

PRESBYTERIAN CREED REVISION.

THE PRESBYTERIAN General Assembly recently convened, in New York City, and has received and adopted the report of its Creed Revision Committee. All broad-minded thinkers will sympathize with our Presbyterian friends in their endeavor to hold to their Westminster Confession of Faith as an infallible document, and yet to adopt an explanation of it as a supplement, that will be more reasonable and that they can confess with less twinging of conscience. We rejoice with those who have some conscience left that can be twinged: the wonder is that after years of stultification conscience is not so toughened as to be beyond twinging. Our best wish for them would have been that they had been still more noble – that they had possessed consciences whose twingings would not have allowed them even to "enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" – the sin of misrepresenting the Divine character and plan and of misrepresenting their own hearts – for the sake of name and place and emoluments.

Anyway, we are glad to note some of the changes now made, though we regret the dishonesty attaching to the whole matter in the claim that the new creed is exactly the same as the old one, only differently stated. Ex-President Lincoln's words should be remembered by the Assembly; viz., "You can fool all the people sometimes, and some of the people all the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time."

THE TEXT OF THE NEW CREED.

We give below the text of the revised creed with brief comments on each division of it in brackets. Italics are ours.

Article I. – Of God.

We believe in the ever-living God, who is a Spirit, and the Father of our spirits; infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His Being and perfections; the Lord Almighty, most just in all His ways, most glorious in holiness, unsearchable in wisdom and plenteous in mercy, full of love and compassion, and abundant in goodness and truth. We worship Him, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three persons in one Godhead, one in substance and equal in power and glory.

[We can assent to this fully except the last sentence, which space forbids us to reply to here; our showing of the Scriptural teaching upon the subject of the Trinity is to be found in *Millennial Dawn*, vol. V.]

Article II. – Of Revelation.

We believe that God is revealed in nature, in history, and in the heart of man; that he has made gracious and clearer revelations of Himself to men of God who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; and that Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person. We gratefully receive the Holy Scriptures, given by inspiration, **[R3025 : page 182]** to be the faithful record of God's gracious revelations and the sure witness to Christ, as the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and life.

[We can endorse this statement heartily.]

Article III. – Of the Eternal Purpose.

We believe that the eternal, wise, holy and loving purpose of God embraces all events, so that while the freedom of man is not taken away nor is God the author of sin, yet in His providence He makes all things work together in the fulfilment of His sovereign design and the manifestation of His glory; wherefore, humbly acknowledging the mystery of this truth, we trust in His protecting care and set our hearts to do His will.

[This surely is a wise statement which it would be difficult to improve upon.]

Article IV. – Of the Creation.

We believe that God is the Creator, Upholder, and Governor of all things; that He is above all His works and in them all; and that He made man in His own image, meet for fellowship with Him, free and able to choose between good and evil, and forever responsible to his Maker and Lord.

[We can endorse this statement too; but wonder how the large and growing number of evolutionists in the Presbyterian denomination can endorse it without mental reservations and twinges of conscience. If Adam was created in God's image, was meet for companionship with him, and free, and capable of deciding his destiny by his actions, he surely was far removed from being a monkey-man; – and surely, too, far superior to his posterity today, all of whom are sadly deficient in the divine image and qualifications for companionship with their Creator. Even the saints, with their much advantage every way, are still lacking in these respects, and are accepted of God only on a basis of faith in their Redeemer.]

Article V. – Of the Sin of Man.

We believe that our first parents, being tempted, chose evil, and so fell away from God and came under the power of sin, the penalty of which is *eternal death*; and we confess that, by reason of this disobedience, we and all men are born with a sinful nature, that we have broken God's law, and that no man can be saved but by his grace.

[This important truth is also well expressed. Eternal *death* [cessation of life], not eternal dying, nor eternal life in torment, is "the wages of sin." (Rom. 6:23.) Hence Jesus Christ "by the grace of God tasted *death* for every man" – "poured out his soul unto death" for us. – Heb. 2:9; Isa. 53:12.]

Article VI. – Of the Grace of God.

We believe that God, out of His great love for the world, has given His only begotten Son to be the Saviour of sinners, and in the gospel freely offers His all-sufficient Salvation to all men. *And we praise Him for the unspeakable grace wherein He has provided a way of eternal life for all mankind.*

[We are glad for this statement, that God's love is for the whole world and not merely for the "elect" Church; and that "all men" are provided an "all-sufficient salvation." Good! very good! It only remains to remember the Apostle's word, "How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard?" to prove that the "due time" for the majority of our race to be saved, by acceptance of the only name given under heaven or amongst men, must be in the Millennium. – Acts 4:12; I Tim. 2:6; Rom. 10:14.]

Article VII. – Of Election.

We believe that God, from the beginning, in His own good pleasure, gave to His Son a people, an *innumerable* multitude, chosen in Christ unto holiness, service and salvation; we believe that all who come to years of discretion can receive this salvation only through faith and repentance; **[R3026 : page 182]** and we believe that all who die in infancy, and all others given by the Father to the Son, who are beyond the reach of the outward means of grace, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who works when and where and how He pleases.

[This statement is the blindest and least satisfactory of all the Articles. It is God's election, not man's that is discussed; hence the word "innumerable" here must be understood to mean that to God the "elect" are either not numbered or beyond numeration or both. Surely this is inconsistent with divine foreknowledge and predestination, – without which the word "elect" would be meaningless. On the contrary, the Scriptures represent the elect as being, not only numerable but,

numbered and limited; – in all a "little flock," the very reverse of innumerable. In Revelations (14:1-5) the number of these "very elect" "overcomers" is given as 144,000; and in chap. 7:1-4 the same ones are shown as filling up the special election first opened to Fleshly Israel (Rom. 11:7, 17-19), and the same number is given. It is another class altogether, not the "elect" "little flock" who shall inherit the Kingdom, that is subsequently described as "a great multitude which no man could number," or whose number is known to no man. (Rev. 7:9.) These latter never sit with the Lord in his throne as "joint-heirs," but are "before the throne;" neither are they the Temple of "living stones," but are honored in permission to serve God in his temple. – Rev. 7:9-15.

The difficulty with the theory of our dear Presbyterian friends is that they misapply the election to *salvation*. True, the elect will all be saved, but they are not elected to salvation. There is but one ground, or condition on which any can now be saved; namely, by *faith* attested by obedience to the extent of ability. God is not unjust that he should make some short cut, or easier condition for the "elect." Rather, indeed, though the standard of salvation now and forever must be the same – perfect love – the holy spirit or disposition of the Redeemer – the non-elect, the world in general, will in their time of trial (the Millennium) have easier *conditions* of attaining to the divine standard than have the elect during this Gospel age.

Our dear friends need to see that the divine plan has heights and depths, lengths and breadths which Brother Calvin and his associates never dreamed of; namely, that favor of God which they obscurely refer to by saying that those "beyond the reach of outward means of grace, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who works *when* and *where* and *how* he pleases." The world as a whole is *now* "beyond the reach of outward means of grace" and there are no other; "for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." But when we begin to seek for "*when*" and **[R3026 : page 183]** "*where*" and "*how*" the spirit of

God will *work* for the world's reclamation we find it all clearly stated in the Scriptures.

The Apostle says that God's grace in Christ for all shall be "testified in due time." (I Tim. 2:6). The Prophet points us to the Millennium as that due time, and assures us that then the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep; – and then there shall be no longer need to "teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying know thou the Lord! for all shall know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them saith the Lord." (Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34.) The Apostle Peter declares that this grand and universal "refreshing from the presence of the Lord," shall come at our Lord's second advent which shall be followed by "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." St. Peter tells us just '*how* humanity is then to be blessed; saying, "For Moses truly said unto the fathers [not fulfilled in Peter's day nor since, but as sure as God's Word], 'A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear [heed, obey] that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people' – Second Death – Acts 3:19-23."

Our Lord himself tells "how" his grace will work or operate by and by, at his second advent. His words are "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good [the faithful, the "elect"] unto the resurrection of life [the First Resurrection – "they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign on the earth. – Rev. 20:6]; and they that have done evil [shall come forth] unto resurrection by judgments." (See Revised Version.) Jno. 5:28,29. This resurrection then is the hope of all except the saints, the elect. When they come forth from the tomb during the Millennium they will not be fully alive, for full life means perfection. None will *live* again in that proper sense of perfect life, complete freedom from death, until the Millennium is finished. It will be an age of uplifting, or restitution, in

which the revivifying influences of the "trees of life" and the "river of the water of life clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne," shall be for the non-elect; for the world of mankind in general – all of these who *will* may take of the water of life freely and live forever; while those who refuse those life opportunities will, as the Apostle declares, "be destroyed from among the people."

The "how" of this great work of God for the whole world is further explained by our Lord; saying, of that future invitation to the symbolical trees of life, and the water of life which will flow from the glorified Millennial Kingdom, "The Spirit and the Bride say Come, and let him that heareth say, Come! And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The election will be over and past then and the elect will be the glorified "Bride" whose work it shall be, in unison with the Spirit of God, to invite the whole world to share God's grace.

The "elect" are not the "Bride" yet, but only the chaste virgin espoused to Christ and waiting on the Heavenly Bridegroom to make her, at his second coming his bride and joint-heir. Neither is there a "river of water of life" now flowing; but merely "wells of water springing up" in the "elect." Neither is there this general invitation to "whosoever wills;" for now the God of this world still blinds the eyes and closes the ears of all but the comparatively few; – deceiving nearly the whole world. It will be after Satan shall be bound for the thousand years, that he should deceive the nations no more, that the promised blessings upon the non-elect, who are now being "passed by," shall be fulfilled. *Then* all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. – Isa. 35:5.

The Apostle Paul clearly shows that the "elect" are the "seed of Abraham" – Christ the head, his church the body. He declares also what is most obvious; namely, that the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham of which his "seed" "the elect" are heirs, is still future; and that promise is, "In thy seed *shall all the families of the earth* be blessed." The

"elect" are "the holy nation, the peculiar people, the royal priesthood," called now to offer sacrifices that thereby they may specially attest their loyalty to God and his righteousness and crystalize their character-likeness to their Redeemer, and thus be qualified to be the kings, priests and judges of the world during the Millennium – the world's judgment day or trial day. Speaking of the "elect" the Apostle asks, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" – I Cor. 6:2.

The "Elect" are tried, tested judged along a very "narrow way" – of opposition from the world, the flesh and the devil; the world's way of the Millennial age is designated a "highway" of holiness, free from stumbling stones so that the wayfarer though unsophisticated need not err therein. (Isa. 35:8,9; 5:27.) The path of the "elect" is a dark way, a night time, in which they need constantly the Word of their Lord as a "*lamp* to their feet;" the path of the non-elect in the Millennium will be radiant because the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams and drive away completely the darkness which now covers the earth, and the gross darkness which covers the people – drive away the miasma of sin, error, ignorance, prejudice, selfishness, etc. Ah yes! the elect may rejoice with the Prophet saying, – "Weeping may endure for the night, – joy cometh in the morning!" – Psa. 30:5.

"The elect" who now during this Gospel night of sin and ignorance are to be "burning and shining lights," and are exhorted not to hide their lights under a bushel, but to set them upon candlesticks – to let the light shine out to the extent of their ability and thus to glorify their Father in heaven – are all to come together by and by, are all to be changed from human to spirit beings, like the Redeemer, and then they with him shall constitute the great Sun of Righteousness whose shining is to bring so great blessings to the world. See the Lord's own statement of this: The wheat are the children of God – "children of the Kingdom;"During this Gospel age wheat and tares – true saints, the "elect," and mere professors, the tares – are to grow together until the end or harvest of the age....Then the wheat are **[R3027 : page 184]** to be garnered and "shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father." – Matt. 13:43.

If all who pray "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," could see that God's great plan for the world's salvation is as yet only beginning, that it will not properly begin until the Millennial Kingdom of Christ comes, then they would be prepared to see clearly that during this Gospel age God is merely selecting or electing from among men the Kingdom class, and fitting and preparing them for their grand and glorious service as the world's missionaries – prophets or teachers; priests, or helpers; kings, or rulers; judges, or disciplinarians. From this standpoint the doctrine of election is grand indeed, but from no other standpoint.]

Article VIII. – Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe in and confess the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and man, who, being the Eternal Son of God, for us men and for our salvation, *became truly man*, being conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, without sin; unto us He has revealed the Father, by His Word and spirit making known the perfect will of God; for us He fulfilled all righteousness and *satisfied eternal justice, offering Himself a perfect sacrifice upon the cross to take away the sin of the world*; for us He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, where He ever intercedes for us, *in our hearts*, joined to him by faith, He ever abides forever as the indwelling Christ, over us, and over all for us, He rules; wherefore, unto Him we render love, obedience and adoration as our Prophet, Priest and King, forever.

[This is a splendid confession of the truth whose Scripturalness rejoices us. We would have preferred a little clearer and fuller expression than "He ever intercedes for us in our hearts." It is true in an indirect sense that the spirit of Christ in our hearts intercedes for holiness as against the weaknesses of the flesh: we prefer to suppose that the comma after hearts is a typographical error and should be omitted, thus expressing the Scriptural thought that our Redeemer "maketh intercession for us" with the Father. This omits the old and erroneous thought of intercession expressed by the hymn: –

"Five bleeding wounds he bears
Received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers,
They intercede for me;
Forgive him, oh forgive! they cry,
Nor let the ransomed sinner die."

No; the thought is that having paid to Justice the ransom price for the sins of the whole world he has ascended to the Father and is there ready to apply of his merit to the covering of our share in Adamic condemnation, and also for our unwilled sins present and future, the results of Adamic weaknesses and depravity. His entire work is one of intercession, – now for his church, the household of faith, the anti-typical Levites, and by and by for all the people – all who when the knowledge and opportunity are granted will desire to come unto the Father by Him. Intercede signifies *go-between*: our Lord Jesus became the Mediator of the New Covenant and thus the "go-between" who took the responsibilities of the sinner Adam (and his race) and paid to Justice the price and now stands ready to apply the benefit of his sacrifice to all who will accept it upon New Covenant terms.]

Article IX. Of Faith and Repentance.

We believe that God pardons our sins and accepts us as righteous solely on the ground of the perfect obedience and sacrifice of Christ, received by faith alone; and that this saving faith is always accompanied by repentance, wherein we confess and forsake our sins with full purpose of and endeavor after, a new obedience to God.

[Another excellent statement to which we can give our heartiest assent.]

Article X. – Of the Holy Spirit.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who moves everywhere upon the hearts of men, to restrain them from evil

and to incite them unto good, and whom the Father is ever willing to give unto all who ask Him. We believe that He has spoken by holy men of God in making known His truth to men for their salvation; that, through our Exalted Saviour, He was sent forth in power to convict the world of sin, to enlighten men's minds in the knowledge of Christ, and to persuade and enable them to obey the call of the gospel; and that He abides with the church, dwelling in every believer as the spirit of truth, of holiness and of comfort.

[This is a most peculiar statement and quite unscriptural. The Scriptures do mention the holy spirit or power of God moving or acting *upon* the waters during the creative period (Gen. 1:2); and they also speak of its *moving* holy men of old to speak and to write divine messages (2 Pet. 1:21); and they also speak of its operation *upon* the Church, the elect, but nowhere is it said to be imparted to any other than God's consecrated children. It shall be *in you*, the Church, as God's power, witness and anointing, and through its operation in you, through your words and conduct, it shall convince or convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of a coming of judgment or judicial recompense. Space here does not permit of a full discussion of this great theme: we refer our readers to "The At-one-ment between God and Man" – Vol. V., of *Millennial Dawn*, chapters VIII – XI.]

Article XI. – Of the New Birth and the New Life.

We believe that the Holy Spirit only is the author and source of new birth; we rejoice in the new life, wherein He is given unto us as the seal of sonship in Christ, and keeps loving fellowship with us, helps us in our infirmities, purges us from our faults and ever continues His transforming work in us until we are perfected in the likeness of Christ, in the glory of the life to come.

[This peculiar statement is confusing however it be read. There is no Scriptural declaration that the Holy Spirit is our *father* but rather that the Father begot us by his holy spirit to newness of life – to be new creatures in Christ Jesus, perfected in the First Resurrection. If this is

the thought of the first sentence it is Biblical, otherwise not. With the remainder we must be in hearty agreement.]

Article XII. – Of the Resurrection and the Life to Come.

We believe that in the life to come the spirits of the just, at death made free from sin, enjoy immediate communion with God and the vision of His glory; and we confidently look for the general resurrection in the last day, when the bodies of those who sleep in Christ shall be fashioned in the likeness of the glorious body of their Lord, with whom they shall live and reign forever.

[This statement emphasizes the general confusion [R3027 : page 185] of thought on this subject prevalent in all denominations. Our fleshly bodies are continually changing – science declares that a complete change is effected about every seven years. It seems very absurd to think that the last atoms of matter were any better than those previously sloughed off, or than any other "dust" for resurrection purposes, when it must be confessed that divine power is the all-essential of resurrection, anyway. It is peculiar reasoning, too, that urges that Adam and Abraham and David and Paul have been in heaven for centuries in *perfect bliss* without bodies, and even to claim that death set them *free*, and then to speak of "the hope of the resurrection" of their *bodies, at the last day*. If they were imprisoned while in them and if they are supremely happy without them, the doctrine of resurrection as a hope is absurd. And if they needed the molecules of dust to make them still happier than they are why should God delay the matter until *the last day*?

The fact is that all this absurdity belongs to a misunderstanding of the grand doctrine of resurrection taught in the Bible. The Bible does not teach a resurrection of the body, but of the *soul*. It declares "The soul [being] that sinneth it shall die." (Ezek. 18:4,20.) It declares that because of sin all souls die, and that to redeem our souls our Lord became a man, a human soul, or being, and "poured out his soul unto death," "made his soul an offering for sin." (Isa. 53:10,12.) The Bible

further shows that it was our Lord's soul that was resurrected on the third day, "His soul was not left in *hades*" – the death-state. (Acts 2:27.) So, also the Apostle treats the subject, declaring, "*It* [the soul or being] is sown [in death] in weakness; *it* [the soul] is raised in power." In the resurrection God giveth *it* a body as it hath pleased him. – I Cor. 15:43,38.

Our word *soul* signifies "sentient being," a cessation of which we call death. The Adamic sentence was death, which would have been the final end of us all but for the redemptive work of Christ. That redemptive work is not yet completed – the *price* has been paid, but the recovery of man out of death awaits the time appointed of the Father. Meantime the dead are no longer thought of nor spoken of as dead (extinct) by God who purposes their resurrection, the resuscitation of their beings, or souls; hence the frequent use in the Scriptures of the very word used by the creed-revisers in the above article; namely, "*sleep*," when referring to the dead. – "Them also which *sleep* in Jesus." (I Thes. 4:14.) "We shall not all *sleep*, but we shall all be changed." (I Cor. 15:51) "Whether we wake or *sleep*." (I Thes. 5:10.) "He saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth*; but I go that I may awake him out of *sleep*....Then said Jesus unto them plainly [coming down to their comprehension] Lazarus is dead." (John 11:11,14.) "The maid is not dead, but *sleepeth*." (Mat. 9:24.) "David after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on *sleep*." "David is not ascended into the heavens." (Acts 2:34; 13:36.) Martyr Stephen "cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell *asleep*." (Acts 7:60.) Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc., good and bad "*slept* with their fathers." [R3028 : page 185]

The Revision Committee's statement is in harmony with the above when it speaks, not of the bodies sleeping and being awakened at the last day, but refers to "the bodies of *those who sleep in Christ*." But if they sleep in Christ waiting for their bodies, how can it be also true that "they enjoy immediate communion with God and the vision of his

glory"? Do the Revisers wish us to understand that the holy dead dream or that they are somnambulists?

The Scripture proposition is clearly stated, "The dead know not anything." "His sons come to honor and they know it not, to dishonor and they perceive it not of them;" "for there is no work nor device nor knowledge nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." (Eccl. 9:5,10; Job 14:21.) From this standpoint the importance attached to the resurrection in the Bible is reasonable and our Lord's words respecting the resurrection have fresh meaning, – "All that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth" – the approved the "elect" to the life-resurrection, and the unapproved world in general to the judgment-resurrection. – John 5:28,29.

Article XIII. – Of the Law of God.

We believe that the law of God revealed in the Ten Commandments, and more clearly disclosed in the words of Christ, is forever established in truth and equity, so that no human work shall abide except it be built on this foundation. We believe that God requires of every man to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God; and that only through this harmony with the will of God shall be fulfilled that brotherhood of man wherein the kingdom of God is to be made manifest.

[An excellent statement; but it might have been improved in our judgment, by a declaration showing that the Law *Covenant* made with Israel of which the Ten Commandments was the basis, has given place to the New Covenant, mediated by Christ and based upon an ability-obedience to its basic law of love.]

Article XIV. – Of the Church and the Sacraments.

We believe in the holy catholic church of which Christ is the only head. We believe that the church invisible consist of all the redeemed, and that the church visible embraces all who profess the true religion

together with their children. We receive to our communion all who confess and obey Christ as their divine Lord and Saviour, and we hold fellowship with all believers in Him.

We believe the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, alone divinely established and committed to the church, together with the Word as means of grace; made effectual only by the Holy Spirit, and always to be used by Christians with prayer and praise to God.

[Here we have another excellent statement seemingly full of breadth and liberty in Christ; but it can be interpreted narrowly enough: and past experiences and our general knowledge of human nature lead us to fear that it will generally be given this narrow interpretation; viz., to make the words "our communion," *i.e.* our fellowship, to mean those only who will heartily and honestly accept the Westminster Confession of Faith and accept these articles, foregoing, as a later statement of the same meaning. Any who by thus joining *our* Church and who by thus coming behind our creedal fence separates himself from all other Christians we will fellowship.

We agree that there is but one Church invisible, and one Church visible; but why then have different [R3028 : page 186] brands, different "communions;" – professedly different "bodies" of Christ? Were our Lord or his Apostles Presbyterian or other sectarians? And if not, have we any Scriptural authority for such divisions which separate the members of the body of Christ? Why not come out of all sects and creeds and stand together as at first on the one foundation, that Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification, and that all so accepting his work and fully consecrating themselves to him to do his will constitute *his elect Church?*]

Article XV. – Of the Last Judgment.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again in glorious majesty to judge the world and to make a final separation between the righteous and the wicked. The wicked shall receive the eternal award

of their sins and the Lord will manifest the glory of His mercy in the salvation of His people and their entrance upon the full enjoyment of eternal life.

[We are glad to note this acknowledgement of faith in our Lord's second coming, so prominently taught throughout the Bible. Could these dear friends get a more correct view of the resurrection they would see that our Lord's coming is as the Life-giver; and that none of his redeemed can enter into life eternal until he comes to receive them unto himself, from the prison-house of death in which they sleep. "Your life is hid with Christ in God [in divine power and promise]; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." – Col. 3:3,4.

The glad welcome of the Lord's second advent, so noticeable in the New Testament, is not found generally among Christians of today for two reasons; one, we have just mentioned; the other is because of false views respecting the judgment our Lord comes to perform. When father Adam was in Eden he experienced his first trial or judgment, and for disobedience he was condemned to death – a sentence which his posterity has shared, dying mentally, morally and physically – a groaning creation under divine sentence or curse. What would Adam and all of his children specially desire of the Lord?

Their prayer would surely be: Lord, that we might have another trial, another judgment; – peradventure our experiences with sin may have taught us such lessons that we would be fully obedient hereafter and abide forever in thy favor. But the Lord's Word assures that we could not succeed if granted another trial under similar conditions; because we, although experienced now, are fallen and imperfect, and cannot do the things which we would wish to do. Furthermore, he shows us that Justice is the foundation of his throne and that having declared us sentenced to death he cannot justly revoke his own sentence.

Then, while we wonder and despair, the Lord reveals to us his plan for our salvation, wonderful in its completeness. (1) He provided for our *redemption* by the death of his Son who took Adam's place, and by redeeming him redeemed all of his race who lost in his failure. Thus God shows us his law and justice inviolate. Nor was this effected by an injustice to his Son, whose full consent was first secured by "the joy that was set before him." (Heb. 12:2.) The obedient Son has been abundantly rewarded – "God also hath highly exalted and given him a name above every name." – Phil. 2:9.

But why this redemption of Adam and his race? What is its ultimate object? We answer that it is God's response to the 6000 years' prayer of our race; – Lord that we might have another trial or judgment. God proposes to answer that prayer in a better way than any except himself could have devised, – as he declares: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord; for as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans higher than your plans." – Isa. 55:8,9.

Foreseeing that fallen man could not obey the divine law, which requires the full measure of a perfect man's ability, God has not only redeemed our race, but proposes also in "due time" to establish the Redeemer as the King over all the earth, to rule and judge and regulate the world, and bring order out of present confusion and darkness and sin, and by corrections in righteousness gradually to raise men up, up, up, to perfection and the divine likeness in heart. This time of resurrection, also called the "times of restitution," is to be the world's "day of judgment," in which each member of Adam's fallen race, redeemed by the precious blood, shall taste of divine mercy and have the fullest opportunity that could be reasonably asked for re-attaining all that was lost in Adam; and meantime for developing such characters as would be fully approved by God as fit for the *gift* of God – everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord; – all others, failing under those favorable conditions being re-condemned, – judged worthy of the Second Death from which there will be no recovery.

This is the Lord's declaration: "God hath appointed a day ["One day with the Lord is as a 1000 years." – II Pet. 3:8.] in the which he will judge [grant trial to] the world in righteousness [equity] by that man whom he hath [afore] ordained [the Christ]; whereof he hath given assurance [ground for hope] unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. (Acts 17:31.) This is the "resurrection by judgment" to which our Lord refers. (John 5:29.) No wonder then that the prophet David rejoiced so in the prospect of the world's coming judgment day; saying (I Chron. 16:31-34): –

"Let the heavens be glad,
And let the earth rejoice;
And let men say among the nations, Jehovah reigneth.
Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof;
Let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.
Then shall the trees of the wood sing out
At the presence of Jehovah,
***Because He Cometh
To Judge the Earth!***
O give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good;
For his mercy endureth forever!"

Does someone inquire why the Day of Judgment should be put off – why it did not begin at once, as soon as the sacrifice of Calvary was finished? We answer, that God hath appointed a day – the seventh or last day of the week for this judgment – the world's great Sabbath of rest after the 6000 years of sin and death, and that is sufficient. But we are glad [**R3029 : page 187**] to see just why our Father so "appointed"; viz., because in the interim he designed the calling and perfecting of the Church, the saints, the "elect," to be joint-heirs with the Redeemer and share his glory and work – his ruling, judging and blessing of all the families of the earth.

For further discussion of this subject we must refer our readers to *Millennial Dawn*, Vol. I., Chap. 8.]

Article XVI. – Of Christian Service and the Final Triumph.

We believe that it is our duty, as servants and friends of Christ, to do good unto all men, to maintain the public and private worship of God, to hallow the Lord's day, to preserve the sanctity of the family, to uphold the just authority of the state, and so to live in all honesty, purity and charity that our lives shall testify of Christ. We joyfully receive the Word of Christ, bidding His people go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, and declare unto them that *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself*, and that *He will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*. We confidently trust that by His power and grace all His enemies and ours shall be finally overcome, and the kingdoms of this world shall be made the kingdom of our God and of His Christ. In this faith we abide; in this service we labor, and in this hope we pray. Even so, come Lord Jesus.

[We are specially glad that the two Scripture citations we have italicized have been made prominent in the Revised Confession. These may assist some to see that the election of the Church is for the purpose of bringing the whole world to a knowledge of the truth in order to their everlasting salvation. If it was the thought of the Revisers that the Church in her present condition can accomplish this, let them reflect that nineteen centuries have accomplished little for the world in general in the matter of knowledge of the Lord. Let them reflect, too, that even in this day of missionary effort, statistics show that the whole annual Church increase including all even nominally Christians, is *less proportionately* than the natural increase of the human family; so that if the hope expressed, that the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord, means a hope of converting the world, it is a blind and baseless one. The Scriptural thought, as shown by old MSS. is quite a different one; namely, that the dominion of this world [is to] become the dominion of God and of his Christ. If the entire world were brought into the condition of earth's best kingdoms it would still leave much, oh! so much, to be desired and prayed for – "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Hence we pray

this prayer, and expect and patiently wait for that Kingdom which will now speedily be introduced by "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus."]

