions, will sweeten the bitter heart. **Z.'99-215 R2517:2**

February 21

*Thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore
for Thy name's sake, lead me, and guide me.
Psalm 31:3*

AFTER the Lord has given us certain lessons and experiences, some of which come to us under quiet and restful conditions, the order of procedure may be changed, and the indication of the Lord's providences may lead to some breaking up of conditions which had been both favorable and unfavorable in some respects --leading into new circumstances and conditions. It is not for the true spiritual Israelite to murmur or complain, or even to express a choice; but to look to the Lord for guidance. If he can discern the leadings of divine providence, even though it be in a wilderness condition more arid and undesirable than that in which he has previously been, he is to follow the Lord's leadings unquestioningly, and with songs of faith and confidence. **Z.'02-249 R3060:6**

February 22

*Let your conversation be without covetousness;
and be content with such things as ye have.
Hebrews 13:5*

SELFISH prayers are too expensive. Some have gained wealth and lost the truth and its service; some have gained health, only to find that with it they gained other trials no less severe: some have had their dear ones restored to them from the very jaws of death, only to wish afterward that God had not answered their prayers--or, more correctly, to wish that they had accepted the Lord's wisdom and providences trustfully, contentedly, uncomplainingly....Spiritual Israel should use wisely such things as are within their reach--accepting all as God's gifts with thanksgiving; but their petitions should be for spiritual gifts --including patient endurance and heart contentment. **Z.'02-250 R3061:3**

February 23

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye. Psalm 32:8

ONE of the most important lessons for the spiritual Israelite to learn is to look to the Lord for leading in all of life's affairs--never to attempt any undertaking either temporal or spiritual, without seeking to note the will of the Lord concerning the same.... We are marching toward Canaan and know that other experiences are due us and must be undergone ere we can inherit the promises. The lesson for us is prompt and thorough obedience to the Lord's leadings without murmurings--with joyfulness; and this can only be expected on the part of those who have learned the lessons previously given them, and above all the lessons of faith,--confidence in the Lord's power and goodness and faithfulness. **Z.'02-251,249 R3062:1; 3061:1**

February 24

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Romans 8:3,4

WHAT comfort and consolation are in these assurances! These are wonderful words of life, indeed! They inspire us with hope. If God will accept perfect heart-intentions, as instead of the absolute perfection of the flesh--then indeed we have hope of attaining to the standard which He has marked for us--the standard of perfection....We can walk after the Spirit, though, so far as our mortal bodies are concerned, we cannot walk up to the Spirit's requirements. Our minds can walk up to the Spirit, our intentions can be perfect; and this is what our Heavenly Father seeks in us, perfection of intention. **Z.'02-248 R3060:1**

February 25

***Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.
Matthew 4:4***

WE are to learn the lesson that a man's life consists not in the abundance of things which he possesseth-- food and raiment--but that his life, in the fullest, grandest, highest sense, is dependent upon his complete submission to the divine will--his careful attention to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God...--every admonition, every encouragement, every promise, is necessary to the development of those whom God is now calling to eternal life as joint-heirs with His Son in the Kingdom. Let us then, more and more, as the disciples, pupils, of the Lord Jesus, keep in memory and act upon the suggestion of the words of this text. **Z.'02-246,248 R3058:5; 3060:4**

February 26

Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Philippians 4:4

WE cannot have too many rejoicing Christians, nor can they rejoice too much, if they rejoice ***in the Lord***. This rejoicing is not necessarily boisterous, nor of necessity the reverse. It implies serenity, happiness, peace, pleasure of soul, however, and does not mean that noisy demonstration is essential, as some seem mistakenly to think....The only ones who can rejoice ***always*** are those who are living very near to the Lord, and who can feel always their oneness with Him, and that His protection and care are over them, and that His promise is sure, that all things shall work together for their highest welfare, as New Creatures. **Z.'03-7 R3128:2**

February 27

***Let your moderation be known unto all men.
Philippians 4:5***

THE Greek word here rendered "moderation" seems to carry with it the thought of reasonableness, and of not exacting our rights too rigorously. Mercy and leniency are certainly qualities required of all who would be members of the body of the Anointed. Faithfulness in the performance, as far as possible, of all that justice would require of us, and mercifulness in respect to all our requirements of justice from others should be our rule: so shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven, for He is kind and merciful to the unthankful. **Z. '03-7 R3128:2**

February 28

Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. Philippians 4:6

THE question may arise, Why will not God give us the things which He sees us to need without our making petition to Him and claiming His promises? Undoubtedly because we need previously to come into the proper attitude of heart to receive His favors and to be advantaged by them. Even as it is, we may be sure that we do not sufficiently appreciate the divine care bestowed upon us hitherto and now. Even in the attitude of prayer and thanksgiving we probably do not discern one-half of our causes for gratitude, as we shall see them by and by, when we shall know even as we are known. **Z. '03-8 R3128:6**

February 29

God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. 1 John 4:16

JUSTICE fills the measure full, but love shakes it, presses it down, heaps it up and overflows justice. It is therefore something not to be demanded, nor its lack to be complained of, but to be gratefully appreciated as a favor and to be generously reciprocated. Every one who craves it at all should crave it in its highest sense--the sense of admiration and reverence. But this sort of love is the most costly, and the only way to secure it is to manifest that nobility of character which calls it forth from others who are truly noble. ***Z. '02-266 R3071:1***

March

March 1

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7

IT is not our own peace that is here referred to. It is the peace of God--the peace which comes to us from a realization of God's power and goodness and willingness to hold us by His right hand as His children. The thought is that this peace stands guard continually, as a sentinel, to challenge every hostile or worrying thought or fear. It keeps the Christian's mind so that he at heart has peace with the Lord, fellowship, communion--and it guards his mind also, his reasoning faculties, instructing him and assuring him respecting the divine power and wisdom and love.

Z.'03-8 R3128:6

March 2

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest,...think on these things. Philippians 4:8

WHOEVER sympathizes with falsehood or exaggeration is more or less defiling himself. Whoever cleanses his thoughts, and avoids exaggeration, etc., is in that degree purifying his mind and his entire character. Nor is it sufficient that we are sure of the truth of matters. We are to test them further, and discern to what extent they are honorable, noble; for, although the Lord has covered the ignoble features of our characters, and proposes to cover them to the end with His own merit, nevertheless we cannot be in sympathy with our fallen condition, but on the contrary must desire true nobility and the highest standards of honor in our hearts, in our thoughts, in all our dealings with our God and with our fellows.

Z.'03-9 R3129:2

March 3

Whatever things are just,...think on these things. Philippians 4:8

WE are not to allow our minds to run along lines that would be unjust, and we are to learn to apply this test of justice to every thought and word and act of ours, while learning at the same time to view the conduct of others from a different standpoint--so far as reason will permit, from the standpoint of mercy, forgiveness, pity, helpfulness. But we cannot be too careful how we criticize every thought we entertain, every plan we mature, that the lines of justice shall in no sense of the word be infringed by us with our hearts' approval. **Z. '03-9 R3129:3**

March 4

Whatever things are pure, lovely, and of good report,...think on these things. Philippians 4:8

WE are to love and cultivate that which is pure to such an extent that that which is impure will become painful to us, distressing, and we will desire to drop it from memory, and this will only be accomplished by continually thinking upon those things that are pure, and avoiding the giving of thought to the things that are impure. We are to recognize true loveliness, and to esteem it. When we would think on the purest of things we must of necessity lift our mental vision to as high a point as possible, and, as nearly as we may be able, discern the loveliness of the perfect character of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and proportionately the loveliness manifested in one or another of the followers of Jesus, who walk closely in His footsteps. **Z. '03-9 R3129:3**

March 5

If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Philippians 4:8

THINGS of any virtue or value, things in any degree praiseworthy--the noble words or noble deeds or noble sentiments of anybody--we may safely meditate upon, and as a consequence find ourselves growing toward those ideals upon which our minds, our new natures, thus feed. We will become more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds, and approach nearer and nearer to the glorious likeness of our Lord and Master, being changed from glory to glory, inch by inch, step by step, little by little, during the present life; and our thoughts being in this attitude and our union with the Lord maintained, we shall have part in the First Resurrection, which will perfect us forever in the Lord's image and likeness.

Z.'03-9 R3129:3

March 6

I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Philippians 4:11,12

IF we find our experiences in life very checkered we may conclude that the Lord sees that we need both the heights and depths of prosperity and adversity to properly instruct us and qualify us for the position He designs for us in the future. Let us, then, as the apostle did, learn how to abound, not allowing the abundance of earthly good things to swerve us from our consecration vows; and learn also how to be in want (need) and yet not to want anything beyond what the Lord's wisdom and providence see best to give--to be content.

Z.'03-10 R3129:6

March 7

If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. 1 John 4:12

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....

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

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. **Z. '03-56,57 R3150:3; R3150:4; R3151:2**

March 8

God hath set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him. 1 Corinthians 12:18

NO member of the body of Christ can say that he has no need for another member, and no member may say that there is nothing whatever that he can do in the service of the body. Under the guidance of our glorious Head each member who is filled with His Spirit, and desirous of serving Him, may do so. When the time for rewards shall have come, who knows how much of the usefulness of Paul and Apollos may be accredited to some of the humble ones, such as Aquila and Priscilla, who in various ways ministered to and encouraged and supported their abler brethren in the Lord's work. **Z. '03-59 R3152:2**

March 9

God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. Hebrews 6:10

NO child of the Lord should be content to let the days of the present harvest time go by with their golden opportunities for service and co-operation without seeking each day to lift the royal banner himself, and to publicly show forth the praises of Him who hath called him out of darkness into light, or without assisting and co-operating with others whom the Lord in His providence has placed in more advantageous positions for public service. **Z.'03-59 R3152:3**

March 10

Exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Hebrews 3:13

IF...we realize that a spiritual lethargy has to any extent been creeping over us, imperceptibly benumbing our spiritual senses, so that the truth is losing its inspiring power upon us, our first duty is to betake ourselves to prayer and to communion with God and His Word, that its sanctifying power may be realized. **(Z.'03-54) R3149:2** "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we *hold* the beginning of our confidence *steadfast unto the end.*" **Hebrews 3:14**

March 11

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Hebrews 12:1

YOU that discern the prize of your high calling, and who are endeavoring to press along the line toward the mark, "gird up the loins of your mind";... strengthen and fortify your purposes and efforts; renew your determination; redouble your diligence; cast aside the weights of unnecessary worldly cares; increase your zeal; and, as the Apostle Paul also urges, run with patience the race set before you. Run, not like one who is merely beating the air, but like one who has a purpose in view, and who, in desperate earnest, is *determined* to make his calling and election sure. **Z.03-54 R3149:3**

March 12

The end of the commandment is love from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an undissembled faith. 1 Timothy 1:5 (Diaglott)

WE are therefore to have clearly before our minds the fact that the *ultimate object* of all the divine dealings for us and with us, and the ultimate significance of all the divine promises made to us, is the development of love, which is Godlikeness, for God is love. And to have this love developed in us, in the sense and to the degree intended by the Lord, it is necessary that it shall come from a *pure* heart, in full accord with the Lord, and His law of love, and wholly antagonistic to the Adversary and his law of selfishness. **Z.'00-360 R2735:1**

March 13

As many, therefore, as are perfect, should be of this mind; and if in any thing you think differently, God will also reveal this to you; but to what we have attained, let us walk by the same line. Philippians 3:15-17 (Diaglott)

IT is indispensable to those who have reached the mark of perfect love that they shall keep actively engaged in the service of the Lord, laying down their lives for the brethren....Such must stand, not only as representatives of God and of the principles of righteousness, but as representatives of those strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, and in the faith of His Word,--ready and willing and efficient in the encouragement of other runners in the race-course, that they likewise may attain to the "mark". *Z.'01-10 R2755:5*

March 14

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city. Proverbs 16:32

WHILE anger, in the nature of hatred, malice, strife, envy, should be put away by all who are seeking to be copies of God's dear Son, anger in the sense of righteous indignation against wrongdoing, sin in its various forms, is proper; and although it should be used with great moderation, backed by love, there are circumstances in which it would be wrong not to have righteous anger and use it. *Z.'96-279 R2068:5*

March 15

The just shall live by faith. Hebrews 10:38

IT is not enough that, by faith, we receive the first impulse of life, but, having passed from death unto life, by the same means, we must continue to receive and appropriate spiritual nourishment, that we may grow thereby: we must walk by faith, following the leading of the Holy Spirit through the Word of truth.

The life of faith is an individual matter, as well of the heart as of the head. It is far more than an acceptance of doctrines which we consider Scriptural and therefore true; it is the *assimilation* of that which we have proved to be the Truth, so that its principles become our principles, and its promises our inspiration.

Z.'95-92,93 R1798:3; 1799:4

March 16

***We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren,...and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
1 John 3:14,16***

ONE of the final and most searching tests of these "brethren," and the one under which probably the most of those once awakened and armed will fall, will be--love for the brethren. Seemingly many will fail at this point and be therefore accounted unworthy of an abundant entrance into the Kingdom on this score.

Should any be specially weak and liable to stumble, the true soldier of the cross will not despise him, nor revile him, even as the elder brother, the Captain, would not do so. On the contrary, he will be the more watchful and helpful toward the weaker even though he most enjoy himself in the company of the stronger. ***Z.'99-88 R2453:4,5***

March 17

Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath. Matthew 25:28,29

WHY is the one-talented man chosen as an illustration of these talent-burials? It is to show the responsibility of those who have least--that the Lord expects even the least of His consecrated people to know of and to use the talents he has in his possession, and that He will not hold guiltless even those who have the smallest ability to serve Him and His brethren and His truth, and who neglect to use it. **Z.'01-59 R2765:1**

March 18

Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:13

HAVING..."girded up the loins of your mind" for a long, steady and determined effort, "be sober"; do not allow yourself to become excited and, under the spur of excitement, to exhaust all your spiritual vitality in a very short time, and then to suffer a relapse into coldness or discouragement; but thoughtfully to consider and prepare for a long and patient endurance of all the discipline and trial of faith and patience necessary to prove an overcomer and worthy of the blessed reward promised "to him that overcometh." The race before us is not one to be run by fits and starts, but by "*patient continuance* in well doing." **Z.'03-54 R3149:3**

March 19

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. 1 Peter 1:14,15

SOME Christians have the erroneous idea that God does all the fashioning, and that His children are to be merely passive in His hand; but Peter does not so express it. He exhorts us to fashion ourselves according to the divine instructions. There is work to be done in us and about us, and those who are not up and doing, but who passively sit and wait for the Lord to work miracles in their behalf, are greatly deceived and are giving the enemy great advantage over them, which he will certainly use to bind them hand and foot and cast them into outer darkness, unless they bestir themselves to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. **Z. '03-55 R3150:1**

March 20

If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free. John 8:31,32

DIVINE truth is never found except in the divinely appointed channels: and those channels are the Lord and the apostles and prophets. To continue in the doctrine set forth in their inspired writings, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and faithfully to conform our characters to them, is what is implied in continuing in the Word of the Lord. If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord, as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the Truth;" we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us," to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," to "war a good warfare," to "witness a good confession," and firmly to "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our course. **Z. '03-61 R3153:5**

March 21

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. Matthew 5:44

HERE is a way to examine the real disposition of your own heart toward such. Would you cheerfully do them kindness and help them to the extent of your ability to see the error of their way and to overcome it? Can you tenderly pray for them and patiently bear with their weakness, their ignorance and lack of development, and try by a noble example to show them a more excellent way? If such be the case, then it is the sin that you despise, and not the sinner. The sin you should hate, but the sinner, never. Not until God's unerring judgment declares that the sin and the sinner are inseparably linked together may love let go its hold upon a brother man. **Z.'91-141 R1330:6**

March 22

If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. 1 Corinthians 11:31,32

THE ascertainment of gains and losses as New Creatures, and how and when and where these came to us in the constant battle with the world, the flesh and the devil, will surely profit all who make such reckonings with an eye single to the pleasement of the Lord.

Spiritual Israelites...are to live a daily and hourly life of nearness to the High Priest. The **blood** of the dear Redeemer is to be continually invoked for the cleansing of the slightest defilement of conscience, that thus the wedding garment of our Lord's imputed righteousness may not become draggled, but that the slightest spot being removed, we may have it "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." **Z.'03-4,3 R3125:4,3**

March 23

Ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became the companions of them that were so used.
Hebrews 10:32,33

THE strongest of the brethren need the help, the encouragement, the assistance of others. The Lord has so arranged it that we may not feel ourselves entirely self-sufficient, and that even our proper leaning upon the Lord shall seem to require also the cooperation, encouragement, sympathy and love of the fellow-laborers in the vineyard. Who that has borne any measure of the labor and heat of the day in the gospel service cannot sympathize with this thought? Here, then, is a way in which many of the Lord's dear people, who have not themselves the largest amount of talent or opportunity for service, may be co-laborers and assistants in the Gospel work. *Z. '03-40 R3144:1*

March 24

I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.
Hebrews 13:5

WHY, then, should we fear what man may do unto us, or be distressed in regard to the Lord's work, as though Satan or any other evil power could prevail against it? Nevertheless, it is for us to show our devotion, not only by our zeal, but also by our prudence, ...therefore we are to proceed in the Lord's work as though the entire responsibility rested upon us, but in our hearts are to recognize that the entire weight and responsibility rest with the Lord.

Long ago some one said, "I am immortal until my work is finished;" and we may rely upon it that this is practically true of all engaged in the Lord's service --that "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." *Z. '03-41*

March 25

Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:17,18

We grow in knowledge as we take note of the promises of God, and by faith apply them to ourselves, and seek to discern in our lives the fulfilment of those promises; we grow in grace simultaneously, for unless each item of knowledge be received into a good and honest heart, and bring forth its measure of obedience and righteousness (grace), we will not be prepared for the next step of knowledge, and would thus be stopped, or possibly turned back. And as a loss of knowledge would mean a measurable loss of grace, so also a loss of grace would mean a corresponding loss of knowledge--going into darkness, the promises of the Lord's Word becoming more and more dim and obscured, in proportion as our goodness or grace would be lost in worldliness or sin. **Z. '03-70 R3156:4**

March 26

We are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others. 1 Thessalonians 5:5,6

THE Christian, as a disciple of the Lord, as a pupil in the school of Christ, is being fitted for a place in the Millennial kingdom--for a share in its glory, honor and immortality....Hence, we see the necessity for the frequent admonitions of the Scriptures, that the Lord's people shall be awake;--not of those who slumber; not of those who are idle; not of those who are overcharged with the cares of this life; but that they be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Their service toward the Lord is primarily the bringing of themselves into as close harmony with the Lord's will, and into as close likeness to the divine pattern as possible; and secondly, it is that by precept and example they may help others of the called ones in the same narrow way. **Z. '03-70 R3156:5**

March 27

*I pray for them...that they all may be one...
that they may be made perfect in one...that the
world may know that Thou hast...loved them, as
Thou hast loved Me. John 17:9,20-23*

IN amazement we inquire, How can this be? Our Lord Jesus was always in perfect harmony with the Father--a son who gloriously reflected His likeness; but it has not been so with us; we were sinners and had nothing worthy of love. Yes, but we have been washed and cleansed, and, however imperfect our earthen vessels may still be, our hearts are perfect in His sight who is able to read the heart. And, as He sees us with a perfect heart--a perfect purpose and intention--striving to overcome the weaknesses and disabilities of our imperfect flesh, and with painful, yet determined effort to do His will, and humbly trusting in the provisions which He has made for our redemption from the fall, God recognizes in us that which is worthy of His love. *Z.'03-79 R3161:6*

March 28

*Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus
Christ. 2 Timothy 2:3*

THE true soldier does not debate his cause. He is rightly supposed to have settled upon its justice and righteousness before he enlisted to serve it. Thereafter he avouches it and defies contradiction of it. He is ready to spend all and be all spent in its defense.

It is glorious to serve Christ in honesty and in fullness of fidelity. There is an ineffable joy in being on the right side, in knowing that beyond the field of blood and the valley of shadows is an abundant entrance into the joys and peace of the triumphant King of kings. For that hope none should shrink from the hardness of battle, none quail before the rage of the enemy, and none tremble before the certainty of hunger, thirst, nakedness, wounds or death. *Z.'03-84 R3162:6; 3163:1*

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**

March 30

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. 2 Peter 3:11

GOD-LIKENESS certainly cannot include any harmful gossip, any unclean or unholy conversation, any disloyal or rebellious words. Let such things be put far away from all who name the name of Christ in sincerity and truth. And let us remember daily to settle our accounts with the Lord, to make sure that no record of idle words, unrepented of, and consequently unforgiven, stands against us....If daily we render up our accounts to God and seek His grace for greater overcoming power with each succeeding day, we shall be acquitted in judgment and stand approved before God through Christ, having the testimony of His Holy Spirit with our spirits that we are pleasing and acceptable to Him. **Z.'96-33 R1938:5**

March 31

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

1 Timothy 6:12

WHETHER our warfare be of the more public kind or of the more private sort, there must be warfare; and, more than this, there must be progress and victory, else we can never be accepted of the Lord as "overcomers."

Another thought should be borne in mind by us all....The Lord in making His estimate will take knowledge of the spirit which actuated us, rather than of the results secured by our efforts....In view of this, let us see to it, not only that we do with our might what our hands find to do, but also that our every sacrifice and gift to the Lord and His cause is so full of love and devotion that the Lord will surely approve it; as done from love for Him and His, and not from vain glory. *Z.'03-91 R3166:3*

April

April 1

*Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.
Mark 14:38*

WHAT may be the character of the temptations, we may not clearly discern until they are upon us; for if we knew all about them in advance they would be but slight temptations. Watch, therefore, and pray always; for the only safe way is to be prepared; because your adversary, the devil, is seeking whom he may devour. He knows your weak points, and is ready to take advantage of them. We will each need the graces of the Spirit in our hearts, as well as the Lord's "grace to help in time of need" if we would overcome.

"My soul be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize."

Z.'03-119 R3179:1

April 2

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Galatians 6:10

THE CHRISTIAN is to be ready to do good at the expense of his own time and convenience to all men, but he is to be ready to lay down his life for the brethren--he is to seek opportunities for laying down his life day after day, in the sense of giving his time to the communication of the Truth, or helping the Lord's brethren in any manner, to put on the whole armor of God, and to stand in the evil day. *Z.'03-121 R3180:3*

April 3

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Romans 13:12

THE works of darkness would be any works whatsoever that would not stand the fullest investigation; that would not stand approval in the light of the new dispensation, if it were fully ushered in. Let us remember that we belong to the new dispensation, and not to the old, and should, therefore, live in accordance with our citizenship and our responsibilities toward the Prince of light and in opposition to the prince of darkness, his works and his ways. ***Z.'03-122 R3181:1***

April 4

Let us walk honestly, as in the day. Romans 13:13

EACH one should see to it that he is honest, not only in matters of dollars and cents, but honest in his treatment of his neighbors, in his treatment of the brethren, and above all, honest in his confessions respecting his God and his faith. The test is being made along this line, and those who love the favor of men rather than the favor of God, and who dishonestly are willing to confess and profess a lie, will be given up to their lie, will be permitted to blight their eternal interests, will be proving themselves unfit for the Kingdom--whatever else they may ultimately become fit for. ***Z.'03-122 R3181:3***

April 5

*My mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips:
when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate
on Thee in the night watches. Psalm 63:5,6*

PRAYER is not a privilege merely, but also a necessity; --commanded as indispensable to our Christian growth. Whoever loses the desire to thank and worship and commune with the Father of mercies, may rest assured that he is losing the very spirit of sonship, and should promptly seek to remove the barrier--the world, the flesh or the devil. Every additional evidence of the Lord's confidence in us by the revealing to us of His character and plan, so far from diminishing our worship and prayers, should multiply them. If our hearts are good soil they will bring forth the more abundantly. **Z.'96-161 R2004:6**

April 6

*If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be
ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.
1 Peter 4:16*

SICKNESS and discomfort of any sort, incurred by our energy in the service of the Truth, are permitted by our Father as evidences of our fidelity and love; because if not liable to such tribulations, or if relieved of them instantly by a miracle, the Lord's service would cost us no sacrifice and the test of our willingness to endure for the Truth's sake would be wanting. As it is, however, every ache or pain or wound of person or of feelings, and beheading socially or literally *for the Truth's sake*, becomes a witness of the spirit, testifying to our faithfulness. And in all such tribulations we should rejoice greatly--as say our Lord and the Apostle Peter. **Z.'96-166 R2007:5**

April 7

My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

IF you have no burning zeal to preach the good tidings of great joy, pray earnestly and faithfully and persistently for it, and strive for it, and you will soon have it. If you have a zeal and love for the gospel, and lack ability to present it, pray for the ability while you make full use of what you have. If you have the zeal and the ability, and lack an opportunity, take it to the Lord in prayer as soon as you can, telling Him that you are faithfully using all the opportunities you have. Then watch for more opportunities, without slacking your hand to use the very humblest and smallest within your reach. **Z. '96-163 R2006:3**

April 8

If any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him. Hebrews 10:38

THE drawing back may at first be a very slight departure from the narrow way of sacrifice--only a looking back perhaps, with a sigh for the things behind; a little slowing up of speed in the race set before us; then a little disposition to compromise the Truth in favor of the cravings of the fallen nature. Thus the way is prepared for the arts of the tempter, who is quick to note our weak points, and to take advantage of them in a manner best suited to our case. Subtle errors are brought to bear against the judgment; pleasing allurements, with a show of righteousness, are presented to the fleshly mind; and, almost imperceptibly, the soul forgets its "first love" for the Lord, and its first zeal for His service, and drifts away from the Truth and the spirit of it, being no longer led of the Holy Spirit of God. **Z. '95-93 R1799:1**

April 9

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 1 Corinthians 9:24

TO gain the victory we must not only put on the armor of God, but we must be heroes in the strife, and wage an **aggressive** warfare upon the lusts of the eye and flesh and pride of life and all the foes of righteousness and purity. **Love**--love for the Lord, for the Truth and for righteousness--must inspire us, or we shall never be victors. Love alone will keep us faithful even unto death, and make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Where fervent love rules the heart it implies that the heart is **fully submitted** to the Lord, and that means that nine-tenths of the battle is already won. But even then, as the apostle says (**Jude 21**), we must **keep** ourselves in the love of God, in watchfulness and prayer and zeal; and grace will abound where love abounds. **Z.'95-93 R1799:4**

April 10

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. 1 Peter 5:6

IT is indeed no easy matter to tread the pathway of humility, to continually check the human aspirations and to keep the sacrifice on the altar until it is fully consumed. But thus it is that we are to work out our own salvation to the high calling with fear and trembling, lest we come short of worthiness for the prize of the high calling promised to the faithful overcomers who tread closely in the footsteps of our blessed Forerunner, who was meek and lowly of heart.

It is when we are thus humble and faithful that the Lord makes us His chosen vessels to bear His name to others. Thus emptied of self, He can fill us with His Spirit and with His Truth, and we can go forth strong in the Lord of hosts and in His mighty power, to do valiant service as soldiers of the cross. **Z.'93-7 R1487:5**

April 11

***Let us walk...not in rioting and drunkenness.
Romans 13:13***

SOME have an intoxication for money, wealth; others an intoxication for business; others for dress; others for music; others for art; but as the Lord's people, who have got a glimpse of the new day, and the great work of God which is to be accomplished in that day, our hearts should be so absorbed in the work of God that these matters, which would be thought proper enough and right enough in others, worldly people--because they are not awake as we are, and because they see not the future as we see it--should be far from our conception and course. **Z.'03-123 R3181:4**

April 12

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the participation of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the participation of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread. 1 Corinthians 10:16,17

IT is one cup, though it be the juice of many grapes, even as it is one loaf, though it be from many grains. The grains cannot maintain their individuality and their own life if they would become bread for others; the grapes cannot maintain themselves as grapes if they would constitute the life-giving spirit; and thus we see the beauty of the apostle's statement that the Lord's people are participants in the one loaf and cup.... There is no other way that we can attain the new nature than by accepting the Lord's invitation to drink of His cup, and be broken with Him as members of the one loaf, and to be buried with Him in baptism into His death, and thus to attain with Him resurrection glory, honor and immortality. **Z.'01-76 R2772:6**

April 13

***Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man,
and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. John 6:53***

GLADLY, dear Lord, we eat (appropriate to our necessities) the merit of Thy pure nature sacrificed for us--for our justification. Gladly, too, we will partake of the cup of suffering with Thee, realizing it to be a blessed privilege to suffer with Thee, that in due time we may also reign with Thee;--to be dead with Thee, that in the everlasting future we may live with Thee, and be like Thee and share Thy love and Thy glory as Thy Bride. Oh! that we may be faithful, not only in the performance of the symbol, but also of the reality. Blessed Lord, we hear Thy Word saying, "Ye shall indeed drink of My cup and be baptized with My baptism." Lord, we are not of ourselves able thus to sacrifice; but Thy grace is sufficient for us, for we are wholly Thine, now and forever. ***Z.'99-51 R2436:5***

April 14

***He hath poured out His soul unto death; and He
was numbered with the transgressors. Isaiah 53:12***

AS every one who follows the Master's footsteps must needs have some Gethsemane experiences, so also each must have a taste at least of all the Master's experiences. Let us not forget, then, to look about us for opportunities for serving the "brethren," the "little ones," the members of the body of Christ. Let each be careful not to add to the reproaches that must fall upon all the followers of the Lamb, but on the contrary to offer words of sympathy, and to help bear each other's crosses, difficulties and trials by the way. Thus can we best show to our Lord and Head how we would have appreciated the opportunity of helping Him bear His cross on the way to Calvary. ***Z.'99-125 R2473:3***

April 15

***Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.
Luke 23:46***

WITH full confidence our dear Redeemer looked up to the Father, and full of faith declared that He committed all of life and all of the blessed hopes for the future to the Father's love and to the Father's power, --to be provided in harmony with the Father's plan and Word. And so must we, as followers in our Master's footsteps, look forward with faith, and in our dying hour commit all our interests to the keeping of Him who has manifested His love for us, not only in the gift of His Son as our Redeemer, but all our journey through,--in His providential care, as well as in the exceeding great and precious promises which go before us and give us strength, comfort and assurance.
Z.'99-128 R2475:4

April 16

They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Malachi 3:17

HAD the Lord sent us forth to seek His Bride, we might have gathered in some whom He rejects as unworthy--because we are unable to read the heart. This thought should make us very humble, gentle and meek toward all, and very trustful of the Lord, and very much inclined to look for His leading in respect to our labors as His servants, just as Samuel looked to the Lord in connection with the anointing of David.
Z.'03-223 R3227:1

April 17

The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you. 1 John 2:27

THE blessing and power of the Lord accompanied David's anointing in some manner--just how we may not understand--enabling him to progress in knowledge, etc., and fitting and preparing him for the duties of the office to which he had been anointed. May we not consider as an antitype to this, the anointing which comes upon the church from the time of her acceptance with the Lord? Ours is not a physical anointing, nor are the blessings conferred of a temporal character: it is as New Creatures that we grow in grace and knowledge and love; and as New Creatures that, by and by, we shall be perfected in the First Resurrection and come to the throne with our Lord and Master as our Head. **Z.'03-223 R3227:4**

April 18

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. 1 Peter 4:12,13

IN an unfriendly world we can expect to receive only the reproaches of our Master, for the servant is not above his Lord. The world, the flesh and the devil oppose our way: there are fightings within and fears without, and many are the arrows and fiery darts aimed at the righteous. But what is the safe attitude of the soul under afflictions and severe testings? Is it not in silence before God, waiting and watching first to see His leading, His will, in every matter before presuming to touch things that often involve so much? So the Psalmist suggests, saying, "I was dumb with silence: I held my peace, even from good." [even from doing or saying what seemed good in my own sight]. **Z.'96-31 R1937:4**

April 19

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. Matthew 12:34,35

OUR first concern, then, should be for the heart-- that its affections and dispositions may be fully under the control of divine grace; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, brotherly kindness, love, faith, meekness, temperance, supreme reverence for God and Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles be fixed, established, in the heart, then out of the good treasure of the heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace. **Z.'96-30 R1937:2**

April 20

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much. Luke 16:10

THIS does not mean that the Lord's people are to be content with the usual routine of daily life in the home or in the shop, and are to say to themselves, "God accepts my labor as though it were given directly to Him in some other more desirable form," but it does mean that each person so situated should day by day carefully scan his earthly duties and obligations to see in what manner he could justly and properly cut off moments, hours or days from the service of earthly things and earthly interests, that now might be given to sacrifice for spiritual things and spiritual interests of himself or others. The consecrated heart, the sacrificing priest, is the one who will improve the moments as they swiftly fly, using them as far as possible in the Father's business. **Z.'03-407 R3266:2**

April 21

We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:15,16

IN the moment of temptation the heart should lift itself to the great Master, in full assurance of faith, recognizing His love, His wisdom and His ability to help us, and His willingness to make all things work together for good to those who love Him. Asking for assistance in such a time of need would surely draw to us the Lord's counsel and help and strength for righteousness, truth, purity and love; and thus we should be hourly victorious, daily victorious, and finally victorious. **Z.'98-23 R2249:5**

April 22

I say unto you, That every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. Matthew 12:36

IF, in the daily scrutiny of our ways, which is the duty of every Christian, we discover that in any particular our words have been dishonoring to the Lord, we should remember that in the name of our Advocate we may approach the throne of grace, explain to our Heavenly Father our realization of the error, our deep regret at our failure to honor His name and His cause by a holy walk and conversation, and humbly request that the sin be not laid to our charge, but that it may be blotted out through His gracious provision for our cleansing through Christ, humbly claiming that in His precious blood is all our hope and trust. Thus we should render up our account for every idle word; and by our words of repentance, supplemented by the merits of Christ applied by faith, shall we be acquitted. **Z.'96-32 R1938:3**

April 23

That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. Luke 8:15

EVERY one who will be a sacrificer must of necessity be meek, humble, teachable, else very shortly he will get out of the way. He must also learn to develop the grace of the Lord along the line of patience, because it certainly requires patience to deny ourselves and to submit at times to injustice where there is no proper means of avoiding it without doing injury to the Lord's cause or to some of His people. It also implies a cultivation of brotherly kindness and, in a word, the development of the whole will of God in our hearts and lives; namely, love, which must be attained in a large and overcoming measure ere we shall have completed our earthly work of sacrificing.
Z.'03-408 R3267:1

April 24

Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. Romans 15:2

THE lesson to each member of the Royal Priesthood is that the special mission of their office, vocation, calling in the present time, is to sacrifice....Another form of service frequently not discerned by the royal priesthood is the opportunity of renouncing our own ways or plans, our own methods or preferences, and in the interests of peace accepting instead the plans, the preferences of others--where it is merely a matter of personal preference, and where we believe the Lord will be as willing to have the matter one way as another. We can in the interests of peace sacrifice our preferences to the wishes of others if we see some good can be gained by such a course.
Z.'03-406,407 R3265:3; 3266:5

April 25

Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6

"ACCORDING to thy faith be it unto thee," would seem to be the Lord's method of dealing with all who are His disciples, from first to last of their Christian walk and experience....faith when He seems not to notice us; faith when things seem to be going prosperously with us in our spiritual affairs and in our temporal affairs; and faith equally strong when the currents and forces seem all to be against us.

The victory that overcometh the world is the faith that in all conditions is able to look up to the Lord with absolute confidence in His goodness and faithfulness, and to realize that according to His promise, eventually all things will work together for good to us because we are His people. ***Z.'00-139 R2627:4***

April 26

He that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. Hebrews 4:10

INSTEAD of demanding one day of the seven the law of love really controls, regulates our entire time; seven days of the week we are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength; and seven days of the week we are to love our neighbor as ourselves; and seven days in the week we are to rest also--rest from our own works--rest by faith in the finished work of Christ--rest in the love of God--rest in the peace of God which passeth understanding, ruling in our hearts continually. ***Z.'02-205 R3039:1***

April 27

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Philippians 2:5

TO have the mind of Christ is indeed the one requirement of lawful striving--a mind which humbly and faithfully submits itself to the will of God as expressed in His great plan of the ages, and which devotes all energy to the accomplishment of His will, because of an intelligent appreciation of the ends He has in view.

If so filled with the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, we, like Him, will desire to be as free as possible from entangling earthly affairs, and to have our time as free as possible for the Lord's service, and then to devote all energy, ability and effort to that service. **Z.'02-265 R3070:5**

April 28

We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. Romans 5:3-5

WE have need of patience, and that can only be gained by trials. We have need of faith, and that can only be developed by necessities. We have need of experience for our future work, which can be gained only by such experiences which permit us to be touched with a feeling of the infirmities and difficulties and trials of those about us, to whom we shall be ministers and representatives when we reach the throne. For us, then, the lesson of present experiences is to resist evil,--and not with evil but with good. **Z.'03-348 R3238:6**

April 29

***He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him:
I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him,
and honor him. Psalm 91:15***

IT is always our blessed privilege to carry our sorrows
and vexations to the Lord;

"For He knows

How to steal the bitter from life's woes."

He does it by showing us, through experience, the
vanity of all earthly things and their utter inability
to satisfy the soul's cravings, or to comfort the wounded
spirit. Then comes the thought that however vexing
our experiences, they will soon be over; and if
we permit them to do so they will only work out in
us the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and develop
in us strong and noble characters, disciplined to
thorough self-control, thoughtful consideration, patient
endurance of affliction and loving loyalty and
faithfulness and trust in God. **Z.'96-31 R1937:5**

April 30

***Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood,
an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should
show forth the praises of Him who hath called you
out of darkness into His marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9***

THE very object of our being called into this light
is that we may let it shine. If we do not let it shine
we are unworthy of it, and the treasure will be taken
away and we will be left in darkness. If indeed we
have received the light and have consecrated ourselves
fully to God, let us ask ourselves, What am
I doing to show forth the praises of Him who hath
called me out of darkness? Am I going forth with
these tidings to my neighbors near and far?

Can I truly affirm that I am:--

"All for Jesus, all for Jesus--

All my being's ransomed powers;

All my thoughts, and words, and doings,

All my days and all my hours?" **Z.'03-165 R3199:6**

May

May 1

The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Matthew 20:28

IF the consecration be to the Lord, then every sacrifice of our just rights and interests on behalf of ourselves as New Creatures, on behalf of husband or children, father or mother, neighbors or friends, brethren in Christ, is counted of the Lord as so much done to Him; whereas if the very same services were rendered from any other standpoint--by any one unjustified, and not consecrated to the Lord, or merely done to the individuals and not as a sacrifice unto the Lord--these things would not count to us as priests, as our sacrifices. **Z.'03-407 R3266:4**

May 2

All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 2 Timothy 3:12

OPPOSITION is to be expected, and will, doubtless, continue until we finish our course in death. To submit patiently to this opposition is to sacrifice our own *natural* preferences for the friendship and the pleasures of the present life, and to endure hardness as good soldiers for the Truth's sake, in whatever shape that hardness may come, in our effort to do the Lord's will and work of advancing the interests of His Kingdom.

To be really in the Lord's service involves, first, the careful and continual study of God's plan; second, the imbibing of its spirit; leading, thirdly, to an enthusiastic zeal for its accomplishment, and to activity to the extent of ability in its service, at whatever cost or sacrifice it may require. **Z.'03-164,165 R3199:2**

May 3

Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Hebrews 5:14

THOSE who have real and sincere faith in God are willing to take Him at His word: and with these the first principles of the doctrine should long ago have been established; much of the superstructure of gold and silver and precious stones should already be erected, and the work be steadily progressing. Such are able, if they are loyal and true to God, to discern between truth and error. We ought to *know* what we believe and why we believe it, and then should be bold and uncompromising in declaring it; for "if the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle?" **Z.'03-167 R3200:5**

May 4

The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. 1 Samuel 16:7

IF we lose sight of the fact that God regards us from the standpoint of the will, if we get to thinking of ourselves and God's estimate of us according to the flesh, we are sure to get proportionately into darkness and confusion and discouragement. But let us not forget on the other hand, that the spirit, or will, is counted alive because of its righteousness, because it is in harmony with God. Let us, therefore, never be slack in respect to the will, or intention governing the conduct of our lives, but remember that any laxity will mean the proportionate loss of spiritual life. To will right is always possible to us, and nothing less than an absolutely loyal will could be acceptable to God in Christ.
Z.'03-171 R3203:2

May 5

If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Romans 8:13

THE conditions upon which we may continue our relationship to the Lord, and our hope for a share in the glories of the First Resurrection are thus definitely stated to include mortification of the deeds of the body --restraining the fleshly inclinations, putting them to death, crucifying them, using them up in the service of the Lord and His cause. Such mortification of the deeds of the body, such a battle against the weaknesses of the flesh, is what the apostle elsewhere speaks of as the "warfare," when he tells us that the flesh warreth against the spirit, and the spirit in turn warreth against the flesh, for the two are contrary, and will be opponents to the end of life; and if the spirit has been willing, and has fought to the best of its ability against the weaknesses of the flesh, the Lord will count the victory complete, through the merit of the Redeemer.

Z. '03-172 R3203:5

May 6

As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Romans 8:14

THIS, then, is the guide by which we may know our true position, not only at the beginning of the race, but to the end of it, viz., if we are led by the Spirit of God --if that is the direction in which we are following, if that is what we are seeking--then we are sons of God; He owns and accepts all who have come unto Him through Christ, and who are trusting in the merit of the wedding garment, and who continue in this attitude of heart. ***Z. '03-173 R3203:6***

May 7

***Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel.
1 Corinthians 9:16***

WE should be prompt to tell others the best tidings we have; sympathy with the groaning creation in the various trials of life should lead us to point to the Lord's promises respecting the coming Kingdom and the blessings that should then be to all the families of the earth. Whoever does not thus proclaim daily, on every suitable opportunity, gives evidence either of lack of knowledge or of faith in the revelation, or of selfishness, which the Lord cannot approve, and which, if persisted in, will ultimately debar him from a share in the Kingdom. **Z.'03-174 R3205:1**

May 8

And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life. 1 John 2:25

WE all should understand that we have something to do in realizing the gracious promises of God to us. In connection with the affairs of this present life He has promised that our bread and water shall be sure, but this does not imply that we shall neglect reasonable opportunities for securing these. He has promised us also a share in the Kingdom by and by; but it is for us to make our calling and election sure. God is thoroughly capable and thoroughly willing to perform all of His part in connection with every matter, but it is to our advantage that He calls us to show our faith by our works--by our co-operation with Him in all reasonable ways. **Z.'03-175 R3205:4**

May 9

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him; rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Colossians 2:6,7

THE general sentiment among the teachers of false doctrines, who think it is neither necessary nor advisable to be established in the faith is...that to be established is to be a bigot. And so it is if one is so unfair in mind as to accept and tenaciously hold that which he has never proved either by sound logic or Bible authority. But he is not an unreasoning bigot who, in simple faith, on the authority of God, accepts the Word of God. And such, and only such, as do so are established in the Truth. The difference between a strong and steadfast Christian and a bigot is that the one is established in the Truth, while the other is established in error. *Z. '03-199 R3215:2*

May 10

Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over. Psalm 23:5

THE fulness of the cup, running over, has a double significance. It is a cup of joy and a cup of sorrow, and in both respects it overflows. He who would partake of the joys of the Lord must also partake of His cup of suffering; we must suffer with Him if we would reign with Him. But we count the sufferings of this present time as not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed in us, and hence we are enabled to rejoice in tribulation, so that as the tribulations will overflow the rejoicing likewise overflows, and with the apostle we can say, Rejoice, and again I say Rejoice! *Z. '03-413 R3270:4*

May 11

For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Psalm 44:22

WE are to remember that we have each but one sacrifice; that it is to be rendered to the Lord day by day in the improvement of every opportunity as it comes to us, to serve Him and His. We are to remember that while it consists of many little sacrifices, some of them too small to mention or even to consider, nevertheless it will require all of these to complete the one sacrifice which we made at the beginning of our induction into His family. When we gave our wills, we gave our all; and any holding back in any of the little affairs of life --any refusal to sacrifice that which we think would please the Lord--is a keeping back of that much of what we have devoted to Him. **Z.'03-408 R3266:6**

May 12

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 7:1

HOW many of the prospective members of the Royal Priesthood find that they have defilements along this line, malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, evil speaking! It is safe to say that every one has some, if not all, of these weaknesses in the flesh to contend with--especially at the beginning of his entrance upon the priestly vocation. How carefully all should seek to put all these away! How each should scrutinize not only every act of life and every word and every thought, but, additionally, every motive underlying his words, thoughts and actions, so that they may be more and more purified from the earth defilements and be more and more acceptable to the Lord! **Z.'03-408 R3267:2**

May 13

Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 1 Samuel 15:22

OUR heavenly Father wishes us to be very attentive to His Word, and not to think for a moment that we can improve thereon, or that times and circumstances will alter the propriety of our obedience to Him....Let us hearken to the Word of the Lord and keep close to it, not fearing the results, but having faith that He who keeps us never slumbers nor sleeps, and is too wise to err, as well as competent to meet every emergency that could possibly come upon us as a result of our obedience. **Z.'03-218,219 R3224:2**

May 14

Speaking the truth in love,...grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. Ephesians 4:15

WHAT is it to grow in grace? It is to grow in favor with the Lord through an intimate personal acquaintance and fellowship of spirit with Him...To grow thus in grace and not grow in knowledge is impossible; for the very object of such communion is to build us up in a more perfect knowledge and acquaintance with the Lord--to bring us into closer fellowship with the divine plan, and to give us the privilege of being "workers together with Him" in executing that plan. If, therefore, we love and obey the Lord and desire to grow in His favor, His written Word is our daily meditation and study; and thus we grow in knowledge.

Z.'03-200 R3215:3

May 15

*Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat: the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.
Habakkuk 3:17,18*

WE see that God permits evil in the *world* that the world may learn certain lessons of bitter experience as to the natural rewards of evil doing, but we see also a ministry of evil in respect to the *saints*--in their testing and polishing and refining; making them ready, and proving them worthy, as overcomers, to inherit the wonderful things which God has in reservation for the faithful. *Z.'03-94 R3168:2*

May 16

*...Thou shalt be called by a new name,...thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.
Isaiah 62:2,3*

LET us never forget that we are a "peculiar people," separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God, having been called out of our former darkness into His marvelous light. And if thus separate from the world and from Christians who partake largely of the worldly spirit, what wonder if we find them all out of harmony with us, and either ignoring or opposing us. *Z.'03-164 R3199:2*

May 17

They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. John 16:2

THE persecutions of today are more refined than in any previous period. The faithful today are not stoned with literal stones or shot with literal arrows or literally beheaded, but it is still true that the wicked shoot out arrows at the righteous, "even bitter words," and many because of faithfulness are reproved and slandered and cut off from fellowship--"beheaded for the testimony of Jesus." Let all such emulate Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Let their testimonies be given with radiant faces like his. Let their eyes of faith perceive Jesus at the right hand of the Majesty on High as their Advocate and Deliverer. Let their words be with moderation as were Stephen's, and let it be true of them, as written of him, "full of grace and power" and "filled with the Holy Spirit." **Z.'97-57 R2109:6**

May 18

We which have believed do enter into rest. Hebrews 4:3

OUR rest in the Lord is as complete as is our belief in Him. He who believes fully **rests** fully; he who believes only partially **rests** but partially. The ideal condition of the spiritual Israelite is the attainment of a perfect rest, a perfect Sabbath-keeping, in his present experience, and a waiting and laboring for another and still more complete rest--the actual rest of the perfected condition--the rest that remains for the people of God. "Let us therefore labor to enter into that rest [Sabbath], lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" [of fleshly Israel].--**Hebrews 4:9-11. Z.'99-253 R2534:5**

May 19

We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

Romans 15:1

PRINCIPLES may never be abandoned for any consideration; but liberties and personal rights may be ignored in the interest of others frequently and to divine pleasing. The Apostle Paul was ready to go to any length in defense of principle (*Galatians 2:5,11*), but in the sacrifice of his earthly rights and privileges and liberties for the sake of Christ and the church, the apostle evidently came next to our Lord Jesus, and is a noble example to all the church. *Z.'97-75 R2119:2*

May 20

A peculiar people, zealous of good works.
Titus 2:14

A "peculiar people,"--not peculiar in dress, nor in manners, nor in language, nor in foolish, senseless forms and idiosyncrasies; but peculiar in that it is separate from the world and the spirit of the world. It has the Spirit of Christ--a spirit of full consecration to the Lord, and separateness from the world and its selfish aims. It is peculiar in its adherence to the Word of the Lord as its only law. It is peculiar in that it rejects worldly wisdom when it conflicts with the divine revelation. It is peculiar in that it is in the world, but not of the world. It is peculiar in that it has a decided faith and acts in harmony with its faith, and with zeal. It is peculiar in that it is self-sacrificing and knows no will but the will of its King. It is peculiar in that it knows the Truth and is able to give a reason for the hope within while others merely speculate and wonder and doubt. *Z.'97-95 R2128:2*

May 21

All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Timothy 3:16,17

IT will be well for us all to remember that all the graces of the Spirit, all the progress in the knowledge of divine things to which we have already attained, that may have helped us nearer to God and to holiness, have come to us through the Scriptures of the Old Testament and through the words of our Lord and His inspired apostles: nor will it ever be necessary to go to other channels for the true wisdom which would prepare us for the salvation promised. **Z.'97-170 R2166:2**

May 22

God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power and of love, and of a sound mind. 2 Timothy 1:7

THE spirit of the Lord imparted to His people is not a spirit of fear, but on the contrary a spirit of power, energy, zeal awakened by love;--loving devotion to God, and a desire to please and serve Him; loving devotion to the Truth, and a loving devotion to God's people and a desire to build them up in holy things, and to do good unto all men as we have opportunity,... a spirit of a "sound mind;" a mind that is fortified and strengthened by the Word of the Lord on every subject, and hence, while thoroughly fearless of man, is wise in judging of times, seasons and methods for using the energy of love which burns as a fire within the consecrated heart. **Z.'97-170 R2166:1**

May 23

***Ye also ought to wash one another's feet.
John 13:14***

THIS would signify that the members of Christ's body should have a mutual watch-care over one another's welfare; to keep each other clean, holy, pure, and to assist one another in overcoming the trials and temptations and besetments of this present evil world, arising from the three sources of temptation, "the world, the flesh and the devil." ...Only as we cultivate the various graces of the spirit,--meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love--can we hope to be specially helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and to get rid of defilements of the world, and the flesh.

Z.'97-243 R2201:6; 2202:4

May 24

Love...is not easily provoked. 1 Corinthians 13:5

HOWEVER natural depravity, and heredity, and nervous disorders may tend toward the spirit of fretfulness, taciturnity, and touchiness, 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 of the power of the grace of Love. This grace as it grows should make every child of God sweet-tempered.

Z.'97-247 R2204:4

May 25

Be not overcome of evil. Romans 12:21

WE are never to take up or to use evil words or methods or manners. To do so is temporarily to join the enemy, or to admit that his implements and methods are better than those of the Captain to whom we belong. To answer anger with anger, evil report with evil report, bitter words with bitter words, slander with slander, persecution with persecution, blow with blow, or any of these, would be to endeavor to overcome evil with evil. This, which is natural to our fallen natures, is what we are commanded to avoid, that we may the more thoroughly cultivate the new nature. To be misled by the adversary to use his methods in any of these ways is to be overcome of evil. **Z. '97-267 R2215:1**

May 26

***Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up.
1 Corinthians 8:1***

ALL who seek to teach the divine plan to others are exposed to peculiar temptations, so that the honor of serving the Lord and His people demands a correspondingly larger measure of the graces of the Holy Spirit, as well as of knowledge...Whoever, therefore, would be an instructor of others, a mouth-piece of the Lord, should cultivate all the various graces of the Holy Spirit, including meekness; that these combined (Love) with knowledge, may build up himself as well as build up those to whom he ministers. **Z. '97-277 R2219:6**

May 27

In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Philippians 2:3

PAUL exhorts that all shall cultivate the grace of humility, and that in every affair each shall take heed that "nothing be done through strife or vain glory," that self-laudation and strivings for pre-eminence be thoroughly put away as the greatest enemies to the Spirit of the Lord and the blessing of the church. On the contrary, each should have that lowliness of mind which can see the good qualities of fellow members and appreciate some of these qualities at least as superior to his own. All the talents, and all the abilities, need never be expected in any one person in any congregation. So, then, each may, if he be of lowly mind, see in others certain good qualities or graces superior to his own, and should delight to recognize these and to esteem their possessor accordingly. **Z.'97-296 R2228:1**

May 28

Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body [so long as we feel entirely contented with present conditions --ourselves and our surroundings], we are absent from the Lord. 2 Corinthians 5:6

IF we were living near to Him, "walking with God," we would not feel perfectly satisfied with present attainments, conditions, etc.; but would feel like pilgrims and strangers, seeking a better rest, a better home, "which God hath in reservation for them that love Him." But this, as the apostle explains (verse 7), is true only of those who walk by faith and not by sight. "But we are confident [full of faith toward God, we rejoice to walk by faith], and are well pleased rather to be from home [homeless, pilgrims and strangers on the earth], and to be at home with the Lord" in the spirit of our fellowship. **Z.'97-305 R2231:4**

May 29

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you:...Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. John 14:27

THE more we overcome the world, the flesh and the devil, the more we seek to do the will of our Father who is in heaven, the more we seek for the fellowship and communion of our dear Redeemer, the more we seek to do those things which are pleasing in His sight, so much the more will we have of the joy and peace which no man taketh from us, and which trials, difficulties and persecutions can only make the more sweet and precious. **Z. '97-306 R2232:5**

"Ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."--**John 16:22**

May 30

Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation. Romans 12:12

HERE is an important part of the great battle of the Christian's life. He must fight the natural tendencies of the old nature and confidently anticipate the victory in the strength of the great Captain of his Salvation. He must not succumb to the flattering and deceptive influences of prosperity, nor faint under the burdens of adversity. He must not allow the trials of life to sour and harden his disposition, to make him morose, or surly, or bitter, or unkind. Nor may he allow pride or ostentation or self-righteousness to grow and feed upon the temporal good things which the Lord's providence has granted him to test his faithfulness as a steward. **Z. '95-20 R1759:3**

May 31

It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Romans 14:21

IT is a very serious crime against the law of love and against the Lord's injunction, to cause one of His brethren to stumble (***Matthew 18:6***), but it would also be a crime in His sight for us to stumble others,--to hinder them from becoming brethren, and of the household of faith. Hence, it is clear that although knowledge might remove all prohibition of our consciences and all restraints of our liberty, yet love must first come in and approve the liberty before we can exercise it. Love places a firm command upon us, saying, --Thou shalt love the Lord with all thine heart, and thy neighbor as thyself. Love, therefore, and not knowledge, not liberty, must finally decide every question. ***Z.'03-43 R3145:6***

June

June 1

He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. John 14:21

MAY this intimate communion and fellowship with Christ impart to us each more and more of His own Spirit, so that the world may take knowledge of us, that we have "been with Jesus;" and let the prayer of each be,

"Lord Jesus, make Thyself to me
A living, bright reality!
More real to faith's vision keen,
Than any earthly object seen;
More dear, more intimately nigh,
Than e'en the sweetest earthly tie."

Z.'95-75 R1789:5

June 2

*I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.
1 Cor. 2:2*

OUR observation of those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than "this gospel" to engross time and attention leads us to advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the gospel, leaving all other subjects, however interesting, to others now, and to the future life for ourselves, when all knowledge shall be ours. Those who for any avoidable cause turn aside from the ministry of the true and only gospel, we have invariably observed, are quickly turned out of the way or greatly hindered in their course toward "the prize of our high calling." **Z.'95-116 R1811:5**

June 3

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech, there are no words, their voice is not heard; but their melody extendeth through all the earth, and to the end of the world their words. Psalm 19:1-4 (Leeser)

THE magnificent pageantry of the heavens daily and nightly should elicit our praise and adoration, and should inspire in our hearts holy and reverent devotion. Let the noiseless activity, the perfect obedience to divine law, and the blessed shining of the heavenly hosts, impress their wholesome lessons upon us--of zealous activity without commotion or ostentation; of perfect obedience to the will of Him who doeth all things well, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; and of letting the glory of the Lord which has illuminated us shine from us in turn upon every beholder.

Z.'95-121 R1815:1

June 4

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:7

IT is your faith that is on trial now. In the calmer days, when the sun of favor shone brightly upon you, you were quietly laying the foundation of a knowledge of the Truth, and rearing the superstructure of Christian character. Now you are in the furnace to be proved: summon therefore all your courage; fortify your patience; nerve yourself to endurance; hold fast to your hope; call to mind the promises, they are still yours; and "cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him," and faith has gained her victory. **Z.'95-135 R1823:4**

June 5

In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust. Psalm 31:1

THERE is nothing that puts the Christian at greater disadvantage in the presence of his foes than for him to let go, even temporarily, his grip upon the anchor of faith. Let him do so for a moment, and of necessity darkness begins to gather round him: he cannot see the brightness of his Father's face, for "without faith it is impossible to please God;" and while he grapples again for the anchor, the powers of darkness fiercely assail him with doubts and fears, based generally upon his human imperfections, which he should ever bear in mind are covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness. If we would have the peace of God reign in our hearts, we must never let go our anchor, "nor suffer Satan's deadliest strife to beat our courage down." The language of our hearts should always be, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust Him." ***Z. '95-157 R1835:4***

June 6

Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life. Luke 21:34

WHAT a work we realize to be before us, and what necessity for sobriety, vigilance, steadfastness! It is a life work, a life battle against a mighty foe entrenched in our flesh. The powers without are strong indeed, but the civil war within is by far the most to be dreaded. If we become in any measure intoxicated with the spirit of the world;--if we give way to self-gratification, love of ease, pleasure, a little indulgence of any of the old dispositions of envy, malice, pride, vain-glory, vaunting of self, headiness, highmindedness, wrath, strife, or any such thing--even a little, Oh, how great is the peril to which we are exposed!
Z. '95-201 R1859:6

June 7

The God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. 1 Peter 5:10

IT is only through endurance of hardness as good soldiers of Christ that this desirable condition can be attained--viz., perfect self-control and ability to resist evil, established faith, patience and virtue, settled, abiding rest in Christ, and hope through His word of promise. This undoubtedly was the apostle's own experience as he grew old in the Master's service, and so may it be ours. Let each departing year find us nearer the glorious summit of perfection! *Z. '95-202 R1860:4*

June 8

He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. James 5:20

WHEN we see others walking in forbidden paths, in the way of transgressors, we are not to follow them there in order to help them out; but to show them the right path by keeping in it and calling to them. When we see some confusing themselves with doctrines and teachings of men, which we know are *fundamentally* wrong, we are not to wade through those doctrines in order to help them out; but we are to remind them that the study of any doctrine which will not square with the *foundation* is not only a misuse of consecrated time, but that all trifling with that which we know to be error is wrong and dangerous, as all violations of conscience and principle are dangerous. *Z. '95-203 R1860:3*

June 9

***In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.
John 16:33***

THERE was no reward of earthly prosperity for the Lord's faithfulness, but the reverse--privation and persecution were realized, even unto death....He was a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" the reproaches of them that reproached God fell upon Him; though He was rich, for our sakes He became poor; so poor that He said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."...And the servant is not above his Lord: if they have persecuted Him they will persecute us also; and the reproaches of them that reproached Him will also fall upon us. The only present reward for which the followers of Christ may look is the heartfelt manifestation of the Lord's love and approval. ***Z.'95-207 R4072:4***

June 10

Lord, teach us to pray. Luke 11:1

IN brief, our prayers, to be acceptable to God, must express confident faith, loving esteem and reverence, full sympathy with the divine plan and submission to the divine will, childlike dependence upon God, acknowledgment of sins and shortcomings and desire for forgiveness, with humble craving for the divine guidance and protection. These may not always all be expressed in words, but such must at least be the attitude of the soul. ***Z.'95-213 R1865:1***

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed."

June 11

***Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended.
Phil. 3:13***

IF any man consider that he has attained a satisfactory spiritual state, from that moment he may date the beginning of his spiritual decline. No present attainments can be satisfactory to a sincere follower of Christ who studiously endeavors to copy the perfect pattern. It is only when we turn our eyes away from Christ that self-complacency can be exercised; for in full view of the pattern our shortcomings are ever manifest. And if in pride of heart we do lose sight of them ourselves, they only become the more manifest to others. Only in the realization of a continual growth into the likeness of Christ should the Christian find satisfaction. ***Z.'95-250 R1885:3***

June 12

This one thing I do. Philippians 3:13

WE observe the Apostle's singleness of purpose-- "This ***one thing*** I do." He did not try to do several things: if he had, he would surely have failed. He devoted his life to the one purpose to which he was called, and to that end dropped every other aim in life. He did it, too, in view of the fact that all through the present life his chosen course would bring certain loss, privation, toil, care, persecution and continual reproach. In this singleness of purpose he was relieved of many temptations to turn aside to enjoy some of the good things of this present life, or to pursue some of its illusive bubbles. ***Z.'95-250 R1885:3***

June 13

I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness. Psalm 17:15

"Now let our thoughts on wings sublime
Rise from the trivial cares of time,
Draw back the parting veil, and see
The glories of eternity."

LET thoughts of God and Christ and the worthy saints of the past and present, of the heavenly inheritance, of the blessedness of our future work in co-operation with Christ, of the magnitude and benevolence of the divine plan, and of the glory and blessedness of our gathering together unto Christ when our work of the present life is finished, fill our minds and inspire our hearts. And to these contemplations let us also receive the additional comfort and blessedness of personal communion and fellowship with God through prayer and study of the Word and the assembling of ourselves together for worship and praise. **Z.'95-251 R1885:6**

June 14

God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 1 Peter 5:5

ABOVE almost everything else, beloved, let us guard well our humility. It is only when we are little in our own eyes that God can use us with safety to ourselves. And yet He does not shield us from every test of fidelity. If therefore the Lord give you a little exaltation today, a little encouragement of success in His service, receive it humbly, meekly, remembering your own unworthiness and insufficiency except as God is pleased to work through you; and be just as ready to receive the humiliations of tomorrow as necessary for your discipline and the proper balancing of your character. If the success of yesterday make you fret under the humiliation of today, beware! You are not as roundly developed spiritually as you should be. **Z.'96-19 R1920:5**

June 15

And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Isaiah 55:3

ALL who hunger and thirst after righteousness, whose souls thirst after God as the hart for the water-brook, and who, having found Him, have consecrated themselves to Him and received the anointing of the Holy Spirit, witnessing with their spirits that they are the sons of God, and who as anointed sons can discover in themselves the worthy traits of true sons,-- loyalty, faithfulness, zeal, energy, courage, discretion, etc.,--these constitute the class with whom the Lord has made an everlasting covenant and to whom belong "the sure mercies of David." **Z.'96-29 R1936:3**

June 16

No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Hebrews 12:11

IT is under such discipline that the soul is mellowed to a loving submission that calmly says, I can do all things, bear all things, through Christ who strengtheneth me. As gradually the dross of the old nature is consumed, and the gold becomes more and more manifest, these precious souls become ever dearer to their loving Lord. So dear are they to Him that in every affliction He is near with His grace to sustain and His presence to cheer; and the deepest shades of sorrow become memory's most hallowed resting places, where the Day Star shines the brightest. **Z.'96-44 R1944:4**

June 17

Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire,...and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. Malachi 3:2,3

THE Great Refiner is watching to see how the precious metal of your character reflects His image. Or, in plain language, in every trial He watches to see what influences control our actions, whether they be influences of present advantage, or worldly policy, or personal friendship, or earthly loves--of husband, or wife, or children, or love of ease, or love of peace at any cost; or whether, on the other hand, we are controlled by the naked principles of truth and righteousness; and whether we will defend these principles with zeal and energy at any cost of labor or suffering, or both, and so fight the good fight of faith to the bitter end--even unto death. **Z. '96-45 R1944:5**

June 18

In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Psalm 16:11

IN the Lord's presence, no matter where we are, is fullness of joy. Let us cultivate the Lord's acquaintance more, drawing near to Him in prayer, in the study of His precious Word, in meditation upon all His goodness, His providential care, the marked manifestations of His grace in our own individual experiences, and His precious promises which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Thus "draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you" (**James 4:8**); He will manifest Himself to you and take up His abode with you.

It is indeed the will of God that all His children should be happy in Him, that they should be always rejoicing; and if any one lack this blessing, he is living below his privileges. **Z. '96-54 R1949:5**

June 19

Light [Truth] is sown for the righteous, and gladness [the joys of the Truth] for the upright in heart. Psalm 97:11

THE true children of God love the Truth because they have an affinity for it....When they have found the Truth they recognize its value; they prize it, and meditate upon it....They say, It is just like God: it is the manifestation of His glorious goodness, the reflection of His loving, benevolent, wise and just character. And therefore they love the Truth and the God who gave it: they treasure it up in their hearts and con it over again and again; and as they look into it, and admire all its symmetry and beauty, they strive more and more to conform their own characters to the same lines of beauty and seek to commend it by word and conduct to others, that they also may be blessed by it. **Z.'96-55 R1950:1**

June 20

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 John 2:15

TO fellowship the world is to walk in harmony with its ideas and to conform to its ways. In this sense we may not love it, but must be apart from it and in opposition to it. The way thus pointed out to us is, in some respects at least, a difficult way, and a lonely way, but it is the only way of peace and happiness. This world with the lust thereof is rapidly passing away: it is hollow and unsatisfying and eventually leads to disaster and ruin; but those who delight in the Lord's way have blessed communion and fellowship with Him. Their joys come from a source which the world cannot comprehend. They live on a higher plane, breathe a purer atmosphere and enjoy a holier, sweeter friendship than the world could ever offer. **Z.'96-67 R1956:4**

June 21

***Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly of heart.
Matthew 11:29***

TRULY, in a meek and quiet spirit is the secret of rest. To be meek is to cultivate the graces of patience; of loving submission to the will of God; of abiding confidence in His love and care and in the wisdom of His guiding counsel and overruling providences; and to persistently pursue this course through evil and through good report, or through favorable or unfavorable circumstances.

Let the beloved children of God seek more and more to copy Christ's meek and quiet Spirit, accepting the providences of God and obeying His precepts and leading as He did, armed with the strength which He alone can supply, and will, to those who take His yoke upon them, and learn of Him. **Z.'96-79 R1962:1**

June 22

It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful....Every man according to his several ability. 1 Corinthians 4:2; Matthew 25:15

THE "pound," being the same to all, fitly represents that blessing of divine grace which is common to all God's people--Justification. Other endowments differ in quantity, according to our natural opportunities, and are generally of the Father,--for instance, the Word and the Spirit. Our justification while planned by the Father is a gift from Jesus, because He paid for it with His own precious blood. The one "pound" each places all on a common footing as acceptable servants and permits each to show his zeal by his sacrificings. But the "talents," being distributed according to every man's ability, represent opportunities for the service of God along the lines of such abilities as we possess. They may be talents of education, or money, or influence, or good health, or time, or tact, or genius, with opportunities for their use in God's service. **Z.'96-99 Z.'07-63 R1972:6 R3948:6**

June 23

He that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the Word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Matthew 13:23

THE different measures of fruitage--the thirty, sixty, and hundred-fold, or the ten pounds and the five, mark differences in obstacles to be overcome, etc., rather than unfaithfulness in the use of the means of grace. Some may work long and diligently for small results, while the same effort in others of more resolute will and of greater continuity may accomplish great things. Some by slips and occasional backslidings, from which they subsequently recover, lose time and opportunities which can never be regained, although they are forgiven and generously reinstated in the divine favor, and thenceforth run with diligence and patience to the end. *Z. '96-99 R1973:3*

June 24

If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. Romans 8:17

READING the Father's plans for ourselves, in the light of His will exemplified in His dealings with our Master, we may settle it at once that it is not His will to keep us from all pain and trial and sufferings, and to carry us triumphantly to glory on flowery beds of ease. Quite the reverse, indeed, must be our course if we would follow in the footsteps of Him whom God set forth to be, not only a satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, but also a pattern to the church, which is His body. And this much learned of God's plan and will promptly teaches us that we must not expect and should not ask freedom from pain and trouble, which His wisdom has ordained to be the path to glory. *Z. '96-151 R2000:2*

June 25

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Colossians 4:2

EVERY trial of faith and patience is an occasion for prayer for the promised succor. Every failure to gain victory is an occasion for a prayer for forgiveness, and as well for divine blessing, that the lesson of our own weakness may be deeply impressed, so that in the next similar trial we may promptly apply for and lay hold upon the "grace to help" promised. Every victory over self is an occasion for prayer that we be not high minded and puffed up, but kept humble and watchful for the next attack from the great adversary. Every service for the Truth becomes an occasion for a prayer of thanks for the privilege of serving the Great King, and mayhap to have suffered something for His cause; and a reason for supplication for further opportunities for service and grace to use them wisely. ***Z.'96-163 R2006:1***

June 26

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Hebrews 3:1

IT is God's will that every member of the "body of Christ" should be touched with a feeling of the world's infirmities, in order that, when exalted to the Kingdom, they may be very tender, sympathetic and generous, when, as the Royal Priesthood, they shall judge the world. Our Lord and Master, who had none of the imperfections of the fallen race, but was holy, harmless and separate from sinners, needed to take from men their sicknesses and infirmities in order that He might be touched with a feeling of our infirmities and be a faithful High Priest. It would be thoroughly illogical to suppose that the lessons necessary to the preparation of the High Priest for His office and service are not necessary to the underpriests who are called to suffer with Him and to reign with Him. ***Z.'96-208 R2029:5***

June 27

Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us. 2 Corinthians 1:21,22

THE seal or mark of the New Creature is the possession of the Spirit of Christ. The manifestations of this Holy Spirit are three-fold. (1) Love supersedes to God and joyful loyalty to His cause even at the cost of suffering. (2) Love of the brethren--unselfish, noble, pure,--a desire for their welfare, which is always alert to do them good. (3) Love, sympathetic, for the world, prompting to good works, as opportunity may afford, and to a desire and effort always to live peaceably with all men. ***Z.'96-212 R2032:3***

June 28

Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil. Proverbs 3:7

NOTHING is more dangerous to the child of God than self-conceit: it blocks the way to true progress and reformation of heart, and hinders true usefulness to others, and especially usefulness in God's service; for His Word declares, "God resisteth the proud, but showeth favor unto the humble." Instead of self-confidence, Wisdom dictates a distrustfulness of self, remembering its weaknesses and imperfections, and correspondingly the greater reverence for God and reliance upon Him, which more than anything else will strengthen and enable us to depart from the evil of our fallen estate. ***Z.'96-263 R2060:6***

June 29

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Matthew 5:8

THE thought of "pure in heart" is not perfection of conduct, nor of word, nor of thought, but perfection of intention as respects all of these. Our desire and effort must be for perfection--in thought, word and deed. The standard before us, to which our hearts, wills, must give assent, is the divine standard, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." (*Matthew 5:48*) God has set no lower standard than this absolute perfection, but He has provided for us grace, mercy and peace through Christ, if we will walk in His footsteps,--this purity of heart being one of the essential steps in the narrow way. *Z. '00-71 R2587:5*

June 30

In the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, ...Gather the wheat into My barn. Matthew 13:30

THE time is short; the harvest work is great; the laborers are few; our time is consecrated; we must labor while it is called day, knowing that a night cometh wherein no man can work. We have consecrated our lives even unto death; we are commissioned of the great Lord of the harvest to seek for the true "wheat" and to gather it into the barn. What time have we for frivolities or worldliness or the many social amenities? Rather, we must content ourselves with giving very little attention to these things, and must press along the line, engaging heartily in the work given us to do, if we would have the approval of our Master, His "Well done, good and faithful servant." *Z. '00-234 R2675:2*

July

July 1

Walk as children of light...proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. Ephesians 5:8,10

IF we be sanctified to God by the Truth--if our wills be dead, and the Lord's will be fully accepted as ours, in thought, word and act, we have attained the will of God and will win the prize as "overcomers" --even if, opportunities being denied us, we never preached, never gave to the poor and never suffered as martyrs for the Truth's sake. Let us all note well this point,--"This is the will of God [concerning you] even *your sanctification*." Let nothing becloud or obscure this truth;--neither other truths nor errors. Let it dominate our course in life, and then, if God's will is really our will, we have a clearly marked pathway before us, which is very important. *Z. '99-4 R2412:2*

July 2

Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it. 1 Corinthians 4:12

IF you are a faithful pupil it will not be long until you see that the perfect law of liberty, the law of Christ, is a discerner of the very thoughts and intents of the heart, and that while you must hate all sin, you cannot hate any sinner and yet have the love of God perfected in your heart....If even so much as a bitter feeling against our traducers and maligners arise, it is to be fought, and so complete a victory gained over it that every fiber of our beings will be in sweet accord with our Great Teacher's instructions, "Love your enemies. Pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. Bless and injure not." *Z. '99-5 R2412:5*

July 3

*I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.
Psalm 16:8*

HE who has buried his own will completely in the will of the Lord can know no disappointment; but in every affair of his life he sees by faith divine appointment or supervision, and hears the Word of the Lord in all of life's affairs assuring him, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." It is one of the evidences of reaching the graduating condition of heart, when we are able to take the oppositions of the great Adversary and of the world and of our own flesh *patiently*, uncomplainingly, uncomplainingly, "joyfully"--as a part of the disciplinary experience meted out to us by our all-wise and all-loving Lord.
Z.'99-6 R2412:6

July 4

Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Isaiah 53:1

THE call of the church in the present time is to let the light shine and thus attract persecution, and to endure the persecution for righteousness' sake, and to be rightly exercised by it in patience, brotherly kindness, pity and love--toward the persecutors and toward all men.... Let all, then, who see the prize, and who see the light of God's glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, be faithful to the Father's conditions, calling, service. Let all such give attention to this ministry (service) which we have received, and faint not; be not discouraged, whether men hear or whether they forbear, whether they think ill of us or whether they speak ill of us; let us remember that our report at the end of the trial is to be rendered to the Lord Himself, when He is making up His jewels.
Z.'99-10,11 R2415:3,6

July 5

*The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth,...and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.
2 Corinthians 10:4,5*

LET us remember that the first condition of acceptance with God is loyal *obedience* to His Word, the evidence of love for Him and faith in Him. Let us remember, also, that the second qualification He will look for in us is love for the brethren, readiness to be, to do and to suffer, to die on behalf of those who are really, truly consecrated children of God, seeking to walk in His ways. *Z.'99-11 R2415:6*

July 6

*What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall He teach in the way that he shall choose.
Psalm 25:12*

IT is not for us to supervise the trials and difficulties which may beset us. It is for us to make an unreserved consecration of ourselves to the Lord and then leave to Him the decision of how great shall be our trials and besetments--how great our sacrifices in following His leadings. The Lord may see that some need special trials more than others, and those things which to some would be great trials and imply great sacrifices, to others, because of greater love for the Lord and His cause, and greater zeal for service, the sacrifice might be, as the apostle expresses it of his own, "light afflictions, which are but for a moment, and which are working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." *Z.'99-13 R2416:5*

July 7

Behold the Lamb of God! John 1:36

ALL of the Lord's servants should call attention to the Lord and not to themselves. Let us each bend our energies to pointing men to the Lamb of God, and not to self-seeking.... Modesty is a gem, wherever found, one of the graces of the Spirit, which all of the Lord's consecrated ones should seek to have largely developed and well polished....

And let us remember that following Jesus, in the best sense, means that we walk in His paths, strive to do as nearly as we are able what He would do today, taking our lessons from what He did and said personally, and from the instructions which He has left for us, through the apostles, respecting the path of fellowship in His sufferings, the path to glory and joint-heirship in His Kingdom. ***Z.'99-14,15 R2418:1***

July 8

The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth. 1 Timothy 3:15

THE Lord's church, the only one to which the name ***ecclesia***, body or church, is properly applicable, is so insignificant, so unostentatious, and comparatively so poor in this world's riches, that it is not recognized nor recognizable from the worldly standpoint. It is neither man-made nor man-ruled; nor are its members enrolled on earth, but in heaven. (***Hebrews 12:23***) Its head and bishop is the Lord, its law is His Word: it has but one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; and it is built upon the testimonies of the holy apostles and prophets--Jesus Christ Himself being its chief corner-stone. ***Z.'99-37 R2429:1***

July 9

When He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice. John 10:4

THE voice of the Good Shepherd is a blending of various sounds in a manner in which they are blended by no other voice. His voice sounds forth the chord of justice commingled with the chord of love, and the whole intoned with wisdom and with power. Other theories, plans and schemes of men and devils have no such harmony of sound as has the message which the Great Shepherd has sent us through His Son. Moreover when the true sheep hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, it satisfies their longings as nothing else could do. They will no longer be in danger of being attracted by other sounds, or voices, theories or schemes, but will reply to all,

"Jesus has satisfied; Jesus is mine."

Z.'00-230 R2672:5

July 10

All bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. Luke 4:22

THIS should be true as far as possible with all of the Lord's footstep followers: their speech should be with grace, with moderation, the overflow of hearts full of loving sympathy for the Truth and all who love and seek it. Their words should always be well within the limits of reason and righteousness, and strictly in conformity to the Word of the Lord. And their manner, their conduct, as living epistles, should harmonize with these so that even their enemies would marvel, and take knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of Him. **Z.'99-53 R2437:6**

July 11

***Whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not,...
but keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth
him not. 1 John 5:18***

SO long as the heart (the mind, the will) is holy, in harmony with God and righteousness,--that is to say, so long as the seed of our begetting, the spirit of holiness, continues in us,--the new mind cannot approve of sin, but must and will be its opponent. Even though many of the battles fought are with the members of our fallen and weak human nature, their appetites and desires, we nevertheless, as "New Creatures," are separate and distinct from the flesh, and the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh are not imputed to the New Creature in Christ Jesus, but are reckoned as covered, hidden under the merits of our Lord's redemptive sacrifice. **Z. '99-58 R2440:4**

July 12

***If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye
shall be free indeed. John 8:36***

THE true disciples heeding the Word of the Great Teacher, and continuing in all things to be His pupils, are not only set free from superstitions and ignorance, but also from the service of sin; and receive instead a correct appreciation of their own natural weaknesses and blemishes, and of the divine mind--the Truth. In consequence, their freedom is one which blesses instead of injuring them; one which brings humility instead of pride and boastfulness; one which brings patience instead of anger; one which brings generosity and benevolence instead of spitefulness and selfishness; one which brings joy and peace instead of discontent and bitterness of spirit. Truly, the Son alone can make us free indeed. **Z. '99-57 R2440:2**

July 13

Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness. 2 Corinthians 11:14,15

IF it be asked, How could Satan be interested in doing a good work? we answer, the adversary thus assumes the garment of an angel of light and mercy, not to lead to the Light of the World--not to lead to the cross of Christ--not to lead to the Bible--but to lead away from these, to another hope of salvation, and to another teacher, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. And be it remembered that our Lord's words indicate that when matters come to this condition, where Satan will cast out Satan and heal disease, it is a marked evidence that his throne is tottering to its fall--that, so to speak, this is the last extremity of the adversary's efforts to deceive. **Z.'99-62 R2669:6**

July 14

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger,...and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. Ephesians 4:31

FROM his high standpoint of appreciation of the divine law, the advanced Christian sees that in the Lord's sight hatred is **murder**, slander is **assassination**, and the destruction of a neighbor's good name is **robbery** and rapine. And any of these things done in the church, among the professed people of God, is doubly evil--the assassination and robbery of a **brother**.... The only exception to this rule, "Speak evil of no man," would come in where we might know of an absolute necessity for making known an evil--where the relating of the evil would be contrary to our heart's wishes, and only mentioned because of necessity--because of love for others who, if not informed, might be injured. **Z.'99-71 R2444:6; R2445:1**

July 15

***Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,
...and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.
1 Corinthians 13:3***

IN our ministrations to others we are not to forget that money is not the only thing of which people are sorely in need--some need love and sympathy who do not need money. Our Lord was one of these: His own heart, full of love, found comparatively little companionship in the more or less sordid minds of even the noblest of the fallen race represented among His apostles. In Mary He seemed to find the depth of love and devotion which was to Him an odor of sweet incense, of refreshment, of reinvigoration, a tonic: and Mary apparently appreciated, more than did others, the lengths and breadths of the Master's character. She not only delighted to sit at His feet to learn of Him, but also delighted, at great cost, to give Him some manifestation of her devotion, her love.

Z.'99-77 R2448:3

July 16

Be ye filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18

THE measure of our filling will correspond with the measure of our emptying of the spirit of self-will, and filling with the spirit of faith and obedience. And although the obedience cannot do otherwise than manifest itself in the daily life, nevertheless it is the obedience of the *intention*, of the *will*, of the *heart*, that the Lord regards in His consecrated people. Hence some whose hearts are thoroughly loyal to the Lord may be pleasing to Him, while not the most pleasing to some of those with whom they come in contact; while others, "highly esteemed among men" because of outward moralities, may be an "abomination" in the sight of God, because of coldness or dishonesty of heart. Nevertheless, he that hath the new hope in him, and the new spirit, will seek to purify himself, not only in his thoughts, but also in his words and deeds and all his affairs, inward and outward.

Z.'99-92 R2456:2

July 17

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee. Isaiah 26:3

THIS is not worldly peace, not the peace of indifference, not the peace of sloth, not the peace of self-indulgence, not the peace of fatalism; but it is the peace of Christ--"My peace." Looking back we can see that the Master preserved His peace with God under all conditions. It is a peace which implicitly trusts to the divine wisdom, love, justice and power, a peace which remembers the gracious promise made to the Lord's faithful--that nothing shall by any means hurt His faithful, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. This peace can accept by faith whatever divine providence permits, and can look through its tears with joyful expectancy for the ultimate blessings which the Master has promised, and of which the present peace and joy are merely foretastes. **Z. '99-95 R2456:6**

July 18

In the last days perilous times shall come. Men shall be traitors, heady,...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. 2 Timothy 3:1,4

THE true Christian is not "heady;" on the contrary, his consecration to the Lord figuratively decapitated him. He lost his head, renounced his own will and self-rule, and submitted himself as a ***member of the body*** of Christ, to the absolute control of Jesus, the Head....The true Christian, therefore, in every affair of life,--in respect to its pleasures as well as in respect to its burdens and trials,--appeals to his Head for direction, to know how and what to do or say--yea, to have even the very thoughts of his mind in full conformity to the will of God in Christ. **Z. '99-102 R2461:1**

July 19

The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it? John 18:11

HOW the grace of humility shines out in all the little affairs of our dear Redeemer's ministry; even at the moment of His surrender to His enemies He does not boast that His course is a voluntary one, nor seek praise as a martyr! He declares the simple truth that the Father required this of Him as an evidence of His personal loyalty to Him. He confesses Himself a servant of God, a Son who learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

No other lesson, perhaps, is more needed by the Lord's followers than the one of willingness to drink the cup which the Father pours--a recognition that the Father is guiding and directing in our affairs because we are His, as members of the body of the Anointed One. ***Z. '99-118; Z. '01-91 R2468:6; R2780:5***

July 20

I am the true vine, and My Father is the Husbandman... every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. John 15:1,2

AS even the best branches in the vine, which give evidence of fruit-bearing, require pruning, so even the most honest and earnest of the Lord's people require the Lord's discipline and providential care--otherwise they might soon run to woodmaking also, and fail to bring forth much fruit.... The true child of God whose will has been entirely immersed into the will of the Lord is neither offended nor discouraged by these prunings. He has learned something at least of his own unwisdom, and has confidence in the wisdom of the great Husbandman. Hence when divine providence estops his efforts in some directions he takes the thwarting of his plans joyfully, assured that the Lord's will and the Lord's way are the best, and intended to work out a blessing. ***Z. '99-109 R2465:3***

July 21

To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth. John 18:37

IT was our Lord's faithfulness to the Truth that brought upon Him the opposition of those who were blinded by the adversary. It was His witness to the Truth that cost Him His life, and it was the giving of His life in defence of the Truth that constituted the redemption price. Similarly all of the Lord's followers are to bear witness to the Truth--the truth in respect to God's character and plan.... It is such witness to the Truth that is to cost all the true followers of Jesus their lives in presenting themselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through Christ Jesus. Let each one who hopes to be a joint-heir with the Prince of Life in the Kingdom witness to the Truth--a good confession respecting the Kingdom, its foundation and ultimate superstructure in glory.
Z.'99-123 R2471:6

July 22

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. Psalm 34:18,19
A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again. Proverbs 24:16

IF at any time we find we have taken a wrong course which is irretrievable, we may expect it to bring the disappointments as the Lord has foretold: but He may permit it to bring, as well, some blessings in the way of contrition of heart, and humility toward the Lord, and greater zeal, watchfulness and faithfulness for the future. Thus even some of the blunders of life may become stepping-stones to higher planes of grace and truth. **Z.'03-217 R3223:5**

July 23

If any provide not for his own,...he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever. 1 Timothy 5:8

"THE *faith*" includes thoughts of love, sympathy, interest and care for others, especially for them of the household of faith....How it gives us an insight into our Lord's sympathetic nature, to find Him thinking in the interest of others at the very time when He Himself was overwhelmed in trouble! His own agony did not hinder Him from thinking of His mother, and making provision for her comfort....We note the choice of John: it was doubtless because, first of all, of his loving, tender disposition; secondly, his zeal for the Lord and the Truth; and thirdly, his courage in pressing near to be with his dying Master in His closing hours, at the risk of his own life. Let us note these characteristics, as being those which the Lord approves, that noting them we may cultivate them in ourselves, and thus be granted special opportunities for service by this same Master. **Z.'99-127 R2474:6**

July 24

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James 5:16

COMMUNION with the Lord in prayer brings increased confidence in the Lord's supervision of our affairs; increased faith in all the exceeding great and precious promises of His Word; increased realization of His leadings, past and present; increased love for all the brethren of Christ, and increased solicitude for their welfare and spiritual progress. Prayer is thus closely and actively identified with progress in spiritual things, progress in the fruits of the Spirit, toward God, the brethren, and all men. **Z.'00-268 R2692:1**

July 25

***There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?
James 4:12***

IT is in harmony with this thought that the Apostle Paul declares in one place that neither the world nor the brethren were capable of judging him--that only the Lord, who could read the heart and know all the conditions and testings and weaknesses to be striven against, could properly judge. He even declares, "Yea, I judge not mine own self." (***1 Corinthians 4:3***) It is an excellent plan neither to condemn others who claim to be walking conscientiously as children of the Lord, nor even to condemn ourselves under similar circumstances. We should simply press along day by day, doing the best we can to cultivate the heavenly graces and to serve our Master, leaving all the results with the Lord. ***Z.'99-139 R2480:2***

July 26

***To him that overcometh will I give...a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.
Revelation 2:17***

THE overcomers must all be proven to be such as would sacrifice every other thing for the Lord; such as would sacrifice the love and fellowship and approval, if necessary, of every other being, in order to retain the love and favor of the Lord. We believe that this test is coming daily closer and closer to the Lord's consecrated people, and it behooves every one of us to remember that this is one of the elements of our trial, and to set our affections on the heavenly things accordingly, and to mortify or deaden all such affections toward earthly beings and things as would bring these into competition with our Lord in our affections, service, etc. ***Z.'99-140 R2480:6***

July 27

We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God. Daniel 6:5

ALL are not leading spirits, as was Daniel, nor are all given to visions and revelations and interpretations, as was he; but all will have the same spirit of devotion to principles of righteousness, which devotion will be tested under divine providence, step by step, through the narrow way, as they seek to walk in the footsteps of Him who set us an example--our Daniel, our Leader, our Lord Jesus. Let all, then, who have named the name of Christ depart from iniquity; let all such be faithful: "Dare to be a Daniel." **Z. '99-167 R2494:4**

July 28

If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye. 1 Peter 3:14

IT is only when we are hated because of our loyalty to the Truth (directly or indirectly) that we are to take satisfaction therein, or to think that we are suffering for righteousness' sake. As the apostle points out, some suffer as evildoers and as busy-bodies in other men's matters, or because of ungentleness, uncouthness, or lack of the wisdom of moderation, which the Lord's Word counsels.

It is our duty not only to study the Lord's will, but also to consider well the circumstances and the conditions which surround us, and to seek to adopt such a moderate course in life as would first of all have divine approval, and secondly, cause as little trouble, inconvenience and displeasure to others as possible, and then to confidently rely upon the Lord's supervising wisdom and providence. **Z. '99-166,167 R2493:3,6**

July 29

***Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us.
Daniel 3:17***

THE Lord's providences vary, and it is not for His people to decide when shall come remarkable deliverances, and when they shall apparently be left entirely to the will of their enemies without any manifestation of divine favor on their behalf....Sometimes, the Lord's people who are bound, restrained of liberty to proclaim the Truth, find, as did the three Hebrews, that the fire burns the cords and sets them free, and really gives them larger opportunities to testify to the glory of our God than they could have had by any other course.

It is not, therefore, for us to predetermine what shall be the divine providence in respect to ourselves; we are to note the point of right and duty and to follow it regardless of consequences, trusting implicitly to the Lord. **Z.'99-171 R2496:3**

July 30

Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines. Canticles 2:15

MANY deal slackly with themselves in respect to little violations of their consecration vow, saying,-- "What's the use of such carefulness and so different a life from that of the world in general?" Ah! there is great use in it, for victories in little things prepare for greater things and make them possible: and on the contrary, surrender to the will of the flesh in the little things means sure defeat in the warfare as a whole.

We who have become "New Creatures," reckonedly, in Christ, know that we are to be tested (if our testings have not already commenced), and should realize that only as we practice self-denials in the little things of life, and mortify (deadens) the natural cravings of our flesh in respect to food, clothing, conduct, etc., will we become strong spiritually and be able to "overcome." **Z.'99-172 R2496:6**

July 31

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire. 1 Corinthians 3:13

THE apostle speaks of this time of fiery trial, and, likening the faith and works of a zealous Christian to a house built of gold, silver and precious stones, he declares that the fire of this day, in the end of this age, shall try every man's work of what sort it is, and shall consume all but genuine faith and character structures. But we are to remember that such loyal characters grow not suddenly, in a few hours or days --mushroom like,--but are progressive developments, fine-grained and strong like the olive tree. ***Z.'99-171 R2496:5***

August

August 1

*Death and life are in the power of the tongue.
Proverbs 18:21*

THE tongue's influence exceeds that of all our other members combined: and to control it, therefore, in the Lord's service, is the most important work of the Lord's people in respect to their mortal bodies and the service of these rendered to the Lord. A few words of love, kindness, helpfulness,--how often have such changed the entire course of a human life!--yea, how much they have had to do with moulding the destiny of nations! And how often have evil words, unkind words, slanderous words, done gross injustice, assassinated reputations, etc.! or, as the apostle declares, "set on fire the course of nature"--awakening passions, strifes, enmities, at first unthought of. No wonder he declares such tongues "set on fire of *Gehenna*"--the Second Death! **Z.'99-75 R2447:4**

August 2

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. Psalm 95:6

OUR judgment is that it is impossible for any Christian to maintain a proper, consistent walk in life, and to build up such a character and faith structure as are represented by the apostle as composed of "gold, silver and precious stones," without prayer; more than this, without regularity in prayer--we would almost be inclined to say, without *kneeling* in prayer: and we believe that the experiences and testimonies of the truest and best of the Lord's people who have ever lived will corroborate this. **Z.'99-184 R2501:6**

August 3

***Separate yourselves from the people of the land.
Ezra 10:11***

SOMEONE has well said:--"The Christian in the world is like a ship in the ocean. The ship is safe in the ocean so long as the ocean is not in the ship." One of the great difficulties with Christianity today is that it has admitted the strangers, the "people of the land," and recognized them as Christians. It does injury, not only to the Christians, by lowering their standards (for the *average* will be considered the standard), but it also injures the "strangers," by causing many of them to believe themselves thoroughly safe and needing no conversion, because they are outwardly respectable, and perhaps frequently attendants at public worship. **Z.'99-203 R2512:4**

August 4

***The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.
2 Timothy 2:24,25***

SOME of the Lord's dear people have greatly injured their influence in the Truth by display of too large a degree of self-confidence, *self-assurance*, in speaking of the divine plan to others--especially to the learned. Meekness is a jewel wherever found, and is especially desirable as an adjunct and sling for the Truth. Let the Truth be shot forth with all the force it can carry, but always with meekness and humility; and the question form of suggesting Truth will often be found the most forceful. **Z.'00-14 R2559:3**

August 5

We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. Romans 8:28

REMEMBERING this, all the Lord's people should be content with the lot which Providence seems to mark out for them--not indolent, but content, when they have done all that their hands find to do,--not restless, peevish, dissatisfied, complainers against God and His providence. It may be that the Lord is fitting and preparing us individually for some special service, and that the permitted experiences alone will prepare us for that service....We are to remember also that we are incompetent to judge of our own imperfections, and hence incompetent to judge of the experiences which would be most helpful to us.

Z.'00-22 R2562:6

August 6

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. James 4:7

IF we are positive in our rejection of temptation it increases our strength of character, not only for that time, but also for subsequent temptations; and it disconcerts to some extent our adversary, who, noting our positiveness, knows well that it is useless to discuss the matter with persons of strong convictions and positive characters; whereas if the question were parleyed over, the result would surely be an advancing of further reasons and arguments on the adversary's part, and a danger on our part that we would be overmatched in argument, for, as the apostle declares, the Devil is a wily adversary, and "we are not ignorant of his devices." Prompt and positive obedience to the Word and Spirit of the Lord is the only safe course for any of the "brethren". ***Z.'00-30 R2567:3***

August 7

If a man contend in the games, he is not crowned unless he strive lawfully.

2 Timothy 2:5 (Diaglott)

JESUS observed God's times and seasons and methods. He never recklessly exposow His life until from the prophets He recognized that His hour had come to be delivered into the hands of His enemies. He did not make long prayers on the street corners to be heard of men, nor exhort the multitude with noisy harangue; as the prophet indicated, He did not lift up His voice nor cry aloud in the streets. (***Isaiah 42:2***) He choso God's methods, which are rational and wise, and which are effective in selecting from among men the class which He desires to be heirs of the promised Kingdom. Let those who would so run as to obtain the prize, mark these footprints of the Master, and be filled more and more with His Spirit. ***Z.'02-265 R3070:5***

August 8

Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. Luke 10:5,6

EACH laborer in the present harvest should note well the Lord's instruction in these verses. Wherever the Lord's representatives go peace should go, not strife, confusion, turmoil, quarreling. True, the Truth will prove to be a sword that will arouse opposition, yet it should be the Truth that causes the opposition and division and not any rudeness or unkindness of word or action on the part of the Lord's representatives. There are plenty of things to aggravate mankind in this our busy day, and all who have received the Truth should receive also its spirit "speaking peace through Jesus Christ." ***Z.'04-108 R3347:6***

August 9

*If the light that is in thee be [come] darkness,
how great is that darkness! Matthew 6:23*

THE "harvest" is a time for winnowing the "wheat" --a sifting, a separating time, and it is for each of us to prove our characters: "Having done all, stand!" The tests of this "harvest" must be like those of the Jewish or typical "harvest." One of them is the **cross**, another is the **presence** of Christ, another is **humility**, another is **love**. The Jews were reprov'd because they "knew not **the time** of their **visitation**." The matter is doubly distressing for those who have once seen the light of Present Truth, and afterward go into the "outer darkness." It implies unfaithfulness.
Z.'04-297 R3437:4

August 10

*If there be any consolation [comfort] in Christ,
if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of spirit,
if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that
ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of
one accord, of one mind. Philippians 2:1,2*

WHAT exhortations these are to unity, peace, brotherly kindness! How they suggest to us patience, forbearance, gentleness, helpfulness and **comfort** one toward another in the church; that thus the Spirit of the Lord may abound in all, that each may make the greatest possible progress in the right way. Dear brethren and sisters, let us more and more be worthy of the name of Barnabas--Comforter of the brethren. Let us have the Holy Spirit abounding in us more and more, for this is the Lord's good pleasure; that with it dwelling in us richly we may be all sons and daughters of comfort in Zion, representatives of our Father, and channels of the Holy Spirit, as well as of the Truth. **Z.'04-296 R3436:6**

August 11

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Revelation 2:10

WE are to anticipate a second attack upon the true church (not upon the nominal system), and this may mean, as in the case of John the Baptist, a second and a seemingly complete victory of the Babylonish woman and her paramour, the world, over the faithful members of the body of Christ in the flesh. We shall certainly not be surprised if the matter so result; but this and all things must work together for good to those who love the Lord. We must all die to win our heavenly prize beyond the veil. The Elijah class this side of the veil must and will be vanquished, but the apparent defeat only hastens the Kingdom glories. ***Z.'04-63 R3326:6***

August 12

Cleanse Thou me from secret faults. Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me....Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer. Psalm 19:12-14

IT would appear that every intelligent Christian would continually pray this inspired prayer, for cleansing from secret faults, that he might thus be restrained from presumptuous sins; and thus praying heartily, he would also watch against these beginnings of sin and keep his heart in a cleansed and pure condition, by going continually to the fountain of grace for help in every time of need. He who seeks to live a life of holiness and nearness to the Lord by merely guarding against ***outward*** or presumptuous sins, and who neglects the beginnings of sin in the secrets of his own mind, is attempting a right thing in a very foolish and unreasonable way. ***Z.'98-22 R2249:1***

August 13

We are ambassadors for Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:20

IF we as Christians could keep this thought always prominent before our minds what a dignity it would add to our character! what a transforming power it would be! what an assistance to the new nature in its battle with the low and groveling tendencies of the old nature now disowned by us and reckoned dead! "Our citizenship is in heaven," says the apostle....While still living in the world we are not of it, but have transferred our allegiance and citizenship to the heavenly Kingdom....And now, as appointees of our Kingdom, while still living in the world amongst aliens and strangers, we as representatives and ambassadors should feel both the dignity and the honor of the position and the weighty responsibilities, and ever keep in memory the apostle's words, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." **Z. '04-72 R3330:2**

August 14

It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household? Matthew 10:25

HOWEVER graciously stated, the Truth is a sword which penetrates in every direction, and which as our Lord foretold, frequently sets parents against children and children against parents, because the darkness hateth the light and opposeth it in every possible manner....In view of the Lord's teachings regarding this subject, and of how the wisest presentation of it may be ultimately misconstrued, it behooves every one who would serve the Truth faithfully to be as careful as possible not to be misunderstood;--to let it be clearly understood that we neither participate in nor advocate anarchy of any kind; but on the contrary, are standing for righteousness and the highest of laws, the divine law. **Z. '03-13 R3131:3,5**

August 15

Now we exhort you, brethren,...be patient toward all. 1 Thessalonians 5:14

THIS seems to imply that the better balanced amongst the Lord's people should look with sympathy upon and exercise patient forbearance not only toward the weak and those who lack courage, but toward *all*; including those who have too much courage and self-push.... Growth in knowledge helps us to grow in this grace of patience, for as we appreciate more and more the heavenly Father's patience with us it helps us to apply the same principle toward others. ...The thought that our heavenly Father has favored and called any one should make us extremely careful how we would co-operate with the Lord in respect to the call, and be as helpful as possible to all those who are seeking to walk with us in the footsteps of our Lord in the narrow way. **Z. '03-24 R3136:3**

August 16

In everything give thanks. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

HAVING the condition of heart which is in fellowship with the Lord and fully devoted to the doing of His will, the Lord's people not only implore His blessing at the beginning of each day, and present their thanks at the close of each day, but in all of life's affairs they seek to remember that they have consecrated their all to the Lord, and by faith look up to Him in all the affairs of life;--and in proportion to the importance of their undertakings they, by faith, realize the association of God's providence with all the interests of life and give thanks accordingly. This is the will of God concerning us;--He wills that we live in such an attitude of constant regard for His will and for His blessing;--and He wills it in respect to us because it will be the condition most favorable to our progress in the narrow way, and which will best assist us in making our calling and election sure. **Z. '03-25 R3136:6**

August 17

Quench not the Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 5:19

THE Spirit of the Lord amongst His people is compared to "a flame of sacred love" for the Lord and all connected with His cause: this flame is enkindled through the divine message in each one individually, when begotten of the Holy Spirit, and appertains, therefore, to the church collectively, under the guidance of that Spirit. In proportion as the church grows in knowledge and in love and in fellowship with the Lord this "flame of sacred love" will make it a light in the world,--a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid. ***Z.'03-25 R3137:2***

August 18

***Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.
1 Thessalonians 5:21***

HOWEVER much they should ever come to respect prophesying, or public speaking, the Lord's people should learn proportionately not to receive what they might hear without proper examination and criticism: they should prove all things that they hear, should exercise discrimination of mind, as to what is logically and scripturally supported, and what is mere conjecture and possibly sophistry. They should prove what they hear with a view to holding fast everything that stands the test of the divine Word, and shows itself to be in accordance with the Holy Spirit; and they should as promptly reject whatever will not stand these tests. ***Z.'03-26 R3137:4***

August 19

Abstain from every form of evil. (Rev. Ver.)
1 Thessalonians 5:22

THE exhortation is that everything that is evil, whether it have a good form or a bad form, is to be resisted and opposed....To abstain from every *appearance* of evil is another thought--a different one from what the apostle's words in the original would warrant; nevertheless, they represent a sound principle. We surely should abstain not only from evil things, whatever their form or garb, but we should abstain so far as possible from doing things that we know to be good, which our friends or neighbors might misunderstand and consider to be evil things. The spirit of a sound mind dictates that not only evil in its every form, but everything that has an evil appearance even, should be avoided--that our influence for the Lord and the Truth may be the greater. ***Z.'03-26 R3137:5***

August 20

Whom therefore, ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you. ***Acts 17:23***

THE apostle's *method* is worthy of imitation. All wise people distrust novelty, and incline to say that whatever is valuable has long been. We, like the apostle, should endeavor to show that the true gospel is not a new theology, but the old theology; not a new gospel, but the old gospel,--the one foretold to Abraham;...the one declared by the Lord Jesus Himself and by all His apostles. In proportion as we would show that errors prevail today, which had their origin in the "dark ages", we must show that we are not forging a new theory equally erroneous, but that we have discarded the errors of the dark ages, and have gone back to the first principles and precepts and instructions of the gospel, as announced by the Lord and His authorized representatives, the apostles. ***Z.'03-29 R3139:4***

August 21

***Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.
Matthew 6:33***

THE Lord's people of spiritual Israel will do well to bear this thought continually in mind--that spiritual interests are to be given the preference always; that temporal affairs are to be managed and controlled from the standpoint of the everlasting welfare;--from the standpoint of spiritual growth and development and prosperity;--from the standpoint of the best interests and influences upon their children. They should not only hesitate to follow any suggestion that would take themselves and their families into unfavorable, godless surroundings, but they should determine that not under any consideration would they follow such a suggestion;--that on the contrary the Lord's people should be their people, even though this meant less of the comforts and luxuries of this present life. **Z.'02-350 R3110:6**

August 22

***Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's
business? Luke 2:49***

SHOULD we not all have the Master's Spirit, expressed by His words?...The Lord's true saints have no business of their **own**, for they gave their all to the Lord at consecration. Their business they manage as trustees for the Lord--not to be turned over at their death, in prosperous condition, to their children or their friends, possibly to their injury. It is to be used by the trustee as wisely as he knows how before death; for then his trusteeship ends, and he must render his account. **Z.'03-53 R3148:5**

August 23

***And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three;
but the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13***

AS love is the most excellent thing, so is it 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 fullness 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. **Z.'03-58 R3151:5**

August 24

***Holy Father, keep through Thine own name
those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may
be one, as we are. John 17:11***

AS we come to consider this beautiful expression of the Lord's sentiments with reference to the church, we catch a glimpse of the glory of the blessed oneness of the divine family. It is a oneness of purpose, a oneness of confidence, a oneness of sympathy, a oneness of love, a oneness of honor, and a oneness of mutual possession. This oneness our Lord described as already existing between Himself and the Father, but so far as His disciples are concerned it was and still is prospective; and its full accomplishment is the ideal goal toward which we are taught to aspire. **Z.'03-77 R3160:3**

August 25

We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him as He is.

1 John 3:2

LET the hope that we shall soon experience our resurrection change, and be made like our dear Redeemer, and see Him as He is, and share His glory in the great "epiphania," or shining forth of the sons of God in the glory of the Kingdom, enthuse us--let this energize our hearts, loose our lips, and strengthen us for every duty, privilege and opportunity--to serve our Master and the household of faith. If this hope has been an anchor to the Lord's people for so many centuries, how much more does it mean to us who are living now in the very time of His presence, waiting for His "*apokalupsis*"--His revealing in the glory of the Kingdom! ***Z.'03-151 R3193:6***

August 26

Love...is kind. 1 Corinthians 13:4

IT is no more obligatory upon the Lord's people to denounce every wrongdoer whom they may meet in the street than it is for them to tell all homely persons they may see of their lack along the lines of beauty. ...Politeness is always a part of Christian character. In the world it may be a polish, but in the Christian it is not merely a veneer, but represents the true sentiments of the heart, developed along the lines of the spirit of life--love. Love leads to gentleness, patience, kindness, etc., and even in the case of disobedience it will hesitate to utter an unkind word, and will avoid the same so far as duty will permit.

Z.'03-153 R3194:2

August 27

***Henceforth know we no man after the flesh.
2 Corinthians 5:16***

THE apostle did not mean that we should pay no attention to the shortcomings of the flesh, either in ourselves or in other members of the body. All fleshly weaknesses should be striven against, and they may frequently demand rigorous treatment in the interest of the New Creature; but nevertheless, we are to distinctly differentiate between the New Creature and his weak mortal body, and are to love and sympathize with the brother, while it may be necessary for us, in his interest, and also in the interest of the church, to reprove or rebuke or otherwise correct his wrong course. The apostle's definition as to how we are to know the two classes apart is that the unregenerate will mind the things of the flesh, while the regenerate will mind the things of the Spirit. ***Z. '03-170 R3202:3***

August 28

Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season. 2 Timothy 4:2

THIS cannot mean that we are to violate the laws of reason and decency by intruding the good tidings upon others at times inconvenient and unseasonable to them; but it does mean that we are to have such a love for the Truth, such an earnest desire to serve it, that we will gladly accept the opportunity to do so, however inconvenient it may be for ourselves. It is the chief business of our lives, to which life itself even is subservient, and hence, no opportunity for service must be laid aside. ***Z. '03-189 R3211:2***

August 29

***Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss.
James 4:3***

LET us learn to pray aright, as well as to labor and to hope aright; and in order to do so let us be swift to hear, slow to speak, swift to hearken to the Word of the Lord and to the lesson which He has already given us, and to His method of instructing us and guiding us and blessing us. Let us be slow to tell Him what our preferences are; indeed let us seek to attain that development of Christian character which will permit us always not to seek our own wills, but the will and the way of our Father in heaven. **Z. '03-204 R3217:6**

August 30

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Matthew 5:16

NOT only shall it be true that the Lord's Anointed One shall be head and shoulders above all others, "the chiefest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely," but it should also be true to a considerable extent that all those who are intimately associated with the members of the body of Christ in the present life--before He is proclaimed King of the whole world--should be able to recognize the largeness and grandeur of character in those whom the Lord is choosing for this place of honor in the affairs of men. They should be able to take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus, should see their largeness of heart, their moral heights--should discern in them the spirit of a sound mind. **Z. '03-206 R3218:6**

August 31

If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thy hand, O king; but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. Daniel 3:17,18

THE answer of the Hebrews to Nebuchadnezzar,-- "Our God whom we serve," is worthy of note. They not only acknowledged God and worshiped Him but they additionally *served* Him, according as they had opportunity....Let us resolve, dear brethren, as did the three Hebrews, that we will worship and serve only the Lord our God--that we will neither worship nor serve sectarianism, in any of its many forms, nor mammon, with its enticements and rewards, nor fame, nor friends, nor self. God "seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth," is the declaration of our Lord and Head. **Z. '99-172 R2496:6**

September

September 1

But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. Acts 9:15

IT is because we see Jesus to be the Father's choice that we unite ourselves to Him; because we see the Father's character manifested in Him that we leave all to follow Him. Similarly, if we lend our aid, our support to any human being in connection with the divine plan and service, it should be simply upon this ground--not merely a personal magnetism or favoritism, but because our hearts are touched by the Lord with a realization of the leader being of His appointment.

Z.'03-206 R3218:6

September 2

Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. 1 Peter 1:22

KNOWLEDGE is to be highly esteemed in the church, and to be regarded as an evidence of progress, of growth; for none can grow strong in the Lord and in the power of His might--in grace--unless he grows also in knowledge. We properly esteem most highly those whose love for the Lord and for His Truth are evidenced by zeal in the study of His Word, and whose favor with God is evidenced by their being guided more and more into the deep things of God. Nevertheless, as in the earthly family we love and care for the babes and immature, so also in the household of faith the little ones and the dwarfs are to be cared for and loved and helped that they may grow strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Z.'03-207 R3219:6

September 3

I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. Hosea 6:6

HE who gives his will, his heart, to the Lord, gives all; he who gives not his will, who comes not in obedience of heart unto the Lord, can offer no sacrifice to the Lord that could be acceptable. "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice," is a lesson which should be deeply engraved upon the hearts of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus. To have the spirit of obedience is necessary too, and whoever has the spirit of obedience will not only obey the divine will, but will seek to know the divine will more and more that he may obey it. It is of this class that the Scriptures declare, "His word was found and I did eat it;" and again, in the words of our Lord, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: Thy law is written in My heart." **Z.'03-220 R3225:5**

September 4

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. 1 John 4:18

MIGHTY, imposing and terrifying indeed is the influence of fear, except upon those who have learned to know the Lord through previous experiences, and to trust Him even where they cannot trace Him. The giant of fear and despair must be met with the pebble from the brook, "It is written." The sling of faith must propel the word of promise with such force as to slay the adversary and to deliver us from his dominationThus armed only with the Word of God, and trusting in His rod and staff, we may well be courageous and answer imposing sectarianism as David answered the Philistine, "Thou comest to me with a sword and a spear and a javelin: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of... Israel, which thou hast defiled." **Z.'03-329 R3231:1**

September 5

Jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Canticles 8:6

JEALOUSY is one of the great foes that confronts every Christian. It should be slain on sight as an enemy of God and man and of every good principle; and to the extent that its presence has defiled the heart even for a moment, a cleansing of the spirit of holiness and love should be invoked. Jealousy is not only a cruel monster of itself, but its poisonous fangs are almost certain to inflict pain and trouble upon others, as well as to bring general woe and, ultimately, destruction upon those who harbor it. Jealousy is sin in thought, wickedness in thought, and is very apt to lead speedily to sin and wickedness in action. The mind, if once poisoned with jealousy, can with great difficulty ever be cleansed from it entirely, so rapidly does it bring everything within its environment to its own color and character. *Z.'03-330 R3231:5*

September 6

There shall no evil befall thee. Psalm 91:10

NOTHING shall by any means hurt us. Things may interfere with our fleshly interests or comfort or course of affairs; but when we remember that we are not in the flesh but in the spirit, that it is as New Creatures that the Lord has promised us the Kingdom in His due time, we can realize that no outside influence can interfere with our real interests, our spiritual interests, nor hinder our attaining to the glories of the Kingdom which the Lord has promised to His faithful ones. Only our loss of confidence in the Lord and our unfaithfulness to Him could separate us from His love and His promises. *Z.'03-331 R3232:1*

September 7

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17

THESE New Creatures in Christ Jesus know each other not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. In each other's spirits or new minds there are the noblest sentiments, the highest aspirations, that which is good, true, noble, pure--whatever may be their weaknesses according to the flesh. They love each other from the new standpoint of intention, will, harmony with God, and their friendship for one another grows increasingly as they perceive each other's energy in fighting the good fight of faith against the evil influences of the world, the flesh and the adversary. Nor tongue nor pen can properly express the love, the friendship, which subsists between these New Creatures in Christ Jesus, to whom old things have passed away, and all things have become new. **Z. '03-333 R3233:4**

September 8

Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. James 4:4

GOD has purposely placed the matter in such a position that His people must take their choice, and lose either the divine friendship and fellowship, or the worldly friendship and fellowship; because those things which the Lord loves are distasteful to the worldly, and those things which the worldly love, evil deeds and evil thoughts, evil-speaking, are an abomination in the sight of the Lord, and those who love and practice such things lose His fellowship--they are not of His Spirit. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." **Z. '99-70 R2444:2**

September 9

That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life. Philippians 2:15,16

IT is the duty of every child of God to be very active in the dissemination of the Truth--in letting his light shine, and in keeping it trimmed and burning. "Trimmed and burning!" what does it mean? It means that we must give very close attention to the words of life that we may come to an exact knowledge of the Truth, and that we must carefully and faithfully trim away every vestige of error as fast as it becomes apparent to us--whether it be an error in doctrine or in our daily walk and conversation--so that the pure light of divine truth may shine out with as little obstruction as possible through the medium of a clear and transparent character. **Z.'03-358 R3243:3**

September 10

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Ephesians 4:29

THE depraved taste hedges itself behind conscience, and declares that it is always right to speak the truth, and hence God cannot have meant that speaking the truth would be slander; but that in condemning evil speaking and slander, as works of the flesh and the devil, He must have meant the speaking of that which is false, untrue. This is a great mistake: a slander is equally a slander, whether it be true or whether it be false, and is so regarded, not only in the law of God, but also in the laws of civilized men. A slander is anything which is uttered with the intention of injury to another, whether true or false, and the laws of men agree with the law of God, that such injury to another is wrong. **Z.'99-70 R2444:3**

September 11

Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple. Luke 14:27

THE Lord's cross-bearing consisted in ***the doing of the Father's will under unfavorable conditions***. This course brought upon Him the envy, hatred, malice, strife, persecution, etc., of those who thought themselves to be God's people, but whom our Lord, who read their hearts, declared to be of their father, the devil....Since we are walking in the same "narrow way" that our Master walked, we may reasonably expect that our crosses will be of similar kind to His--oppositions to our doing the will of our Father in heaven--oppositions to our serving His cause and letting the light shine out as our Master and Leader directed. ***Z.'03-345 R3237:3***

September 12

In your patience possess ye your souls. Luke 21:19

"LET patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," the apostle explains. Very evidently patience, therefore, includes other graces of character--implies their possession to a certain extent. Amongst the Lord's people patience surely must be preceded by faith, and the degree of patience very generally measures the amount of faith. The Christian who finds himself impatient and restless evidently is lacking in faith toward the Lord; for otherwise he would be able to rest in the Lord's gracious promises, and wait for their fulfilment. After using reasonable diligence and energy he should be content to leave the results and times and seasons with the Lord. ***Z.'03-361 R3245:3***

September 13

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Psalm 133:1

LIKE our Lord, let us seek to be peacemakers, and to dwell together with all the brethren in the unity of the Spirit, in the bonds of peace. Let our activities, our combativeness, etc., be engaged against the great enemy and all the works of sin,--including those in our members, our own fallen flesh. We, and all the brethren, will thus find sufficient engagement for every combative element of our nature, in ways well pleasing to the Lord, and employment for every lovable and helpful quality we possess, in building one another up, and doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith. **Z.'03-363 R3246:5**

September 14

Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 1 Peter 2:12,19

WE may be evil reported of and slandered, but all who know us, who have dealings with us, should find from experience our loyalty to principle, our endeavor that the words of our mouths as well as the meditations of our hearts and the conduct of life should be pleasing to the Lord and an honor to His name and cause, that God may be glorified through Christ, to whom belongs the glory and the Kingdom forever. **Z.'03-365 R3248:1**

September 15

Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 2 Corinthians 6:17

THOSE who conscientiously live separate from the world in spiritual matters, and recognize as brethren only those who confess to circumcision of the heart and adoption into God's family, will find themselves opposed by moralists, liberalists and higher critics, as well as by the masses, who hate the light, because it condemns their darkness--doctrinal and otherwise. Nevertheless, this is the only good and safe course to pursue. Better far is it that only true Israelites should be recognized as brethren, and thus the true wheat be separated from the tares. *Z. '99-203 R2512:4*

September 16

The Lord will give strength unto His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace. Psalm 29:11

IF you have trials and temptations which you are able to overcome, and which are working out in your character patience, experience, brotherly-kindness, sympathy and love, rejoice and offer the prayer of thanksgiving and acknowledgment of divine mercy and help. If your trials seem heavier than you can bear, and likely to crush you, take the matter to the great Burden-bearer, and ask His help in bearing whatever would do you good, and release from all that would do you no good, but which would injure you. *Z. '96-163 R2006:2*

September 17

Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:27

EVERY true child of God must have a definite individual Christian character which is not dependent for its existence upon the spiritual life of any other Christian. He must from the Word of Truth, proclaimed and exemplified by other Christians, draw those principles of life, etc., which give him an established character, a spiritual individuality of his own. So positive and definite should be the spiritual individuality of every one, that, should even the beloved brother or sister whose spiritual life first nourished ours and brought us forward to completeness of character fall away (which the apostle shows is not impossible--*Hebrews 6:4-6; Galatians 1:8*), we would still live, being able to appropriate for ourselves the Spirit of Truth. *Z.'03-375 R3250:6*

September 18

My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. Exodus 33:14

THE Lord is ever present with His people. He is always thinking of us, looking out for our interests, guarding us in danger, providing for us in temporal and spiritual things, reading our hearts, marking every impulse of loving devotion to Him, shaping the influences around us for our discipline and refining, and hearkening to our faintest call for aid or sympathy or fellowship with Him. He is never for a moment off guard, whether we call Him in the busy noon hours or in the silent watches of the night. How blessed the realization of such abiding faithfulness! And no real child of God is devoid of this evidence of his adoption. *Z.'03-376 R3251:4*

September 19

Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth. John 17:17

OUR Lord always links the progress and development of our spiritual life with our receiving and obeying the Truth, and every child of God should beware of that teaching which claims to be in advance of the Word, and that Christ or the Holy Spirit speaks to such advanced Christians independently of the Word. It cultivates spiritual pride and boastfulness, and renders powerless the warnings and exhortations of the sacred Scriptures because the deluded ones think they have a higher teacher dwelling in them. And Satan, taking advantage of the delusion, leads them captive at his will. ***Z.'03-377 R3251:5***

September 20

Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place,...to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones. Isaiah 57:15

LET us ever keep in memory that a broken and contrite heart the Lord never despises, will never spurn. Therefore, into whatever difficulty any of the Lord's people of the New Creation may stumble, if they find themselves hungering for the Lord's fellowship and forgiveness, if they find their hearts contrite and broken, let them not despair, but remember that God has made a provision through the merit of Christ which enables Him to accept and justify freely from all sin all that come unto Him through Jesus--through faith in His blood....Those who have broken and contrite hearts on account of their sins may know that they have not committed "the sin unto death," for their condition of heart proves this, as the apostle declares: "It is impossible to renew again unto ***repentance***" any who have committed the sin unto death. ***Z.'03-383 R3255:4***

September 21

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. Psalm 23:4

THE sheep of the little flock fear no evil because of the Lord's favor, because He is with them, on their side, and has shown His favor in the redemption price already paid. He is with them, too, in His word of promise--His assurance that death shall not mean extinction of life, but merely until the resurrection, an undisturbed sleep in Jesus. What wonder that these can walk through the valley of the shadow of death singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord, calling upon their souls with all that is within them to praise and laud and magnify His great and holy name, who loved us and bought us with His precious blood, and has called us to joint-heirship with our dear Redeemer. **Z.'03-413 R3269:6**

September 22

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalm 23:6

THE goodness and mercy which we anticipate beyond the veil has its beginning here already and is thus to be appreciated. Whoever knows nothing of the joys of the Lord in the present time will evidently not be prepared for the joys of the Lord in the Kingdom, whatever blessings and joys he may attain to under the administration of the Kingdom during the Millennial Age. There is then joy and rejoicing granted to the Lord's faithful ones, not a momentary matter connected with their first acceptance of the Lord and their consecration of themselves to Him. The goodness and mercy of the Lord is not to be looked back to as a thing of the remote past, but is to be recognized and appreciated as a thing of the present. Day by day God's goodness and mercy follow us, refresh us, strengthen us, bless us. **Z.'03-413 R3270:5**

September 23

Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Jude 3

OUR good fight of faith consists in a considerable measure in our defense of the Word of God, which includes also our defense of the character of God. This will mean our willingness to stand for the Truth at any cost and against any number of assailants-- against the creeds and theories of men, which would misrepresent the good tidings of great joy which the Lord and the apostles have announced, and which shall, thank God, yet be unto all people. As the apostle again says, "I am set for the defense of the Truth." We can do no less than defend the Truth. The Truth is God's representative, Christ's representative, and hence our standard, and as true soldiers we must defend our standard, even unto death.

Z.'03-423 R3274:3

September 24

I keep my body under, and bring it unto subjection: lest...I myself should be a castaway. 1 Corinthians 9:27

THERE is a tendency for the body, the flesh, to arise from its condition of reckoned deadness, hence the new nature needs to be continually on the alert to maintain its ascendancy, to fight the good fight of faith and to gain the prize as an overcomer. These battlings of the new mind against the flesh are a good fight in the sense that they are fightings against sins and weaknesses that belong to the fallen nature. They are a fight of faith in the sense that the entire course of the New Creature is a course of faith, as the apostle says, "We walk by faith and not by sight."... It is a fight of faith in the sense that no one could keep up this battle against his own flesh and its propensities and desires, except as he can exercise faith in the promises and in the Lord as his helper. ***Z.'03-425 R3275:3***

September 25

Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness [justification], and sanctification, and redemption [deliverance]. 1 Corinthians 1:30

HE who redeemed us, or bought us with the sacrifice of His own life, gives us, as our Prophet or Teacher, **wisdom** by His Gospel, to see our fallen state and Himself as our helper; as our Priest, He first **justifies** us and then **sanctifies** or consecrates us, as His under priesthood; and finally, as King, He will **fully deliver** the faithful from the dominion of sin and death, to the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature; --for "God will raise up [from the dead] us also, **by Jesus.**"

"Hallelujah! What a Savior!"

Truly He is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. **Z.'03-440 R3281:6**

September 26

Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Ephesians 2:20-22

LET us, as day after day rolls by, remember our three-fold relationship to this Temple: (1) We are still in process of preparation as living stones. (2) AS members of the Royal Priesthood carrying the Ark we are marching from the Tabernacle into the Temple condition; some of our number have already entered in and some are still on the way. (3) As the Lord's people the time has come for us to know, to sing with the spirit and understanding, the new song of divine mercy, justice, love and truth. Let us be faithful in each of these respects, fulfilling our parts, and ere long our course will be ended and the glory of the Lord will fill the Temple. **Z.'03-443 R3284:1**

September 27

***Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.
Matthew 4:7***

TEMPTATIONS continually assail the Lord's people --suggestions to do some wonderful works in His name, and to thus prove to themselves and to others that they are heaven's favorites. The lesson for us to learn is that the work which the Father has given us to do is not a work of convincing the world or of showing His favor toward us and our greatness in Him, but rather that we should quietly and humbly, yet as effectively as reason and propriety will permit, let our lights shine, and show forth the praises of Him who hath called us from darkness into His marvelous light, and from a desire to be wonder-workers to the reasonable position of servants, ministers of the Truth. ***Z.'04-9 R3298:5***

September 28

Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith. 1 Peter 5:8,9

THIS thought of Satan's opposition to us, and that we are contending not merely with flesh and blood but with principalities and powers and wicked spirits in high positions of power, would be appalling to us did we not on the other hand realize that by positiveness of decision we acquire great helps and assistances by other unseen powers. From the moment of our positive resistance of temptation and positive standing up for the Lord and His cause, we become stronger in the Lord and in the power of His might, and greater is He that is for us than all that be against us.

Z.'04-11 R3300:4

Hesitancy after the wrong is seen increases the power of the temptation. ***Z.'03-32 R2568:5***

September 29

Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord. Proverbs 16:5

ONE of the severe ordeals of the New Creature is the conquering of the love of the spirit of worldliness under the leadership of pride. Worldly pride challenges faith in God and obedience to Him, and only those who are of good courage and full of confidence in the Lord can overcome this giant. It is necessary, too, that the victory should be made complete--that pride should be thoroughly humiliated, killed, so that it can never rise up again to destroy us. It is an individual battle, and the only proper armament against this giant is a stone from the brook, the message of the Lord, showing us what is pleasing and acceptable in His sight, and assuring us that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted and he that exalteth himself shall be abased. As the poet has expressed it:--

"Where boasting ends, true dignity begins."

Z.'03-329 R3231:1

September 30

The love of Christ constraineth us. 2 Corinthians 5:14

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, Godlikeness in heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts--supervising all the human attributes and seeking fully to control them....

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."

Z.'03-55,58 R3150:2; R3151:5

October

October 1

I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me. Psalm 39:1

PROBABLY every person of experience will fully agree with the statement that the tongue is potent in its influence beyond any other member of the body, for either good or evil. Experience teaches also that with the vast majority it is easier to control any other organ than the tongue. So skillful a servant is it that every ambition and passion and inclination of the fallen nature seeks to use it as a servant or channel for evil. It requires, therefore, on the part of the Christian, increased vigilance, wisdom and care so as to govern this member of his body and bring it into subjection to the new mind in Christ, that it shall be, not a hindrance to himself or to others, but, on the contrary, a help in the narrow way. *Z.'97-156 R2156:3*

October 2

Forgetting those things which are behind. Philippians 3:13

WE forget the things that are behind, because it is right that we should do so. Because God forgets them, and declares that He has cast all of our imperfections behind His back; that our imperfections are all covered from His sight, by the merit of Him who loved us and who died for us, and whom we love, and in whom we are trusting, and in whose steps we are seeking to walk with more or less imperfection according to the defects we have inherited in the flesh. We are not meaning to suggest that slips or failures should be lightly esteemed or quickly forgotten; they should be rectified to the extent of our ability, and divine forgiveness should be sought for these defects daily. *Z.'04-23 R3306:2*

October 3

Great peace have they which love Thy law; and nothing shall offend them. Psalm 119:165

OUR requests should be, increasingly, for grace and wisdom and the fruits of the Spirit and opportunities for serving the Lord and the brethren, and for growing more and more into the likeness of God's dear Son. Under these conditions who can doubt that the promised "peace of God beyond all understanding" would "guard" such "hearts" and their "thoughts?" This peace would of itself dispel one of the great evils that afflict the hearts of many. Selfishness and ambition would find little room in a heart so filled. Divine peace can dwell in our hearts, and rule in them, so as to keep out the worry and turmoil of the world, even when we are surrounded by these disadvantageous conditions--even when the adversary himself is besetting us through deceived agents.

Z.'04-24 R3306:3

October 4

Jesus saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. Matthew 4:19

ALL of life's affairs will teach us lessons profitable throughout its future, if we will receive them. Perhaps there was something peculiarly helpful in the fishing business--something peculiarly like the great work in which the apostles were to engage the remainder of their lives. Our Lord intimates this in His call. Fishing requires energy, tact, proper bait and that the fisherman keep himself out of sight. And these four things are requisites in the spiritual fishing in which the Lord privileges us to engage. We are to remember that as fish are easily alarmed when they find that any one wishes to take them, so humanity is shy of being captured by anything--especially if they have the least suspicion that they may lose their liberties: and thus consecration appears to the world. ***Z.'04-26,27 R3308:3***

October 5

Consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Hebrews 12:3

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. 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.
Z.'04-38 R3313:5

October 6

Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of: the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them. Luke 9:55,56

SO with all of the Lord's disciples: their continual study should be to avoid that hypercritical disposition to sentence and to destroy other people while desiring mercy for themselves. The rule which the Lord establishes is that we must expect from Him mercy only in proportion as we shall exercise this grace toward others....The fault-finding disposition that is ready to accuse and condemn everybody, indicates a wrong condition of heart--one which all the Lord's people should be on guard against....Mercy, goodness, love, are the elements of character which He desires to see in the spiritual Israelites, and without which we cannot long continue to be His children.
Z.'04-43 R3316:4,6

October 7

Every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand. Matthew 7:26

THE hopes built upon the Lord's promises and unaccompanied by works are hopes built upon the sand. It is only a question of time until the great testing time shall come and such hopes will be shown to be worse than useless. They will be shown to have deceived their possessor, who thought himself safe in his assurances of a share in the Kingdom....On the contrary, those who build with obedience, their hearts as well as their tongues confessing and honoring the Lord, their deeds corroborating their faith, and their fruits bearing testimony of their vital relationship with the Lord--these shall pass through all the storms of life and shall never be moved, never be shaken, because they are on the foundation. **Z.'04-46 R3318:5**

October 8

Be not deceived,...he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Galatians 6:7,8

WE sow to the flesh every time we allow the fleshly, selfish, unjust, unrighteous desires of the flesh to have sway in our hearts and lives, and each sowing makes easier the additional sowing and makes more sure the end of that way which is death--Second Death. On the contrary, each sowing to the Spirit, each resistance to the desires of the flesh toward selfishness, etc., and each exercise of the new mind, of the new will, in spiritual directions toward the things that are pure, the things that are noble, the things that are good, the things that are true, is a sowing to the Spirit, which will bring forth additional fruits of the Spirit, graces of the Spirit, and which, if persevered in, will ultimately bring us in accord with the Lord's gracious promises and arrangements--everlasting life and the Kingdom. **Z.'04-57 R3323:5**

October 9

Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Matthew 8:26

EACH experience should be helpful to us. If at first we were fearful and cried aloud, by and by we received the succor, with perhaps the reprimand, "O thou of little faith!" but as lesson after lesson has come to us, the Master will expect--and we should expect of ourselves--greater faith, greater trust, greater peace, greater joy in the Lord, greater confidence in His presence with us and His care over us, and in His power to deliver us from the adversary and from every evil thing, and to bring us eventually in safety to the port we seek--the heavenly Kingdom.

Z.'04-60 R3325:1

October 10

Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. Colossians 3:9,10

ONLY in our minds, in our wills, have the old things passed away and all things become new. Actually, this change will be accomplished when this mortal shall have put on immortality, when this corruptible shall be raised in incorruption--raised in glory, in power, spirit beings. But meantime, in order to be counted worthy of a share 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; and in no way can this be better demonstrated to the Lord and to ourselves, or prove more helpful, than by keeping a strict surveillance of our hearts and of our thoughts. **Z.'04-25 R3307:4**

October 11

***Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.
Isaiah 52:11***

THE divine method seems to be to make a clear separation between the servants of God and the servants of evil. The privilege of testifying for God or being ambassadors for the Truth is a favor reserved for the Lord's own people. He seeketh not the evil one nor the fallen demons nor evil men or women to be heralds of the good tidings. The Lord's people should note this matter carefully, and resent the services of any who do not give evidence of being in heart-union with the Lord. "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to take My covenant into thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and casteth My words behind thee."--***Psalm 50:16,17. Z.'04-28 R3309:4***

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***

October 13

I will show thee my faith by my works. James 2:18

WHILE the Lord's people of the present age are not to be judged by their works but by their faith, nevertheless, works will be required. By our works we demonstrate our faith, and, thank God, imperfect works can demonstrate to Him the loyalty of our intentions, our wills....If our works demonstrate to the Lord the sincerity of our faith, that faith will be acceptable to Him and we will be counted perfect and be granted a share in the Kingdom, and all the great and precious things which the Lord has in reservation for those who love Him--not merely in word but also in deed--for those who strive by the deeds of life to show forth, to demonstrate, their love. *Z. '04-45 R3318:1*

October 14

To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. Proverbs 21:3

WE are to grow in love, and love is the principal thing; but before we can make much development in the cultivation of love, we must learn to be just, right, righteous....It is a proper presentation of the matter that is given in the proverb, that a man should be just before he is generous. It behooves the Lord's people, therefore, the New Creation, that they study this subject of justice continually and daily put into practice the lessons inculcated in the divine Word.... Such as get this proper foundation of character before they begin to build love will find that they are making progress properly. All love that is founded upon injustice or wrong ideas of righteousness is delusive, is not the love which the Lord will require as the test of discipleship. *Z. '04-56,57 R3323:1*

October 15

Have faith in God. Mark 11:22

OUR daily experiences since we became the Lord's followers have been guided and guarded apparently by the power unseen, to the intent that as pupils in the school of Christ, we may all be taught of Him and develop more and more of the graces of the Spirit, and particularly more faith. How important this item of faith is we probably cannot fully appreciate now. It seems to be the one thing that the Lord specially seeks for in those now called to be followers. ...So according to our faith will we be able to rejoice even in tribulation. We cannot enjoy the sufferings; we can enjoy the thought which faith attaches to them, namely, that these are but light afflictions working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. **Z. '04-59 R3324:5**

October 16

He maketh the storm a calm. Psalm 107:29

WE of today represent the Lord's cause in the midst of the raging elements of human passions, oppositions, etc.,...and our hearts would be at times dismayed except as faith is able to see the Lord with us in the ship, and able to grasp the thought of His mighty power in His own time and way to speak peace to the world....It must not surprise us, however, if a dark hour is before us--if the time shall come when the stormy winds will be so fierce that many will cry out in fear and trembling. Let us learn well the precious experiences of the present time, so that then our faith shall not fail us--so that in the darkest hour we shall be able to sing and to rejoice in Him who loved us and bought us with His own precious blood, and to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. **Z. '04-60 R3325:4**

October 17

He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust. Psalm 91:4

SO close to His heart does Jehovah gather His loyal and faithful children that they feel the warmth of His love, and the responsive language of their hearts is, "I will abide in Thy tabernacle"--under Thy protection--"forever:" "I will trust in the covert of Thy wings; for Thou hast been a shelter for me and a strong tower from the enemy; for Thou hast heard my vows"--my consecration--"Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear Thy name." ***Psalm 61:4,3,5***
--Z. '04-75 R3331:6

"I will sing of Thy power: yea, I will sing aloud of Thy mercy in the morning: for Thou hast been my defense and refuge in the day of my trouble."--***Psalm 59:16***

October 18

He that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster. Proverbs 18:9

WE cannot see wastefulness in any of the Lord's consecrated people without feeling that, however great progress they have made in understanding the mind of the Lord in some respects, they are still deficient in this particular. An appreciation of the gift and respect for the Giver implies carefulness and a stewardship in respect to all that comes to us from our heavenly Father--things temporal and things spiritual. According to our Lord's parables He is measuring our love and zeal in a considerable degree by our use or abuse of the talents, opportunities, blessings, temporal and spiritual, now bestowed upon us. ***Z. '04-77 R3333:3***

October 19

Freely ye have received, freely give. Matthew 10:8

LET us be on the alert to give to all who are hungering and thirsting the blessed food which has so greatly refreshed and strengthened us. If they do not get it they will faint by the way as they go looking for other provisions. We have the very thing which all of the household of faith need; without it they cannot maintain their standing, they cannot press on, they shall surely become discouraged....Whatever we may have of financial means for sending forth the bread of life to others, or whatever we may have of knowledge of the Truth, is neither to be selfishly hoarded nor selfishly partaken of by ourselves. It is to be consecrated to the Lord, and out of that consecration the Lord will bring blessing to others and increased blessings upon our own heads and hearts. **Z. '04-78 R3333:6-3334:1**

October 20

Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. Matthew 10:16

OH, that all of the Lord's dear people could learn the value of wisdom in connection with their endeavors to serve the Truth! Our Lord not only taught us to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, but He exemplified this lesson in His own course, saying on another occasion to the apostles, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now." We, too, should learn that there are opportune and inopportune times for mentioning certain truths, and that there are wise and unwise methods of presenting them. It is not enough that we do not speak untruths; it is not enough that we speak the truth; additionally we should see to it that we speak the truth in love, and love that is trained uses wisdom that it may accomplish more good. **Z. '04-91 R3339:5**

October 21

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Luke 11:2

THIS expresses adoration, appreciation of divine goodness and greatness, and a corresponding reverence. In addressing our petition to the Lord our first thought is to be, not a selfish one respecting ourselves, nor a thought respecting the interests of others precious to us, but God is to be first in all of our thoughts and aims and calculations. We are to pray for nothing that would not be in accord with the honor of our heavenly Father's name; we are to wish for nothing for ourselves, or for our dear ones, that He would not fully approve and commission us to pray for. Perhaps no quality of heart is in greater danger of being blotted out amongst professing Christians than this thought of reverence for God. **Z. '04-118 R3352:2**

October 22

Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? Matthew 20:22

THE courage of our Lord in the narrow way fills us with admiration. What a strong character was His! He had no thought of turning back; He was intent upon accomplishing His Father's will--upon sacrificing Himself in the interest of others. A noble pattern the apostles saw before them--greatness in humility, victory through service.

It is well that we should have clearly before our minds that unless we partake of His cup and are immersed into His death, we can have no share in His Kingdom of glory. Let us then count all things else as loss and dross to obtain this necessary experience. As it comes to us let us not be fearful, nor think strange of the fiery trials that shall try us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us. On the contrary, even hereunto were we called, that we might now suffer with the Lord and by and by be glorified together with Him. **Z. '04-138,139 R3362:2,5**

October 23

Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Matthew 20:27

AMONGST the Gentiles the rulers are lords, who do no serving but are served, but among the followers of Jesus the rule is to be reversed; he who would serve most was to be esteemed most highly. What a beauty there is in the divine order of things! How thoroughly all who are right minded can sympathize with the principles here laid down! How reasonable they are and how contrary to the spirit of the world. Truly, the Lord's followers will in this sense of the word be a peculiar people in their zeal for good works --for serving one another and for doing good unto all men as they have opportunity. **Z. '04-140 R3363:1**

October 24

And as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one Simon,...and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus. Luke 23:26

WE HAVE often wondered, where were Peter and John and James that they did not see the Master's burden and run to proffer assistance? If disposed to envy Simon his privilege of assisting the Master in the bearing of the cross, let us reflect that many of the Lord's brethren are daily bearing symbolic crosses, and that it is our privilege to assist them, and that the Lord agrees to reckon any service done to His faithful followers as though it were rendered to His own person....As the wooden cross was not our Lord's heaviest burden, so, too, His followers have crosses which the world sees not, but which the "brethren" should understand. "Bear ye one another's burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ." **Z. '04-155 R3369:6**

October 25

Deal courageously, and the Lord shall be with the good. 2 Chronicles 19:11

WHOEVER has a duty to perform let him not fear, and while seeking to do unpleasant tasks in a kindly manner, both justly and lovingly, let us fear not man, but rather fear the Lord and be intent on pleasing Him.

Let the world fight its fight: the Lord will supervise and the results will be glorious eventually. Let us who belong to the new nation, to the new Kingdom that is not of this world, use no carnal weapons, but the sword of the Spirit--let us fight the good fight of faith, lay hold upon the glorious things set before us, and not only stand ourselves, but help all those begotten of the same Spirit and members of the same heavenly army corps to stand, complete in Him who is the Head of the body, the Captain of our Salvation. **Z. '04-207,205 R3395:4; R3393:5**

October 26

Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you. 1 Peter 5:7

THIS is a very consoling and encouraging suggestion from the Word. However, the Lord's people are to learn more and more distinctly, as their years of membership in God's family and tutelage in the school of Christ go on, that they are not to ask the Lord to guide their efforts according to their wisdom; that they are not to request that their wills shall be done either on earth or in heaven, but rather, telling the Lord their burdens, great and small, they are to realize and appropriate to themselves His sympathy and love, and to apply to their own hearts as a balm the consoling assurances of His Word, that He is both able and willing to make all of their experiences profitable to them if they abide in Him with confidence and trust. **Z. '04-237 R3409:1**

October 27

My times are in Thy hand. Psalm 31:15

ALL of the Lord's consecrated servants devoted their lives to sacrifice when they became followers of the Lamb, and if they could but realize their consecration continually, they would be ready for the consummation at any moment at the Lord's pleasure and by whatever means or channel His providences may permit. The Lord's consecrated ones of the Elijah class are to remember that not a hair of their heads could fall without their Father's knowledge and permission, and the attitude of their hearts should be that expressed by our dear Redeemer--the Head of the Elijah body--"The cup which My Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" The language of their hearts should be that expressed by the poet:

"Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

Z. '04-237 R3408:5

October 28

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the LORD hath anointed Me,...to comfort all that mourn, ...to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning. Isaiah 61:1,2

OUR commission is to seek out the meek and the mourning ones, who have appreciated their own shortcomings and weaknesses, and who are looking for refuge and deliverance. It is part of our commission to point them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, to point them to the beauty of the resurrection for the ashes of death, and the glories which the Lord has promised by and by to take the place of the spirit of heaviness and disappointment and sorrow and trouble of this present time. It is our commission to tell such that "Joy cometh in the morning," and to assist them to arise and at once put on the garments of praise, and to begin to walk in newness of life, with a "new song in their mouths--even the lovingkindness of our God." **Z. '04-295 R3436:1**

October 29

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. 2 Corinthians 4:8-10

THOSE who joyfully endure for the Lord's sake, the Truth's sake, the greatest shame, the greatest ignominy, the greatest trials, the greatest persecutions in this present life, and thus have experiences most like those of the Master and Pattern, we may be sure will in proportion to their faithfulness manifested in such sacrifices, have a future great reward;--as the apostle has declared, "star differeth from star in glory." **Z. '01-55 R2762:4**

October 30

No man can serve two masters. Matthew 6:24

"YE cannot serve God and Mammon." Experience and observation corroborate this; and hence as a rule we find that people are either cold or hot in spiritual things...We are to "seek first (chiefly) the Kingdom of God." It is to be our chief concern and to receive from us all the time, attention, thought, energy, influence and means we have--the things *needful* for the present life being understood to be excepted; and our love and zeal will be manifested by the proportion of even these which we are willing to sacrifice in the interest of heavenly things. **Z. '01-61 R2765:5**

October 31

Because Thy lovingkindness [favor] is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee. Psalm 63:3

THOSE who have tasted of the Lord's grace, those who have come to realize His favor as ***better than life***, and who have joyfully laid upon His altar every earthly good thing, and hope and ambition, rejoice to tell the good tidings to others; they rejoice to tell forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. The message is too good to keep; they not only do not require to be hired to tell it, but they are willing that the telling of it, and the enjoying of God's favor in connection with the telling, shall cost them something--cost them trouble, cost them money, cost them the loss of earthly friendship, cost the straining, if not the breaking, of some home ties, cost them the frown of the world and of churchianity. **Z. '01-246 R2852:4**

November

November 1

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips. Psalm 141:3

THE number of watchmen, or pickets doing duty and standing guard over our actions and words will be fewer in proportion as the picket line guarding our minds, our thoughts, is a strong one. It is here that we need to be especially on the alert. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." This general truth is particularly exemplified in the regenerate, who are more open in their conduct and language, proportionately, than others. Having the right sentiments at heart they are less on their guard in respect to their manner of expression perhaps than previously; but all the more, they need to remember the words of the apostle, "If any man sin not with his lips, the same is a perfect man." --*James 3:2 Z. '04-23 R3305:5*

November 2

It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth Him good. 1 Samuel 3:18

WE know not what is for our highest welfare. Sometimes those things which we crave and desire to grasp, considering them to be good, might really be to our disadvantage. Blessed are they who are able by faith to pierce the gloom of every trial and difficulty and perplexity, and to realize that "The Lord knoweth them that are His," and that He is causing all things to work together for their good. *Z. '01-148 R2806:4*

We are to wait patiently for the Lord, and to take patiently such experiences as His providences may mark out for us, questioning not the wisdom, the love and the power of Him with whom we have to do. *Z. '01-317 R2888:2*

November 3

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Matthew 26:41

SOME make the mistake of praying without watching; others make the mistake of watching without praying; but the safe and only proper method is that which our Lord directed, to combine the two. We are to watch, and to be on our guard against the encroachments of the world, the flesh and the devil. We are to watch for all the encouragements of the Lord's Word, the evidence of their fulfilment, the signs that betoken His presence and the great changes of dispensations just at hand. We are to watch for everything that will strengthen us in faith and hope and loyalty and love; and while watching we are to pray without ceasing. We are to pray together as the Lord's people; we are to pray in our homes, as families; we are to pray in secret, in private. **Z. '01-80 R2775:5**

November 4

He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant. Philippians 2:7

AS no man is able to serve two masters and satisfy both, and do justice to both, their interests conflicting, no more can we serve God and righteousness, and at the same time be pleasing and acceptable to the adversary and those who are in harmony with him who now rules in this present dispensation, the "prince of this world." All of the Lord's consecrated people, those who would lay up treasures in heaven and be rich toward God, must be willing to become of no reputation amongst those who are not consecrated, and who, whatever their professions, are really serving Mammon, selfishness, and the present life, and not sacrificing these interests to the attainment of the heavenly Kingdom. **Z. '00-318 R2717:5**

November 5

Having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. Hebrews 10:21,22

LET us remember that He who has begun the good work changes never, and that if our hearts are still in harmony with Him, if our faith is still clear and firm in the great atonement, if our consecration is still full and complete, so that we seek not our own wills but His will to be done in our affairs, then we may indeed have the full assurance of faith, because knowing that God is unchangeable, and knowing that we are still in line with His promises and arrangements, we know that all of His gracious providences are still being exercised on our behalf. This is full assurance of faith--full confidence in the Lord. **Z. '00-170 R2643:1**

November 6

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Romans 12:1

TO render all we have to the Lord's service is not only a reasonable thing, but an offering far too small --far less than what we would like to render to Him who has manifested such compassion and grace toward us. And we should feel thus, even if there were no rewards attached to such a consecration of ourselves. But inasmuch as God has attached great rewards and blessings, we should feel not only that a refusal to accept would be an indication of non-appreciation of divine mercy but an indication also of weakness of mind, of judgment, which is unable to balance the trifling and transitory pleasures of self-will for a few short years, with an eternity of joy and blessing and glory, in harmony with the Lord. **Z. '00-170 R2642:5**

November 7

And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God. Revelation 20:4

ALTHOUGH this beheading is figurative and not literal, it nevertheless has a deep significance.... It signifies, not only death to *self-will*, but also to be cut off from all other heads, governments and law-givers, and to recognize no "head" but Jesus, whom God hath appointed to be the Head of the church, which is His body....It means, not only to be *cut off* from institutional heads and authorities, but also to cease to have heads and wills of our own, and to accept, instead, the headship, the will, of our Lord Jesus. It is the same thought that is drawn to our attention by the apostle in Romans 6:3, where he declares that we are baptized into the *body* of Christ, as members of that body, under the one Head, Christ, by being baptized into His death,--a full consecration of our wills, and ultimately a full laying down of our lives, faithfully unto death. *Z. '00-285 R2700:6*

November 8

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. Exodus 20:7

ALTHOUGH this commandment was not given to spiritual Israel we can readily see how the spirit of it comes to us....We have taken the name of Christ as our name. We are counted as members of the body of Christ. The holy name of the Head belongs to all the members of the body. The honored name of the Bridegroom belongs to His espoused. What carefulness the thought of this should give us, and how appropriately we should say to ourselves:--"I must see to it that I have not taken the Lord's name in *vain*,--that I appreciate the honor, dignity and responsibility of my position as His representative and ambassador in the world. I will walk circumspectly, seeking as far as possible to bring no dishonor to that name, but contrariwise to honor it in every thought and word and deed." *Z. '04-73 R3331:1*

November 9

The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. Galatians 5:17

HERE is the great and continual battle, for although the new will asserts itself and puts the body under and compels its subjection to the new mind, nevertheless the mortal body, not being actually dead, is continually coming in contact with the world and the adversary and is continually being stimulated by these and reinvigorated with earthly cares, ambitions, methods, strivings, conflicts and insubordination to our new will. No saint is without experiences of this kind--fightings without and within. It must be a fight to the finish or the great prize for which we fight will not be gained. For although the New Creature masters the mortal body by the Lord's grace and strength repeatedly, nevertheless until death there can be no cessation of the conflict. **Z. '03-424 R3275:2**

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 encourage 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? 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**

November 11

Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue. (fortitude). 2 Peter 1:5

ONE great difficulty with the Lord's people is that, even when determined for a right course and thus resisting the temptation, they do not take sufficiently positive action. Many say to the tempter, I have concluded not to yield at this time. Thus they leave in their own minds an opportunity open by which the tempter may return. Our Lord's course was the proper one: we should dismiss the tempter once and forever. We should take our stand so firmly that even the adversary would not think it worth while to come back at us along that line; "Leave me, adversary-- I will worship and serve my God alone." **Z. '04-10 R3299:6**

November 12

Be not faithless, but believing. John 20:27

IT is impossible for us to come near to the Lord except as we shall exercise faith and trust in Him, in His goodness, in His power, in His wisdom, in His love.... Faith is a matter of cultivation, of development. The same apostles who cried out in terror when the storm was upon the Sea of Galilee gradually grew stronger and stronger in faith until, as the records show, they could and did trust the Lord in His absence and where they could not trace Him. Similarly it should be a part of our daily lesson to cultivate trust in the Lord, and to think of the experiences in the past in our lives and all of these lessons in His Word, that thus our faith in Him may become rooted and grounded. **Z. '04-89 R3338:5**

November 13

Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of. Matthew 6:8

OUR petitions, our requests, our cries to the Lord, therefore, should be for the holiness of heart, for the filling of His Spirit, for the spiritual food, refreshment, strength; and as for the natural things, He knoweth the way we take and what would be to our best interests as New Creatures. We are to leave this to Him: He would not be pleased to see us importuning Him for things which He did not give us, for to do so would not be an exemplification of faith in Him, but the reverse--an exemplification of doubt, a manifestation of fear that he was forgetting or neglecting His promise to give us the things needful.

Z. '04-90 R3338:6

November 14

Take heed unto yourselves,...[for] grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Acts 20:28-30

IT is necessary for the discipline, trial and final proving of the church of God that they should be subjected to these adverse influences; for to him that **overcometh** them is the promise of the great reward. If we would reign with Christ, we must prove our worthiness to reign by the same tests of loyalty to God, of faith in His Word, of zeal for the Truth, of patient endurance of reproach and persecution, even unto death, and of unwavering trust in the power and purpose of God to deliver and exalt His church in due time. To such faithful ones are the blessed consolations of Psalm 91. **Z. '04-74 R3331:3**

November 15

He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked. 1 John 2:6

HE is to walk as our Lord walked, in His general deportment and relationship to everything that is good and correspondingly to avoid everything that is evil. He is to walk as nearly as possible in the footsteps of Jesus. This, however, does not mean that he either should or could, in an imperfect body, walk up to all the perfection of his Lord, who even in His flesh was perfect. It means just what it says, that we should walk as He walked--in the same way, in the same direction, toward the same mark and standard that He recognized and established. **Z. '03-345 R3237:5**

November 16

She hath done what she could. Mark 14:8

IT is not our privilege to come into personal contact with our dear Redeemer, but it is our privilege to anoint the Lord's "brethren" with the sweet perfume of love, sympathy, joy and peace, and the more costly this may be as respects our self-denials, the more precious it will be in the estimation of our Elder Brother, who declared that in proportion as we do or do not unto His brethren, we do or do not unto Him.Our alabaster boxes are our hearts, which should be full of the richest and sweetest perfumes of good wishes, kindness and love toward all, but especially toward the Christ--toward the Head, our Lord Jesus, and toward all the members of His body, the church; and especially on our part toward the feet members who are now with us, and on whom we now have the privilege of pouring out the sweet odors of love and devotion in the name of the Lord, because we are His. **Z. '99-78; Z. '00-378; R2448:5; R2744:3**

November 17

He shall give his angels [messengers] charge concerning thee, to guard thee in all thy ways. Psalm 91:11

THAT is, God will raise up some faithful pastors and teachers who will "watch for your souls as they that must give an account." True, there shall arise false teachers, perverting the Word of the Lord and seeking by cunning sophistries to subvert your souls; but if in simplicity of heart God's children require a "Thus saith the Lord" for every element of their faith, and carefully prove all things by the Word, they will be able to distinguish readily the true from the false. And having done so, the Apostle Paul (*Hebrews 13:17*) counsels us to have confidence. The Lord, our Shepherd, will care for the true sheep. **Z. '04-75 R3332:2**

November 18

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them. Psalm 34:7

HOW it enlarges the confidence of a Christian to realize that whilst earthly powers may be in opposition, and whilst he may be really of himself powerless to resist adversaries, and whilst in addition to the flesh and blood adversaries he may realize that he battles also with spiritual wickedness in exalted places --against Satan and his minions of darkness--yet that, on the other hand, "greater is He that is on our part than all that be against us," and that all the heavenly hosts are subject to the divine will and may be employed for the advancement of the divine cause according to divine wisdom. **Z. '97-120 R2140:6**

November 19

Let us watch and be sober. 1 Thessalonians 5:6

LET us watch in the sense of taking careful notice of all the directions which the Lord our God has given us, respecting what would be acceptable service to Him. Let us watch ourselves, striving to walk as nearly as possible in the footsteps of the great High Priest....Let us be sober in the sense that we will not be frivolous; that while happy, joyous in the Lord, free from the anxious cares that are upon many others through misapprehension of our Father's character and plan, we may, nevertheless, be sober in the sense of earnest appreciation of present opportunities and privileges in connection with the Lord's service;-- not thoughtlessly negligent, letting opportunities and privileges slip through our hands to be afterwards regretted. **Z. '02-239 R3056:5**

November 20

If ye do these things, ye shall never fall. 2 Peter 1:10

THE contingency is not in the doing of these things ***perfectly***, and regardless of the righteousness of Christ to cover our transgressions and compensate for our daily shortcomings; but if, ***added*** to our faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ, we have cultivated all these graces ***to the extent of our ability***, we shall not fall. When we have done all that we can do, we are still unprofitable servants, not daring to trust in our own righteousness, but in the ample robe which is ours by faith in Christ, while, with consistent "diligence," we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that the righteousness of Christ is only applied to such as desire to forsake sin and pursue that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." **Z. '97-148 R2155:6**

November 21

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations. James 1:2

ALL wish frequently, no doubt, that the testings were all over and that we were accepted to a place amongst the overcomers; but patience and faith and trust are to do a refining work in our hearts, making us mellow, willing and obedient to the Lord. Let the good work go on. Let us rejoice if our trials have brought us lessons of any kind that are profitable to us;--that have tended to make us stronger in character, more firm for truth and righteousness, more aware of our own weaknesses, and more on guard against the same. Even those conflicts which have resulted in only partial victories have possibly been to our advantage....Even on points in which there may have been absolute failure, the result may be a strengthening of character, a crystallization of determination for greater zeal in that direction again, and a humility of heart before the Lord in prayer.

Z. '02-133 R3001:5

November 22

The zeal of Thine house hath consumed me. Psalm 69:9

COLD, calculating people may have other good qualities, but there is no room for coldness or even lukewarmness on the part of those who have once tasted that the Lord is gracious. With such, the love enkindled should lead to a consuming zeal. It was thus with our Lord Jesus, and this was one of the reasons why He was beloved of the Father....Let all who desire to be pleasing in the Lord's sight become so filled with the same spirit of zeal for righteousness and truth that it will consume them as sacrifices upon the Lord's altar. Thus they will be most pleasing and acceptable to Him through Jesus our Lord. ***Z.'98-112 R2289:3***

November 23

Ye have need of patience, [cheerful endurance, constancy] that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. Hebrews 10:36

HERE we see that it is not merely to do the will of God that is the test, but that after having attained to that point, that mark of character in our hearts, in our wills (if only partially in the flesh) we should, by *patient endurance*, establish God's righteous will as the law of our hearts, the rule of life under all circumstances and conditions. Then, and not until then, will we be in the heart condition of fitness for the Kingdom. The Apostle James says, "The trying of your faith worketh patience [*patient endurance*"]; that is to say, if our faith stand the trial it will work this character of patient endurance. Of course, on the other hand, if we do not attain to patient endurance, it will mean that our faith has not stood the test satisfactorily, that we are not fit for the Kingdom.

Z. '01-117 R2792:1

November 24

Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward man. Acts 24:16

OUR consciences require regulating, as do all the other features of our fallen nature. If our consciences are to be regulated we must have some standard by which to set and regulate them. The conscience is like a watch whose dial is properly marked with the hours, but whose correctness as a time-keeper depends upon the proper regulating of its mainspring, so that it may point out the hours truthfully: so our consciences are ready to indicate right and wrong to us, but they can only be relied upon to tell us truly what is right and what is wrong after being regulated in connection with the new mainspring, the new heart, the pure will, brought into full harmony with the law of love, as presented to us in the Word of God.

Z. '00-360 R2735:1

November 25

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man. James 1:13

THERE is a difference between temptations which the Father considers proper and the temptations which come from the adversary. The former are tests of loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness, and are intended to be a blessing and a help to all those who withstand them, and who thus demonstrate their loyalty to righteousness. The temptations of Satan, on the contrary, are in the nature of pitfalls and snares in evil and wrongdoing, temptations to make right appear wrong and wrong appear right, putting light for darkness and darkness for light. In this sense of misrepresentation and ensnarements in evil, God tempteth no man. **Z. '04-7 R3297:5**

November 26

And the Lord said unto Moses, What is that in thine hand? Exodus 4:2

IF any man would be more abundantly used of the Lord in His blessed service, let him seek first to be fitted for it more and more. Let him imitate that beloved and honored servant, Moses, in meekness, humility, energy and untiring zeal and self-sacrificing service of the Lord. But the wise steward will seek always to cultivate along the lines of his natural abilities, and not expect the Lord to work a miracle for his advancement, and so waste valuable time seeking to develop that which he does not by nature possess.

Z. '94-143 R1651:5

Let us each, therefore, seek by humility, by zeal, by love for the Lord and for His cause, by faith in His power, to be in that condition of heart and mind which will make us ready to be used, and useful in any department of the divine service to which the Lord may be pleased to call us. **Z. '01-348 R2904:4**

November 27

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance. Ephesians 6:18

WE are to have the spirit of prayer in all that we say and do: that is to say, our hearts should be going out continually to the lord for guidance in all of life's affairs, that we may do with our might what our hands find to do, in a manner that will be acceptable to Him, and that we may be shielded by Him from temptation that would otherwise be beyond our endurance, and that we may be ultimately delivered from the evil one and have a place in our Lord's Kingdom. Brethren and sisters, let us more and more remember and put in practice these words of our Lord, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."
Z. '01-80 R2775:5

November 28

When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? Job 34:29

WHO but He, the 'God of all comfort,' can give quietness in the midst of tumults which rise upon the soul like sudden storms upon the sea? Like ocean mariners in peril, we cry unto Him, and He bringeth us to the desired haven--blessed haven--of quietness and peace in God.

What is the cry which brings this answer of peace? It is not a prayer that all occasion for disturbance shall be removed, for it is not always the divine will to bring peace to the human spirit in that way; it is not always the best way. But there is a cry which never fails to bring the quietness in which none can 'make trouble.' It is the prayer for sweet, trustful loving acquiescence in the will of God." **Z. '96-259 R2058:3**

November 29

***Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised.
Hebrews 10:23***

GOD'S promise is the foundation upon which all that we hope for, either of character or coming glory, is built. Let us prize this truth so that we will not compromise it in any sense or in any degree; let us not only hold the Truth in the letter but in the spirit;-- in the love of it, because it is true, as well as because it is beautiful and grand. And let us ever remember the importance of ***patient endurance***, that we may not only cultivate the Christian graces, and practice them, but that we may take joyfully the trials, persecutions or difficulties which our Lord may see proper to permit to come upon us for our testing and for the development of this character which He explains to us is of paramount importance, and without which perfect love could neither be attained nor maintained. ***Z. '01-119 R2793:3***

November 30

Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age. Matthew 28:20

SURELY He who was careful to supervise the sowing work is not less interested and careful in respect to the reaping. Let us then thrust in the sickle of Truth with energy and courage, remembering that we serve the Lord Christ, remembering that we are not responsible for the harvest but merely for our energy in gathering what ripe "wheat" we can find. If the labor be great for the finding of a few grains of ripe wheat we are to rejoice the more in those we do find, and learn to love and appreciate that which is scarce and precious. Let us remember, too, while using all the wisdom we can in this service, that the Lord's object in giving us a share in His work is not so much what we can accomplish as in the blessing that the labor will bring upon us. ***Z. '01-155 R2811:4***

December

December 1

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Matthew 22:39

YOU would not want your neighbor to use brain and tongue in evil surmises and slanders against you; and you should not do so to him....the law of the Lord commands that all under His Covenant shall not utter one solitary suspicion against a neighbor: and that if suspicion beyond knowledge is *forced* upon the mind by associated circumstances, the new mind shall promptly, with its native benevolence, counterbalance the suspicions by suggestions of the possibility of misinformation or misinterpretation and always give the apparently guilty the benefit of the doubt. *Z. '99-72 R2445:3*

December 2

And now, why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized. Acts 22:16

THERE is a directness in this address that is worthy of being copied by all who have an influence upon others, and who are seeking to bring them along in the right way. Urge them to promptness, to full and complete obedience, to a full confession of the Lord and the Truth. If they are not inclined to promptly obey after their eyes of faith have seen the Lord, and after their ears have heard His voice, they will be much less likely after a while, when the world and the flesh and the devil will say to them, Do not be an extremist; be moderate; do not make a full consecration of yourself to the Lord. Your neighbors and friends will think you beside yourself, and it will interfere with your hopes and prospects, and turn your friends into enemies. It will cost you too much; go slowly. *Z. '01-186 R2825:4*

December 3

Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Revelation 3:10

THIS is the special reward of those who are running the race with *patient endurance* in the present time, in the Laodicean period; while it was not our privilege to escape the hour of temptation, it is our privilege to have a counter-balancing special blessing as a result of living in the time of our Lord's *parousia* (presence). We may have His fellowship, His instruction, His dispensing of spiritual food which is now "meat in due season," in a manner and to a degree in which none of the faithful of past periods enjoyed these. But as we might expect, this greatest favor is correspondingly offset by the subtlety and severity of the trials of this hour of temptation coming upon the whole world. If ever *patient endurance* was necessary it is necessary now. *Z. '01-118 R2792:3*

December 4

If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? Luke 11:13

IF the Lord's consecrated people could all be brought to the point where the chief aim in life, the burden of all their prayers, would be that they might have a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of a sound mind, what a blessing it would mean! If then they should wrestle with the Lord until the breaking of the day, their hold upon Him would be sure to bring the desired blessing. The Lord has revealed Himself to His people for the very purpose of giving them *this* blessing; nevertheless, He withholds it until they learn to appreciate and earnestly desire it. *Z. '01-271 R2866:1*

December 5

Choose ye this day whom ye will serve;...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.
Joshua 24:15

LET others reverence whom and what they will; we, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, we, who have come to know Him through the power of the spirit by which we are begotten again to newness of life--we can do naught else than reverence our God; and reverencing Him we must trust Him implicitly; and trusting Him implicitly we will gladly walk in whatever way He may mark out for us; and thus trusting and thus walking we are content, whatever lot we see, since 'tis His hand that leadeth us. And let us be assured that, following the true Shepherd after this manner, we shall ultimately reach the heavenly fold. In these assurances we have joy and peace and blessing of heart, even in the house of our pilgrimage, before we reach the heavenly city.

Z. '01-284 R2873:1

December 6

He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.
Proverbs 25:28

THE battle with self is the greatest battle, and we have the Lord's word for it that he that "ruleth his spirit (his own mind, will) is better than he that taketh a city," because he has to that extent learned to exercise the combativeness of a true character in the right direction, in self-control. It is after we have had considerable experience in battling with sin and selfishness in ourselves, in casting the beam out of our own eyes, in subduing anger, malice, hatred and strife in our own hearts and flesh--it is then, and by means of this severe battle and experience, that we will be prepared to assist the brethren, and to assist our neighbors in their difficulties--to help them to overcome their besetments and weaknesses. *Z. '01-295 R2878:1*

December 7

When He was reviled, He reviled not again. 1 Peter 2:23

NOT because His enemies had found in Him something that could properly and justly be reviled and evil spoken of;--nor because His enemies were so nearly perfect that He could find nothing in them to revile and speak evil of; but because He was so full of submission to the divine will that He was enabled to take the scoffs and railings of the people, and to bear these humbly and patiently, and to remember that *even hereunto He was called*, did Jesus endure patiently and learn the lessons, and prove Himself faithful, and develop and demonstrate His true character, and feel and manifest His pity for the people, in their blindness and ignorance, and His love for them. **Z. '01-298 R2879:4**

December 8

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. John 15:18

AS our Master was hated without a cause, so let it be with us so far as possible, that the hatred, malice, envy and murder which may be poured out against us may be wholly unmerited by us--that our lives shall be as nearly pure as possible; that so far as we are able our thoughts and words and deeds may show forth the praises of our Lord, and speak of our love for all men, especially for the household of faith. By and by, when the church shall have been glorified, and a new dispensation inaugurated, those who hate us now, largely because they are blinded by the Adversary and misled, will bow before us, as the Lord's Anointed, and we shall have the great pleasure of lifting them up blessing them, encouraging them and forgiving them; and assisting them back to the full image and likeness of God. **Z. '01-300 R2881:1**

December 9

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him. James 1:12

IF we could but keep in memory the fact that every trial, every persecution, every difficulty of life, permitted to come upon those who have made the covenant of sacrifice with the Lord, is intended to ***prove them***, to test their love, to see whether or not their characters are fixed, rooted and grounded in righteousness, and being built up in love, it would put all these trials, difficulties and temptations in a new light before us, and greatly assist us in fighting a good fight and overcoming. We would say, if by these little trials the Lord is proving my love and devotion to Him, then, however trifling they may be or however important, I will diligently use them as favorable opportunities to demonstrate to my Lord the fullness of my love and devotion to Him and His cause. ***Z. '98-41 R2258:3***

December 10

Them that honor Me, I will honor. 1 Samuel 2:30

IN whatever department of the Lord's service He is pleased to open the door of opportunity to us, we should enter it promptly and with energy--with zeal for Him and for the cause to which He has called us. This is one condition of our acceptableness to Him. If we are slothful, inattentive to opportunities, undoubtedly they will be removed from us, and given to others, for the Lord is abundantly able to raise up one or another to serve His cause without interfering with, or overruling our free moral agency. Let us more and more appreciate what a privilege we enjoy in being co-laborers together with God, and especially in connection with this great service which our Lord and Master Jesus is exercising, and to fellowship in which we have been called, as His bride and joint-heir. ***Z. '01-317 R2888:6***

December 11

My son, give Me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe My ways. Proverbs 23:26

THE heart, the will, thus given over to God, seeks to know the divine will, to catch the divine thought and to obey it in word and in act; and in proportion as this condition of the new mind is attained, in that same proportion will there begin to be a newness of life in every respect--in ambitions, hopes, sentiments and efforts. It is for this reason that the revelation of the divine will and plan is furnished to believers--that by growing in the knowledge of it, by thinking on these things, by filling the mind with the divine plan and will, the transforming influence may extend into every avenue of life. **Z. '01-324 R2891:1**

December 12

As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Proverbs 23:7

IT...behooves the Lords consecrated people...to carefully strain out the impurities, and see that they do not enter into our hearts, our thoughts, realizing that with them in, the result will be to work to our defilement, to a greater or less degree. Whoever maintains purity of thought will have comparatively little effort in maintaining purity of word and of action. Whether the impurity come from one direction or another--from the world or the flesh or the devil--its attack must first of all be upon the mind; and if repelled there the victory is won; if not repelled we cannot know what the consequences might be, as the Apostle James declares: "Lust [selfish desire of any kind], when it has conceived [in the mind] bringeth forth sin [develops sinful words or deeds], and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." **Z. '01-325 R2891:5**

December 13

Lay not this sin to their charge. Acts 7:60

HOW great a blessing it would be for all spiritual Israelites to learn well this lesson; viz., that if we accept the results of any matter as being good, and if we realized that we were guided to those results by divine providence, we should think and feel most generously, most kindly, toward those who were the instruments used by providence, notwithstanding the fact that they might have been unwilling instructors, or, like Joseph's brethren, have verily intended opposite results. Those who are enabled to take such a view of affairs and forces operating in their daily lives are enabled "always to triumph through the Lord," as the apostle expresses it. And such find no room for bitterness or railing, either against Satan or against any of his servants. **Z. '01-331 R2896:1**

December 14

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Matthew 5:7

ALL do not know it, but it is a fact that the grandest quality that man can exercise, and the one which brings the largest amount of blessing itself, is the exercise of the God-like quality of **mercy**, compassion, benevolence. The Lord lays great stress upon this quality of mercy, declaring that whatever else may be our attainments of knowledge or of grace, if we have not this one we can never be acceptable to Him --if we do not have mercy upon others neither will our Heavenly Father have mercy upon us. And to insure that we do not consider this mercy to be merely an outward form, an expression of forgiveness and benevolence, our Lord expounds the matter, saying, "If ye do not from the heart forgive one another, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you."...Only the merciful shall obtain mercy: and if we have not mercy at the hands of the Lord all is lost; for by nature we were children of wrath, even as others, and under just condemnation. **Z. '01-332; '00-70 R2896:3; R2587:1**

December 15

The Lord is my Shepherd. Psalm 23:1

THE Lord, in calling His people His sheep, chose a very significant emblem of the character He would have manifested in them. The most noticeable characteristics of the sheep are meekness, docility and obedience to the shepherd to whose care they fully entrust themselves....The true sheep will carefully listen for the faintest accents of the voice of the Shepherd-- i.e., he will treasure up His words in his heart, he will study His providences, and he will cultivate that communion and personal fellowship with the Lord which are his privilege. Those who thus abide in Him can never go astray.

"They can never, never lose their way."

Z. '02-365 R3116:2

December 16

How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, follow him. 1 Kings 18:21

WE need to have some touchstone, as it were, some matter which will help us to decide, which will enable the mind to reach a decision quickly. This touchstone should be **God's will**; so that to perceive the Lord's will in respect to any question would be to settle it--as quickly as discerned....Ability to decide quickly, and to decide always on the right side, what the Lord's will is, requires some experience and discipline; but the sooner we begin the sooner we will become proficient. The more energetically we set ourselves to know the Lord's will and to do it, and to show Him by our promptness that we delight to do His will, the better and the more quickly will we find our characters established on proper lines. **Z. '02-42 R2950:5**

December 17

Beloved,...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Philippians 2:12,13

IT was God that provided for us the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and it is God that has drawn us unto Himself and that has promised us all needed grace to walk in the paths of righteousness; and more, even to follow in the footprints of Jesus in the way of self-sacrifice. While, therefore, with fear and trembling, --with great *carefulness*--we endeavor to work out our salvation, it is our privilege always to realize the promised grace to help in every time of need, and to be confident that our best *efforts* toward righteousness are acceptable to God when presented through the merit of the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us by faith. *Z. '97-147 R2154:6*

December 18

The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. Hebrews 13:6

TO have the proper course in life, to be able to meet the trials and difficulties of life as they come to us, and to meet them in the proper spirit which the Lord directs--in the spirit of rejoicing in tribulation, and counting such experiences all joy,--it is necessary that all fear of man, which brings a snare, shall be removed. And it is our Lord's direction that we shall fear Jehovah, and not fear our mortal fellows. The righteous are bold as a lion, as well as gentle as a dove, and meek as a lamb. This peculiar combination should be found in every Christian, and we doubt if it will be found elsewhere. *Z. '02-45 R2953:1*

December 19

Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off. 1 Kings 20:11

THE test of endurance is certainly one of the severest tests of faithfulness to which the elect church, the body of Christ, is subjected. It is the test which gauges and registers the strength of every other virtue and grace, and no soldier of the cross will be crowned with the laurels of victory who has not stood this test....In the battle of this day, as in all other battles, the effort of the enemy is to surprise and suddenly attack and overwhelm the Lord's people; and the only preparation, therefore, that can be made for such emergencies is constant vigilance and prayer and the putting on of the whole armor of God--the Truth and the spirit of the Truth. **Z. '94-155 R1656:1**

December 20

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15

THERE is much significance in that word "*study*;" and only the studious find the narrow way to the divine approval and acceptance. **Study** to show thyself approved--study the doctrine; study your course of conduct, to keep it in harmony with the doctrine. Study how to promote the peace and prosperity of Zion, and how to shield yourself and others from the missiles of error and from the poison of an evil, worldly spirit. Study to perform the duties of a faithful soldier of the cross--the seemingly insignificant, as well as the bravest and noblest deeds. **Z. '02-318 R3097:1**

December 21

Who is worthy? Revelation 5:2

LET us, dearly beloved, as we realize that thus far God has counted us worthy to look upon the scroll of His plan which has been unsealed for us by our blessed Lord Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, prove our worthiness to continue to look therein and to read the wondrous things of His law, by faithful obedience and loyalty to it in all things. Let us not undervalue our great privilege in being counted worthy to have some part in the blessed ministry of reflecting the light of divine Truth; let us prove ourselves jewels of rarest value, diamonds indeed, heartily receiving and beautifully transmitting to others the light of Truth, and faithfully enduring the severest pressure that God may permit to come upon us; for, if faithful in these small things we shall in due time be counted worthy also to reign with Christ in power and great glory. **Z. '02-333 R3104:4**

December 22

If a man therefore purge himself, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. 2 Timothy 2:21

IF any man desire honor from God, let him not fail to seek it in God's appointed way--along the pathway of humility; for the Lord giveth His favors to the humble. If you would be a vessel fit for the Master's use and a vessel of honor, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and He will exalt you in due time. Do not be in a hurry about it either; but whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, beginning and ever continuing to cleanse your earthen vessel, that it may be fit for the Master's use. **Z. '02-319 R3097:5**

December 23

A word in season, how good it is! A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. Proverbs 15:23; Proverbs 25:11

WE are to remember, when talking with those who have an ear to hear and are inquiring the way to the Lord, that there are great crises in the lives of men, momentous occasions, in which one word may be more valuable, more potent, than would be a hundred words or a thousand words at another time, under different circumstances; and we are to be instant in the Lord's service, whether seasonable or unseasonable to ourselves, --gladly ready to lay down our lives for the brethren.... We are to distinguish, however, between out-of-season to ourselves and out-of-season to others; and to be willing to serve others at any time, however out-of-season to ourselves, if it be in season and opportune for them. We are not to intrude even the Gospel itself at inopportune times, however convenient the occasion may be to ourselves. *Z. '02-381 R3124:1*

December 24

Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins. Matthew 1:21

THE noting of those little incidentals by which divine providence prepared for our Savior's birth and for the sending forth of the Gospel message, are strengthening to the faith of the Lord's people. Realizing God's care in the past over even the little things, gives a foundation for confidence in His wisdom and provision for the features of his plan which are yet future--the fulfilment of all the exceeding great and precious promises which centered in Him who was born in Bethlehem. And so also a realization of the divine providence in the larger affairs of the divine plan stimulates faith also in the Lord's providences as respects the personal and more private affairs of His people. *Z. '00-8 R2556:2*

December 25

Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:10,11

ALTHOUGH we cannot agree that this is the proper day for celebrating the birth of our dear Redeemer, but must insist that it was about October first-- (Volume 2, p.54) nevertheless, since He did not intimate His desire that we should celebrate His birthday, it is quite immaterial upon what day that event, of so great importance to all, is celebrated. Upon this day, so generally celebrated, we may properly enough join with all whose hearts are in the attitude of love and appreciation toward God and toward the Savior. The habit of giving little remembrances one to another at this time of year seems to us specially appropriate. God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. He is continually giving and we are continually receiving from Him; but amongst all His gifts the one of greatest importance to us is the gift of His Son to be our Redeemer. **Z. '03-457 R3290:4**

December 26

Be thou strong and very courageous. Joshua 1:7

"BE strong and of a good courage." There are different kinds of courage; one sort is begotten of egotism and self-reliance; another kind is begotten of a recklessness which fails to take into account the difficulties of the situation; but the courage which the Lord inculcates, and which all the spiritual Israelites are to seek to possess, is the one which, while coolly and calmly discerning the trials and difficulties of the way and while humbly realizing its insufficiency for the occasion, is supported by a faith in the Lord--a trust in the divine promises which enables them to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. **Z. '02-285 R3079:6**

December 27

Little children, keep yourselves from idols. 1 John 5:21

WE are not to put our trust in leaders, but in the Lord. This does not signify that we are not to trust leaders, and not to acknowledge leaders, for all the history of the Lord's dealings with His people, the typical as well as the antitypical, shows us that He is pleased to use human agencies as His representatives in the teaching and leading of His people from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge. The lesson to be learned is that the Lord is thoroughly competent to manage His own work, and that while we may look for His leading through human agencies our trust is not in them, their wisdom, their strength, but in the Lord's wisdom and strength, guiding them and us through them. **Z. '02-284 R3078:5**

December 28

He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall He lift up the head. Psalm 110:7

WE want to ask the Lord, our Master and Head, that He will bless us more and more, as with fresh zeal we shall endeavor faithfully and rejoicingly to drink of the brook of life's experiences, and gain wisdom therefrom that will fit and prepare us for His service by and by; and which will the better fit and prepare us for His service also in the present time, and enable us by His grace to show forth His praises in all the trying circumstances and vicissitudes of life so as to glorify Him in our bodies and spirits which are His. Let us, as we drink of the brook, take a lesson from the little birds, which, when drinking, repeatedly lift the head as though giving thanks to God. Let us continually give thanks to our Lord for every taste of life's experience, for every lesson, for every trial--appropriating them all to our spiritual development. **Z. '02-14 R2936:5**

December 29

In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good. Ecclesiastes 11:6

ALL of the Lord's people, in proportion as they desire to be the servants of the Truth, should be continually on the alert to note opportunities for service, and should expect to be guided and used of the Lord. Wherever we see evidences of devotion to the Lord and His Word, we should be on the alert to extend a helping hand....We are to be on the alert to pass along the blessing which we have received, and to esteem that this is the chief business of life with those who have consecrated themselves to the service of the King of kings. **Z. '02-71 R2965:3**

December 30

Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness. Psalm 65:11

AS we review the leadings of divine providence during the year that is past, let God's goodness and mercy stimulate our faith and confidence in Him as respects the New incoming Year. A proper retrospect on the part of a proper child of God will enable him not only to render thanks for the past, but to look up and lift up his head, realizing that our deliverance is nearer than when we first believed; and that He that began a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it, if we will but continue to submit our wills, our lives, our all, to His wisdom and loving care. **Z. '00-365 R2738:1**

December 31

What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now, in the presence of all His people. Psalm 116:12-14

THE close of the year is an excellent time for the making of new resolutions for the year to come. Let us, beloved brethren, make plenty of good resolves respecting what we shall be willing to be, to do, to suffer, in fellowship with our Lord; that we may by His grace make of it the best year thus far of our lives--the year of largest hopes, of largest endeavors, and by the Lord's grace of largest successes in self-sacrifice, in overcoming the world and its spirit, in vanquishing self and the desires of the flesh, in resisting the adversary, and in glorifying our Lord and blessing His people. **Z. '99-286 R2551:5**