

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

WILL GREAT COMPANY HAVE PART IN FIRST RESURRECTION?

QUESTION. – Will the Great Company have part in the First Resurrection?

Answer. – Those in the First Resurrection will live and reign with Christ a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4,6.) Therefore those of the Great Company will have no part whatever in the First Resurrection. The Apostle Paul speaks of Christ's Resurrection – "That I might know Him and the power of His Resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." (Phil. 3:10.) This is the First Resurrection.

There are, however, two other Scriptures which include the Great Company: Heb. 12:23, where the Apostle speaks of the Church of the First-borns whose names are written in heaven, and Rev. 2:27, where mention is made of those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. All will attain life on the spirit plane, whose names are written in the Book of the Lamb, and the Lord said that He would not blot out the names of any *overcomers*. – Rev. 3:5.

Do the Great Company overcome? Yes. God has no blessings to give to those who are not overcomers. What is the difference between the Great Company and the Little Flock? The difference is that the Little Flock are those who are more than loyal to God. The Great Company will be loyal to God in that they will not withhold their lives when the test shall come. They will perish rather than deny the Lord; and thus they will experience the destruction of the flesh. But they did not go forth with sufficient zeal to carry out their consecration. They were loyal to God, but they did no more than maintain their loyalty.

Then we have our Lord's statement as recorded in John 5:28,29: "For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life." This will include both the Little Flock and the Great Company; both classes will get eternal life. If this statement includes the Ancient Worthies, then it [R5105 : page 298] means three classes: the Little Flock, the Great Company and the Ancient Worthies, though there will be different planes of perfection – human perfection, then the perfection that will be like that of the angels, and lastly the perfection that will come to those who shall be like Christ, namely, that of the Divine nature.

**"WISDOM – RIGHTEOUSNESS – SANCTIFICATION –
REDEMPTION"**

Question. – In what way was our Lord made unto us wisdom, righteousness [justification], sanctification and redemption? – I Cor. 1:30.

Answer. – In a great variety of ways our Lord was made unto us wisdom. He is the Head of the Church which is His Body. And as the head is the center of knowledge, so the Lord Jesus is the Head of His Church. But the particular thought of the text seems to be that of a progressive order. Looking, then, to see how Jesus was our wisdom before He became our Justifier and Sanctifier, we perceive that the Scriptural declaration is that "no man cometh to the Father but by" our Lord.

Previous to justification *the Father draws*, for none can come to *Christ* except through the Father. After the Father has drawn, the *wisdom* comes from Christ, who instructs us *how to come* to the Father. Just as the disciples were instructed by our Lord, so it is all the way down throughout the Age. There is *no other way* by which men

may be saved – "None other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Sinners could not be acceptable to the Father except by the way of justification such as the Father has provided. This justification means their blessing. "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and ***I will give you rest.***" (Matt. 11:28.) We need to be instructed. The light was not ***prior*** to Jesus Christ; for we read that ***He is the Light.*** He makes that statement Himself: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." – John 1:9; 8:12.

This wisdom was first promulgated by our Lord. So the same wisdom which instructed His disciples guides men back to the Father, instructs them as to what discipleship means, makes them wise in order that they may take the steps by which that discipleship is to be gained. Whoever will be His disciples ***must take up their cross and follow Him.*** No matter in what way one may get the wisdom, it comes to him from our Lord Jesus Christ; and without this wisdom we could not know how to come to God. No one can ***ever*** come to God without this wisdom. And so His wisdom instructs what will be the reward of discipleship.

Our Lord appeared in the presence of God ***for us*** – on ***our behalf.*** Thus, according to the Father's plan and arrangement, He became the ***Justifier*** of those who come to the Father by Him, and none can get the ***justification*** except by a consecration of life. Then He becomes their ***sanctification*** by assisting them in everything ***necessary*** to their sanctification. They have the ***will*** to do, and as they have this will, so now He works in them a sanctified character in life.

This course being followed, the one who has the ***wisdom*** of the narrow way first obtains ***justification*** through our Lord's blood and then ***sanctification*** through following in the Lord's footsteps. Finally comes the ***deliverance*** [redemption] by the First Resurrection. The One who led us all the way is the One who leads us still and who will

finally lead us into the New Jerusalem, the glorious condition beyond the veil.

FORGIVENESS OF ALL SIN

Question. – "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9.) How comprehensive is the word "all" here used?

Answer. – Except sin against the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:31,32), *all manner of sin* amongst the sons of men shall be forgiven, either in this Age or in the Age to come. The Holy Spirit here denotes a light, an intelligence, respecting God's purpose. Whoever wilfully and **[R5106 : page 298]** intelligently would sin against Jesus, would be guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. But if he blaspheme the name of Jesus, being deceived in some way, then the sin is not blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and may be forgiven. In the case of the Church, these forgivable sins will be forgiven through the Advocate, who has appeared for us in the Heavenly Court and can restore us to favor with the Father, unless we sin against full light and knowledge. To do this would be to take ourselves out of His hands.

But there might be a sin partly wilful – a sin in which both superstition or weakness and a certain amount of wilfulness had a part. As to how this would be possible we answer that there is a difference between the forgiveness of the moral obliquity and the sin. For instance, a child has committed some trespass and the parent says, "I will punish you for what you have done." There might be two parts of the punishment, one corporal punishment, the other the displeasure of the parent.

With some children the latter part of the punishment, the cloud between the child and parent, would be unbearable. Then the parent might say, "Since you tell me that you are sorry and that you will never do it again, I forgive you. But I told you that there would be a penalty attaching to disobedience. I will make the penalty as light as would

seem best in my judgment, but you must still bear punishment." And that which would be proper for an earthly parent we may consider might be done by the Heavenly Father.

In the case of the Prophet David: he committed two very serious, grievous sins – one in respect to Uriah and Uriah's wife, and the other in respect to Uriah's death. But we remember with what perseverance David pleaded with the Lord; and though the Lord indicated His forgiveness, yet there must be a punishment. David's child died. – 2 Sam. 12:15-22.

Again, Satan provoked David to number Israel, contrary to the command of the Lord; God was displeased and smote Israel. Again David repented and prayed earnestly for forgiveness. The Lord offered him three things, one of which he must choose as the punishment for his sin. "Thus," saith the Lord, "Choose thee either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, or else three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence in the land, and the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel." (I Chron. 21:10-14.) Realizing his own weakness, David, in humility declined to make a choice. The three days' pestilence was sent upon Israel, and there fell seventy thousand men; but in the meantime, before the punishment reached David, he had received the Lord's forgiveness for his sin.

So with the sins of the Lord's people. If there is more or less of ignorance, then the punishment is in proportion to the amount of wilfulness. Temptations come to us and to all mankind. Christ died for man's sin, from which He freely absolves the whole human family – the Church now, and the world in their day of trial.

