

## 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

(Mat 10:16-17 KJV) "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. (17) But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;"

R825 "As you go, let it not be for strife or vain glory, but that the spirit of the truth filling you may overflow upon others. Speak the truth in love, love for the truth, and love for those you would assist. Be not ashamed of the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God; handle it with confidence, but not boastfully, it is not thine, but God's. In speaking of the plans of the great Jehovah, let it be with reverence, as well as love. Do not for a moment forget the responsibility and humble dignity of your mission as an ambassador and herald of the Lord of life and glory. Go forth each day from your closet, from private reflection upon the glorious message you bear, forewarned and fore-armed also, to meet the reception you may expect from many who know us not; that being thus shod with the preparation needful, you may not so much feel the sharpness and ruggedness of the way. Even so it was with our Master also. Consider this lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. (Eph. 6:15; Heb. 12:13). Prepare from the first to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. This is your ministry. Make full proof of your ministry. Keep the object well in view, and look unto Jesus for an example of how to endure, as well as for grace to help you. You may not *see* much of the fruit of your labors, yet the Lord may show you some, for your encouragement by the way. The fruits will be better seen by and by. "Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matt. 10:16.)

R5720 "HOW TO PROCLAIM THE TRUTH "*Speaking the Truth in love,...grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ.*"--*Ephesians 4:15*

The Truth is always to be spoken humbly, but fearlessly. The Christian is not at liberty to speak anything but the Truth. If he is a professed minister of the Gospel when the Truth reaches him, he is not to continue to preach error just because the congregation employing him do not want the Truth...

Such a faithful servant of God would by his uncompromising attitude lose his standing and his honor amongst men. But all this is not to be considered; for he would gain instead the favor and blessing of the Lord. The great Apostle declared that he counted all things but loss and dross, that he might win Christ and "be found *in Him*"--that he might gain a place in the everlasting Kingdom of Messiah. Those who succeed in so doing will win the "pearl of great price." So, then, the speaking of the Truth is absolutely essential to the life of the Christian. The Truth of God's Word is to be enshrined above all else in the heart of the child of God, and he should esteem it a blessed privilege to speak it...

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

We are to exercise our function of ambassadorship -- we are to show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of the darkness into His marvelous light. And in telling the Message of His Grace we shall grow spiritually. "He that watereth shall himself also be watered." As we proclaim the Truth from an honest, earnest, loving heart we shall become more and more filled with it ourselves. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth and it tendeth to poverty"--to leanness of soul. As we give out to others, our own store of blessing is increased. We are to develop day by day this quality of *love*. Why is this? Because it will make us like God, and that is the one thing to be desired--the one thing necessary.

Our God has other glorious attributes besides Love, but this attribute is the especially predominating, overruling quality of His character. God's Justice co-operates with His Love. And His Wisdom would not attempt to carry out any plans that His Love would not approve. So as we grow, this quality of Love should be more and more manifest. We are to see that our words are loving, kind, gentle. We are to curb any tendency to self-glorification or show in telling of God's great Plan to others. Let us keep self out of sight, that the beauty of the Truth may be seen. Our manner of presenting the Message to others has much to do with its effectiveness. Speaking the Truth in love, we shall not only be accomplishing much more for others, but the Message will also be more impressed upon our own mind.

Whoever appreciates these things of God and then speaks forth in love and sincerity will receive a blessing in his own heart and mind, and the Truth will become clearer and sweeter. In helping others he will be helping himself. Thus the various features of the Plan of God become more firmly engraved upon his mind."

R5540 "COURAGE BORN OF FAITH

The world has often wondered at the calmness of the Lord's humble little ones under circumstances which would cause the stoutest heart to quail... We cannot accomplish this in our own strength, but in the strength of God alone. We are instructed to fear Jehovah, and not to fear a weak mortal. The righteous are as bold as a lion, as gentle as a dove, as meek as a lamb. This peculiar combination of boldness, gentleness and meekness should characterize every Christian."

(Pro 28:1 KJV) "The righteous are bold as a lion."

(Heb 13:5-6 KJV) "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. (6) So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

R2156 "The Word of the Lord is quick and powerful and *sharp* and cuts "to the heart" without bitter and acrimonious and uncharitable human expletives to enforce it....

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

It is an old and true saying that "Kind words can never die," and it would be equally true to say, "Unkind words never die." Indeed, the latter live much the longer in a majority of cases -- in worldly hearts especially. Let us each and all redouble our energy in subjugating our tongues, that they may always bless and "minister grace to the hearers."

R5146 "A teacher must be wise and give only the kind and only the quantity that will nourish.--Heb. 5:12-14...

Let us remember that we not long ago were in similar darkness to that which generally prevails--and still we were Christians.

Hence we should not, in talking to our friends, give any hint that they do not belong to the family of God. Rather we find it the much better way to class ourselves in with all as true neighbors, to acknowledge that once we were in darkness, and to express the thought that all Christian people are becoming more and more enlightened in respect to the teaching of God's Word, because we are now living in God's due time for revealing some of the secrets of God's glorious Plan of the Ages. We are now living in the time of which the Prophet Daniel declared, "The wise shall understand"--the Wise Virgin class.--Dan 12:10; Matt. 25:1-3"

R5688 "Beginners who have not long known Christ, who are new in respect to the truths of God's Plan, are not to be choked with strong meat. These may be fed upon the simpler truths, which they can assimilate. They need "the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby." Some of the Lord's people, who have been longer in the way, in talking with the newly consecrated unwisely begin to tell them the truths regarding immortality, trinity, etc., before they are able to digest them. These are giving strong meat to babes, and are liable to drive them away from the table of the Lord, giving them spiritual dyspepsia, so that they are unable longer to eat even of the simpler food furnished by the Lord."

R3674 "BE YE WISE AS SERPENTS

On his arrival at Jerusalem Nehemiah did not reveal his plans. The people merely knew that a Jew high in favor with the King, an officer of his household, with a small retinue of servants, was in their midst. Had he told his plans the enemies of the city would soon have heard of them and have taken steps to interfere; besides, the course followed was a much better one for the awakening of the interest and co-operation of the people. Many of the Lord's people need to learn this lesson of secretiveness--not to tell everything that they know. Our Lord not only exhorted us to be as wise as serpents while harmless as doves, but through the Apostle also he exhorts that we should be swift to hear and slow to speak--not too ready to tell all of our plans and arrangements, etc. We even know of some of the Lord's consecrated people who have

gotten the wrong impression that to secrete any matter, to avoid telling all that one knows, to avoid giving full answers that would reveal all that is asked, would be considered by some as sinful, deceptive. It is well for them to have their conscience, but conscience requires training, and the safest instruction comes from the words and example of our Lord and his apostles.

Our Lord used this very method of not telling all that he knew to those who were not ready for the information. He said on one occasion to his disciples, "I have many things to tell you but ye cannot bear them now." (John 16:12.) When asked questions by his enemies who sought to entrap him he avoided answering them or gave them evasive answers. In all this he was as wise as a serpent, yet harmless as a dove. He did not refrain from telling that which was really proper to be told, necessary to the comfort or advantage of his questioner. The Apostle Paul quotes his enemies as charging him with guile—"Being crafty I took you by guile." (2 Cor. 12:16.) An evil mind can indeed put an evil construction upon the noblest words and deeds. This was true in the Master's case also. The Apostle exercised wisdom in his method of dealing with those whom he desired to bless, hiding from them for a time truths which at first they were not prepared to receive or appreciate, but afterward, when necessary to them, he made plain, assuring us that he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. (Acts 20:27.) Strong meat for men and milk for babes is the thought. Let us more and more seek to exercise heavenly wisdom in all our affairs, that we may accomplish as much good as possible and choke and stumble none."

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(Mat 10:16-22 KJV) "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. (17) But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues... (22) And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."

R1109 "This must not discourage us; we must expect just such results; they were promised. (Matt. 10:22; 1 Cor. 4:10.) Even our Lord's faithfulness made him of "no reputation." And Paul and the early church were "counted fools for Christ's sake." Yea, and whosoever will live Godly, *in this present time*, "shall suffer persecution" of some sort—according to the degree of civilization by which surrounded. While pitying their blindness and longing for the clearer, fuller dawn, when all shall see clearly, let us rejoice that we are counted worthy of an experience so much like that of our dear Redeemer."

R3104 "The Lord is seeking his precious jewels. Many of them are indeed diamonds in the rough. The real diamond is a noble, loyal, faithful character, devoted and uncompromising in its allegiance to God. Sometimes the circumstances of life have deprived such of education or culture and have left them only sufficient means for the barest necessities of life. But no matter, God's eye is on them: character is what he is looking for, and in due time, when that character is sufficiently developed, confirmed, tested and proved worthy of exaltation, he can and will add to it all the glories of knowledge and wisdom and grace and beauty. But first he will subject it to all the necessary tests. If it is a true diamond it will receive and it will also transmit to others the light of divine truth. Nothing so gloriously reflects the light as the diamond; and nothing so gloriously reflects the truth as the worthy character of the true and faithful saint.

Another way of testing a diamond is to put it under pressure. If it is a real diamond it will stand the pressure, for the diamond is the hardest substance known; but if it is not a real diamond it will go to pieces and thus prove itself spurious. So God allows us to come under the constant pressure of years of toil and care and self-sacrifice to see how we will endure; and blessed is that diamond-proved character that endures to the end. — Jas. 1:12; Matt. 10:22."

#### HE IS NOT WISE WHO TURNS A DEAF EAR TO WARNINGS

A74 "Throughout this age there have been many seducing deceptions, and we are told that even in the very end of the age—" *In the last days...*evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." (2 Tim. 3:1,13)"

R3331 "In the midst of the "perilous times" of this "evil day," and of the warning voices of prophets and apostles pointing out snares and perils and subtle dangers on every hand... How precious to the saints are the assurances of divine protection and care and personal love!

We call to mind the gracious promises of our Lord—"The Father himself loveth you;" "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom;" and "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him... John 16:27; 14:21, 23, 27; Luke 12:32.

But warning voices and wholesome counsel are also necessary; and he is not wise who turns a deaf ear to them, and takes cognizance alone of the comforting assurances which are designed only for those who faithfully "watch and pray lest they enter into temptation." Every soldier of the cross needs to heed the Apostle's warnings

#### R3339 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0) "WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?"

--MARK 8:27-38.--APRIL 10.--

Golden Text:--"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."--Matt. 16:16.

IT was probably toward the close of the third year of our Lord's ministry that the incidents of this lesson transpired. In all this time of now three years from the beginning of John's ministry, we have no record that either John or Jesus had publicly proclaimed the Messiahship of the latter. There was wisdom in this. When we remember the expectations of the Jews for eighteen centuries, that the coming

—"Take unto you the whole armor of God, *that ye may be able to withstand* in the evil day, and having done all, to stand;" and again, "Let us *fear* lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it;" and fear also "lest, as the serpent [Satan] *beguiled* Eve, through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ;" "*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." "Behold," said our Lord, "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves."—Eph. 6:13; Heb. 4:1; 2 Cor. 11:3; Acts 20:29, 30; Matt. 10:16.

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 Psalms 91."

(2Ti 3:13-14 KJV) "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. (14) But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;"

Joh 6:44-45 KJV No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (45) It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

R1321 "Continue, therefore, in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of (having proved them yourselves from the Scriptures), and be not of them who turn away their ears from the truth and are turned unto fables."

A348-349 "It will be observed that the divine plan is complete and harmonious with itself in every part, and that it is in perfect harmony with the character which the Scriptures ascribe to its great Author. It is a marvelous display of wisdom, justice, love and power. It carries with it its own evidence of superhuman design, being beyond the power of human invention, and almost beyond the power of human comprehension."

of the Messiah was to be the great event for their nation and for the world, and that his Kingdom was to accomplish the blessing of all the families of the earth, we can readily see that their ideas of the glories connected with this heavenly King were such that had Jesus announced himself the Messiah at the beginning of his ministry, the effect would have been disappointment to the degree of disgust.

Without political or social influence, without wealth or name or fame as a leader and commander of the people, or a general of armies, he would have been regarded as mentally unbalanced to have made such a claim.

He merely took the position of a religious teacher with whom divine power was specially present, divine power manifested in the dignity of his manner, the grace of his lips, the authority of his teaching, and his wonderful works--healing diseases, casting out devils, walking upon the water, stilling the storm, etc. It would appear that John the Baptist knew more than anyone else respecting our Lord's mission. This is indicated by the sending of the query to Jesus, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" John's knowledge apparently came less through Jesus than through the spirit of prophecy, which indicated to him that the one upon whom he saw the holy Spirit descend was the special ambassador of Jehovah. Even John's faith was staggered by the absence of the glory and prosperity he had anticipated for Jesus. What, therefore, the sentiment of the masses would have been, had Jesus been publicly proclaimed the Messiah, we can readily imagine.

#### BE YE WISE AS SERPENTS, HARMLESS AS DOVES

But now, after his disciples had been intimately associated with him for three years, and after John the Baptist had been dead for a year, the time had come for Jesus to prepare the disciples for the ignominy and death which he knew to be in store for him. But even then the matter was approached in a wise and careful manner. <sup>(1)</sup>O, 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 the more good.

Our Lord would draw out the apostles and seek to crystalize in their minds the thought which he knew already was forming or formed. Leading up to his intention he inquired respecting the general voice of the people as to who he was. The answer that some thought him John the Baptist risen from the dead, and others thought him Jeremiah or one of the other great prophets risen from the dead (Matthew's account), showed that the public mind was being exercised--was noting that he was not an impostor. As we read later on, some of the people were ready to inquire, "When Messiah cometh, will he do greater works than this man does?" All of these sentiments indicated the wisdom of the course pursued by our Lord, and that it was taking effect--that instead of being ridiculed, he was respected by the people, some of whom even thought to take him by force to make him their King.

Now the Lord addressed his disciples as implying that they were separated in his mind from the rest of the people, and should have a clearer knowledge of him than others, and his question is, "Whom say ye that I am?"--with the intimate acquaintance that you have had, what is your opinion? Peter, probably the eldest of the disciples, and in general a leader and spokesman amongst them, answered for them all,--"Thou art the Christ [God's Anointed One: Hebrew, the Messiah], the Son of the living God." This answer proved that Jesus had rightly judged that the time was ripe for such a confession of him amongst his apostles, and for the first time he intimated to them that their surmises on the subject were correct--that he was more than Elijah, Jeremiah, or any of the prophets--that he was the long-promised Messiah.

#### THE HUMILITY OF OUR LORD

Our Lord's answer, given in another account, distinctly acknowledges the correctness of Peter's statement, and declares that flesh and blood had not revealed it unto Peter, but the Father in heaven. We are struck with the modesty of our Lord Jesus in respect to this proclamation of himself as the great Messenger of the Covenant. How beautiful a lowly mind is! and if it was beautiful and appropriate in our Lord, how much more appropriate it is for us who are his followers and who have nothing of ourselves--nothing that we have not received through him. How appropriate the Apostle's words, when, after speaking of how Jesus humbled himself to become a man, and to be obedient unto death, he exhorted us saying, "Humble YOURSELVES, therefore, brethren, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." Indeed, we may be

sure that none will share with the Lord in his exaltation who do not learn at heart this lesson of humility. "The Lord abhorreth the proud but giveth grace to the humble."

Jesus charged his disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Messiah. This was an item of truth intended only for themselves as yet; and to have proclaimed it in a general way might have created more or less of insurrection, and might have hindered the carrying out of the divine arrangement respecting his ignominious death. They could still proclaim the Kingdom of heaven at hand, they could still speak of Jesus as the great Teacher and man, they could still wonder as to whom he might be; but the proper time for making him known as the Messiah would be after he had finished the work of sacrifice which the Father had given him to do. Indeed he could not be the Messiah except by accomplishing this work. He must purchase the world of mankind before he could become its Lord and Life-giver, its Restorer, its Messiah.

Now for the first time Jesus began to teach his disciples to expect his ignominious rejection by the Jews, his ultimate death, and his resurrection on the third day. Matthew's account makes this still more explicit, saying, "From that time he began to teach them these things." What a sifting, what a testing of the hearts of his apostles, and yet how wisely it was done! They must be prepared in advance for his shameful death, else it would prove such a shock to their faith that they could not recover from it, neither believe in his resurrection. But now, after nearly three years of experiences, and when they had just confessed him to be the Messiah, and by so confessing had crystalized the thought in their own minds, it must have been a severe blow to all their hopes and aspirations to be told of his ignominious death. How could he be the Messiah, and yet suffer death at the hands of his enemies? How could he bless all the families of the earth, and yet be put to death as a malefactor?

These things must at first have appealed to them as inconsistent; but all the more the announcement would prepare their hearts for the explanation of the Scriptures which Jesus was ready to impart. The statement that he began to tell them about his coming death implies that thereafter this was frequently a subject for discussion and consideration between him and them. The same Lord, with no less wisdom, is still guiding in the affairs of his Church, and still teaches us line upon line, precept upon precept, as we are able to bear the Truth, and our preparedness for it will be proportionate to our nearness and fellowship with him. It is worthy of note, also, that the deep things of the divine plan are revealed to us only as we have confessed Christ. To this class it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom which are withheld from others. Only if we have fully confessed Christ are we granted a knowledge of the fact that all who would be his disciples must take up their cross to follow him, must suffer with him if they would reign with him, must be dead with him if they would live with him.

#### SLOW TO SPEAK AND SWIFT TO HEAR THE GREAT TEACHER

Our Lord uttered this statement respecting his rejection and death openly--before the entire twelve apostles; but Peter, possibly elated by our Lord's words of commendation that the Father had revealed the matter to him, took our Lord aside privately to whisper to him that such sentiments should not be introduced nor expressed before the apostles--that it would be discouraging to them all, and that anyway there was certainly a mistake about the matter, for such things could never happen to him--must not happen; he must so order his speech and his conduct that these things would not happen. He must not violently antagonize the chief priests or elders, to thus lead them to conspire for his death. Allowance must be made for Peter, in that he was not only the eldest of the apostles, but quite a good deal older than our Lord, and that he was of a very ardent disposition, strong and impulsive. However, Jesus--who had a few moments before commended Peter for his appreciation of the fact of his Messiahship--now rebuked him, not privately, but in the presence of all the apostles. He probably knew that this would be the best method of correcting Peter's sentiments, which, should they spread amongst the apostles, would be very injurious to them all. Hence, our Lord's rebuke was pointed, sharp, and made known to all the apostles. He said, Get thee behind me, Satan --adversary; thy words are not in accordance with divine wisdom, but in accord with human wisdom. We are not to understand that Peter was turned into Satan, nor that Satan got possession of him, but rather in taking such a position he was becoming an opponent of the divine arrangement, as Satan was and still is.

There is a great lesson in this for us. Even though we be the Lord's disciples, and honored ones at that, we might very easily reach such a position as would be antagonistic to the divine arrangement and thus put ourselves unintentionally on the side of Satan, and become his ministers or servants. Our Lord emphasized

<sup>(1)</sup> Oct. 20 Manna, Mat. 6:10

this again on another occasion, saying, "His servants ye are to whom ye render service." It is not enough that we have named the name of Christ and have placed ourselves under his banner, and called ourselves by his name, and rejoiced to be accounted his servants; it is necessary that we see to it that we are rendering him service, and that our energies are not being spent in opposition to him and really in cooperation with the Adversary.

It is our opinion that a great many are in this very position today. Unwittingly they are on the Adversary's side of many questions connected with Churchianity and sectarianism, and especially does this seem true of many ministers in the nominal Church. We may assume that some of them, at least, have made a full consecration to the Lord, yet as a whole they are standing in opposition to the Truth--supporting the errors of the dark ages and helping to blind and mislead the people. Let us each be careful, let us each see to it that we be not disposed as Peter was to be wiser than the Lord, and to attempt to tell him how matters should be conducted. In everything connected with the Lord and his service, let us, as the Apostle exhorts, be slow to speak and swift to hear and to obey the divine plan.

#### THE MILK OF THE WORD--THEN ITS STRONG MEAT

The foregoing special lessons were to the apostles apart from the multitude; but later on Jesus began to teach the multitude as well as his disciples some of the deep things pertaining to his mission and the conditions upon which any might become his disciples. There is a lesson in this also for us: We are not to put tests of discipleship to the forefront in the preaching of the Gospel. We are not to meet inquirers with the announcements of the "straight gate and narrow way" and the lessons of self-sacrifice, as they come to us to hear something about the Gospel of God's dear Son. There are primary lessons for them to learn first. They should be instructed respecting the goodness, love and mercy of God, respecting the redemption accomplished through the blood of Jesus and that it is free and for all, respecting the glorious times of restitution which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began, and respecting the call of this Gospel age to association in the Kingdom. They should know these things with considerable clearness before being informed of the cost--the self-sacrifice even unto death which is the price of joint-heirship in the Kingdom. This appears to have been the Lord's method, and we cannot do more wisely than follow it.

The time had come when not only the twelve apostles but all of the people, who were deeply impressed with the teachings of Jesus, should know what it meant to be his followers. In other words, a time of sifting had come--the time for presenting doctrines that would shake off, sift out, from close sympathy, fellowship and discipleship, all except the Israelites in whom there was no guile. We remember that while there were thousands who attended the Lord's ministry and were miraculously fed by him--amongst all the thousands upon thousands who heard him and profited by his healing, his teaching, and the wonderful words which proceeded out of his mouth, only "about five hundred brethren" (I Cor. 15:6), true disciples, remained faithful to the end. The remainder were all sifted out by such teachings as these that were now for the first time promulgated.

The substance of these discourses is briefly stated to have been that, if any man would be the Lord's follower or disciple, he must practice self-denial and cross-bearing. Of course these words are used in a figurative sense: they signify that all who will be the Lord's disciples and share his Kingdom and glories, will be tested in faith and obedience to such an extent that they will fall out by the way unless their faith and interest are so deep as to lead them to ignore themselves, their own earthly interests, pleasures, appetites, and to seek chiefly for this joint-heirship with the Master in the Kingdom. They must regard the pearl of great price as worth more than all else, so that they will be willing to dispose of, to give in exchange for it, every earthly interest and thing--houses or lands, parents or children, the love and esteem of friends and neighbors --choose obedience to the divine arrangement at any cost, else they will not be worthy of the Kingdom. They must count upon such crossbearing, such a crossing of their own wills, submission to the divine will.

#### CHOOSING BETWEEN GOD AND MAMMON

Emphasizing this lesson, the Lord says that it amounts to a question as to whether we love the present or the future life. He who sets great store by the present life, in whose heart the joys promised in association and joint-heirship with our Lord in the life to come does not overbalance present interests and hopes and aims, that person would lose the life which the Lord was proposing to give to his disciples--the life eternal, in the Kingdom, with "glory, honor and immortality." While our Lord used these words particularly in refer-

ence to the elect class which he is seeking as joint-heirs in the Kingdom, and therefore particularly in respect to immortal life of the Kingdom class, nevertheless there is a large sense and degree in which his words will always be applicable to all men--in the next, the Millennial age, as well as in the present age. Whoever will attain eternal life, either as member of the Church which is being elected now or as members of the restitution class which will be developed during the Millennial age, can only have the eternal life by a full submission of himself and every interest to the will of the Lord. Whoever self-willedly refuses such complete submission will thus prove himself unworthy of eternal life on any plane, for the terms of life-eternal are full obedience to the divine will.

From this standpoint the force of our Lord's words is manifest: it would profit no man if he should succeed selfishly in gaining the whole world, and as a result of that selfish will, which is opposed to the divine will and its law of love, bring upon himself the utter destruction of the Second Death. What would compensate a man for the loss of his soul--his existence? Assuredly nothing would compensate, for without existence there could be no possession or pleasure.

The lesson then is that if we are granted hearing ears and understanding hearts in this present time, and a knowledge of the exceeding great and precious things which God is offering during this Gospel age, we would be without excuse before the Lord if we were to despise his offers and selfishly choose self-control and a share in the world rather than joyful submission to the divine will and a participation in the sufferings of the present time and the glories which shall follow when, as members of the Kingdom, it will be our privilege to participate in the showering upon the world of the blessings secured by our dear Redeemer's sacrifice. (Gal. 3:29.) Similarly, those who will live during the Millennial age, after the present offer of the Kingdom shall have been withdrawn, and when the offer of restitution will be made to every creature, those who then selfishly refuse to submit their wills to the Lord's will fail to make progress in the highway of holiness toward perfection, and instead of gaining life eternal they will fail and fall into the Second Death. In other words, there will never be any other way of attaining life than a full renouncement of every selfish aim, object and desire, and the full acceptance of the divine will.

#### A SAVOR OF LIFE UNTO LIFE OR OF DEATH UNTO DEATH

Our Lord sums up this lesson respecting the necessity for self-denial and cross-bearing by showing what it would really mean--that to confess him and the great truths of the divine plan for which he stands as the representative, would surely mean at the present time to bring upon one's self the opprobrium of the world, for whosoever will live godly in this life shall suffer persecution. To live godly will mean not only to abstain from crimes, but to live up to the light which God gives us, to be faithful to the principles of truth and of righteousness. Those who are blinded by the god of this world so that they do not recognize Jesus as the Messiah, the sin-bearer and coming King, are proportionately irresponsible at the present time. Their responsibility will come when this knowledge reaches them, and ultimately the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth.

The time, therefore, will come when they will be responsible, and when the Truth will be to them either a savor of life unto life everlasting, or a savor of death unto death everlasting--the Second Death. But those who know the Truth, and who allow shame to hinder them from espousing it, may be sure that they are not disciples of Christ, that they cannot share in the life which he is now holding out as the reward of the overcomers --immortal life. All those who will be acknowledged before the Father and before the holy angels at our Lord's second advent will have proved so loyal to the Lord and to the principles of righteousness that he will take pleasure in acknowledging them, and the Father will also acknowledge them as being copies of his dear Son, their Lord.

The Lord has given us examples of those who are bartering the glorious hopes and opportunities of participating in the Kingdom for the things of this life. The type in the Old Testament mentioned by the Apostle Paul is that of Esau, who for a mess of pottage sold his birthright. Foolish as was that transaction, it was only a type: much more foolish is it for those who are now having the opportunity by the Lord's grace of becoming joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus, in the glory, honor and immortality of the Kingdom, to lose all these privileges and advantages and favors--to trade them, as it were, for a mess of pottage--for a more favorable condition in this present life, for greater honor amongst men, or for wealth, or for the affection and sympathy of husband or wife, parents or children. The prize is of so great value that nothing is comparable to it.