

WALK IN WISDOM.

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without redeeming the time.
['Securing the season.' – *Diaglott*; 'buying the opportunity'
– *Rotherham*.] Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt,
that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Col. 4:5,6.

Paul drew such a bold, clear line of separation between himself and the world, that no one observing him need be in doubt of his inflexible purpose and his faithfulness in carrying it out. And when he wrote to the Corinthian church, "Be ye followers of me" (1 Cor. 4:16), there was no danger of misunderstanding. They could not help knowing that he meant the narrow way of sacrifice – in the very foot-prints of the Lord. Alluding as an illustration to those *last* exposed in the theatre to fight with wild beasts, or with each other, and who were devoted to certain destruction, he says, "I think God exhibited us the Apostles last, as devoted to death; for we are made a spectacle to the world, [R756 : page 7] both to angels and to men." And so are all who follow in the footsteps of these faithful ones – the footsteps of our Lord.

In view of the fact that those who have consecrated themselves as sacrifices, are being made a spectacle to all those outside, as well as within their own company, Paul further urges that we bear this in mind, and that we walk wisely, so that, so far as it is possible, our conduct, etc., may be transparent before the world. We call to mind many of his words of special instruction on this point. Among others he says (Rom. 12:18), "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." If circumstances have placed you among contentious and disagreeable people, here is a good opportunity to show them in your actions, and without the least ostentation, your spirit of self-sacrifice, your benevolence, brotherly kindness and love. Such a spirit will rebuke the world and show them a more excellent way, whether they are yet ready to walk in it or not. This spirit, however, should not permit continued oppression and injustice for the sake of dearly bought peace.

Sometimes we, as Paul *did*, may have to speak very plainly and pointedly, and warn of a coming time of reckoning when the actions of the present time must all be accounted for. (Acts 24:25.) Thus Paul reasoned with Felix, until the strong man trembled in view of the time of reckoning.

Again he says, (Rom. 14:16), "Let not your good be evil spoken of." Even though some things may be right enough and lawful to us, if they become an occasion of stumbling to others, we should deny self if need be, that others be not caused to stumble.

"Let your speech be always with grace [liberality, favor] seasoned with salt." In reproof, warning or counsel, a spirit of liberality will not lose sight of commendable features in those opposed, nor fail to commend it. Temperance [moderation] should characterize all our conversation, and in all our dealings with men of the world, as well as with Christians, courtesy, liberality and kindly consideration for their interests, should be evident, even though their lack of such consideration toward us should be glaringly manifest. Not only should our speech be liberal, temperate, courteous, but it should also be seasoned with salt. Salt is a figure for truth. Truth, like salt, has the power of preserving from decay that which is good and pure. We should, therefore, be well established in the truth of God's Word, that we may be able to answer every one, giving a good Scriptural reason for both our faith and our practice.

But mark the significance of the words "buying" or "securing the opportunity." Shortly those now sacrificing will be reigning. The time for sacrifice and suffering will be over. Seeing the reward as we do, we should wisely secure the present opportunity which can never again be enjoyed. When the Church has been glorified, the world's time of trial and discipline begins, and their way up to perfection will be more or less painful and difficult; but it will be a source of encouragement and comfort to them to know as they look back to our still more difficult

path of *sacrifice*, that they have not a Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of their infirmities.

Are we in any way hoping to escape the cross, and yet to wear the crown, as members of the Royal Priesthood? Such hope is certainly vain. Let us each ask ourselves, What kind of a spectacle am I before angels and men? Let us endeavor to ever keep this thought in mind, and let everything be done with an eye to this great responsibility, counting it all joy when our names are cast out as evil, when like our Lord we are despised and rejected of men. Those who now reject and despise the sacrificing ones will, by and by, be comforted and blessed through this sacrifice. At present they think it strange that we run not with them to the same excesses, often thinking and speaking evil of us. But we must bear in mind that we walk toward a shining mark which they cannot discern; and, therefore, should be patient and courageous as seeing that which is invisible to the world.

Contrast for a moment the real position of the saints with those flourishing in the world about us. Some of them are living in present affluence and gratifying themselves with every luxury, but soon these, and even life itself, must be laid down, and they must wait in the unconsciousness of death possibly many years, until their turn for the awakening comes, and then must awake without their past possessions and to be more or less severely disciplined up to perfection. But now that we are in the day of the Lord, those faithfully enduring trial and sacrificing even unto death, finish their course here, to be changed instantly, in the twinkling of an eye, without a moment's unconsciousness, to the glory of their new condition – even the divine nature.

Think on these things, dearly beloved, that ye may be enabled to walk in wisdom toward them that are without, securing the opportunity for sacrifice, remembering that it is a great privilege because of its great reward, and that now is the accepted time – the time or opportunity

granted. Secure the opportunity and with it the great prize of our high calling.

MRS. C. T. R.

=====