

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

MORE ABOUT HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS

Question. – Will any one be forced, or *compelled*, to walk up the Highway of Holiness?

Answer. – At present there is no Highway of Holiness; consequently no one is walking on it during the Gospel Age. There will be no such Highway until the Great King takes control of affairs, overthrows the present order of things and sets up the Kingdom of Heaven. Then a Highway of Holiness will be prepared, upon which the righteous can walk. During the Gospel Age there are but two ways – the Narrow Way and the Broad Way. (Matt. 7:13,14.) The former is for those who desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, and is a steep, rugged path. The latter is the road that leads to destruction and is a broad way on which the human race are hurrying to the tomb.

Those who walk *acceptably* in the footsteps of the Master must do so willingly. Theirs must be a *voluntary devotion*. To be *forced* is *not at all* the thought. The Little Flock will thus run the Narrow Way; but the Great Company will have experiences which will *force* them, not to take one special way, but to *decide for themselves*, what course they will pursue. There is a difference between *forcing* a man to go aboard a vessel, and bringing certain influences to bear which will cause him to *desire* to do so.

In the next Age, when the world's Highway of Holiness shall have been opened up (Isa. 35:8), *force* will be used to bring all mankind to a *knowledge of the Truth* respecting God's provision for them. Wrong doing will then be punished with corrective stripes. But it would be far from right to suppose that mankind will be driven or *forced along* the Highway of Holiness. All who *go up* thereon

must *exert themselves*; for it will be an *upward* way. Our Savior stated the Father's sentiment respecting all to whom He will ever grant everlasting life. His words were, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

"PERFECT LOVE CASTETH OUT FEAR"

Question. – What kind of fear is referred to in the text, "There is no *fear* in love, but perfect love casteth out *fear.*" – I John 4:18.

Answer. – Fear is a mental condition which is begotten of uncertainty. There are some things which we ought to fear, and some which we need not fear. The Adversary seems to take advantage of the fallen condition of the race, and to cause them to fear God; for it is natural to avoid whomsoever we fear. Mankind realize instinctively that they are sinners by nature and that there is a penalty for sin. Taking advantage of this fear of the consequences of sin, the Adversary tries to instill in them a dread of God. He pictures before their imperfect minds a God who is unjust, over-severe in His dealings with sin and the sinner, for whom He has prepared a place of everlasting torture.

As we gradually come to a clear knowledge of God and of the principles by which He regulates the universe, we lose this improper fear; and in its stead comes a love for God and a realization that He has love for us. Our love for Him grows in proportion as we perceive that He loves mankind, and has made provision for them whereby they may have an opportunity for everlasting life. After we have come to love Him perfectly, all fear in the sense of dread is cast out.

Our knowledge and love should not, however, cast out the fear of displeasing God; for *proper fear* (reverence) must never be cast out. The more we have of reverential love, the more of the proper

fear we shall have. Who would not fear to offend a brother or a neighbor whom he loved and appreciated? Much more should we dread offending our just, wise, loving God. [R5245 : page 159]

The principle that "perfect love casteth out fear" should operate between husband and wife, between parents and children. The wife who fears her husband cannot be as happy as she would be if there were perfect love; and so also children who are in dread of either, or both, of their parents cannot love them with true filial affection. Each should fear to wound or offend the other, and should strive to have that perfect love which God is pleased to have all of His intelligent creatures exercise.

RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT AND CRITICISM

Question. – How may we distinguish between "righteous judgment" and criticism?

Answer. – The Lord says, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (John 7:24.) St. Paul says, "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come." (I Cor. 4:5.) The question then arises, What is "righteous judgment"? A righteous judgment is a *right decision*. But since we cannot read the heart, how can we render a right decision? The Scriptures answer that we cannot read one another's hearts and therefore should not *attempt to judge them*.

If, then, we cannot judge each other's hearts, motives or intentions, what can we judge? The answer of Scripture is that we may judge each other's *conduct*. If we see one of the Lord's people doing something improper, we might say, "Dear Brother (or Sister), your conduct would seem to be contrary to the Word of God, and to be bringing forth bad fruitage." If that person should reply, "It does not seem to *me* that I am doing wrong," we must not judge or

condemn that one's heart. But we should judge between good and evil conduct, and at the proper time and place call attention to the matter and leave it there.

There is a difference between judging the *heart*, which we have *no right* to do, and judging the *conduct*, which is *right* to do. But it does not always follow that our judgment of another's conduct must always be right. We are all prone to make mistakes.

If we should come to a brother and say, "Dear Brother, your conduct seems to be wrong, but I am sure that you want to do right. Will you explain?" He may be able to show us that the fruitage was good when we thought it bad. We may have misunderstood the matter. We are not to condemn our brother, but to go directly to him and get his view. Then if we cannot agree, we should tell him how it seems to us, and ask him to judge his own heart. We can do no more.

SETTING MEMBERS IN THE BODY

Question. – What is signified by God's "setting the members every one of them in the Body, as it hath pleased Him"? – I Corinthians 12:18.

Answer. – In the present time there is a Church of Christ on probation. We sometimes say that we are members of the Church Militant; but to be a member of the Church Militant will not prove that we shall be in the Church Triumphant. Only those who are "faithful unto *death*" will be in the Church Triumphant. St. Paul, whom God had set in a very high position in the Church feared lest he might become a castaway. He said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." (I Cor. 9:27.) Various privileges and opportunities are granted to us while in the flesh, and

our acceptance in the end and our participation in the glory beyond will depend upon our faithfulness here.

The Apostle says that the various members, "fitly framed together, grow into an holy Temple in the Lord." (Eph. 2:21.) We may not use this figure too literally or we may get into confusion. The stones in the Temple differ to some extent one from the other. In what is called "random range work" building there are places for little stones and places for larger stones. This might, in some [R5246 : page 159] respects, represent our being a larger or a smaller stone in the Temple – representing the privileges or honor which we may have beyond the veil.

St. Paul also says that he was trying to do much more, that he was trying to have a larger share in the trials and self-denials, in order that he might have a larger share in the work beyond. This did not mean that he desired self-aggrandizement, or that he was either *proud* or *self-seeking*. And *we* shall not be so if we would attain that to which God would have us attain – the glorious character-likeness of our Master.

"JERUSALEM...MOTHER OF US ALL"

Question. – In the text, "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" (Galations 4:26), who are meant by "us," and how is the spiritual Jerusalem the "mother of us all"?

Answer. – The Apostle here uses a figure of speech which is common in the Scriptures, and in which a city is referred to as the mother of its inhabitants; for instance, "daughters of Jerusalem," "daughters of Zion," "Sodom and her daughters," etc. The "us" class mean the saints of God. The citizenship of the saints is in Heaven – in the Heavenly Jerusalem, which will not be built until the First

Resurrection. By faith we look forward and speak of that promised condition and of our citizenship therein.

The Church is developed under the same Covenant-Mother as was Christ; for we are His members. His was a covenant of sacrifice. "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by *sacrifice*." (Psa. 50:5.) The Man Christ Jesus entered into a covenant with the Father, which meant the sacrifice of His *flesh*, His *earthly nature*. As a reward for this sacrifice, the Father made Him a New Creature of the Divine nature – "far above angels," constituting Him the Great Messiah who shall bless the world.

Carrying out the Father's Plan, our Lord imputes His merit to such as now follow His example, and walk in His footsteps, performing the same covenant of sacrifice. If these are faithful, they will share in the great work of Messiah in blessing the world, and will constitute the New Jerusalem, the Millennial Kingdom. By faith we are *its children*. Even now, our citizenship is in Heaven.

BROAD UNSECTARIAN QUESTIONS

The following are the questions usually put by Brother Russell when receiving candidates for Water Immersion. It will be noticed that they are on broad lines – questions which any Christian, whatever his confession, should be able to answer in the affirmative without hesitation if he is suitable to be acknowledged as a member of the Church of Christ:

(1) Have you repented of sin with such restitution as you are able, and are you trusting in the merit of Christ's sacrifice for the forgiveness of your sins and the basis of your justification?

(2) Have you made a full consecration of yourself with all the powers that you possess – talent, money, time, influence – all to the Lord, to be used faithfully in His service, even unto death?

(3) On the basis of these confessions, we acknowledge you as a member of the Household of Faith, and give to you as such the right hand of fellowship, not in the name of any sect or party or creed, but in the name of the Redeemer, our glorified Lord, and His faithful followers.

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