

ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM FAITHFUL WORKERS.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: – This morning, in thinking over the subject of "present experience," or "present privilege," I thought, I will write of it to one of the brethren; then I thought, I will write it to the Church at New York; then again I thought, No: I will write it to Brother Russell for the Church in general. So here it is: –

KNOWING AND DOING.

Practical and perfect obedience (on our part to God) "is a consummation devoutly to be wished." It is, it seems to me, one of the most timely, vitally important and intensely interesting subjects that can engage our attention at this season of the Christian year, when we have again been privileged to "Do *this* in remembrance of *me*."

It is not enough simply to resolve or determine to do right or to obey God. We may sing:

"I want to touch lightly the things of this earth,
Esteeming them only of trifling worth!
From sin and its bondage I would be set free,
And live, my dear Savior, live only for thee!"

But unless we go further, and actually make advancement in character, we will prove failures, and finally be completely shipwrecked.

"If ye *know* these things, happy are ye if ye *do* them." (John 13:17.) Our Lord, here, as in other places, lays special stress on obedience, as do also all of the New Testament writers. Many seem content simply to know these things. Alas! how many there are who stop with a knowledge of God's plan, as it is now revealed and understood, seemingly unmindful of the latter clause of this text. Their

lives are not conformed to the Word, nor to the likeness of Christ. (See Rom. 6:17, *Diaglott*; Rom. 8:29; 12:1,2.) It would seem at first that they really desire to be moulded and fashioned into the image of God's dear Son, but they go no further. They are not willing to pay the price: *obedience* is the price. They are not willing to endure the self-sacrifice and self-denial required by their covenant; for the "High Calling" costs all we have, though it is also worth all it costs. But these forget, or disregard, our Lord's words: "Happy are ye, *if ye do* them!"

How prone we all are to desire and to acquire knowledge, at the expense of our spiritual development, and of the chief "fruit of the spirit," love – forgetting that "knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth." Knowledge does not bring, nor produce, happiness. Obedience does. This we know, not only from our text, but by experience as well.

We must bear in mind, however, that obedience is prompted by love; even as he said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" or "If a man love me, he *will keep* my words." Our love, then, is the measure of our obedience, and *vice versa*.

Perhaps some one will say, "Oh! but you forget that he takes the will for the deed," and that it is written: 'Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.'" No, we do not forget: we are well aware of that glorious truth; but we claim that there is great danger, right here, of "presumptuous sins." – Psa. 19:13; read also Rom. 2:1-6; 6:12-22.

Let us now notice some other texts on the importance of obedience. In Mark 3:34,35, our Lord does not say, whosoever shall hear, or understand, or desire to do, nor even try to do, but "whosoever shall *do* the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." What a privilege! Is it not worth striving for?

Luke 6:46: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and *do* not the things which I say?"

John 15:14: "Ye are my friends, if ye *do* whatsoever I command you." What an honor to be the Lord's friend!

Matt. 7:21-27: Here we are taught that works are not always obedience; in other words, "Obedience is better than sacrifice." Many there are who are consecrated to a system, or to a work, who are not fully consecrated to *him*. How earnestly we should desire and strive to be "wise" in his estimation!

James 1:25: "Blessed," not in his profession, not in his desire, nor yet in his determination; but blessed in his *doing*.

John 14:21-23: Here is an experience to be coveted.

Gal. 6:9 – not in well-meaning, but in well-*doing*. So in 1 Pet. 4:19.

Col. 3:23: "And whatsoever ye *do*, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." Oh, to measure fully up to this experience!

Heb. 2:3: Simply to neglect is fatal. We must stand (Eph. 6:13,14), or progress. To stand, in this "evil day," requires the "whole armor;" and, to progress, we have to (beside having on the whole armor) "pray always" and "watch," as in verse 18.

When tempted in any line or to any degree, "Let us fly to the Word." – Matt. 4:4. Here are some of the "exceeding great and precious promises," upon which we may stand. Please read them carefully. – 2 Cor. 12:9,10; 2:14; 1 Cor. 10:13; 1:26-31; 2 Cor. 9:8; Phil. 4:19.

We will never (while in the flesh) be exempt from temptations; but it is not a sin to be tempted: "He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin!" We must expect a constant and a hard fight. Satan is so persistent. The poet says truly:

"Yield not to temptation; for *yielding* is sin.
Each vict'ry will help you some other to win."

So also there is truth in the old proverb, "We cannot prevent the birds from flying over our heads; but we can prevent them from building their nests in our hair." And the Scriptures exhort us to "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." "Neither give place to the devil." "Above all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked (one)." "Take us the little foxes (*i.e.*, wicked thoughts, etc.,) that spoil the vines." "Love thinketh no evil!" (Oh, for instant and constant victory!) Whatsoever things are pure, lovely, etc., think on these things. See also 2 Cor. 10:5.

"All for Jesus, all for Jesus! all my being's ransomed powers. All my thoughts, and words, and doings; all my days and all my hours."

As one recently wrote, "By never permitting wrong thoughts to have a place (in our minds or hearts), one can overcome much more easily. I speak from experience." Or, as another said, speaking from another standpoint, "We realize more and more the necessity for the development of *positive* traits of the Divine character, as well as the maintenance of our loyalty and integrity (to him) in the crucial tests to which the world, the flesh and the devil subject us. Oh, the sweet joy and peace that brighten our pathway tonight!" We must not only "cease to do evil," but we must "learn to do well" – really *do* good works; be "rich in good works;" "always abounding in the work of the Lord."

We all desire to be more spiritual-minded; but how can we? Answer: By feeding constantly on the Word, and by following closely in Christ's footsteps. (1 John 2:6; [R1802 : page 98] 3:3; 1 Pet. 1:22; Acts 10:38.) A recent letter voiced my sentiments: "How I long for a higher life, a closer walk with God, a more realizing sense of Christ's presence. It does seem as though I were not living as high as I ought, or as in my privilege. I see so clearly the necessity of the *willing* sacrifice. I feel the need of higher, spiritual teaching."

Praise God! that we are growing up "in the unity of the Spirit" and to "the unity of the Faith." (Eph. 4:1-13.) Verse 13 should describe our present experience; or, better, our present experience should

approximate that description. And, "speaking the truth in love, may [we] grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

As a fitting close for this subject of obedience, I present this, as our motto for the coming year – "What would Jesus do?" And for a definite and complete answer, how appropriate his own words: "*I do always those things that please Him!*" (John 8:29.) Amen! And may God Almighty help us so to do!

Your Brother, "all for Jesus,"

JAMES A. WEST.

[R1803 : page 98]

DEAR BROTHER: – It is evident that not a few of your readers are solicitous in regard to their spiritual state and prospects; and well they may be, for the time is short, and the issues are tremendous.

In my own mind it lies in this way. When the Lord would open my eyes to the truth, he found in me a will at variance with his. I was born with it, and my evil acts were generated by it. My whole life and activity were inspired by self-will; and what was externally correct was vitiated at heart, because done in alienation from the life and will of God. The carnal mind minded not the things of God.

But, on acquaintance with himself and myself, I saw that, not only is his will sovereign, but righteous – holy, just and good; while mine, being variant from his, was essentially vicious, and could end only in ruin. "For desire, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." It follows that the universal welfare, in earth and heaven, demands the universal prevalence of God's holy will. His claim to our loyalty and obedience is co-incident with our truest welfare, and enforced by true love. Hence I renounced my self-reliance, self-assertion, self-seeking, and sank my whole self-will into his righteous will. I desire nothing more than his will, I accept nothing less. That he has a will about it, that covers all my case,

enthuses me. I am of value in his sight when I am of his mind and will, and act on his plan; he is mine, and I am his; and I can trust his infinite wisdom and power to do all for me that is in his heart of love. Why should I ask more? how can I accept less than he so freely offers? I find it my wisdom to refer it all to his own wisdom and sovereign pleasure. Neither do I envy any other one's fortune. He has a dispensation for you, and also one for me – both conceived in consummate wisdom, and provided for of sovereign grace. Your fortune is fitted to you, and mine is suited to me. And when the Lord's will is done in you, and in me, and in every other one wise enough to submit theirs to his, then every star will shine in its own place and magnitude – even though one star may differ from another star in glory.

Every life, therefore, is a standing success when free and whole-souled choice has been made of the whole will of God – no matter what its worldly circumstances. The endeavor after the obedience of love – as complete as its surrender of will – will be accepted of the Lord, despite the imperfections arising out of nature's infirmities. He is accepted in the Beloved, complete in Christ, and justified freely by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

For myself, therefore, I do not specify, nor bargain with the Lord. What he offers freely I accept thankfully. I will neither go beyond nor stop short of all his will. I take him at his word, and trust him for all that grace of life that is in Christ for us, and which his holy spirit administers in every soul that offers itself to him. When he fills me, all else is shut out; and when his work is done, all is done. The redeemed of the Lord are guided into all truth. All are complete in him, and satisfied with him. He sees in them of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.

Great things are present, but greater ones are ahead. How blessed to be on the Lord's side, and to have the Lord on our part in these tremendous times, and thus to escape the things that are coming upon the earth!

J. R. LENTE.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: – Since receiving the tracts we have been at work among our Methodist friends, and as a result our supply (4,000) of No. 25 is exhausted. We still have a number of *Do You Know?* but will be glad to have at least 5,000 more of No. 25, and such others as you feel disposed to send.

Our friends here all seem glad to help spread the truth, and I am glad to say that it is having a sanctifying influence on our own lives and hearts, and that we rejoice that we have the privilege of serving our Master, even though it is in doing some of the small things. But, as I said to Sister Wise last night, the plan of the ages has become a part of my very life. How precious does the old story become to us, who are in Christ Jesus! How gratifying it is to note the unfolding of God's great plan day by day! Truly the Lord is good! Your Brother in Christ,

C. A. WISE.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: – While Brothers Wright and Causer have been finishing here, I have been down to Bedford. It is a little place, of about three thousand. I was there not quite nine days, and took 195 orders, and think I will have better success in delivering there than here, where I have had to work against more opposition than ever before; for even some of the colored ministers oppose the truth very bitterly. While I cannot say that this opposition and loss of orders have made me feel good, I realize that in view of the life of our Lord and his faithful followers, and the things which they suffered in living a godly life, if I am a follower of the Lord I cannot expect it otherwise; and so I strive to take it patiently; and my earnest desire is that when opposition to the truth waxes stronger I may, by the grace of God, endure faithfully to the end.

When I view the favor that my Heavenly Father has bestowed upon me, in leading me out of gross darkness into his marvelous light, in opening my eyes to an appreciation of our high calling and in

enabling me to apply the precious truth to myself, I am greatly comforted, and I experience that peace and joy which the world cannot give or take away. And not by words alone would I show my appreciation of God's grace to me. By my actions, by my daily life in his service, would I prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God.

Please take from my account One Hundred Dollars and apply it where it is most needed. I thought to save what money I could in view of going to New Zealand in the interests of this gracious gospel (as you remember I spoke to you about it), but seeing the amount of work to be done here, I would rather submit to the leading of the Lord as circumstances may direct.

S. J. RICHARDSON.

[R1803 : page 99]

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER RUSSELL: – It is about a year since I came into the light of harvest truth. How wonderfully God has been leading me – more and more fully into the light.

I sometimes ask myself these questions: Am I the same man that I was one year ago? Why is it that all my earthly surroundings have so changed? I seem to see everything in a different light. Earthly objects do not seem so real as before. Is this the experience of all to whom God reveals his plan?

Oh! it does seem that God has drawn me to himself, that I have caught a glimpse of the glories of the heavenly kingdom; and as the truths of the spiritual kingdom are revealed to me more and more, I can say from the heart, "Heaven is my home." Heavenly hopes grow brighter as earthly hopes fade away. And, while here, I rejoice to be counted one of the harvest laborers, though but a humble one. I can never do enough.

Sometimes it is necessary for me to surrender or stand boldly for the truth. Through the grace that is given unto me, I always choose the latter. If I had built my faith on *Millennial Dawn* only, I should long ago have proved an unfaithful member of the "one body." Thank God! I have searched his Word to learn whether these things are true or not. My dear friends, it is God's work in which we are engaged. I never start out selling *Dawns* or distributing tracts without first asking him to bless my efforts to aid in spreading the blessed truths of the coming kingdom. I have sold thirteen of the DAWNS ordered of you, and have loaned several among my neighbors. I sell four or five in a half day, and eight or nine when I can give a whole day to the work – which is not often. I could sell many more than that only many poor people are not able to buy. May God bless them. The good news of the kingdom is received more gladly by the common people than by the rich, even as at the first advent.

Dear friends, may God's richest spiritual blessings be showered upon you. Forgetting the present "light afflictions," let us press forward toward the great prize.

Yours in the blessed hope,

W. B. LINDSLEY.

DEAR BROTHER: – For more than a quarter of a century I had been an active worker in church and Sunday School and a diligent Bible student; but as I always approached and viewed the Bible through erroneous doctrines, the effect produced on my mind was one of confusion. When I either read or heard from the pulpit of God's promises to gather his people together into their own land, or that every one should be brought to a knowledge of the truth, or other similar statements, this thought always thrust itself into my mind: "What benefit is this to the thousands of millions who are already dead, and who will yet die, before this gracious time comes?" As I could never find an answer to this, I fell at last into a state of spiritual apathy, content to drift along and teach doctrines which I did not comprehend

and only half-believed, my only consolation being that these things would all be cleared up in the next life.

Eighteen months ago a DAWN, VOL. I., was put in my hand by a neighbor. It opened at the chapter on Restitution, and after reading a few sentences my interest was aroused. As I went along, again and again I said to myself, "It is too good to be true." And when I reached the end I resolved that I would not leave a stone unturned until I had satisfied myself whether or not your views and statements were in harmony with the Word of God.

Within six months I had read VOL. I. more than a dozen times, and VOLS. II. and III. four or six times each, comparing the references with the Bible, to see if you had used any of them in a strained sense. Afterward I read the entire [R1804 : page 99] Bible through, so as to view it as a whole; and I became thoroughly satisfied that your statements are in harmony with the original Scriptures, with the accepted character and attributes of God, and also with reason and common sense. And this cannot truly be said of any other system of religious belief with which I am acquainted.

Since I have been thus enlightened, the Bible appears to be an entirely new book. Once it was a duty to read, now it is a pleasure. It seems as if for twenty-five years I had been trying to read it at night by the light of the stars only, and that now the light of the glorious sun shone full upon it.

Mrs. W. and I are still alone in our immediate neighborhood, but we feel and know that we have God on our side; and within a radius of a few miles we have the encouragement and fellowship of more than a score of others who are living and rejoicing in the light of present truth. This is a privilege which has not been always enjoyed by some of us. Bro. Edmonds says he was entirely alone for more than six years after he was led into the light, and he now appreciates the privilege of meeting those of like precious faith almost daily.

We are trying to let our light shine among our friends and old religious associates, but the results thus far have not been very pronounced. I have a number of DAWNS out, but nearly all my friends take hold of the matter in a very sleepy manner. Some only read snatches here and there, and of course miss all the force of their systematic reasoning. One who has given me the most encouraging hopes has carefully read VOLS. I. and II., and is now engaged on VOL. III. He is a Methodist, but says he has been satisfied for years that the orthodox teachings were wrong, yet felt somehow that it was not specially his business.

I can get any number of listeners when I talk on the new truths, but I can not get the same persons to search and prove the truths for themselves. The restitution prospects are embraced the most eagerly, and those who are afraid to believe usually hope that it may prove true. The last new tract, "Do You Know," is a most excellent one, and I think I can make good use of one hundred among such as I know to be thoughtful and religiously inclined, with a request to read as a personal favor.

I have prepared a series of discourses on these Bible truths, and purpose inviting in my friends and neighbors to listen to them; and if they do not bear any fruit now, they will in 1914.

My dear Brother, as a slight encouragement on your toilsome way, I wish to assure you what a blessing the visits of the WATCH TOWER are: how eagerly we look for them, how they are devoured and re-read again and again, and what palatable and strengthening food we find them.

Your brother and friend,

SMITH WALKER.

DEAR FRIENDS: – Please send TOWER for one year to _____ . He was a notorious infidel, but now, thank God! he is

firmly grasping the truth. The other day he told me, "Each day I see a little more plainly than I did the day before." Yours fraternally,

W. HOPE HAY.

MY DEAR BROTHER: – "One of the characteristics of religious activity in our day is the mobilization of young workers in church work. The annual national and international assemblies of these societies attract world-wide attention and interest. These assemblies bring together as many persons as the national political conventions, and few [R1804 : page 100] cities now have halls large enough to accommodate them."

The above editorial, from the Philadelphia *Ledger*, goes to substantiate the truth of the final massing of the sects. One word particularly drew my attention – "mobilization."

I am much pleased with the interest manifested by the brothers and sisters here. They are taking a firm hold on the truth; yet the adversary still darkens the intellect of some with reference to "Babylon." Brother Sears has done a most excellent work – I think a harvester's work.

You will find enclosed an order slip for DAWNS. An old acquaintance of the family stopped me on the street this afternoon, and greeted me thus: "What is the name of that book you have been reading, that has so changed your views in religious matters, and where can I procure a copy?" We walked up the street together and had (I trust) a very profitable talk. He told me, among other things, that he was somewhat of a skeptic at present. On leaving I handed him some tracts. I find there is a good field in this direction, and keep a record of the tract given to a person and the date, so that I know how to approach that one again.

Yours in the Faith once delivered to the saints,

L. J. WILCOCK.
