

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. *R1756:5*

R1756 (From Harvest Truth Database V8.0 2014)

SELECTIONS FOR THE FAMILY CIRCLE

"THE INELEGANCE OF HURRY"

There is an idea prevalent that to be in a hurry is a sign of importance, of large business and large achievements. It is a serious mistake. An experienced person always mistrusts the man who hurries, for he fails in emergencies. Serenity of mind and leisurely action are necessary to fine work of any kind. It is in leisure that the mind assimilates best.

Scipio Africanus declared, "I am never less at leisure than when at leisure." A rare bit of wisdom of which all reflective minds know the value. If we admit this as true, the inelegance of a hurried manner has the best of reasons. It is wasteful, inconsistent with the finest action, and is caused by a man losing control of himself, and suggests an uneasy, indecisive mind.

A distinction, however, should be recognized between activity and excited hurry, and between slowness and self-possession. Activity with self-possession is the desirable condition.

TROUBLES MADE BEAUTIFUL

Most of the shells of the oyster are pearly in the interior; and as the true pearls are merely morbid growths, they may all produce pearls of various qualities. The formation of pearls is caused by the introduction of irritating substances, such as grains of sand, between the mantle and the shell. The irritation causes the animal to cover the obnoxious object with layers of pearl, which generally attach the foreign body to the interior of the shell. The Chinese produce pearls artificially by placing substances in the position just described; and we have seen some shells to the interior of which small metal images were attached by this pearly secretion.

When we look at a pearl, we look at an annoyance which has been ennobled. The oyster by itself is of merely nominal value. But the result of the oyster's own treatment of its irritation—the pearl—is something "of great price." Apart from its pecuniary worth this gem has a moral significance. It suggests that troubles may be made beautiful, and reminds us that amongst mankind some martyrs are more remembered for the glory with which they invested their sor-

rows than for any other portion of their lives. Biography has its moral pearls, which are treasured long after the creators of them have perished, just as material pearls are valued long years after the oysters have been discarded.

GOD CHOOSETH

There are men who have strong and laudable desires to serve the Lord, and who fervently pray for his glory; but he does not always seem to hear their prayers. There are various reasons for this. Sometimes men are unfit for the Lord's service. They are not purged from their sins; they are not vessels unto honor, *fitted* for the Master's use; and so he sets them aside as not adapted to his work. Sometimes men wish to do great things, but find themselves straitened, hindered, limited and circumscribed; sometimes they are reserved for still greater work; in other cases they are rejected of the Lord for reasons well known to him.

Moses longed to lead Israel into Canaan, but he was not permitted to enter the promised land. So David would gladly have built the temple at Jerusalem, but the Lord would not accept that service at his hands. Paul was forbidden by the holy Spirit to preach the gospel in Asia, and though he essayed to go into Bithynia, the Spirit suffered him not. In like manner ⁽¹⁾ 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 the 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 fulfill his purposes of grace.

⁽¹⁾ Feb. 6 Manna, Psa. 75:6-7

R5321 "THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE THE SPIRIT OF DISCIPLESHIP"

"Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."—Matt. 20:27

PROPER aspirations are very beneficial, both to the person himself and to those with whom he comes in contact. Our Lord had an aspiration. We read of Him that He "for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame." (Heb. 12:2)...

Every New Creature has high aspirations. In fact, every one should have an ideal toward which he is striving; and having this wish to attain it indicates that there is a *motive* behind the desire. It is altogether proper to have incentives before the mind, and it is proper to know what kind are worthy of our efforts; otherwise wrong ones might lead us astray. In our text a most laudable aspiration is placed before us...

RESPONSIBILITY UPON EACH ECCLESIA

As respects positions in the Church, the Lord indicated that *He* would do the setting. "Now God hath set the various members in the Body as it hath pleased Him." God ordained that there should be in the Body this setting; for instance, the service of the eye. As the eye member assists the human body, so the eye member in the Church may be very assistful to the Body of Christ. Also there are ear members, foot

members, hand members and tongue members. These different members have unlike services to perform for the welfare of the whole body. The hand is not to say to the foot, "I have no need of thee," or vice versa.—1 Corinthians 12:14-31.

If the body tries to walk on the *hands*, it is not the Divine order. The body should walk on the *feet*. So it is in a congregation. But if the congregation lays too much on the feet members, it is depriving the hand members of their use. The various members should be in the positions where they can render the most efficient service. In other words, the congregation should seek to know the service God has evidently prepared each individual to perform. They are to seek to use their best judgment, to place the right person in the right position...

The difficulty with many in the Church is that they desire to do what somebody else is doing—something that they admire. They are not looking around to see what they *can always* do—do good unto all men, as they have opportunity, but especially unto those who are of the household of faith. They have not the proper spirit of discipleship. Therefore the injunction of our text should lead them to say to themselves, My highest ambition should be to *serve* the Lord *acceptably*, and let Him take care of the *place* where I may serve. Here is a little

place; there is a little corner. I will try to do the thing which is needful... I will do with my might what it is my duty to do—whether it is sweeping, or engaging a hall for a meeting. Whatever comes as an opportunity to me, that I will do."

R5793 "HAVE NO AMBITION FOR PERSONAL GLORY"...The thought should come home to each of our hearts, that if any of us have ambition for service in some special capacity, we are not to do like worldly people. We should take the opposite track, and leave any honor of men out of the question entirely. We should leave God to attend to that matter as shall seem to Him best, and be content merely to be a servant to the brethren. Let the Lord see how willing you are to serve in any manner...

But we are to lay aside any desire to be chief so far as ambition for personal glory is concerned. We are to seek to serve *the Lord* the best we know how...doing all we can to further the Lord's Cause. And this service should be prompted by love. Any service not prompted by love is not acceptable in the sight of the Lord."

R5127 "SANCTIFICATION THE RESULT OF LOVE OF GOD..."

Our love for the Lord, for the brethren, for our families and sympathetically for the world of mankind, will increasingly fill our

hearts as we grow in grace, knowledge and obedience to the Divine Word and example.—Gal. 6:10; I John 3:16...

The mainspring back of all this should be our supreme love for our Creator and Redeemer, and our desire to be and to do what would please Him. Our sanctification, therefore, must be primarily toward God and first affect our own hearts and wills and, as a result of such devotion to God, find its exercise in the interest of the brethren and of all men."

R3150 "The Apostle declares that if he should give all of his goods to feed the poor—keeping nothing back—and yet do this without proper love as the mainspring to the conduct, it would profit him nothing. He goes still further and declares, that even if he should become a martyr, and be burned at the stake, it would not bring him the blessed reward sought, unless that martyrdom were prompted, impelled, by love.

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

(Mat 6:2-4 KJV) "When thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. (3) But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: (4) That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."

R3542 "It is difficult for us to gage our own hearts thoroughly and hence we should use great charity in measuring the hearts and intentions of others, and should err rather on the side of too great sympathy and leniency than on the side of too strong condemnation. Doubtless had the apostles been inquired of respecting the matter they would have denied any elements of selfishness in their motives and conduct, and would have thought and spoken only of their zeal for the Lord and desire to be near him. This illustrates to us, what the Scriptures declare, that the human heart is exceedingly deceitful—that it needs scrutinizing carefully lest, under the cloak of something good, it might

harbor qualities which without that cloak we would despise or spurn.

As further illustrating this subject, and as helping us each and all to apply the lesson personally, we relate a dream told by a Scotch minister, Horatius Bonar, shortly before his death. He dreamed that his zeal was represented in a package of considerable size and weight, and that some angels came to it and weighed it and assured him that it was full weight, an hundred pounds—all that was possible. In his dream he was greatly pleased with this report. They next determined to analyze it. They put it into a crucible and tested it in various ways and then reported the result thus: "Fourteen parts selfishness; fifteen parts sectarianism; twenty-two parts ambition; twenty-three parts love to man; twenty-six parts love to God." Awakening he realized that it was but a dream, yet felt greatly humbled, and doubtless was profited by it throughout the remainder of life. That dream may be equally profitable to each of us in leading us to a close inspection of the motives which lie beyond our words and thoughts and doings—especially beyond our service for the Lord and for the brethren." [Also see R1159]

R1159 Summary: "Love of God and love of our fellow-men are the only elements of real zeal in the above analysis. All the other parts are detestable dross in God's sight... Let each servant who desires to stand approved of God, examine *his own* heart, analyze *his own* zeal..."

R2275 "With the Psalmist, therefore, we may well inquire, "Who," then "shall be able to stand?" -- "Who shall ascend into the hill [kingdom] of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?" Now mark the answer: "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." (Psa. 24:3-5.) Here is the class among whom the delusions of error can make no headway. These have a standpoint of observation from which every error appears in its true colors, and every truth in its proper light.

Mark the peculiar features of this class: They have "*clean hands*:" Their work for the Lord may be very imperfect; they may tell the story of his love and grace in a very halting, awkward manner; they may minister to the temporal or spiritual necessities of the saints, or others, from a very frugal and plain store of their own; but their work will be *clean*; their story will be free from self-emulation and human glorying, and their works will be free from both ostentation and parade. What they do will be done with simplicity and meekness, as unto the Lord, and not for the praise of men.

They have "*pure hearts*:" Under divine inspection, their motives are seen to be pure. Their whole purpose and endeavor is to glorify God and to bless their fellow-men, especially the household of faith. They *have not lifted up their soul unto vanity*: They have no vain worldly ambitions, either secretly or openly cherished and ministered to behind the outward profession of entire consecration to God—no ambition to be great, or good, or wise in the eyes of men, nor to grasp the fleeting earthly treasures once consecrated to God. Nor have they

"*sworn deceitfully*:" They have not made a covenant with God of entire consecration to his service, with a secret determination to keep back part of the price: nor have they since making the covenant repudiated its obligations."

R5958 "GOD FIRST—SELF LAST..."

God first in the home and the personal affairs means that *all earthly interests and pleasures* will be subordinated, and that the will of God, the service of God, the honor of God's name, will have the most prominent part in *all of our affairs every day*—in *all of our words, in all of our dealings, in our very thoughts*...

In the election of servants in the Church, the rule of "God first" would mean that each one in voting would seek to vote according as he believed to be *God's will*, entirely ignoring *his own will* and the wills of all others of the brethren. "God first" would also lead him to take an individual stand in that kind, loving manner which the Bible declares to be the Holy Spirit, or disposition of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. Surely a blessing would follow such an endeavor to put God first, and to forget everything that might be in competition with the Lord in our affection!

As for the latter part of this resolution—"self last," this would mean the very essence of the Apostle's admonition, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory" (Philippians 2:3); and again, "in honor preferring one another." (Romans 12:10.) We look back at the record of the Twelve Apostles, and see how they were disposed to strive amongst themselves as to which should be greatest in the Kingdom. But this striving was before their begetting of the Holy Spirit, before Pentecost. How glad we are to see that such a spirit apparently disappeared after Pentecost, amongst those who received the spirit-begetting! "Self last" might well have been the rule among the Apostles—so loyally did they support the principles of the Lord's Word and uphold and encourage one another in the good work. How we rejoice with them!"

"IN HONOUR PREFERING ONE ANOTHER"

Rom 12:10

R2213 "*In honor preferring one another.*" That is, rejoicing more if honor come to another than if it had come to self." [See the rest of this paragraph in quote below]"

THE WIDER CONTEXT OF

Rom 12:10

R2213 "*Let love be without dissimulation.*" He had already explained the necessity for love; but he now puts us on guard against a merely feigned love, which would only outwardly appear kind and polite. The true spirit of love, a holy spirit, will not be a dissimulating one, a hypocritical one: the love will be genuine, heartfelt as well as mouth expressed. This love is to be toward God, and toward all in proportion as they are God-like, or striving to be so. It is to be a love of that which is good, right, pure, true.

"*Abhor that which is evil.*" We are not merely to avoid doing that which is evil, not merely to have no love or affinity for evil; but more than these we are to hate, to abhor

evil. And as the love for God and for all things true and pure and making for righteousness is to be cultivated, so the abhorrence of sin and impurity of every kind is to be cultivated, so that the stronger we become in Christian character the more intense will be our love for the good and pure and true, and the more intense will be our opposition to the untrue, the impure, the sinful. The more we learn of the beautiful harmonies of this heavenly grace of love, and the more they become the melodies of our own hearts, the more distressing and repugnant and abhorrent will sin and selfishness, "the spirit of the world," be to us: just as discords in music grate upon our ears in proportion as our knowledge and appreciation of musical harmonies grows. As holiness and sin are opposites, so our feelings toward these must be represented by the sentiments of love and hatred. To grow cool in love for righteousness, is to lose some of the abhorrence for sin. Let us therefore cultivate in ourselves hatred for sin, selfishness impurity and every evil way, that we may find it the easier to cultivate in our hearts the beautiful graces of the holy spirit.

"*Cleave to that which is good.*" The thought is, adhere to, be cemented to, that which is good. There is a constant tendency not only from our own fallen natures, but also from the world and the devil, to separate from that which is good and pure and noble. And we must resolutely determine, that at all hazards and for all time, by the

Lord's grace, we will adhere to him,—the truth, the way, the life.

"*Be kindly affectioned.*" The thought here seems to be: Cultivate among yourselves that kind of affection which properly belongs in a family, where the blessing or honor of one member signifies the blessing, honor and advancement of all. Perhaps the Apostle thus delicately suggests the impropriety of any manifestation of affection except such as would be proper between brethren: as we read in another place, "Love as brethren."—1 Pet. 3:8.

"*In honor preferring one another.*" That is, rejoicing more if honor come to another than if it had come to self. Our hearts should be so unselfish that we would take pleasure in seeing honor and prosperity come to another, and rejoice in it: and so sympathetic that a brother's failure would cause us as much chagrin as if it were our own failure. This is the holy spirit which unfeignedly rejoices with those who rejoice, and weeps with those who weep.

"*Not slothful in your affairs.*" The word here does not refer specially to mercantile business, but to affairs in general. The class addressed, who are seeking to make their calling and election sure, are to "do all things as unto the Lord;" and nothing done for the Lord should be done in a slovenly manner. We are in a world full of opportunities for good or evil: there are few on our side, the side of God and of righteousness; and whoever realizes this, and is

fully consecrated to the Lord, will certainly be aroused from slothfulness which is natural to many in the fallen condition. If the battle of truth against error, of light against darkness, does not awaken us to energy in the Lord's service, it marks an unfavorable condition of heart. And to the consecrated child of God, every affair of life—eating, drinking and all other business in this present life—is to help us to serve the interests of our Master's cause.

"*Fervent in spirit.*" This is placed in contrast with sloth: if as stewards of divine mercy and truth we are slothful, it is because we are cool in our love to the Lord; hence the Apostle's instruction that we should be hot, fervent in spirit. The Greek word here translated "fervent" signifies to be hot, to boil. We are reminded of our Lord's words to the Church of Laodicea, boastful of its works but luke-warm in the spirit of its love. "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." Let all who have received the Lord's spirit take heed lest they get into a lukewarm condition and lose the Lord's favor: let them cultivate rather a growing appreciation of the mercies of God, which growing appreciation as fuel will add fervency to our love and zeal for his truth, and for purity in our own hearts, and for service to others."

R5710 (From Harvest Truth Database V8.0 2014)

THE SOURCE OF TRUE PROMOTION

"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

ONE watching the stars night after night, would observe that while each one has its own motion, yet all seem to revolve around a fixed point which we call the North Star. This fixed star is apparently motionless, and therefore is a point by which a man may gage his course. As we all know, the magnetic needle of the mariner's compass always points due north.

From the clearer astronomical knowledge of our day, it has been ascertained that while the planets of our solar system revolve around our sun, yet there are vast numbers of other suns each having its own retinue of planets, which with their satellites are revolving around it as a center. Furthermore, Science declares that there is a far mightier Center, around which these countless millions of suns revolve, accompanied by their planets and satellites. This great Center seems to be associated with the Pleiades, particularly with Alcyone, the central star of this renowned group. For this reason the suggestion has been made that the Pleiades may represent the Residence of Jehovah, the place from which He governs the Universe. This thought gives new force to the question which the Almighty asked the patriarch Job: "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth the constellations of the Zodiac in their season?"—Job 38:31,32.

There seem to be fewer stars in the North than in any other part of the heavens. Thus the North seems to have been given a very prominent position, the other points of the compass giving it homage, as it were. This fact was observed by the ancients, as the Prophet Job declares—"He stretcheth out the North over the empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7.) Throughout the Scriptures the North seems to be closely associated with Jehovah's government of the earth.

LESSONS IN THE RESULTS OF SIN

For six thousand years this planet Earth has been a rebellious province in the Universe of God; and God has permitted mankind to work out their own designs, to manifest what they could do. He not only gave His chosen people Israel certain promises and blessings, but He afterwards gave opportunity also to various nations of the world to exercise great power, to become indeed world-empires, as representatives of Gentile wisdom, to show what the unregenerate heart could give to men in the way of order, law, prosperity, bless-

ings, peace. The period during which He gave this opportunity to the nations is Scripturally called the "Times of the Gentiles," a period of 2,520 years, which began with Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon at the time the Lord permitted His own typical kingdom of Israel to be overthrown, to so remain until Messiah's Day.—Luke 21:24; Ezekiel 21:25-27.

During this interim the world has had four great universal empires. These world-governments have attempted to bring various blessings to mankind, yet they have all proven weak so far as righteousness is concerned, and strong so far as evil and viciousness are concerned. Evidently this is the great lesson which God designed that mankind should learn—that in this fallen condition human government cannot be a success; that perfection of being and perfect conformity to the Divine Law alone can give true happiness; that mankind in their present sinful, dying condition, can meet with only ultimate failure and disaster. Thus through actual experiences mankind will come to realize their own helplessness and their need of God.

But while God has been permitting man to prove his own weakness, He has also been preparing for the blessing of the whole world, as He has foretold in His Word. The time when He will take charge of man's affairs, through the Kingdom of Messiah, will be the time when true and lasting promotion will be realized. All who will then come into harmony with God will receive this true promotion—the attainment of all the good things which were originally provided for mankind in God's Plan, but which were lost by the disobedience of our first father and our first mother, Adam and Eve.

"God is the Judge; He putteth down one and setteth up another." The Lord will put down the attempt of the great usurper Satan to rule the world. Satan, originally Lucifer, conceived an ambition to exalt himself to "sit upon the sides of the North," to "be like the Most High." (Isa. 14:12-17.) But very soon now he will be bound for a thousand years, and will finally be destroyed.

So far as earthly kingdoms are concerned, we may say that God has a general supervision over them in so far as they might otherwise thwart His purposes; and He sometimes puts down one and favors the exaltation to power of another. We are not able to say, however, that this putting down or setting up is in the nature of Di-

vine judgment for sin; for some of those put down have not been the unworthy, and some of those raised to power have not been the best, but often very evil. God has been merely so overruling as to cause all things not only to work together for the ultimate outworking of the great Plan which He has arranged, but also to teach men the necessary lessons of the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

"MOUNT ZION ON THE SIDES OF THE NORTH"

God's particular dealings with the world will be in the future, and for the first thousand years will be through the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. All things are of the Father, and by the Son. In this glorious work of judging the world, Christ Himself will be the Judge, and the Church, His Body, will be the associate judges. They will render righteous judgment in all cases, will set up only those who come into full accord with God, and will overthrow and eventually destroy all others.

In the meantime God has a special dealing with His people—those who have already left the world, who have consecrated their lives to Him, who have been accepted through the Lord Jesus Christ and counted members of Christ's Body. These are in the way to a promotion, a prominence, greater than that of all others. Satan's ambition was for self-exaltation; Christ's ambition, on the contrary, was to please the Father and to do good. So likewise the class called to be Christ's associates in the Kingdom have a similar purpose and spirit to that of their Lord and Head. They also seek to do only the will of the Heavenly Father. They also are moved, not to promote their own selfish interests and to gratify their fleshly propensities, but to lay down their lives in carrying out God's great Purpose and Plan.

This is the class which will receive the preeminence over all other classes, all other stations, in earth or in Heaven. With their Lord they are to receive glory, honor, immortality. They will be exalted far above angels and be granted the Divine nature, as has been their Master and Forerunner. (Romans 2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:53,54; 1 John 3:2,3; 1 Corinthians 1:26,27; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; 2 Peter 1:4.) These will share the First Resurrection, Christ's Resurrection. (Revelation 20:5,6; Philippians 3:10.) Their mortal bodies, now merely the instruments of the New Creature, will be laid down forever in death—"Sown in weakness," they will be "raised in power"; "sown in dishonor," they will be "raised in glory"; "sown an animal body," they will be "raised a spiritual body."

A careful study of the above citations of Scripture will be very helpful to those who are comparatively new in the study of the High Calling of the Church of Christ. It is a subject but little understood by Christians in general. But such is the great promotion which God purposes to give His true saints of this Gospel Age, and this promotion can be received from no other quarter than God Himself, on His own terms. This is the glorious inheritance of Zion. When she has been thus exalted and glorified with her Lord, it will be said of her, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the North, the City of the Great King." (Psalm 48:2.) Thus the great eminence which Lucifer in his pride and presumption sought to grasp, that he might "sit upon the sides of the North," will be granted as a reward to The Christ, Head and Body.

PUTTING DOWN AND SETTING UP IN THE CHURCH

This is the great prominence which the people of God, called to this high station, should be seeking, by faithfulness, humility, love and zeal in the service of the Lord. During the present life, experiences of developing and testing are necessary preparations for this exaltation. All those begotten of the Holy Spirit as New Creatures are now called the Church of Christ, although the elect Church proper will not be organized and completed until the First Resurrection. Not until then will the personnel of the Church of glory be manifested. But God deals now with all those who have made a Covenant of Sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5.) When they meet, even two or three of them, the Lord's presence is in their midst; and each has the Lord's blessing in proportion as he has His Spirit. God is now judging in the Church through His Son. He is not judging the world at present.

The principle expressed in our text is operating now in the Church—the setting up of one and the putting down of another. That the Lord does take an active part in the affairs of the Church we truly believe. St. Paul says that "God hath set the members, every one of them, in the Body as it hath pleased Him." (1 Corinthians 12:18.) This surely indicates a Divine supervision in the Church. We believe that a great deal of trouble is caused by the failure of many of the Lord's people to view matters from this standpoint. They are too apt to forget about the supervision and oversight which the Lord is taking of His Cause. Some therefore have felt great distress if they were not elected to be a Deacon or an Elder in the Church. Instead

of looking at the matter from this viewpoint—that the Lord Himself has the supervision of the affairs of His Church—they are too liable to think. It was that brother who opposed me, or this brother, etc.

We believe that these take a wrong view. Perhaps the Lord permitted the matter to result thus in order to test their humility. The Apostle James intimates something of this kind: "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, and the brother of high degree in that he is made low." We should look beyond the mere circumstances of the moment; we should consider and remember well that all prominence, all promotion, and all control of the Church, is in the hands of the Lord. Not only might the Lord wish to give a lesson to a brother who might have been a faithful Elder or a faithful Deacon, but it might also be a good lesson to the Class. They might have failed to appreciate what zeal, energy and ability this brother had. If so, their neglect to reelect him to the position would in time prove a lesson to them. The same is true in the case of a brother who has energy, zeal and ability with spirituality, who has never been elected to eldership by the class.

In any event it is for each of the Lord's children to exercise faith, and to remember that real prominence, true exaltation, is of the Lord. As the Apostle Paul shows, he that "desires the office of an overseer [from a real wish to serve], desires a good thing." So it is not wrong to appreciate such office in the Ecclesia; and we are to appreciate it when we are chosen Elders, because we shall thus have special opportunities for service and for laying down our lives for the brethren. But we are not to be self-seeking in the matter.

When brethren who have served as Elders or Deacons are not reelected, yet are rightly exercised and manifest no resentment, but say, "I am just as glad to serve in one place as another," and enter cheerfully into whatever service is open to them, it will no doubt prove a blessing to their own hearts, and also a blessing to the Class, who note their Christlike spirit. So such brethren should say to themselves, "I will do everything I can to forward the Lord's Cause. The vote of the Class has not given me the responsibility of initiative and direction, but I will do my best to help on in other ways the work of the Lord." Thus they would show the proper spirit of humility and submission to the Lord's providence in the decision of the Class.

"HE CALLETH HIS OWN SHEEP BY NAME"

We believe the principle of our text should be considered in the daily lives of all the Lord's people. Some may fail to see the particular interest which the Lord takes in each one who is His. Every true child of God is the Lord's in the particular sense of having entered into a Covenant of Sacrifice. We should always remember this. Thus as we grow in grace we shall undoubtedly come to see that all "the steps of a righteous man are ordered of the Lord, and He delighteth in his way." "He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken." (Psalm 37:23;34:20.) The Lord will surely direct the path of such. The Master emphasized His peculiar and personal interest in each of His followers. He calls Himself their Shepherd, and says, "He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." (John 10:3.) This means a very special supervision of the affairs and interests of each one of His true disciples. Whatever may come to these is not a matter of chance or luck.

The steps of the world are *not* ordered of the Lord. But God's people in proportion as they walk by faith and realize that "all things are working together for good to them that love God, to the called according to His purpose," in that proportion will they be able to have joy, blessing and peace in every experience that comes to them. Failing to do this, some of God's people, we continue to see, are fretting and chafing, feeling that things are working wrong with them, fearing that the Lord has forgotten them, or that the brethren have forgotten them, and that everything is amiss in their case. They are failing to recognize that *God* has to do with all backsetting. If He sees best not to promote them, not to use their talents for a time as they would like, let them learn a lesson of humility and submission, of patience and trust. Let them be willing to cheerfully await God's own good time for their promotion.

To us, then, the great lesson of our text is that promotion, exaltation, cometh neither from the East nor the West nor the South, but from Jehovah, who alone is the Judge, who setteth up one and putteth down another—and all in love. If the putting down seems at times to be the result of mistakes or lack of appreciation on the part of the brethren, let us remember that it has come in the providence of the Lord, and is designed of Him for our good, and perhaps for the good of others in one way or another. The experience will prove a blessing if received in the right spirit. "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Nothing can by any means hurt us if we keep close to the Lord. Then in due time, we shall be promoted to sit with Christ in His Throne.