

"LABORERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"

"We are laborers together with God." – 1 Cor. 3:9.

DURING this Gospel Age there has been a work of God, arranged for and carried on by Him. And that work is the selection of the Seed of Abraham. The first opportunity of being of this Seed was granted to the natural seed of Abraham – Israel after the flesh. The work succeeded so far as the gathering of an elect company from among them was concerned. And having accomplished this part of the work, God set the Jewish nation aside, while the further work of the selection of the Elect from among the other nations has continued for eighteen centuries.

"Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." The blindness is merely until the remaining members of the elect class have been found; and then God's favor will return to Natural Israel. "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My Covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins." Israel made a failure respecting the Election, except a few. And yet they are still beloved for the fathers' sakes. – Romans 11:7,26-28.

The one work of the Gospel Age has been the selection of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, through whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed – shall become of the earthly seed. This Promise, that all the families of [R5302 : page 262] the earth shall be blessed, cannot be fulfilled until the Spiritual Seed shall first be completed. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the Promise." There has been but one work from first to last. And so we read: "One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor; other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors." (John 4:35-38.) Whether it was

at the beginning, or now at the close of the Age – the time of the reaping – it is all *one work*, and there is the one purpose being served, the gathering of the Elect.

HUMANITARIAN WORK

If asked as to the reason why we will not enter into and engage in humanitarian work, building hospitals, looking after the poor, doing slum work, etc., our answer would be, We are so engaged. We have agents all over the country attending to that very work. In every county in the state there is an almshouse. The hospitals are taking care of the sick and the blind. The money to do this with is provided by the state – and it is the money of the citizens which is used. If anybody assists in doing some additional work for the poor, he has that privilege, he has that right.

We believe it to be our duty to be humanitarian, and our state laws are humanitarian. New York is a first class state. And if we were in Pennsylvania, we would be able to say the same. And so in respect to any state we know of in this country. As respects these humanitarian efforts, the reason we do not engage in them more particularly is that we think they are well managed by the "powers that be," according to the Government and the will of the people. And any one who thinks differently holds different views from the majority. We stand in with the majority as to the proper way of dealing with these questions. Why do we not more particularly take part in slum work? We understand that it is not for us to do. We cannot do better along this line than the majority. To interfere in these matters would imply that we have not confidence in the laws. We have no right to go about interfering with the laws.

Why do we not engage in holding revivals? For the reason that those who engage in the holding of revivals are doing something that the Scriptures never instructed us to do. Nothing in the Bible says that we are to go and pull the people in to hear some one speak. Let each do as seemeth him best. If there is any one who thinks

differently, and he can do any good, all well and good; if he does more harm than good, then that, also, is his responsibility. Our responsibility is to follow the course laid down by the Bible. And the Bible does not say anything about holding revival meetings. Those who wish to do this have the privilege of so doing. This is a free country. But we do not find that Jesus did this. To any one who thinks differently, we give full liberty to do according to his will, and find no fault with him.

Why do you not take up collections for the missionary societies? is asked. We answer, You have a right to contribute to your missionary society. It is not *ours*, it is *yours*. You will be responsible to the Master for what you do, so you have full right and privilege to do whatever you think proper – and we have the same. What we are trying to do for the heathen is to show them that God is Love.

We are trying to show them that the theory of eternal torment is not the Truth, and that if they really knew the teachings of the Bible, they would see that God is a God of Love, and they would love Him; and this would be a helpful thing to them. You have a right to create a missionary fund. We would not throw a straw in your way. By and by you will hear whether the Master says, "Well done!" to *your* work or to *ours*.

As to why we do not engage in Socialism: Socialism is impracticable. We are glad that Socialism has done a great deal for the world. We are glad that we have a measure of Socialism – the street railways and cars, gas and water systems, etc. If, for instance, any family wanted to make its own gas and have its own plant for filtering water, etc., to do so would be quite an expense. And if each wanted to have its own street car lines, etc., the streets would be crowded up too much. But when Socialism goes on to tell us that it is the savior of the world, we dispute the claim. We hold that, on the

contrary, Socialism is about to bring the world into anarchy. Not that Socialists wish to do so, but they are unwise.

We would be very much inclined to favor many phases of Socialism, were it not that we see in the Bible that God has a very much better way of accomplishing the same results. However, the Bible assures us that there is a great time of trouble coming, before the blessings can come. But first God is gathering out a saintly company, and testing and proving them, so that He can entrust to them the government of the future. They will constitute the theocracy of God.

We are fully convinced that the Bible is correct, that it is the Truth, and that nothing can bring about the desired result but the Kingdom of God. We are laborers together with God. He is working with us, and we are working with Him. What is the work? God's present work is finding the saintly, the true, and guiding them, fitting them for the spiritual Kingdom to be introduced. Therefore we are working for Socialism to an extent, but working in a different manner. Socialists are working according to their light, and we according to our light.

SOME GLARING INCONSISTENCIES

The various denominations represent Christian people with good desires, good intentions, and having certain fixed ideas respecting God and His will. No two of these agree. Many of their beliefs are thoroughly inconsistent. There are over six hundred different denominations. It is unreasonable for us to believe, as the Baptists do, that any one will go to a place or condition of everlasting torment for not having been put into water over his head! We cannot believe anything so unreasonable. And just the same with our Presbyterian friends and their doctrine. They are certainly sincere. They have taken hold of the doctrine of John Calvin.

If John Calvin had had the proper view, he never could have signed the death warrant to burn his Christian brother Servetus at the stake. This fact teaches us that he was not a proper teacher of theology, however good he might have been in mind and heart. And when we come to look at his theology, that God fore-ordained that a little handful of humanity should be saved, not for any good that they had done, but of His sovereign will; and that He equally fore-ordained all the non-elect to an eternity of torture – if we believed such doctrine as this, we would believe that God was the veriest devil we could imagine – to cause hundreds of millions to come into existence, knowing that He had nothing for them but an eternity of suffering! That is a most devilish thought! We cannot believe that theory. If we did, we could not worship God!

And then as to the Methodists, and their Free Grace! This does not give one much show. How could that Grace be free? – only one in ten thousand ever having a chance of getting it! We are sorry for them if that **[R5302 : page 263]** view appears to their minds as rational. We would not be a Methodist or a Presbyterian for a million dollars a year! Not that we do not love our Presbyterian, Methodist and Catholic friends, etc., but it would not be right for us to so believe. We find so much error in any one of their doctrines! We find that not one of them is in accord with the Bible.

We prefer to stand by Jesus and the Apostles and all who are in harmony with them. We prefer to stand for what the Bible calls the Church of the First-born, and for whatever the Bible teaches. And when we thus take our stand, we find that the Bible teaches something beautiful – that God is indeed preparing a Church, to be associated with Jesus in His Kingdom; and we find that nobody is to be roasted eternally – quite to the contrary, they are all to be blessed with an opportunity to live forever.

The Elect are the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, through whom all the non-elect are to be blessed. According to the Bible, the dead are

all *asleep*; they do not know anything. [R5303 : page 263] "Their sons come to honor and they know it not," because "There is no wisdom, nor knowledge, nor device in Sheol, whither thou goest." We find that Jesus went to Sheol. We find that, having thus given the Ransom-price for Adam and his family, all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth.

We find that during the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom, Christ and His Church will be reigning – not to *oppress* the world, but to lift them up, to break the shackles of sin and death. We find that under this blessed arrangement, *all* will be brought to a knowledge of the Truth; and that at the close of that thousand-year period Christ will have finished His work; and that as a result of His Reign, not only will all be destroyed who love unrighteousness, sin, and who refuse to live in harmony with God, but all who were willing to come into harmony will have bowed the knee. "Unto Him [Christ] every knee shall bow and every tongue confess."

These are the reasons why we cannot work hand-in-glove with those who have opposite theories and opposite ideas. We cannot associate with systems and be bound up to creeds that are dishonoring to God and contrary to His Word, the Bible!

THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION

There will be many who will have their chance in the future who do not have their chance now. But whatever knowledge they have now will not do them any harm. A certain cast of mind cannot receive the things of God now. The Scriptures say that they cannot appreciate a God of Justice and Love. Therefore "none of the wicked shall understand" is the statement of the Scriptures. If they could understand, if they could get the right thought, they would see that every transgression, in proportion to its degree of wilfulness, will be punished in the future; hence they would know that they are treasuring up to themselves wrath.

God has established, as a general law, the principle that whatsoever a man *soweth*, that shall he *reap*. Every step a man takes *down* must be retraced. If every one knew this, it would make mankind very much more careful. If a man knows that there is to be a *just* punishment, it will make him very much more careful than if he thinks it will be an *unjust* punishment. Our thought is that if the people could get the proper focus on the subject of the penalty for sin, it would be the most potent factor in convincing them of the propriety of righteous living. Furthermore, we might cite to the denominations the fact that with all their preaching of eternal torment, they succeed in driving but a comparatively small number into *holiness of life* – into becoming footstep followers of Jesus, character copies of God's dear Son.

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