

February 1

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IF we have come to the forks of the

road--to some crisis in our experience--and know not whether to turn to the right or to the left, we should stop at once and listen to the voice. Or, in other words, we should turn at once to the Word of the Lord, and by pondering its precepts and principles, and

its illustrations bearing on the perplexing subject, seek to learn the will of the Lord, asking also the leading of His Spirit, and endeavoring to bring the mind into a loving, submissive and trustful attitude. Z.'95-6 R1753:2

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"THIS IS THE WAY"

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

HOW often in the midst of life's perplexities and trials have weary hearts felt the need of wise direction and counsel. The counsel sought, however, is not always wise: sometimes it is the counsel of the ungodly and sinners; and sometimes that of the immature and inexperienced, and the results of such counsel are unsatisfactory and often disastrous, and the way pursued in consequence one of trouble and darkness. Such is the way of the world; for it is not in the power of man to direct his own steps. (Jer. 10:25.) But not so is the way of the child of God. He has learned where to seek counsel, and the counsel of wisdom is always ready to come to his aid.

The Prophet describes it as a word, a voice, "behind thee." It is not a voice *before* thee, of some new theology -- of Evolution, or Spiritism, or Christian Science, or other human philosophy--but it is the old theology with all its blessed doctrines of hope through Christ our Redeemer and Lord, our Teacher, our Example and our Leader. It is the voice of the Lord uttered through his inspired apostles and prophets from two to four thousand years ago. It is to this Word of divine inspiration, then, that the prophet would direct the attention of all those desiring wise counsel; and in that Word we hear the voice of God, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." ⁽¹⁾ If we have come to the forks of the road--to some crisis in our experience--and know not whether to turn to the right or to the left, we should stop at once and listen to the voice. Or, in other words, we should turn at once to the Word of the Lord, and by pondering its precepts and principles and its illustrations bearing on the perplexing subject, seek to learn the will of the Lord, asking also the leading of his spirit and endeavoring to bring the mind into a loving, submissive and trustful attitude. "This is the way, walk ye in it," will be the plain answer to every such inquiring heart.

These words of the Prophet were, however, addressed directly to fleshly Israel, though their application to spiritual Israel is none the less forcible. As applied to them it foretells the return of divine favor to them when the long season of their chastisement and blindness shall be at an end. Then, under the Millennial reign of Christ, the blind eyes shall be opened and the deaf ears shall be unstopped and the voice of the whole inspired Word, then made clear to their understanding, will direct them in the right ways of the Lord; for the books (the law and the prophets and the New Testament Scriptures) shall be opened, and they shall be judged according to their teaching.--Rev. 20:12.

The way then indicated to fleshly Israel and to all the world

will be a grand highway of holiness; and the ransomed of the Lord shall go up thereon with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads (Isa. 35:10); and the end of that way will be life and peace,--salvation to the uttermost, from sin and death, and complete restitution to human perfection.

While the way of life will be made very clear to Israel and the world in the age to come, it is made none the less clear now to the children of God who walk by faith and not by sight. It is shown to be (1) a way of faith; and those who now walk by faith are the true seed of Abraham (Rom. 4:12-16), to whom pertain the covenant and the exceeding great and precious promises in their largest fulfillment. (2) It is a way of entire consecration to God, even unto death, which implies the burial of one's own will into the will of God--the presenting of self a living sacrifice.

In harmony with these two principles--of faith and consecration--we are taught to walk, in newness of life, not after the flesh, but after the spirit; not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, but circumspectly and not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time; and not by sight, but by faith.--Rom. 6:4; 8:1; Eph. 4:17,18; 5:15,16; 2 Cor. 5:7.

By faith and consecration we have come into a new life as spiritual sons of God, and yet we have this treasure in earthen vessels and the new life is only in its embryo condition. Hence the necessity of walking after the spiritual instincts of the new nature and keeping down the stronger impulses of the old nature. This is what it is to walk in newness of life, after the spirit, and not after the flesh. To walk after the flesh is to pursue its hopes, aims and ambitions; and since the flesh and the spirit are at war one with the other, it is impossible to maintain the life of both. Therefore, it is written, "If ye [spirit-begotten ones] live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the spirit do mortify [put to death] the deeds of the body, ye shall live."--Rom. 8:13.

While the Word of the Lord speaks thus on general principles as to the way in which we should walk, we are also bidden to come with all the minor affairs of life, to inquire of these divine oracles. If we know not whether to turn to the right or to the left, we come and find the promise, "Commit thy way unto the Lord, and he will direct thy steps." Or, if heavy laden, we find the promise, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Thus the voice behind brings comfort, peace and rest in the midst of all life's cares and trials, if we walk in obedience to its principles and precepts. "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

⁽¹⁾ Feb. 1 Manna, Isa. 30:21

R4882 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

THE WORD AND THE WAY

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

IN OUR DAY when the evil spirits seem to be trying very hard to get into close communication with humanity, we learn of what is called the "clairaudient power." Suggestions are made to the person having this power that he has a great favor from God in being able to hear what others cannot hear. Usually he becomes puffed up, thinking that he is in special favor with God and the angels. Then the fallen angels are very liable to take advantage of his wrong thought and to seek to obsess him. We have tried to guard people from this very condition of things; and from time to time we hear of those who are helped. Only a few days ago we had a letter from a lady who had thought that a godly influence was being exercised upon her, whereas later she found that it was a malevolent influence to bring her into slavery of mind. But the voice referred to in our text we understand to be the voice of God. The Scriptures, written in the past for our admonition, constitute this voice. This voice is behind us in the sense that the history of the centuries is behind us. So we are to hearken to the voice that comes through the Apostles and

Prophets; and as we hearken, we recognize that it is the voice of the Lord, pointing the way in which we should go.

But as we hearken to the past we hear also the voices of false prophets; as, for instance, the voice of Satan, the great Adversary of the past. The voice of God said, "Ye shall *surely die*." The Adversary's voice said, "Ye shall *not surely die*." At one time all of us were dead. Some of us, however, were blessed as we obtained the true information and followed in the way God directed. Many of the so-called "Fathers" of the past, we find, do not give the same voice that Jesus and the Apostles and Prophets gave. We are to guard against all such voices and to listen for the Shepherd's voice; to look for the righteous arrangements made for us. We are not to investigate anything which would not seem to be the voice of God, but which tends to deceive, to alienate the sheep from the Shepherd.

The child of the Lord has learned where to seek counsel; and the counsel of wisdom is always ready to come to his aid. The Prophet describes it as a word, a voice "behind thee." It is not a

voice *before* thee, of some new theology--of Evolution or Spiritism or Christian Science or other human philosophy--but it is the old theology, with its blessed doctrine of hope through Christ our Redeemer and Lord, our Teacher, our Example and our Leader. It is the voice of the Lord through His inspired Apostles and Prophets, from two thousand to four thousand years ago. It is to this Word of Divine inspiration, then, that the Prophet would direct the attention of all those desiring wise counsel; and in that Word we hear the voice of God, saying, "This is the Way, *walk ye in it.*"

BIBLE TO BE OPENED UP TO THE WORLD SHORTLY

While these words of the Prophet were addressed directly to *fleshly* Israel, their application to *spiritual* Israel is none the less forcible. As applied to *fleshly* Israel, the Prophet foretells the return of Divine favor to them when the long season of their chastisement and of their blindness shall be at an end. Then, under the Mediatorial Reign of Christ, the blind eyes shall be opened, the deaf ears shall be unstopped and the voice of the whole inspired Word, then made clear to their understanding, will direct them in the right ways of the Lord; for the books (the Law and the Prophets and the New Testament Scriptures) shall be opened, and they shall be judged according to their teaching.--Rev. 20:12.

The way then indicated to *fleshly* Israel and to all the world will be a grand highway of holiness; "and the ransomed of the Lord" shall go up thereon "with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads." (Isa. 35:10.) And the end of that way will be life and peace, salvation to the uttermost from sin and death, and complete restoration to human perfection.

While the way of life will be made very clear to Israel and to the world, in the Age to come, it is made none the less clear now to the children of God who walk by faith and not by sight. It is shown to be, first, a way of faith; and those who now walk by faith are the true Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16,29), to whom pertain the Covenant and the exceeding great and precious promises, in their largest fulfillment. Second, It is a way of entire consecration to God, even unto

(Prov 14:12) "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

(Prov 18:13) "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."

CR497 "The Bible uses the shepherds of Palestine as an illustration of the great care which our Heavenly Father and His Heavenly Son exercise over the people of God. There the shepherd goes before his flock, and the sheep follow him, ever listening to his voice. They will never follow the lead of strangers. So the Lord's flock listen to the voice of the Shepherd; and a stranger's voice they will not follow, if they are true sheep.

We hear this voice behind us, the words of Our Lord Jesus and of his apostles. This voice is still guiding the people of God. The world does not now hear that voice; they do not recognize it; they do not think that it is worth heeding. But bye and bye they will begin to hear. They will then have the ability to hear the voice that we now heed. "Thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye to the left." (Isaiah 30:21) This voice is the Message contained in the Word of God. If we faithfully heed it, we shall never wander into the ways of death."

(Joh 10:4-5 KJV) "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. (5) And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."

(2 Th 3:5 KJV) "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God..."

F408-410 "The Apostle James... says: "If ye

death, which implies the burial of one's own will into the will of God--the presenting of self a living sacrifice.

LET US WALK AFTER THE SPIRIT

In harmony with these two principles--faith and consecration--we are taught to walk in newness of life, not after the flesh, but after the spirit; not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minds, but circumspectly; "not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time"; not by sight, but by faith.--Rom. 6:4; 8:1; Eph. 4:17,18; 5:15,16; 2 Cor. 5:7.

By faith and consecration we have come into a new life as spiritual sons of God; and yet we have this treasure in earthen vessels and the new life is only in its embryo condition. Hence the necessity of walking after the spiritual instincts of the New Creature and keeping down the stronger impulses of the old creature. This is what it is to walk in newness of life, after the Spirit and not after the flesh. To "walk after the flesh" is to pursue its hopes, aims and ambitions; and since the flesh and the spirit are at war one with the other, it is impossible to maintain the life of both. Therefore, it is written, "If ye [spirit-begotten ones] live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify [put to death] the deeds of the body, ye shall live."--Rom. 8:13.

While the Word of the Lord speaks thus on general principles as to the way in which we should walk, we are also bidden to come with all the minor affairs of life to inquire of these Divine Oracles. If we know not whether to turn to the right hand or to the left, we come and find the promise, "Commit thy way unto the Lord"; "He will direct thy steps." Or, if heavy laden, we find the promise, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Thus the voice *behind* brings comfort, peace and rest in the midst of all life's cares and trials, if we walk in obedience to all its principles and precepts. "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God!" --Psa. 37:5; Prov. 3:6; Matt. 11:28; Gal. 6:16.

have bitter envyings and strife in your hearts, glory not and *lie not against the truth.* This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." (James 3:14,15)...

Proceeding, the Apostle declares the secret of the confusion and unrest which has troubled the Lord's people at all times, to be in this unclean, only partially sanctified condition of the heart, saying, "where envyings and strife is, there is confusion [disquiet, unrest] and every evil work." (James 3:16) If these weeds of the old fallen nature are permitted to grow they will not only be noxious but will gradually crowd out and kill all the sweet and beautiful flowers and graces of the Spirit...

It will be in vain that we shall endeavor to cleanse the flesh and to bridle the tongue if we neglect the heart, the mind, the spirit, in which are generated the thoughts, which merely manifest themselves in filthiness of the flesh -- by words and deeds. Only by prayer and perseverance can this cleansing necessary to a share in the Kingdom be accomplished -- "perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord." Not that we may hope, either, to effect an absolute cleansing of the flesh. It is the absolute cleansing of the will, the heart, the spirit, that the Lord demands (implying as complete a cleansing of the flesh and tongue as we can accomplish)...

How appropriate here are the Apostle's words (2 Thess. 3:5): "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God"--the love that is gentle, meek, patient, long-suffering--that seeketh [F410] not more than her own, and that is not puffed up, nor envious--that thinketh and speaketh no evil, but trusteth and is kind and considerate according to the Golden Rule. We need to have our hearts *directed* into this love, for as a New Creature we are walking in a new way--not after the flesh but after the Spirit. And the Lord

alone is our competent guide and director--though he may use various of his "members" as his mouthpieces. "Thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee [from the past], saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." Isa. 30:21"

R4135 "Well do the Scriptures declare of our day and people, "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." (Isa. 29:14.)... "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him." Hence the Christian of low degree, from the standpoint of service, may, through the instructions of the Bible, know clearly things that the famous and learned in other wisdom cannot know....

Look for guidance to the voice behind--the Lord's messages through the apostles and prophets. (Isa. 30:21.)"

(Col 2:8 Diaglott) "Take care that no one make a prey of you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ"

R46 "TRUE LIGHT is in harmony with all previous light, or truth.

We should scrutinize closely everything presented as light which shines only as it is able to extinguish previous light.

Remember, too, that now ("the evil day") is not so much a time of attack and advance, as of watching and withstanding the attacks of error. "Take unto you the whole armor that you may be able to withstand in the evil day."

R4838 "STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED"

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." --2 Tim. 2:15

This text does not say, "Study the Scriptures," but "Study to *show thyself approved*" -- study to know what God would approve. And yet it means, first of all, to study the Revelation He has made. Then, after having come to some knowledge of the Scriptures, we must *meditate* upon them and consider how the Word is applicable to all of life's affairs. Thus we would study the nature of everything that we come in contact with, as to whether it is good or evil. The word "study" here is used with very much the same thought as when the Apostle says, "Study to be quiet."

Evidently the central thought of this expression is the approving of ourselves to God, not to men. It is proper enough that we should have the approval of all good men and good women. But our *study*, primarily, should not be along this line. First, we should *study to please God*--to be approved of God. We notice that there is a contemplative study, such as David speaks of when he says, "I meditate upon thy Law day and night"--to see how that Law would work out its height and depth, its length and breadth of influence upon himself. And so the Apostle's thought here is that it should be our chief aim to please God.

"Rightly dividing the Word of Truth" would signify the *proper application* of the Word of Truth; the understanding of how and when and where it should be applied and what was the purpose and thought and Plan of the Divine Mind in the giving of this Word of Truth, the Word of God's Message. Up to the advent of our Lord, God's

Message had been given chiefly through the Old Testament Scriptures. Then God's Message was attested by Him who came from heaven. Additionally, our Lord left twelve chosen Apostles to be His special mouthpieces, to increase the Word of Truth, to increase the Word of knowledge, to increase the Word of explanation of the Divine Plan. Everything, therefore, that Timothy could recognize as being the Lord's Message he was to give heed to. For instance, one part of God's Message applies to the past, a part applies only to the Jews, still another part applies to Christians in the present life, and yet another part to their future hopes.

WE SHOULD HAVE CLEARER LIGHT THAN HAD OUR FOREFATHERS

And so, as we get the matter rightly divided before our minds, we get the true understanding, the special enlightenment needed in our day, and we are enabled to rightly divide the Word better than did our fathers, so that today we can see, as our fathers did not see, the teaching of God's Word respecting the "high calling" and "restitution" -- the spiritual portion of blessing for the Church and the human portion of blessing for the world. We also see something about the times and seasons --*which* apply to the Church and *which* to the blessing of the world.

Thus, in our Day, to rightly divide the Word of Truth necessitates the taking cognizance of everything that seems to be of the Lord and that throws any light upon the Word, and thus we may be able to "rightly divide" it. We must always bear in mind that

in the Scriptures of the *Old Testament* "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," and that the Lord also said of the *Apostles*: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

We are not to forget that the Lord promised that He would guide His people in the way of the Truth and show them things to come. We are to "study" to show ourselves approved--*study* the doctrine and endeavor to have our course of conduct harmonize with it--*study* to perform faithfully the duties of a loyal soldier of the cross of Christ.

The Christian soldier must *study* to perform even the smallest duty in a manner creditable to his calling; he must not permit himself to become entangled with other things which do not relate to his duties as a soldier and thus be side-tracked. The Christian soldier who turns aside to seek some personal, temporal advantage to the detriment of his duties as a soldier is to that extent an unfaithful soldier and likely to be drawn out of the ranks entirely..."

(Phil 1:9-10 Weymouth) "And it is my prayer that your love may be more and more accompanied by clear knowledge and keen perception, for testing things that differ, so that you may be men of transparent character, and may be blameless, in preparation for the day of Christ, being filled with these fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ -- to the glory and praise of God.

R590 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

GUIDANCE

Should not God's own word satisfy every inquiring mind touching divine guidance all the way through life?

Has He not said, "Acknowledge Him in all thy ways, and He shall direct thy paths."--Prov. 3:6.

"The Lord will guide thee continually." --Isaiah 11:58.

"He will be our guide, even unto death."--Psalm 48:14.

"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel." --Psalm 73:24.

"The meek will He guide in judgment." --Psalm 25:9.

This guidance in judgment will be God's guidance for the knowing of His will. As we honor him by perfect obedience and submission of spirit, he takes into his own hand the direction of our way, and calls on us only to follow the leader, who will make plain paths for our feet through all the journey.

How shall I know the voice as God's voice?

As well ask, how know the voice of a most intimate friend or companion? Has not intimacy with that friend in familiar converse, as you have walked in companionship together, made the voice to be as well known as your own? Cultivate, then, like intimacy with God; walk with him and talk with him hour by hour, and in the freedom you have with a personal friend. Cultivate such a sense of His living presence that you will learn to speak to Him, as well as of Him, most freely and without embarrassment. Living thus in companionship with God, for companionship implies converse, you will learn to know God's voice when he speaks; and as you bring all your thoughts into captivity to the obedience of Christ, habituating yourself to speak to him of all that you do, holding nothing back, you will find it most easy to lay down the task in which you may be engaged, at any moment, to hold intercourse with Jesus as your loving friend. Living thus, you will not fail to know God's voice when he speaks to you.

Then, again, with your soul baptized in love--in the love of the Lord Jesus-- you will live in such an assurance of God's love to you, that there will be no questioning in your mind as to his responding to the longing desire of your heart to know his will. Thus, thus, you will be at rest, assured He will no more fail in this than in giving you your daily bread. As well may you question your receiving salvation as divine guidance, and that up to the full measure of your faith in His own words of promise, for they are as full and complete.

Again. How recognize the voice as God's voice amid the confusion that comes from another spirit than the good Spirit of God. John bids us "try the spirits, whether they are of God," and in referring us, in the trying, to the Word itself, we are told that the Spirit's confession of Christ--exaltation of Christ-- in the exhibitions of His love, unerringly declare it to be of God's good Spirit, so moving the heart that the voice will be known as God's voice. God speaks, then, not only by His Spirit, but by His Word, and with the eye single and the heart fixed on knowing His will, it will be revealed as His voice through the light the blessed Spirit sheds upon the Word.

If, then, there be in the heart a desire for guidance in any of the relative duties of life, divine light will be shed upon every step of the way through the Word, under the illuminating power of the Spirit. God's words are made living words, and will be spoken afresh as His voice expressing His will, as certainly as we ask, expecting to know it. In singleness of eye for God's glory the Holy Spirit purifies the vision; the scales fall; we see clearly; we know God's will, for the voice is His to us, and in the consciousness our steps are ordered of the Lord we testify that "He leadeth us."

The result, then, of carrying "everything to God in prayer," everything pertaining to this life, that you may know His will, desiring obediently to do it, will beget such a susceptibility to hear the slightest whisper that you will learn to know it as clearly as the father of our race knew God's voice, spoken to him in the cool of the evening, as he walked in the garden of Eden.

And then, in the depth of your consciousness, you will find yourself learning to catch the reverberation of His voice in every sound of nature, in the intervals of thought, as they come in the occupations of life. If you have the first lessons to learn in divine guidance, read the *eighth and tenth verses of the 143rd Psalm*, and with those on your lips take the matter on which you would have light to God. Ask Him to guide you; and with no will of your own, no choice as to the pathway, trusting everything to God, while silently waiting to hear his voice, as God is true it will be given you to know His will. You will hear it saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." As you enter upon the doing of it, opposing obstacles will disappear, for the voice of God's providence is in unison with that of the Spirit and the Word.-- *Selected*.

BLESSED ASSURANCES

Do you need a counselor? "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." Psa. 73:24.

Do you want a friend? "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Prov. 18:24.

Are you discouraged? "Be of good courage and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." Psa. 31:24.

Have you been wronged? "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." Matt. 5:44.

Do you suffer for well doing? "But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." 1 Pet. 2:20.

Are you heavy laden? "Come unto me all ye that labor and are

heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28.

Are you ignorant? "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5.

Are you tempted to do wrong? "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Prov. 1:10.

Do you hunger after righteousness? "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Matt. 5:6.

Are you fearful? "O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: he is their help and their shield. Psa. 115:9.

Do you want sympathy? "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that reverence him." Psa. 103:13.

DISCERNING THE WILL OF GOD

"Teach me Thy way, O Lord."—Psalm 27:11

THE LORD does not wish us to walk by *sight*, and thus to have *no difficulty* in discerning His will. Therefore He puts matters in such a way that both our *obedience* and our *perseverance* are tested; for we are to walk by faith and not by sight. In order to do this, we should daily take everything to the Lord in prayer. We should not undertake anything without seeking to know the will of the Lord respecting the matter.

Since, however, we have no miraculous insight through which we may know what is the will of God in all the details of every-day life, we are not always able to discern that will. When the matter is one about which the Scriptures give instructions, then the way is clear; for the only course which the child of God desires to follow is that of *obedience*. But when the matter is such as depends upon *one's own judgment*, then the way is not so clear. Realizing that our judgment is not sufficient, we should not tax our minds with what we know is beyond our power to decide, but should leave the matter to the Lord.

We know that the Lord can direct our course in whatever way He chooses, if we put ourselves under His care. So at the beginning of the day we can say, "Lord, here am I; I thank Thee for the privilege of another day, which I hope will be full of opportunities for serving the Truth and the brethren. I ask Thee to direct my thoughts, words and conduct, that I may serve Thee acceptably." *Then* we may go forth and use our best judgment.

If the Lord wants to lead us in one direction or another, that is His part, not ours. We have solicited His guidance; and our eyes are alert to know and to do His will at any cost. In this attitude we may rest easy, knowing that God is able and willing to overrule all things for His glory and our profit.

As a child, the Editor noticed that some people had a *certain* way of going to the Lord with all of their affairs. They would open their Bibles at random; and whatever verse their thumb or finger

happened to touch they would consider to be the Lord's message to them; and they would follow its suggestion carefully. Sometimes the text to which they opened seemed to be a remarkable answer to their prayer.

This method is not one with which the Editor desires to find fault. But since it did not appeal to his judgment, he took the matter to the Lord in prayer and said, "Father, I am really afraid to adopt this plan. So if it please Thee, I would rather be directed by my judgment than by this method; for my mind does not seem capable of accepting it." The Lord seems to have taken him at his word.

There is surely a reason why right is right in every matter; and we should desire to know it. We should desire to know why God wishes a matter *this* way rather than *that* way; not that we doubt His wisdom, but that we may enter into the *spirit* of the Divine regulations. The Editor's method of seeking Divine guidance is to study the Scriptures, taking all of the verses bearing upon the subject under consideration, and trying to find the *underlying principle* of God's dealings and teachings.

By this method he has much more happiness than he otherwise could have. By following the other method he could not know whether God or the Devil or chance would open the Bible for him. He much prefers to follow what he believes to be the teaching of the Word of God; that is, to commit all to the Father in prayer, asking Him to guide both reason and judgment, and then go out and use that judgment and reason to the best of his ability. Even if God should permit him to use his judgment in a way that afterward appeared not to have been the best, nevertheless the Father may use it to bring some great blessing or profitable lesson. By *judgment*, of course, he means his understanding of the Father's Word and of His providential leadings. Thus doing, he knows that all things shall work together for good.—Rom. 8:28.

JUST FOR TODAY

LORD, for tomorrow and its needs I do not pray;
 Keep me from any stain of sin just for today.
 Let me both diligently work and duly pray;
 Let me be kind in word and deed just for today.
 Let me be slow to do my will, prompt to obey;

Help me to sacrifice myself just for today.
 Let me no wrong nor idle word unthinking say;
 Set Thou Thy seal upon my lips just for today.
 So for tomorrow and its needs I do not pray,
 But keep me, guide me, hold me, Lord, just for today.

(Psa 25:4-5 KJV) "Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. (5) Lead me in thy truth, and teach me..."

1913 CR160 "Perfection" by Bro. Russell
 "We all come short, and need to realize these shortcomings, and we are to fight the good fight against them..."

You show your loyalty as a New Creature in fighting down everything in your flesh that is contrary to you and the Father, that you show your loyalty to righteousness, to truth, to God and the Brethren, in that proportion you are growing in grace and in that character which God can approve...

You know how you used to decide according to your own preferences, now you must make up your mind not according to

your own preferences, but according to certain principles, certain lines of righteousness, and principles of justice and love, so that the New Creatures in Christ have a new set of rules, altogether different from what they ever had in the world. The world has no such regulations and rules as are applicable to the New Creatures in Christ. Everything you do must be squared by the rule of justice. You dare not do as a New creature anything that would be unjust to a neighbor, to a brother, or to anybody. You are bound at least to be just; to the very extent of your ability you must not be lacking in justice. I think there are many of the Lords people who have not fully realized this part of the lesson, that the new nature and obedience to its rules means absolutely

the Golden Rule on their part toward all others."

R4467 "Let us all remember that all of the Lord's special dealings with his people during this Gospel Age are with a view to developing them in character, not only good character, but fixed character. It is not sufficient that we accept Christ, nor sufficient that we should preach him to others. To be fit for the heavenly Kingdom we must develop characters in harmony with our Lord--gentle, yet firm; sweet, yet strong... The difficulty apparently with the majority of people is that they do not see and do not understand the purpose of life; hence valuable opportunities and precious lessons are wasted upon them."