

"TO COMMUNICATE FORGET NOT."

"But to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Heb. 13:16.

Our Heavenly Father is very rich, possessing all things, lacking nothing, yet if we may judge from his dealings with his earthly creatures, his pleasure has been not so much in the possessing of these great riches as in the using of them for the good and blessing of his creatures.

"His providence is kind and large,
Both man and beast his bounty share;
The whole creation is his charge,
But saints are his peculiar care."

So also as we become more and more like him – "partakers of the Divine nature" – benevolence, kindness and love will become more and more characteristic of us. Few perhaps of the "little flock" have been made stewards of this world's goods. It may be because there are few who could use and not abuse the trust, but such as have it should esteem it a privilege to be imitators of our benevolent Heavenly Father; not wasting it, neither hoarding it, but esteeming it merely as an agent for blessing and "doing good unto all men, especially to the household of faith." And we should be anxious and careful to use whatever God has put into our hands, and to be faithful whether over a few things or many things, remembering that the man with but one dollar may be as really a miser or a philanthropist as he who has a million.

What we should endeavor to possess is true benevolence and breadth of mind, charity, love. "Let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus our Lord," and it will lead you to regard and treat with tenderness and loving kindness, even those with whom

you differ. Let us remember in this connection, too, that, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

The spirit or mind of Christ is a meek and quiet and charitable spirit. It "vaunteth not itself, is not easily puffed up." Its fruits are the opposite of the depraved fleshly nature, viz.: love, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, etc. "If we live in the spirit let us also walk in the spirit" and "not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another," but displaying the spirit of our Father in heaven, "and we shall be the children of the Highest, for He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." "Be ye therefore merciful as your Father also is merciful."

But if it is a joy and privilege to be God's stewards to a greater or less degree in earthly goods, how much more blessed is it to be permitted to dispense the spiritual blessings and thus to be "Stewards of the manifold grace of God." Do we appreciate the fact that each disciple of Christ is a steward, some to a greater, some to a less extent; some with many talents, some with few, yet "To every man (in Christ) is given a measure of the spirit to profit withal" – to make use of. What use are you making of the talents given to you? Before saying to us, have you rule over two cities, five cities or many things, He will ask us to give an account of our stewardship. He will not expect me to give an account of your stewardship, nor you to give an account of mine. To the Master each servant will give an account and stand or fall.

But while it is true that we each have been given special blessings of knowledge and truth and that certain responsibilities come with them, we had rather provoke you to love than fear. If we possess the spirit of Christ, love, we shall esteem it a great privilege to be permitted to carry to others that which has done so much good, which has removed the clouds from our minds and brought us into the clear sunshine of God's love, revealing to us the grandeur of our

Heavenly Father's character, the beauties and harmonies of his word, and the "exceeding riches of his grace in his loving kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." If it has set our hearts to ringing in melodious harmony with the heavenly music, "bringing glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people," may it not produce the same effect upon others? Would that the story filled each of our hearts, that as a flame of fire it would consume all dross from our own hearts and set fire to all with whom we come in contact. Like the widow's cruse of oil, our treasure will fill to overflowing all the earthen vessels ready to receive it. Oh that every word of the beautiful song – "I love to tell the story" – could be the emphatic and truly heartfelt expression of all the readers of the WATCH TOWER:

"I love to tell the story,
'Tis pleasant to repeat,
What seems each time I tell it,
More wonderfully sweet.
I love to tell the story,
It did so much for me,
And that is just the reason
I tell it now to thee."

Again, if we would "do good and communicate," how should we tell the story? Tell it simply, tell it plainly; be entirely swallowed up with the grandeur of your theme. Lose sight of yourself and what you have learned and let it be all "of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love." Too many take pleasure in telling the story only as they can make battle with it. They delight in using the truth as a knock-down argument. This is an element of the old nature which, not yet dead, asserts its right to fight what it terms the Lord's battles or the spiritual warfare. A sad mistake; be not deceived into developing an element of the carnal nature in direct opposition to the fruits of the spirit – meekness, gentleness, patience, love.

Truly we are told that "the word of God is the sword of the spirit," but remember it is not our sword. The spirit does its own smiting and in its own way, but to us it says, "Put up thy sword." The command to us is, Be light bearers. "Let your light so shine" by showing forth the fruits of the Spirit, that men may see your good fruits and glorify your Father in heaven. The word is a lamp, by its light put on Christ's righteousness, and truth as a garment, then lift it up to others that they may see your clean robes and be led to desire the same. Then let the Spirit use his sword upon others as he may see fit to humble them, strip them of pride, and bring them to the rock that is higher than they.

We should not become discouraged if there are but few who love light rather than darkness. We should remember that the God of this world has succeeded in darkening the minds of many that they cannot appreciate the light of truth; that we are as it were, surrounded by men and women blinded totally or partially by sin and ignorance. Some, totally blind, can see and appreciate none of the good news; others can see a little but cannot see afar off. They can only see "the present evil world (age) and are losing much pleasure and joy because they cannot see afar off, how that, "In the ages to come, God will show forth the exceeding riches of his grace in his loving kindness toward us (who are) in Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:7); and how it is his plan that both Jew and Gentile shall obtain mercy through your mercy. Rom. 11:31. Surely as it would afford great pleasure to strengthen and heal physical sight, much more should we rejoice to lead those who are blind spiritually to the Spirit's eye-salve – the word – that they may rejoice with us in singing:

"O, the prospect, it is so transporting,
Saviour hasten our gathering we pray."

Of many it is as true to-day as when uttered: "Eyes have they but they see not, ears but they hear not." God shows us through the lamp that this age ends the probation of none except those who do see and hear [R127 : page 4] clearly and plainly; that because of Jesus' ransom there is to be an age of Restitution. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." "Then all shall come to the knowledge of the truth" and "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth" and none shall say to his neighbor, "know thou the Lord," for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest of them.

In presenting the good news of the kingdom and the deep things of God, we should seek to follow Jesus' example, that is, while we at all times hold up Christ's righteousness to all men and thereby be to them "living epistles," we should seek to show "the deep things of God" to those who seem to have the spirit of God. (1 Cor. 2:9-16.)

Knowing this, that spiritual or deep things cannot be discerned except by those having the spirit, "He that hath an ear let him hear," saith the Spirit. This must be our method, therefore, when we find any one without an ear to hear, leave off telling such an one. You cannot give him an ear; God will do that in his "due time." Waste not valuable time and energy. Leave them in love and sympathy with God, and put no obstacle in their way.

Whenever you meet what seems to be "an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile," expect in such a one to find "an ear to hear." Commune with him first on Spiritual things familiar to you both, that he may come to recognize you as led of the same spirit – a fellow member of "the body of Christ," and an heir of the same glory. Then present to such the deeper things of God and your communion, instead of being a battle of words, will be profitable

and blessed to both. To fully appreciate the meaning of our text, we should do good and communicate until we feel it. It is with such sacrifices God is well pleased. It does not amount to a sacrifice to merely give a dollar, or a moment, or an hour for which we have no other use. Give until you can feel it and then you may expect to feel in your heart that "with such sacrifices God is well pleased."
