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## **ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS' QUESTIONS.**

Ques. – Bro. Russell please give your opinion of Jesus' words: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away." Jno. 15. Can it be that a truly regenerated soul will be lost?

Ans. – As expressed in article – "Restitution – for whom?" – in the August number, I believe that the Divine nature once imparted never ceases, except in those who commit the unpardonable sin counting "the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing." Heb. 10:29. We answer your question then by saying: A truly degenerated soul who abides under the blood never will be lost. "His seed remaineth in him." Jesus is the great Shepherd and says of his sheep: "I will give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." Jno. 10:28. Vs. 26, shows that all who believe are his sheep.

What shall we say then of the text "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away." Simply this: Jesus is the vine [the head] we are the branches [the body]. The only "calling held out before us now, as we come to God is, to join the vine, become members of the "body of Christ" – to become members of His "bride" – the "little flock." There is no calling to be a part of the second – or "great company." No, "ye are called in one hope of your calling" and all coming to God are reckoned at first, "Babes in Christ" – "Branches" in the vine. And it is God's will that they shall continue in Him and thus make their "calling and election sure." But how many do not, "go on unto perfection." How many would like to be branches in this vine, and yet, would not like to "crucify the flesh" and be made "conformable unto His death." Jesus used the red juice of the grape [the fruit of the vine] to symbolize his death – his shed

life ["this is my blood"] and the fruit expected of every branch of the vine is the same, viz: a giving of your life for the world "being crucified with Christ" – "filling up the measure of the sufferings of Christ which are behind." Those who do not bring forth this fruit, are cut off from membership with the body – the vine; and as touching our high calling in Christ Jesus [to be his bride] they become castaways.

This was what Paul guarded against saying, "I keep my body under [crucified] lest after having "preached to others I myself, should become a castaway." 1 Cor. 9:27. He is talking about running the race for the great prize – an incorruptible crown. [See vs. 23-25.] He does not fear losing the Divine nature and eternal life, for again he says, "I am confident that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him." [Life.] 2 Tim. 1:12.

The cut off branch referred to is not one which has withered, of course the husbandman would trim such off or rather they cut themselves off; such dead branches would represent those who commit the unpardonable sin. But, the branches here mentioned as cut off are what Vine dressers call "suckers." They usually make the most show and seem to grow the fastest and are well covered with leaves [professions]. Alas how fitly does this picture many who starting as members of the body agreeing to "take up their cross and follow" the head, make only professions, and never bear his fruit – self sacrifice to death.

Oh, yes, the blood of sprinkling covers the entire household of faith, and they shall never perish if they abide under the blood and continue to trust in its sufficiency. If cut off from the body – bride – vine, they will be cast forth and will be burned "delivered over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit [life] may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Their works shall be burned –

they shall suffer loss of the glorious joint-heirship [R140 : page 8] of the bride, but themselves shall be saved. 1 Cor. 3:15.

All having the new nature are children of God, for "the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." But will all be heirs? No, only the first-born are heirs; "Christ (head and body) "the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his (parousia) presence." Christ (head and body) "the first-born among many brethren" – the great company. All are brethren because begotten by the same Father – God, but not all first-born, therefore not all heirs. When they were called it was in this hope of their calling – viz.: that they should be "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ," but there were conditions put upon them if they would be joint-heirs, viz.: "If so be that we suffer (death) with Him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. 8:16,17.)

To be a joint-heir with Jesus means a great deal. It means to share all the glory, and all the power, and to inherit all things. None but "the bride," "the overcomers" who suffer with him shall reign with him. Oh, ours is a high calling – a great prize, let us "so run that we may obtain."

Q. – Bro. R. we feel so deeply interested in the WATCH TOWER and its teachings that we think its monthly visits too far apart; would it not be advisable to make it a semi-monthly or a weekly at a corresponding advance in price? We should like it so, as it is almost the only "meat" some of us get.

A. – We think it not advisable to change for three reasons: One is, that the present price, fifty cents a year, is quite beyond the means of many of the readers; Another reason is that to issue more frequently would necessitate a great deal of "clipping" and publishing of "little anecdotes" and "tales," a surfeit of which reading is easily attainable, from thousands of other papers, and our third and chief objection is, that we do not think that our readers can

fully digest the mental and spiritual food put before them each month in less time than a month. Permit us to suggest that if you read each article thoroughly three times before going to another you would get fully three times as much nourishment from the paper. Then, too, it would be well to keep a "file" of the paper convenient and to re-examine and refresh your memory on subjects of previous issues. Careless reading may do for light subjects and anecdotes, but God's word and arguments drawn from its "deep things" require careful study.

Q. – Your exposition of Rev. 15, "Song of Moses and the Lamb" in last No. is quite satisfactory, except that Moses' song was one of deliverance after Israel had left Egypt. I had supposed Egypt a type of earth and that we would sing that song after we had left earth. Can you explain this feature?

A. – We understand that this song of deliverance will be sung by mankind in general during the Millennial age. But we sing it now, because we have now gotten the victory over the world (Egypt), and over "the beast and his image," etc., the bindings of human traditions and man made creeds, and are no longer in this condition of mental slavery to great ecclesiastical authorities. If you will notice, those who sing this song have gotten this very victory, vs. 2. That it is sung before the pouring out of the vials is evident from v. 6. In those vials is "filled up (completed) the wrath of God," and we understand that those who get the victory over the beast, etc., are the ones "accounted worthy to escape all those things coming upon the world" – a "little flock."

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