

June 17

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

THE Great Refiner is watching to see how the precious metal of your character

reflects His image. Or, in plain language, in every trial He watches to see what influences control our actions, whether they be influences of present advantage, or worldly policy, or personal friendship, or earthly loves--of husband, or wife, or children, or love of ease, or love of peace at any cost; or whether, on the other hand, we are con-

trolled by the naked principles of truth and righteousness; and whether we will defend these principles with zeal and energy at any cost of labor or suffering, or both, and so fight the good fight of faith to the bitter end -- even unto death. Z.'96-45 R1944:5

R1943-1945 "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire..." Let the fire burn; let the dross be consumed; and see to it, beloved, that in the heat of the flame you remove not the "living sacrifice" from the altar."

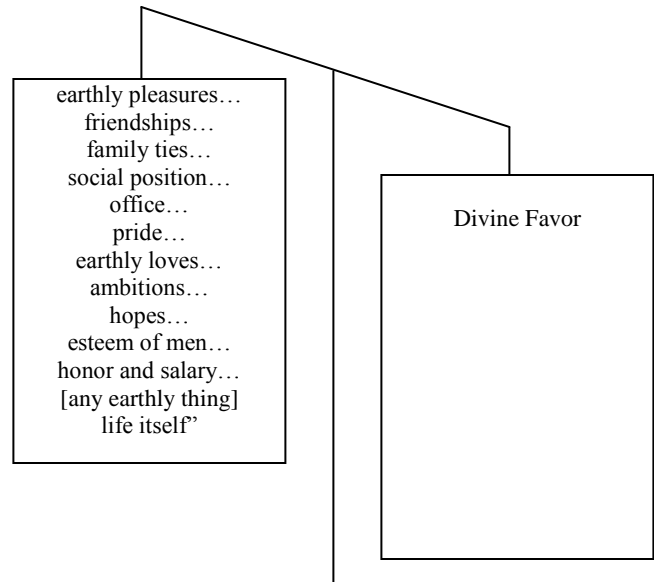
"In every trial he watches to see what influences control our actions, whether they be influences of

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whether, on the other hand, we are controlled by the naked principles of truth and righteousness; and whether we will defend these principles with zeal and energy at any cost of labor or suffering, or both, and so fight the good fight of faith to the bitter end--even unto death."

R2480:2:4 "The overcomers must all be proven to be such as would sacrifice every other thing for the Lord; such as would sacrifice the love and fellowship and approval, if necessary, of every other being, in order to retain the love and favor of the Lord."

R2850 "BALANCING EARTHLY GOOD WITH DIVINE FAVOR" "Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee."--Psa. 63:3...



The new creature is willing rather to cut it off [Matt 5:29-30], if it were dear as a right hand; to pluck it out, if it were precious as a right eye; than to allow any earthly thing to intervene between him and the divine loving-favor which he has learned so to enjoy that he considers it better than all the rest of life."

R1943 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

GOLD TRIED IN THE FIRE

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich."--Rev. 3:18

IN OUR study of the typical tabernacle, which was a shadow of good things to come, we have seen that everything inside the tabernacle was made of gold. The boards of which the tabernacle was constructed were overlaid with gold. The furniture also was of gold. There stood the golden candlestick, the golden table, the golden altar of incense, the golden ark of the testimony and the golden cherubim. Gold was also prominent in the typically glorious robes of the high priest. The fringe upon the upper robe was of golden bells and pomgranates; the texture of the ephod was interwoven with golden threads, and it was fastened on the shoulders with golden clasps; and upon his head was the golden crown, upon which was inscribed, "Holiness to the Lord."

All this was in striking contrast with the metals used elsewhere about the structure, its typical significance here being that all within "the Holy," which represented the present condition of truly consecrated believers, and within the "Most Holy," which represented the glorious condition of the Church triumphant, pertains to the divine nature, gold being a symbol of divinity. All who are privileged to enter the antitypical Holy and Most Holy are also to be, as Peter tells us, "partakers of the divine nature." (2 Pet. 1:4.) They are members of the body of the great Highpriest whose divine nature was symbolized in the gold of the typical highpriest's typically glorious garments.

It is in harmony with this same symbolic meaning of gold, that the Revelator says of the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, "And the city was pure gold [a divine institution], ...and the street of the city was pure gold [all its highways are of divine appointment]." (Rev. 21:18,21.) And the Psalmist, referring to the privileged class who, when glorified, shall constitute that heavenly city, government or kingdom of God,--the members of the body or bride of Christ,

partakers of the divine nature,--says, "Upon thy right hand did stand the queen, in gold of Ophir. ...Her clothing is of wrought gold."--Psa. 45:9,13.

It is to the same apt symbolism that our Lord also refers in addressing his people in our text,--"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire." These words, be it remembered, are not addressed to the world, but to the Lord's people, justified and consecrated. (Rev. 1:1; 3:14.) This call is an exhortation to them to faithfully fulfil their covenant, to submit themselves fully and unreservedly to the discipline of the Lord, which is necessary for their perfecting in holiness, and for making them ready to reign with him as his bride and joint-heir in the glory of the divine Kingdom.

Not until we lay hold by faith upon the *exceeding great and precious* promises--of joint-heirship with Christ in his coming Kingdom and glory--which promises lead us to fulfil their conditions of consecration and self-sacrifice even unto death, is there any of the "gold" of the "divine nature" in us. This treasure can be purchased only at the cost of entire consecration or sacrifice of all that we have, to Christ. Previous to our justification by faith in Christ we had nothing to sacrifice, all that we had being under condemnation; but, being justified, we may present our bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and our reasonable service. Thus the treasure of the new, divine nature, the gold, is given us. Thus we "buy" the gold.

But we have this treasure in the earthen vessels, and there is consequently much of alloy mixed with it. Hence the necessity that the gold be cast into the crucible for refining. And if we would purchase the "gold *tried in the fire*," it must be at the cost of faithful and constant submission to the discipline of the Lord in the fiery trials which are necessary to consume our dross and refine our gold.

Wherefore Peter says, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." (1 Pet. 4:12.) And Paul reminds us of the counsel of wisdom (Prov. 3:11,12; Heb. 12:5-8),--"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

Peter also reminds us that the trial of our faith is much more precious than that of gold that perisheth, and that the end sought through such trial is that we may be "found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 1:7.) It would be idle for any of the Lord's consecrated people to hope to be made meet for the glorious inheritance of the saints without the refining processes of fiery trial; for Paul tells us that "the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." "If ye receive not chastisement [discipline, fiery trial], whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." (1 Cor. 3:13; Heb. 12:6-8.) And through the Prophet Isaiah the Lord tells his spiritual Israel, as well as his typical fleshly Israel, "I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy sin." (Isa. 1:25.) The Prophet Malachi, making special reference to the last days of this age, the days of the Lord's presence, and the great refining work to be accomplished then, says, "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver."--Mal. 3:2,3.

Fiery trials are therefore to be expected by all of the Lord's people, especially in this day of the Lord. As surely as we are sons of God we shall have them; and when they come we should promptly recognize their mission to us and see that we are exercised by them unto godliness, sobriety and deep and fervent piety. "Now no chastening [discipline] for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."--Heb. 12:11.

It is in the school of experience that we learn our most valuable lessons; and the ripest saints, in whom we find the deepest sympathy, the most patient forbearance, and the most tender helpfulness and consideration, are those who have been through the fire of affliction, and who have been rightly exercised thereby. It was when the cross grew heaviest and the clouds were darkest, and when the tempest was highest, that the Master's presence was most sensibly realized, and the blessed lessons of faith and trust and of the Lord's tender, personal love were sealed upon the hearts of the disciples. ⁽¹⁾ It is under such discipline that the soul is mellowed to a loving submission that calmly says, I can do all things, bear all things, through Christ who strengtheneth me. As gradually the dross of the old nature is consumed, and the gold becomes more and more manifest, these precious souls become ever dearer to their loving Lord. So dear are they to him that in every affliction he is near with his grace to sustain and his presence to cheer; and the deepest shades of sorrow become memory's most hallowed resting places, where the Day Star shines the brightest.

Whenever a new trial is presented to the Christian, if he will but call to mind this precept of the Lord, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire," it will stimulate courage, nerve to patient endurance, and quicken to self-sacrifice. "Gold tried in the fire!" How can it be tried without the crucible and the flame? How otherwise can the dross be eliminated? There is no other way. "Wherefore, think it not strange:" let the fire burn; let the dross be consumed; and see to it, beloved, that in the heat of the flame you remove not the "living sacrifice" from the altar. Remember that the eye of ⁽²⁾ the great Refiner is upon you; and as the refiner of gold watches the metal in the crucible to see his image reflected in it, so the Lord, the great Refiner, has his eye upon you. He is watching to

see how the precious metal of your character reflects his image. Or, in plain language, in every trial he watches to see what influences control our actions, whether they be influences of present advantage, or worldly policy, or personal friendship, or earthly loves--of husband, or wife, or children, or houses, or lands, or whether they be honor among men, or love of ease, or love of peace at any cost; or whether, on the other hand, we are controlled by the naked principles of truth and righteousness; and whether we will defend these principles with zeal and energy at any cost of labor or suffering, or both, and so fight the good fight of faith to the bitter end--even unto death.

Those who do so, reflect the Master's image. Like him they are loyal to God, loyal to the principles of truth and righteousness, brave, obedient, faithful. These are the overcomers. They overcome by faith; for without a strong reliant faith they could not thus endure hardness as good soldiers, and pursue to the end a course which is continually against the current of the old human nature. Faith buckles on the armor of God and goes forth to the battle with firm and steady tread, quickened by the inspiring melody,--

"Awake my soul, stretch every nerve,

And press with vigor on;

A heavenly race demands thy zeal,

And an immortal crown."

The Christian course of self-sacrifice cannot be one of ease and continuous smooth-sailing and peace. There may be a calm now and then, but storms and battles are the rule; and he who courts ease and peace at the expense of the principles of truth and righteousness, or who is so indifferent to the value of those principles as not to study to discern them in order to defend them, is not a faithful, overcoming soldier of the cross. "Ne'er think the victory won, nor once at ease sit down; Thine arduous work will not be done till thou hast gained thy crown."

Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." "If any man come to me, and hate not [*i.e.*, and love me not more than^(*)] his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters; yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple...Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple...He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."--Matt. 10:34-38; Luke 14:26,33,35.

Oh, how necessary is the hearing of faith to the victory of faith--to that victory which makes every other love subservient to the love of God, which makes every other interest bend to the interests of his great work, and which cheerfully sacrifices every other interest to the interests which center in Christ and in his coming Kingdom. The ear of faith must be attuned to the melodies of divine truth if the soul would catch its blessed inspiration; and the eye of faith must discern the symmetry of truth and the beauty of holiness, if the soul would be filled with a burning zeal for God--for his truth and his righteousness.

But let the soul be thus inspired with deep and abiding love for the melody of truth and the beauty of holiness, and filled with a holy zeal for God, then everything else takes a secondary place, and we have the victory by faith in every encounter with the enemy. The soul thus stayed upon God can always trustfully sing,--

"If on a quiet sea toward home I calmly sail, With grateful heart, O God, to thee, I'll own the favoring gale. But should the surges rise, and rest delay to come, Blest be the tempest, kind the storm, which drives me nearer home."

^(*) See EMPHATIC DIAGLOTT--foot note.

⁽¹⁾ June 16 Manna, Heb. 12:11

⁽²⁾ June 17 Manna, Mal. 3:2-3

MORE ON THE MANNA TEXT ITSELF

R4931 "Who shall stand when He appeareth?" "Who will abide the day of His coming?" (Malachi 3:2.) The intimation is that not many will abide, not many will stand--the majority will fall.

The reason is given. He will require such purity, such holiness, that few will come up to His requirements. The tests He will impose will be like fullers' soap, which

is the foe of every spot upon a garment white. His requirements will be like those of a refiner of silver--all the dross must be eliminated, in a furnace hot enough to insure its separation. The test will last a considerable time, for He will sit as a refiner sits, giving close inspection, that the heat be neither too great nor too little, the time neither too long nor too short.

This great Messiah, the Messenger of the New Covenant, began His refining and

purifying work more than eighteen centuries ago. He followed the Divine rule, "To the Jew first." He began to refine and purify a priestly class for association with Himself in the glorious Messianic work."

R3864 "PURIFY THE SONS OF LEVI..."

If we knew in advance just how each trial of faith and love and devotion to principle and loyalty to the Lord and to the brethren would come we might be prepared

to meet it, and correspondingly it would be less severe, and our humility, patience and love be correspondingly less tested. But the Lord wishes to test us along these very lines, and hence our trials usually come from unexpected quarters. This makes the trial more severe and proves the better the real sentiments of our hearts. The Lord desires to purge out of us everything in the nature of dross--self-will, personal ambition, pride: he wishes to cultivate in us loyalty to himself and the principles of righteousness, represented in his character, and exhorts us through his Word."

R3864 "Who shall abide the day of his coming? Who shall stand when he inspects? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi and purge them as gold and silver, and they shall offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." --Mal. 3:2,3...

The end of this age is the time for the Lord's inspection of the entire household of faith, and properly enough the inspection begins at the top of the house, begins with the saints"

R5119 "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his only son that serveth him."--Mal. 3:17.

Like many other prophecies, the words of the Prophet Malachi seem to have a general application throughout the Gospel Age and a particular one at the close of the Age...

THE MOUNTING OF THE JEWELS GOING ON

In a certain sense, then, God has been making up His jewels for more than eight-hundred years—in the sense of preparing them. But there is still a final gathering, or assembling, of this class, which has not yet been completed. The gathering of these jewels must include the resurrection, not merely of those who have been sleeping as members of the Body of Christ, but also of those who are alive and remain to the end of the Age. These all experience a change from animal to spirit conditions—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Cor. 15:51,52.) In the assembling of this class—the *mounting* of the jewels, as it were—the Lord will show His own workmanship, what He has selected out of the filth and mire of the sinful race of mankind, and what He has made of them.

This gathering of the jewels is that to which the Prophet Malachi refers in the following quotation: "Behold, I will send My Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap; and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."--Mal. 3:1-3."

R5916 "SIGNS OF THE PRESENCE OF THE KING "But who may abide the Day of

His Coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap."--Malachi 3:2

THE words of the Prophet given in our text refer to the close of the present Gospel Age. It is the same Day prophesied by the Apostle Paul when he declared, "The fire of that Day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (1 Corinthians 3:13.) It is the Day of which the Apostle Peter wrote so graphically when he said that in that great Day of the Lord the heavens should be on fire and the elements should melt with fervent heat, and that the earth and all the works therein should be burned up. (2 Peter 3:10)...

The Scriptures call this Day "the Day of the Lord," "the Day of Jehovah," "the Day of God," "the Day of Christ," "the Day of Vengeance," "that great and notable Day," etc. It is the Day in which the Old Order is to perish and the glorious New Order is to be ushered in. In foretelling this Day, both the Prophets and the Apostles speak of the class which will *stand* in this Day when all others shall fall. St. Paul says that everything which can be shaken down will be; and that only the Kingdom which will then be set up, and which cannot be shaken, will remain. (Hebrews 12:25-29.) The present order of society—the nominal church systems, financial institutions, political institutions—all—will go down.

During the Gospel Age many who have not been Christians have associated themselves with the Church. The civilized world of today call themselves "Christians," in contradistinction to the nations which they call "heathen," though from the Scriptural standpoint they are all heathen—Gentiles. Among all these various nations we find many religions, whose devotees claim that they have consecrated themselves to God. But the touch-stone by which these claims may be tested is the Word of God. See Galatians 1:6-9. To the true Church of Christ alone will God give the Messianic Kingdom. Some who really have Christ and His work of sacrifice as their foundation will be saved, but at the expense of all their works, their character-structure, which the "fire" of this Day will consume. The tare class in the nominal churches will be bundled and "burned," not as *individuals*, but as *professed Christians*; that is to say, their professions will be seen to be without foundation. They will come to see how grossly in error they were—how far removed from the Truth...

INVULNERABILITY OF THE TRUTH...

Those who have been teaching errors will soon be ashamed (Isaiah 66:5), while the fire of this Day will only *manifest* the *Truth* to all. No power, no tongue, no pen, can successfully contradict the Truth, the great Divine Plan of the Ages. It is strong before its enemies and before all who make assaults upon it, and ere long the folly of its foes shall be made known to the whole world. "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE KING

The coming of the King to possess His Kingdom will mean a personal as well as a national and a church examination, judgment and treatment. It will mean, when the Kingdom is fully inaugurated, the suppression of vice in a manner and to a degree never attempted by any earthly reformer.

There will be no license to do evil in any form. The only liberty granted will be liberty to *do right*. It is no wonder that so few experience joy at the proclamation of the return of earth's rightful King to reign. To many it will mean the loss of their present advantages over their fellowmen. To many it will mean the prohibition and cutting off of sins now indulged in and enjoyed.

Nevertheless, both the King and the Kingdom are not only *coming*, but are *here*; and the present troubles and shakings in church and state, and the general awakening of the people are the results of influences emanating from that King and Kingdom. Though men know it not, it is the smiting of the Kingdom of God that is even now preparing for the wreck of all the kingdoms of the earth, that the way may be opened for the establishment of righteousness in the world, that men's hearts may be humbled and prepared for the righteous Government which is to take control of earth. Worldly men cannot realize this; for this Kingdom cometh not with outward observation—with outward show and display...

But we are thankful that while the judgments of a righteous God against sin must come at this time, yet the ultimate results will be glorious, when the world will come forth chastened, subdued, purified by the awful baptism of fire and blood; when they shall come to see that sin, selfishness and corruption have wrought their legitimate outcome. Then mankind will be ready to cry to the Lord and to long for His deliverance, and He will be entreated of them and will lift them up and bless them... It means the shaking of society in a manner and to an extent never before known, and so thoroughly that another shaking will never be necessary. (Hebrews 12:26,27.) It means the breaking in pieces of the empires and governments of the world as a potter's vessel. It means the passing away of the present ecclesiastical "heavens"...

He will bring to light all the hidden things of darkness, and correct and suppress private as well as public sin and selfishness. He will expose depths of corruption never before realized. He will make "Justice the line and righteousness the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." (R.V.) ...Isaiah 28:15,17,18; **26:5,6**."

D14 "No hand but the hand of God could stay the progress of the present current of events; and his hand will not do so until the bitter experiences of this conflict shall have sealed their instruction upon the hearts of men."

(Psa 107:26-29) "They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. (27) They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. (28) Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. (29) He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still."

MOST CERTAINLY HIS LOVING FAVOR IS BETTER THAN LIFE

R2850 "BALANCING EARTHLY GOOD WITH DIVINE FAVOR" "Because thy

loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee."--Psa. 63:3

"LOVING-KINDNESS, in our text, has the signification of favor. The Prophet, in speaking, represents the Church--the Christ, Head and body. The words are applicable to no others. None but the saints esteem divine favor more precious, more valuable, than the present life--than earthly good things. If we ask the world to balance this matter, to weigh on one side of the balances earthly interests, earthly pleasures, family ties, social position, pride, worldly aspirations, and to put on the other side of the balance divine favor, the reply would be that the earthly good things have all the weight; and that divine favor has none, for the worldly know little or nothing respecting divine favor. They have indeed heard that some people believe in a God, believe in his providential care, believe in his love, believe in a future life, etc., but as for themselves they conclude that such things *may be*, while the earthly things are certainties; and they would not think for a moment of exchanging present certainties for unknown and intangible matters, called divine favor.

If we even ask the average nominal Christian to weigh this matter, and tell us if willing to exchange, -- putting in the one side of the balance all the good things, hopes, ambitions, family ties, social position, churchianity, petty office and esteem of men, and putting into the other side of the scale God's favor,--he will hesitate and eventually decide that he will do nothing of the kind. The reason with many is that they do not appreciate divine favor...

How shall we today balance this question of earthly life and its advantages and privileges and hopes and aims with the favor of God? Well, it will be a test to us, as it has been a test all through the ages... The Lord is now seeking only the Kingdom class, only the little flock, and he wishes to have in it only such as love him supremely--only such as, having tasted that the Lord is gracious, desire to and do feast upon his favor, enjoying it, relishing it, appreciating it far beyond any earthly pleasure, any earthly hope, any earthly ambition, any earthly love.

This class today and at all times has been the same,--of one spirit with their Head. The Apostle Paul voices their sentiments; speaking on this very subject, and weighing the earthly life with the divine favor, he says: "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ and be found in him....That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead." (Phil. 3:7-11.) The Apostle's sentiment is that of all the saints; it is that of all who will be accounted "overcomers," and who will be accounted inheritors of the promise of joint-heirship with Jesus. Nothing short of this will do. We must appreciate the loving favor of God as *better than earthly life*, else we are not worthy of him and not of the kind he is seeking. And it is with all who have the Lord's spirit just as it was with the Apostle; the moment they begin to weigh and con-

trast fellowship with God and the eternal hopes associated therewith, in contrast with earthly loves and family ties and earthly ambitions and pleasures, the latter all seem to be quite insignificant in comparison, dross as compared to pure gold. And from this standpoint they gladly renounce all, giving up life itself for the favor of God.

ATTAINING CHRISTIAN MATURITY

But this full development is not at the beginning of the Christian experience with us, nor was it at the beginning of Paul's experience. It is development attained by growth. At the very beginning, however, it was necessary, before either Paul or we could be accepted at all of the Lord, as begotten of the new nature, that we should first balance the loving favor of God with the earthly good things, and the balance must be settled on the side of divine favor, so that we would give up the other,--earthly life, earthly hopes, earthly aims, earthly pleasures, *consecrating* them to sacrifice, in such measure as may be necessary in order to maintain divine favor and blessing. From the time the scale was thus turned to the Lord's side, and our hearts were consecrated to him, earthly things began to lose their weight and to lose their value, to lose appreciation in our eyes, as our eyes began to open the wider to the heavenly things; and the latter became more and more weighty with us, more and more real, until we could see with the eye of faith him who is invisible to the natural sight, and the crown of glory, and the exceeding great and precious things which God has in reservation for them that love him, and be more and more strengthened thereby. And so with some it may have been after weeks or months or years that they reached the position attained by the Apostle when he wrote, as above, that all earthly things were henceforth but as loss and dross when weighed in comparison with Christ and God's loving kindness or favor toward us in him.

This loving favor of God, so much appreciated by the saints that they consecrate their earthly all to obtain it, is not merely a favor as respects future prospects and hopes--not merely as respects the Kingdom to come and the glory and the honor and immortality then to be granted to such as are in divine favor, but it extends to the present life. Gradually we come to appreciate fellowship and communion with the Father to such a degree as to produce misery of soul if this communion is interrupted. And this sentiment is beautifully expressed in the hymn which we sometimes sing:--

"Sun of my soul, my Father dear,
I know no night when thou art near;
O let no earth-born cloud arise

To hide thee from thy servant's eyes."

The true child of God will be in such close fellowship with the Father, and with the spirit of truth and righteousness and love, that anything which would interrupt or hinder this fellowship would be esteemed a calamity, however sweet or precious it might be to the natural man. The new creature is willing rather to cut it off, if it were dear as a right hand; to pluck it out, if it were precious as a right eye; than to allow any earthly thing to intervene between him and the divine loving-favor which he has learned so to enjoy that he considers it better than all the rest of life.

"THEREFORE WILL MY LIPS PRAISE THEE"...

Those who have tasted of the Lord's grace, those who have come to realize his favor as *better than life*, and who have joyfully laid upon his altar every earthly good thing, and hope and ambition, rejoice to tell the good tidings to others; they rejoice to tell forth the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. The message is too good to keep; they not only do not require to be hired to tell it, but they are willing that the telling of it, and the enjoying of God's favor in connection with the telling, shall cost them something--cost them trouble, cost them money, cost them the loss of earthly friendships, cost them the straining if not the breaking of some of home ties, cost the frown of the world and of churchianity;--yes, they rejoice, saying, in the language of the Prophet, "He hath put a new song into my mouth, even the *loving-kindness* of our God!"

Some one, perhaps, will say this is exaggeration; it will not cost earthly friendships nor home ties; it will bring with it respect and honor of men, and a salary. We answer, No! The Lord's Word is still true; he is still the example to all who will walk in his footsteps. For what did the Master suffer the loss of social position? Why did the Doctors of Divinity of his day, and the notables of the religious people, hide as it were their faces from him? Why did they finally become so embittered against him, and so hate him, that they crucified him? Was it because of evil-doing on his part? Nay, but "he went about doing good." It was because he told the truth--truths which they believed in great measure, but with which they had mixed "traditions of the elders," which blinded them and made them children of darkness. Our Lord gives us the key to the situation when he says, "The darkness hateth the light."...

As his persecutions and oppositions came not from the world, the Gentiles, the heathen, but from the professed holiness people of his time, so all through the dark ages, and at the present time, those opposing the Lord and the truth are not worldly people, but sectarians whom Satan has more than half blinded with his false doctrines and misrepresentations. We are not, therefore, to be surprised that we find it as the Lord declares, that wherever his truth goes it will be like a sword to separate, and that especially in the home and the family. And as he declared, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my sake."--Matt. 10:22.

These experiences are for the very purpose of testing us, as the Lord's experiences were for the purpose of testing him... Those who love the present life close their lips and refrain from speaking his loving kindness...

The "harvest" message of good tidings which is now revealed to the Lord's consecrated people... This message is the "new song"...that is mentioned by our Lord in Revelation, which none others might sing except the elect 144,000, who have the Father's name in their foreheads--publicly professed. If others hear of the song they cannot sing it, because it costs something to sing this song. "Because thy loving favor is better than life [more esteemed by us, more than all of earthly life and its good things] *therefore* will my lips praise thee."