

**MODERN INDUSTRIAL**  

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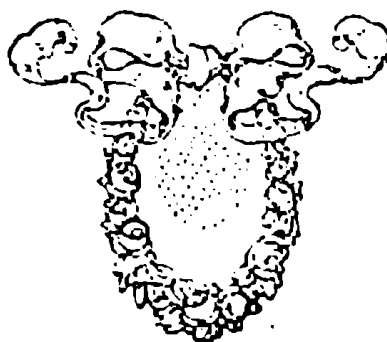
**CONDITIONS AND**  

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**THE BELIEVER.**  

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**THE CENTRAL BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT,**  
**5, Rose Street, Paternoster Square,**  
**London, E.C. 4.**

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**PRICE FOURPENCE.**

**MAY ALSO BE OBTAINED FROM**

**EDINBURGH:** J. K. Souter & Co., 2 and 3, Bristo Place.

**NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE:** The Northern Counties Bible and Tract Depot, 63a, Blackett Street.

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**NEW YORK:** Lo'zeaux Bros. 1, East Thirteenth Street.

## PREFACE.

**W**E desire to impress upon any into whose hands this pamphlet may come, that it is intended only for those who have been "born again"; (John iii. 7), who know what it is to be "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." (Galatians iii. 26), and who acknowledge the supreme authority of the Word of God.

That many of the Lord's dear people find themselves in great perplexity at the present time there can be no question.

That they are stumbled by seeing those who profess to be servants of Christ in worldly positions, and by hearing them recommend the Christianizing of purely worldly movements is not surprising.

That they feel a strong inclination to choose the easy path is only natural.

That they are bewildered by the multitude and variety of counsels offered is, perhaps, not difficult to understand.

What is required to-day is to get back to the Word of God, to be subject to the teaching of the Holy Spirit of God; and to have unbounded confidence in the sufficiency of God to support us in, and carry us safely through, the most difficult circumstances.

If Moses in his day "esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt"; (Hebrews xi. 26); and if the apostles, in the early days of the Christian era, "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name"; (Acts v. 41); shall not we seek to answer to the call;—"Let us go forth therefore UNTO HIM without the camp, bearing His reproach"? (Hebrews xiii. 13).

May the Lord be graciously pleased to use the following pages for the help and encouragement of "His Own," and to His Name shall be all the glory.

W. BRAMWELL DICK.

# MODERN INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS AND THE BELIEVER.

## I

"Our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven ; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Philippians iii. 20).

**W**E can all look back to periods in the course of our short life when the world has been in the throes of great problems. These may have been political, social, industrial, religious, national or international. By some means or other a way was found out of the difficulty ; and a brief breathing space ensued until fresh problems presented themselves and called for solution.

The children of God who accepted the truth contained in the verse at the head of this chapter did not take an active part in these matters. They realized that if they were citizens of heaven, they were no longer citizens of earth ; and that their politics could not be in heaven and earth at the same time.

Now, however, we find ourselves confronted by

**Circumstances such as never obtained before**

in living memory. Problems of the most complex nature, and which seem to baffle the wit of man, arise almost daily on all hands, and in every department of

life. The men of the world have adopted new methods of keeping their ideas prominently before the people, and of enforcing their demands. In connection with the latter, the children of God are perforce dragged in: for if a certain trade decides to "down tools" for a particular reason, all connected with that trade, and with kindred trades, must of necessity do likewise.

The question therefore arises;—Do the altered conditions necessitate the children of God adopting a different attitude towards the problems of the day?

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## II.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."  
(Psalm cxix. 105).

**T**HE Word of God is the one infallible guide under every circumstance; therefore, the child of God who owns the authority of the sacred Word of God, and who is subject to the Holy Spirit of God, may confidently count upon God for direction as to every step of his path. It will not do to suggest that the times are different from those obtaining when the Holy Scriptures were written; and that, therefore, the exhortations contained therein do not now apply.

God knew exactly the difficulties that would have to be faced by His children in this twentieth century, and He intended that His Word should be "a lamp unto *our* feet, and a light unto *our* path." We are aware that there are Christians who consider it to be a christian duty to take part in the discussion and solution of present-day problems; to put those whom they consider to be the best men in places of power. We have to enquire, however, does the Word of God call upon a heavenly people to take part in earthly affairs?

Perhaps we may cite just here a command of Jehovah to the children of Israel ;—

“Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders

### **A Ribband of Blue:**

and it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; *and that ye seek not after your own heart* and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring: That ye may remember and do all My commandments, *and be holy unto your God*. I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the Lord your God.” (Numbers xv. 38-41).

If the children of Israel were thus to be marked as a separate people, no less should we seek to realize that we are “partakers of the heavenly calling.” (Hebrews iii. 1); that the “Ribband of Blue” shows the heavenly colour, and that our conduct should be as heavenly as are our origin and destiny. Let us observe that there is a great difference between

### **The “Ribband of Blue” and a Blue Ribbon.**

When the Lord Jesus was here, the former had, alas, degenerated into the latter, and He had to charge the Pharisees with making a show of, and a boast in that which was intended only for their own eye, and the eye of God, (read Matthew xxiii. 5). We are not immune to-day from the danger of failing to apprehend the present practical significance of the “Ribband of Blue.” During a recent industrial crisis, some who professed an intelligent acquaintance with the truth of the heavenly calling, were TALKING RED. They were

### **Seeing Red and Thinking Red.**

They spoke of the downfall of Capitalism, and even predicted an early revolution; evidently forgetting for the time that their colour was not red but blue; and that a heavenly people have nothing to do with the politics of this world.

Before leaving this point let us note Jehovah's reproof of one of Israel's Kings, ever remembering that

### **The Principles of Scripture are Unchanging and Unchangeable.**

In 2 Chronicles xviii. we find that Jehoshaphat—who had shown himself zealous for the Lord his God—in an unguarded moment allied himself with the wicked King Ahab. It was only by the merciful intervention of God that he escaped with his life. (v. 31). Having returned to his house in peace, God's servant went out to meet him and said:—"Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord." (Ch. xix. 1, 2). How strong and how unanswerable was this challenge. It is as applicable to us in this day as it was to Jehoshaphat in his day. The men who are at the back of the various movements that are agitating the world at present, as well as those who are attempting their solution by mere human means, are ungodly, and hate the Lord. The fact that they profess some religious connection, and even appear at times on religious platforms, only renders their position worse; for obviously they cannot work for God and "help the ungodly" at one and the same time; nor can they love the Lord and yet go arm in arm with "them that hate the Lord." *He* has drawn the line of demarcation, and across that we cannot go without incurring His displeasure, and rendering ourselves useless as a testimony for Him in the world.

We shall now see however what the New Testament teaches with regard to the question before us.

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## III.

"They are not of the World, even as I am not of the World."  
(John xvii. 16).

**W**E turn in the first instance, as we should always do, to our Lord Jesus Christ as our great example. In the twelfth chapter of the Gospel according to Luke we find Him giving an exquisite discourse to His disciples in the hearing of "an innumerable multitude of people." He had been already rejected by the nation; He had "stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem" (ix. 51). there to "accomplish His decease." (ix. 31). He was seeking to conduct the minds and affections of His disciples to the new scene whither He was going thereafter, and was also giving them at least a hint of the new relationship into which they would be brought as a result of His death and resurrection. All this we find in this chapter. The persecution they would be called upon to suffer at the hands of the world was plainly set forth. In the midst of it all, they would have the Father's care, the Holy Spirit's support, and in a coming day the expressed approval of their Lord.

Just then there came a rude interruption; as one of the company said unto Him,

"Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." (v. 13).

He was a man who believed that he had a grievance. Failing to apprehend the greatness of the Person whom he was addressing, he, so to speak, said to Christ;—"If You have come as a Reformer, to remedy the wrongs of humanity, to remove the iniquitous inequalities under which we suffer, to level up society, to form men of all classes into a universal brotherhood, to introduce a new social system, then I will be on Your side. My brother has got more than I have, cause him to share it with me."



Note the trenchant answer Christ gave him, and with which He instantly dismissed him ;

“ Man, who made Me a Judge or a Divider over you ? ”  
(v. 14).

In effect He said, “ I have come *not* to set this world right, the time for that has not arrived ; I have come to secure for men *not* earthly riches but heavenly wealth ; not to set them up in this disordered scene, but to lead them to another world, to an abiding inheritance, and to give them to taste of that satisfaction that is to be found in God alone.”

Then turning again to His disciples, and making use of the interruption to teach a lesson, He at once put His finger upon the root cause of that man's grievance, of the wretched state of the world as it then was ; and of all the unrest that has existed from the fall of our first parents until now.

“ And He said unto them, TAKE HEED, AND BEWARE OF COVETOUSNESS : for a man's life consisteth *not* in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” (v. 15).

Covetousness was the cause of Satan's fall ; (Ezekiel xxviii) ; it was the secret of Adam's ruin ; it was at the bottom of all the sad record of departure from God recorded in Holy Writ ; and it is responsible for all the mischief in the world at the present time. Covetousness is the desire to have that which belongs to another. Across the divorce courts, the civil courts, the criminal courts ; the moral, social, religious, industrial, national, and international upheaval of the day, may be written this one word—“ COVETOUSNESS.”

Children of God ! Let us heed our Lord's warning regarding it, and “ BEWARE ! ”

Then He spoke the parable of the man whose wealth exceeded his wildest dreams, who made his plans without taking God into account, who died and left his wealth behind ; and Christ pointedly asked ;—

“ *Then* whose shall those things be ? ”

and solemnly added ;—

“ So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God ” (v. 20, 21).

In this world of uncertainties there is one thing that is absolutely certain, and that is ;—

“ We brought nothing into this world, and IT IS CERTAIN we can carry nothing out.” (1 Timothy vi. 7).

We see then quite plainly that the Lord Jesus Christ refused to put His hand to the improving of conditions here ; and also that He urged His disciples to fasten upon the things that are “ unseen and eternal,” rather than upon the mundane things of life’s brief sojourn.

This we learn also from His beautiful prayer to His Father as recorded in John xvii.

He had been ministering valedictory words to His own whom He loved so dearly. He had told them just what they might expect here when He was gone. The hatred that had been gratuitously heaped upon Him would be their portion. (See John xv. 18-25). Once again He had assured them of the Father’s love ; of the Holy Spirit’s support ; of His peace—He who had overcome the world—and had cheered their hearts by the promise of His return, and the prospect of their being at home with Him in the Father’s house. Then he turned from them to the Father, and in that prayer throbbing with divine affection, commended to His care the disciples of that day—and of this. There we learn our heavenly origin, for in past eternal ages the Father

gave us to the Son ; we discover also our heavenly destiny, for His prayer *will* be answered that we should be with Him ; we ascertain also the intensity of His desire that we should be characterised as a heavenly people while left down here in this world. Read verses 9 and 15.

"I pray for them : I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given me : for they are Thine.

. . . . .

"I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

Can we with words such as these ringing in our ears, in face of His own definitely expressed wish, have anything to do with the world's politics and strifes ?

Having considered the Word of God Himself to His people and the expressed desire of our Lord Jesus Christ with regard to His own ; let us now see what the Holy Spirit of God has to say through the inspired apostle Paul.

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#### IV.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ . . . gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." (Galatians i. 3-4).

**W**E cannot do better than turn to Paul's second epistle to Timothy ; because not only is it, as we have reason to believe, the last epistle which he wrote ; but it was penned in view of "the last days ;" and we have only when reading it, to compare with it the times in which we live, to satisfy ourselves that we are in "the last days" now.

Whilst we cannot read it without realizing the pathos of it ; we can thank God for pointing out to us just what

to expect in our day, as well as how to conduct ourselves : and we are also immensely encouraged by its perusal.

In chapter i. we are cast back upon the purpose of God ; on that bedrock we confidently place our foot ; and we know that no work of the devil, no artifice of man can ever turn God aside from His purpose (v. 9). In chapter ii. there is the call to

### **“Remember Jesus Christ**

... raised from the dead,” and we are assured, that by Him every purpose of God WILL BE fulfilled. In chapter iii. after indicating the difficulties with which we may expect to be confronted in “the last days,” we are referred to the inspired Word of God as our unerring guide. In chapter iv. the home going, the crown, and the approval of our beloved Lord are set before us as the grand incentive to go on. We desire to call special attention to chapter ii. and to the various figures used there, all urging upon us whole-hearted separation from the world, and the seeking of the approval of Him Whose we are and Whom we serve. Let us enumerate them :—

- I. A STRONG MAN.
- II. A GOOD SOLDIER.
- III. AN ATHLETE.
- IV. A HUSBANDMAN.
- V. A WORKMAN.
- VI. A VESSEL.
- VII. A SERVANT.

We can see at once that every simile is pregnant with meaning. In this graceless world we are exhorted to be “*strong in grace*.” There is no grace to be found among the agitators of the day, no matter in what department of life they may be found. As a matter of fact, there is no grace in the world at all except as it is found in the children of God.

When our Lord Jesus Christ was here grace was exemplified in Him ; for “grace and truth came by Jesus

Christ." (John i. 17). It was grace that brought Him here, (2 Corinthians viii. 9). Grace was manifest in all His dealings with those with whom He came in contact: grace led Him to go into death: He is the personification of grace where He now sits at God's right hand.

As those left here to represent Him we are to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." (v. 1). Grace does not assert its rights; grace does not fight for betterment here; grace does not seek to overturn anything that the Word of God sanctions; grace does not object to being dubbed pusillanimous; grace does not resent being "cut" by those who differ; grace manifests the spirit of Christ to all men and at all times. This can be secured and maintained only as our hearts are engaged with our Lord Jesus Christ where He is, by dwelling much upon the lovely traits manifested by Him where He was, and by being under the constant control of the Holy Spirit.

The three characteristics of "*a good soldier*" are:—  
(1) To endure hardness; (2) not to entangle himself with the affairs of this life; and (3) to please Him Who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

Shall we who are honoured by being left here to hold the ground for our absent and rejected Lord, render ourselves unfit for the fight by entangling ourselves with the affairs of the world, with the prince and god of which we shall be in conflict as long as we are here? Is it not the case that the great enemy, who is a skilful strategist, resorts to such tactics in order that he may enfeeble us, and render us unfit for the warfare? Since our great Commander has conferred upon us the distinction of choosing us to be His soldiers, let us see to it that we do nothing to mar His escutcheon or dishonour His Name.

*The Athlete* has one object before him, and that is to gain the crown. For this he puts himself into training; he denies himself many things that he likes; he refuses much that in ordinary circumstances he would consider

quite lawful ; and, as far as possible, he seeks to make sure that he will not by any fault of his, risk losing the coveted prize. That the inspired penman acted on these lines is evident ; for in the last chapter he tells us that he has run the race, and finished the course, and that he was going in to receive not a laurel wreath, but an incorruptible crown. So we set aside our natural ideas, go against our natural inclinations, and say "No" to ourselves, in order that the prize that He offers may be ours.

The lesson that we learn from "*the husbandman*" is patience. The apostle James tells us that the husbandman "hath long patience." It was just here that many of God's honoured servants in Bible times failed ; and it is just here that so many of God's dear children fail now. We do not seem to apprehend that

### **This is Not GOD'S Time for Putting the World Right ;**

and as a result we seek to take matters out of God's hands into our own hands, and, as might be expected, it ends in failure.

As we leave everything in His hand we will ask Him for patience to wait His time, and meanwhile to be preserved from dabbling in the world's affairs.

*The Workman* works intelligently. We are to rightly divide, or cut in a straight line, the Word of Truth. We will not wrest a text of scripture from its connection in order to seek justification for our ideas or our actions ; but having a form, or outline of sound words (ch. i. 13), we will go on seeking only God's approval. We have heard of a railway Ticket-examiner, who, standing at the entrance to a platform one morning was calling out "All show 'Seasons' please" ; when an irate gentleman, who had difficulty in finding his ticket, remarked "I should think you are not very popular here young man." Pointing up to the General Manager's window the young man replied "It is up there I wish to be popular, Sir, and if I am popular up there nothing else matters." We

Christians cannot be popular in heaven and on earth; We have to choose between the approval of God, and the approval of man, and surely we will all seek to pursue the excellent "study" of showing ourselves "Approved unto God."

*The Vessel* has to be "sanctified and meet for the Master's use." Verses 20-21 refer to moral fitness for the Master's service. A lady says to her servant one day, "I have just received intimation that several friends are coming for tea this afternoon, and I wish you to put out the best silver. Let me see it please." Reluctantly the maid takes her, not to the place where the silver ought to be, but to the coal cellar where, to her consternation the lady discovers those vessels upon which she places great value, and which she reserves for special occasions, covered with grime and coal dust. "Why," she exclaims, "these are entirely unfit for use." The vessels were genuine silver, and would in ordinary circumstances be a credit to the owner, but, through carelessness, are not in a condition that renders them usable. The illustration may seem far-fetched, but we fear that that which we seek to illustrate is to be found in real life.

How many of God's children are unfit for the Master's use, and cannot reflect credit upon, or bring glory to Him, because by their unholy associations they are covered with the pollution of this world, and instead of shining in His service they are tarnished and useless in some dark corner.

Lastly, the inspired penman writes of a *servant*; and in the most unequivocal language he insists that "The servant of the Lord **MUST NOT** strive" (v. 24). He does not say should not or may not but "**MUST NOT.**" In face of this what are we to say of some who profess to be children of God and who are constantly on public platforms—on the Lord's day in particular—striving for what they consider to be their rights?

What are we to say of those who do not take a prominent part, but who are in sympathy with those

whose aim it is to undermine the foundations of that which God has established, who take part in their propaganda, and who support their methods of enforcing their ideas?

They may argue, "We want to see wrongs righted; grievances redressed, inequalities removed etc; we cannot sit still, see others fight the battle, and we share in the benefit *if they succeed*." Here however is the word of the Lord to all who belong to Him; for every one who belongs to Him is a servant. "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth" (Isaiah xlv. 9). but "the servant of the Lord *must not* strive." Surely "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Samuel xv. 22). And surely we all desire to be like Him of whom it was written "HE SHALL NOT STRIVE." (Matthew xii. 19).

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## V.

"Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself." (Psalm iv. 3).

SO important is the subject that it is of the utmost consequence that we should examine it only in the light of the Word of God, in true subjection to the Holy Spirit of God, and not be influenced by our own ideas. If we turn to 2 Corinthians vi. we find there a divine injunction and a clarion call which seem to be pertinent to the matter under consideration. We venture to quote, in full verses 14-18.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My



people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

This was Paul's second letter to the saints at Corinth. In his first epistle he brought prominently before them :—

### **"Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified."**

(1 Corinthians ii. 2). as the one corrective for their worldliness, as well as for the display of the flesh in them in its religious, educated, moral and ecclesiastical forms. This communication seems to have had the desired effect, with the result that in his second epistle he was able to direct their attention to

### **Jesus Christ, and Him Glorified.**

(2 Corinthians iii. 18). In the case of the apostle, the transforming effect of occupation with Christ in glory was such that no matter what his enemies might do to him (read chapter iv). it only served to bring out Christ the more in all his ways, and to set him looking at—as well as longing for (see chapter v)—the things that are unseen and eternal. This leads to the solemn injunction in chapter vi. already quoted. Some have confined the application of v. 14, to marriage, and to that, it certainly applies; no Christian has deliberately—with knowledge of this passage—contracted a union with an unsaved person without laying up for himself, or herself, a heritage of sorrow. Clearly, however, it refers to association with the world religiously, commercially, as well as in any and every department. The trumpet call is

### **"Come Out!"—"Be Separate!"**

This may cost something; very likely it will. It may revolutionize our plans, and alter the whole course of our

life. Employers may suffer because they refuse to join a Federation, and they may have to change their line of business. Employees may find that their refusal to submit to the tyranny of Trades Unions means altering their vocation. Both employers and employees will realize that paying a subscription involves association even if the former be passive members, and the latter refuse benefits offered; and that to them the call is "COME OUT!"—"BE SEPARATE!" It has been argued that we should not advise any to abandon existing conditions, unless we are in a position to place them in equally favourable circumstances. *We do not advise.* We simply seek to remind ourselves, and our fellow Christians, of the call of God; and pray that they, and we, may have grace to answer to it. Our faith may be tested. So it was with those in early days to whom it was written:—

"Ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, while ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye . . . took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. CAST NOT AWAY THEREFORE YOUR CONFIDENCE, WHICH HATH GREAT RECOMPENSE OF REWARD." (Hebrews x. 32-35).

Look, however, at the tender consideration of our gracious God. If it should cost us something, we have His assurance, "I will be a Father unto you." This is not relationship; if it were we would not read of "sons and daughters"; for "in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female" (Galatians iii. 28) but the meaning is "I will father you—I will look after you—I will provide for you." Who says so? "The Lord Almighty." Just as He appeared to Abram, after Lot had separated himself so that he might enjoy the wealth and pleasure of Sodom, and promised him inconceivable prosperity; and as He again appeared to him, after he had refused the reward of the King of Sodom, and said;—"Fear not Abram, I AM THY SHIELD, AND THY EX-

CEEDING GREAT REWARD"; so in the scripture before us He assures those who answer to His call of His succour and His support.

May we not learn from this how God desires the separation of His children from the whole system and order of things in the world; how He appreciates loyalty to Himself; and how He seeks to encourage His own in the path by pledging His name that all will be well.

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## VI.

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

THE question may be asked; if all the foregoing is true, why have we been left in the world at all, and what is our mission here? The answer is;—to do good. Such was the ceaseless occupation of our blessed Lord when He was here. If He refused—as He did—to set things right in the world; we know

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about DOING GOOD, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; FOR GOD WAS WITH HIM." (Acts x. 38).

What Christ did when He was in the world, God desires His children to do while they are in the world. The verse at the head of this chapter is cited from a portion of the Galatian epistle in which the writer protests his separation from the world in the striking words;—

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom (or whereby) THE WORLD IS CRUCIFIED UNTO ME, AND I UNTO THE WORLD." (Galatians vi. 14).

Yet just at that point he urged those Galatian Christians to "do good unto all." As heavenly

strangers we are to shed abroad the breath of heaven, the fragrance of the name of Jesus, the warmth of the love of God. We are also to preach the gospel to the world. It seems quite clear from the Holy Scriptures that thereby

### **The World will not be Converted;**

because the work of God to-day is "to take out of the Gentiles a people for His name," (Acts xv. 14); but it is equally plain that it is our responsibility as well as our privilege, to "preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark xvi. 15). For this we require divine power; and from every part of the Word of God we learn that the separate man is the man of power. We do well to enquire whether the lack of power in, and the absence of results from, the preaching of the gospel, is not largely the outcome of the children of God associating with the world; engaging in a vain attempt to christianize present movements as a means of solving the problems of the day, and in this way unfitting themselves for the most glorious work ever entrusted to mortal man, that of carrying to the lost and perishing the evangel of the blessed God. It is likewise laid upon us as a divine obligation to PRAY. We desire to exhort ourselves; and if we could gain the ear of every child of God on earth we would exhort them, one and all,

### **Pray! and PRAY!! and PRAY!!!**

Amid all the rush and bustle of life we must

### **Make Time to Pray!**

We quote from 1 Timothy ii. 1-6;—

"I exhort therefore, that *first of all*, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men

to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

We are to pray NOT for the betterment of the world. NOT for the success of the schemes of some party, political, religious, or otherwise; but for the welfare of the children of God; and for the prosperity of the gospel of God. In praying, as in preaching, it is the separate Christian who has power with God, and who prevails.

Abraham could pray for Sodom because he was outside Sodom. Evidently Lot could not pray for it. According to 2 Peter ii. 7-8. he was a "just" and "righteous man," but he was up to the eyes in Sodom's ways. Attracted by its well-watered plain, he gained position, probably became immersed in its politics, tasted of its pleasures, and followed its pursuits. So seldom had the name of God been on his lips that when he went to warn his sons-in-law of impending danger he seemed unto them as one that mocked. Abraham, on the other hand, had trod his solitary path of separation, prepared to be misunderstood and it may be reviled; he had already shown himself to be the man for an emergency by delivering Lot when he was taken captive (Genesis xiv). Now he proves himself to be the man who could intercede with God. With a holy boldness that is almost startling we hear him pleading with God on behalf of Sodom, and getting from God the promise of all that he asked.

What a lesson for the children of God now. It is ours NOT to appear on political platforms; NOT to visit the polling booth; NOT to lend a hand in the settling of international strife; but to go to the throne of God, to gain the ear of God, to reach the heart of God, to pray to God. Do we realize that there is at our disposal a power greater than that possessed by the entire electorate of the country in which we live? It is given to us NOT to

agitate, nor protest, nor strive, nor fight, nor vote, but to PRAY. By prayer, the privileges that have been conferred upon the children of God will be preserved; the going forth of "the glad tidings" will be prospered, and by all this the world will benefit.

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## VII.

"To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isaiah viii. 20).

**I**T might be well before closing, just to note the testimony of other inspired apostles with regard to the subject under consideration. Let us take them in order.

(James iv. 4).

*"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, 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."*

Could words be plainer? Could language be stronger? Do not let us try to explain the text away, but rather let us accept it as the Word of God to us.

(2 Peter ii. 20).

*"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."*

Solemn words indeed, to which we do well to take heed in a day such as the present when the world is doing its best to entangle us, and thus draw us away from loyalty to Christ.

(1 John ii. 15-17).

"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. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

These words are addressed to young men in the family of God. Those who having progressed in divine things are strong, the Word of God abides in them, and they have overcome the wicked one. Such are exhorted to "love not the world;" are warned that the love of the world, and "the love of the Father" are utterly incompatible the one with the other. The flimsiness of everything connected with the world system is indicated; and the abiding nature of those who do the will of God is pointed out. As we weigh these up we should have no difficulty in deciding upon our course.

(Jude 23).

### **"Hating even the Garment Spotted by the Flesh."**

A pointed, pithy, practical sentence of eight words. The brief epistle has pointed out the fearful workings of the flesh and the state of the world. The inspired penman seems to use the strongest word he can find as he urges God's children to "hate even the garment spotted by the flesh."

(Revelation xviii. 4, 5).

"Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues, for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."

We are aware that this refers to a period subsequent to the removal to heaven of the children of God of this dispensation; and that it is God's call to His own to

come out of a wretched religious counterfeit. There is however a principle therein which applies now. This chapter—as also chapter xvii.—gives us the end of the religious department of the world system of the present day, of which Satan is the god. It is opposed to God and to His Christ, and should therefore be eschewed by all God's children.

It seems abundantly clear then that if we take our directions from the Word of God; if we review the history of men of God as therein recorded; and above all if we accept as our great example the Son of God, our path here has to be one of unhesitating and uncompromising separation from the world in every shape and form.

Is it possible that we have shirked this path because we have shrunk from the persecution, and, it may be, privation, which it would involve? Is it possible that during the recent great crisis in the history of the nations of the world where the people of God had to face a momentous issue, we took the line of least resistance rather than bear the opprobrium of the world, which the Word of God calls “the reproach of Christ”?

Without laying claim to ability to prophesy, we may safely predict that if the Lord leaves His people here a little while yet, the path will become, if possible, more narrow; the road will become more rough; the opposition of the enemy will become greater; the difficulties will increase; that which we find full blown at the close of Revelation xiii. will develop with amazing rapidity; and we shall have to decide;—yea, we are called upon now to decide, whether the faithfulness which will characterise a loyal few in that day is to be found in us in this day. God desires it of us; the Lord Jesus Christ prayed, and prays, that it might be seen in us; the Holy Spirit seeks to produce it and maintain it; the Word of God encourages us to exhibit it; the arch enemy uses, and will use, every artifice of which he is capable to



prevent it; and it is for us to say which path we shall choose; how we shall walk; and whom we shall serve till travelling days are done. Our eternal home is assured; our joy then will be without alloy; whatever may be the character of our service, then all will be divinely suited to our blessed Lord.

It is here that we have the unparalleled opportunity, the inestimable honour, the unique distinction of standing *for* Him, of suffering *with* him, by being separated *to* Him. Thus will *His* name be glorified; thus will *His* heart be comforted; and thus will we learn *Himself*, *His* love, *His* support, *His* peace, and *His* joy, in a way that these could not be known under any other circumstances.

“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” (Jude 24-25).

W. BRAMWELL DICK.

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