

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

TRADING WITH OUR "POUNDS"

Question. – In a recent article in the WATCH TOWER you interpret the Parable of the Pounds and say that the "pound" that is given to each of the servants is *Justification*. How then can the pound be taken away from the unfaithful servant and be given to the most faithful one? Is it possible to thus transfer Justification?

Answer. – Possibly we should have been more explicit in the article you refer to. We probably left too much for inference. We should have explained in detail that while what the Lord *gives* to each servant is Justification, the effect of that gift is the possession by the servant of *special opportunities as a justified person* that he would not have had without. Suppose the ten persons of the parable presented themselves for service – desiring to be the servants of the nobleman – desiring him to grant them some opportunity for rendering him service. Suppose that in order to be recognized as his servants and to be able to trade at all it was necessary for them to receive and wear a livery or costume provided by the nobleman. The gift of the costume would be the acceptance of them as servants and constitute their opportunity for serving him.

So it is with us: However much we may desire to be the Lord's servants we are imperfect, weak through the blemishes of the flesh, through our fallen nature. We are incapable of doing anything in the Lord's service that would be acceptable until first of all he justifies us. This all-important justification places every servant of God on the same footing in relationship to him and his service – each one justified reckoned as being a perfect man from the divine standpoint – all his blemishes are fully covered by the precious merit of our Redeemer, the Nobleman. So long as we

wear this livery (Justification) we have opportunity in God's sight of rendering acceptable service; and since he will count to us not according to the flesh but according to the spirit, mind or heart's desires, therefore the one who has least as respects his natural talents has the same standing before God as the one who has the most, because both are justified or made equal and right as perfect men, reckonedly. This, then, is the "pound" that is thus given to each one who enters [R3949 : page 63] the Lord's service. It is the same in every case. Nothing else that we have is common and equal – talents, opportunities, educational advantages, etc., are all variant, as well as physical and mental capabilities. Only from this standpoint of God's reckoning us perfect through Christ have we in any sense of the word a "pound" apiece to use in the divine service.

Each one during his life time is to use his pound, his opportunity secured *through his justification*. Each must trade with his "pound," must exchange it, if he would make increase. We do lay down or exchange *justified* earthly rights, earthly interests, for heavenly ones, – and in proportion as we have zeal and energy in so doing will be our standing at the inspection when the nobleman returns. He who sacrifices most zealously his *justified human nature*, not only by consecrating it, but by daily sacrificing it, will be the one who will have the ten pounds at the conclusion of the test, and to such the Lord would say, Have thou dominion over ten cities.

If, then, our reward at our Lord's hands is to be in proportion as we shall be diligent in using this "pound," opportunity received *through our justification*, let us lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, and strive with patience to do with our might all that our hands find to do. The faithful ones seeking opportunities will find them; the less faithful, the less zealous, will find fewer, while others will pass them by, and ultimately miss the

reward, and the opportunities previously *theirs through justification* will be given to those more zealous.

LOVE THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW

Question. – In the Berean Bible Study on Love Question V. is, "What is the difference between duty love (*filio*) and disinterested or divine love (*agapee*)? I am somewhat perplexed regarding this difference, and would thank you for a little more light on the subject.

Answer. – Three different words in our Greek New Testament are translated love. The principal word, which well corresponds to our word love in English, is *agapee*. This word is used whenever the highest type of love is described; hence we have designated it disinterested or *divine love*, as representing the highest type of love when used respecting the Lord and his people. Nevertheless, just like our English word love, *agapee* is also used in an inferior sense, as for instance when describing love for the world in the text, "If any man love [*agapee*] the world, the love [*agapee*] of the Father is not in him." – I John 2:15.

The Greek word *philadelphia* signifies brotherly love, and of course is always used in a good sense, because the brethren of the Lord are all "holy brethren." We are exhorted to develop this love for the brethren (*philadelphia*), and it is given as a mark or indication that we are New Creatures in Christ. Nevertheless the Apostle exhorts that we go on beyond this degree of love (*philadelphia*) and attain to the broader or divine love, the disinterested love (*agapee*). Note an instance of this: "Add to your faith patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness [*philadelphia*], and to brotherly kindness, charity – Love [*agapee*]." (2 Pet. 1:7.) The Apostle thus uses the word *agapee* to indicate the broader and more comprehensive love as the highest attainment of Christian character. Similarly, when describing the greatest thing in the world, in I Corinthians

13:2,3,4,8,13, the Apostle uses the Greek word *agapee*, love – in our common version translated charity. The culmination of his argument is, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity [love – *agapee*], and the greatest of these is charity [love – *agapee*]." *Agapee* is also used in I John 3:1, where the Apostle says, "Behold what manner of love [*agapee*]"; and "He that dwelleth in love [*agapee*] dwelleth in God." In the next verse also we read, "Herein is our love [*agapee*] made perfect." Again we find *agapee* used by the Apostle in the statement, "God commendeth his love [*agapee*] toward us"; and again, "Love [*agapee*] worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love [*agapee*] is the fulfilling of the law." – Rom. 5:8,13.

The Greek word *filio*, rendered love, we have designated "duty love," but we fear that this does not give a sufficiently clear understanding of its meaning. The noun which is the basis for the verb is frequently translated *kiss* in the New Testament, and by implication the kiss belongs to the family and implies a love that is more or less respect, or we might say exclusive or selfish – not general – not for everybody. It represents more of an individual or family love, and is used either in a good or an evil sense, as, for instance, we read, "The Father loveth the Son" (John 5:20); and again, "The world will love its own." – John 15:19.
