

## INTERESTING QUERIES.

### WERE LINCOLN AND GRANT CHRISTIANS?

*Question.* In the WATCH TOWER of June 15, p.180, the intimation seems to be that Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant were not Christians, but noble specimens of the natural man; and that their opportunities in the future may be much more favorable than those of some who, professing Christ in church membership, deny him openly and continually in their daily life; but, nevertheless, that such moral people are in no sense counted by the Lord as members of his elect Church. Have I understood you correctly?

*Answer.* You have stated the matter very correctly. The Church is composed only of *believers in the redemptive work of Christ Jesus*, who, because of their faith, are reckoned as justified from all sin.

Moreover, the believer must subsequently consecrate himself to the Lord a "living sacrifice," ere he is reckoned as a *member* of the body of Christ, which is the Church. And this implies not only belief with the heart, but also confession with the mouth, and in the general course of life a manifestation of having (in will at least) died to sin and self and become alive as a new creature to the Lord and his righteousness.

We are well aware that the foregoing is very contrary to the general views of this subject, but the Scripturalness of our position cannot be successfully controverted. The popular, but very erroneous, idea of the name Christian was recently illustrated by the answer of a gentleman to the question whether or not he or any of his family were Christians. His answer was, – Well, I presume we are Christians, for we are not Jews, nor heathen.

The trouble with Protestants in general is that they assume that the Scriptures teach that all who are not of the Church are damned to

eternal woe, and they reason correctly that Lincoln and Grant were too good to be everlastingly tormented, and so, without the slightest warrant of Scripture and in opposition to it, they crowd into heaven, as members of the glorified Church, "all the ring-streaked and speckled" of Christendom, excluding only the absolutely black.

And when we call their attention to the Scriptures which declare that the blessings of the Church's high calling are promised only to the sanctified in Christ Jesus, who strive to walk in the Master's footsteps of self sacrifice; and to the fact declared by the Apostle, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord, – then they abandon the Scriptures, declaring that they prefer their own judgments. However, if the Scriptures be rejected at all they should be rejected in toto. But in that case to be consistent they would have to abandon all hope in a divine plan of salvation, for there is no other revelation of it: and such is the general trend.

We most heartily agree that Lincoln and Grant were far too noble to be justly sentenced to everlasting torments: and we will go a step further, and assert that no man is or ever was bad enough to justly merit eternal torment. The Bible commends itself as vastly superior to the views and teachings of the heathen and of Christian sects, in that it does not teach so unjust and unreasonable a theory.\*

\*See *What Say the Scriptures About Hell?* Postpaid 10c. Watch Tower office.

Much more consistent is the teaching of Roman Catholicism than that of Protestants on this subject. It puts all except the "*saints*" into Purgatory for purification and development.

But the essence of consistency is found in the teachings of the Bible: that (1) the present age is merely "for the *perfecting of the saints*, for the work of service" in the age to follow this – the Millennium. (Eph. 4:12.) (2) That under that future ministry of the saints, for which they are now being perfected, "all the families of the

earth shall be blessed," which will include the awakening of "them that sleep in the dust of the earth" (Dan. 12:2); for in that glorious day of blessing and restitution "all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth." – John 5:28; Acts 3:19-23.

When the sleeping world comes forth from the grave it will be found that while all men inherit blemished characters, nevertheless, each has according to his knowledge and opportunities either builded and strengthened character or undermined and degraded the measure of character received from his parents. Among these will be noble characters, such as Lincoln, Grant, Plato, Socrates, Confucius and many others less notable. These will be recognized according to their true worth at a time when "every secret thing shall be revealed" whether it be good or bad. And amongst those who shall then come forth we are told there will be some exposed to "*shame and lasting contempt.*" (Dan. 2:2.) Oh, how much meanness and perfidy and hypocrisy and selfishness will then be exposed: and what shame will be connected with this exposure – and what contempt in their own eyes as well as in the eyes of each other. Yet all this will be a part of their "blessing," which, to those rightly exercised thereby, will work out reform and gradually lead, step by step, up to full restitution of all the glorious likeness of God bestowed upon father Adam and lost by disobedience. The shame and contempt will [R2331 : page 204] continue so long as the shameful and contemptible conditions continue, and no longer. And all who refuse to go up on the highway of holiness then opened up to [R2332 : page 204] them "shall be *destroyed* from among the people" – "the Second Death." – Compare Isa. 35:8; 62:10; Acts 3:23; DAWN I., Chap. 11.

### **WAS THE TEMPLE CLEANSED TWICE?**

**Question.** From the various accounts would it not appear that the Temple was cleansed twice? I see that DAWN and WATCH TOWER always refer to the matter as tho there had been but one cleansing. – See Mark 11:15; John 2:13-17; Matt. 21:12,13.

*Answer.* Many take the view suggested – that there were two cleansings; but we do not share it. It will be noticed that Matthew, Mark and John each mention the matter only once; and each mention once our Lord's riding upon the ass in fulfilment of Zechariah's prophecy (9:9-12); but only one of them *connects* these two events – Matthew. Moreover, since all agree that the riding on the ass was in fulfilment, of Zechariah's prophecy, and that *there* our Lord assumed for the first time his title as *King*, it is but reasonable to suppose that the use of force in cleansing the temple followed and did not precede that assertion of regal authority. For the same reasons we accept that *same* day as the one on which our Lord wept over Jerusalem and said "Your house is left unto you desolate!" Note the Prophet's expression – "Even *to-day* do I declare I will render [the second half of thy] double unto thee;" – the day of the riding on the ass as King.

The disconnection so noticeable in the gospels may be accounted for (1) By remembering that the Apostles were "unlearned men," not regularly educated historians, men who recorded the wonderful words and works of their wonderful Teacher, but apparently saw little necessity for order or sequence. (2) By assuming that in this matter our Lord designed the confusion of the record, that only the faith-full and zealous might, under the leading of the holy spirit be led to "rightly divide the Word of truth" and to get from it "meat in due season."

### **CHRISTIAN DUTY IF DRAFTED.**

*Question.* There are possibilities of a still greater war and of a draft which might include some of us who understand our Lord's commands to forbid our engagement in carnal warfare. What then, would be our duty?

*Answer.* "We know that all things shall work together for good to those who love God – to the called ones according to his purpose." If, therefore, we were drafted, and if the government refused to accept our conscientious scruples against warfare (as they have heretofore done with "Friends," called Quakers), we should request to be

assigned to the hospital service or to the Commissary department or to some other non-combatant place of usefulness; and such requests would no doubt be granted. If not, and we ever got into battle, we might help to terrify the enemy, but need not shoot anybody. Meantime what an opportunity we might thus have for preaching "Jesus and the resurrection;" – for being "living epistles known and read by all" the camp; – examples of good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, drilled and thoroughly equipped with the armor of God, loyal and courageous in the Christian warfare, against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

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