

"IF THOU KNEWEST THE GIFT OF GOD."

"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." – John 4:10.

THE woman of Samaria failed to recognize in the weary sojourner who sat by the well, the anointed Son of God, whose presence in the world at that time had been foretold by all the holy prophets for four thousand years previous. And few indeed, even of those who knew of his claims and his teachings, as well as of the divine testimonies at his birth and baptism – that this was the beloved Son of God and the bringer of good tidings of great joy to all people (Luke 2:9-14; Matt. 3:17) – could appreciate this fact, because of the meek humility which bore no similarity to any thing that men were accustomed to call great. Even John the baptist sent and inquired, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?"

No wonder that the woman of Samaria did not recognize him. And, not recognizing him, how could she realize her privilege of service to him as a gift of God. Had she known and been able to appreciate her privilege of giving a cup of cold water to the only begotten and well-beloved Son of God, how gladly would she have rendered the service requested! And not only so, but had she realized who it was that requested the favor, she would have seen her opportunity of applying to him for the water of life, the great salvation.

But the woman did not know the gift of God so close at hand. Thinking of the stranger merely as a Jew, and one of a class who refused to have any dealings with the Samaritans, the request for a drink of water seemed only to arouse a measure of the old animosity of her race against this one, whom she probably thought of as one willing to receive a favor in his extremity, but at other times regarding

her and her people as too far beneath him to have any dealings with her.

The Lord recognized the foundation for this feeling of animosity, and did not resent it, but **[R1712 : page 313]** patiently led her first to suspect, and then to realize, that this was indeed the Christ; and she went forth joyfully to proclaim this truth, and to bring others to him. This woman was a sinful woman, and a type of thousands of others, men and women, who would act very differently if they only knew. If the Jews had only known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (1 Cor. 2:8.) That which prevented them from knowing was the god of this world, who blinded their eyes and prejudiced their minds so that they could not believe. (2 Cor. 4:4.) Consequently they failed to perceive the gift of God in their privilege of service to Christ and of receiving from him the water of life.

The same is true also to-day of the world in regard to the body of Christ, the Church. They do not know that the Lord has his representatives in the world. Like their Lord, these are not invested with the glory of this world, but they are despised and rejected of men, and are not known as the future judges of the earth. But **[R1712 : page 314]** those who do know them should appreciate the privilege of service, since the Lord has said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. 25:40.) Whatever, therefore, we do for the least of God's people we are doing for him. How this should make us appreciate our privileges of service one to another!

But if the world knows us not, and has not yet learned to appreciate the refreshing water of life we have to bear to them, it is no cause of surprise. If they failed to recognize the Master who was perfect, how could we expect them to recognize us, in whom are many imperfections still, although in God's sight through grace we are reckoned holy? If the god of this world has blinded the eyes of many, it is our privilege, as it was that of the Master, to help remove the

blindness and let the glorious light of the gospel of peace shine in upon their minds. Let us offer the water of life to all as opportunities may present themselves. In so doing we also will be blest, as was the Master. – John 4:31-34.
