

HOPE AN OUTGROWTH OF CONFIDENCE

**"Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the things promised."
– Hebrews 10:35,36.**

CONFIDENCE is another word for trust. The Apostle's thought, then, is, Cast not away your faith, cast not away your trust, which hath great recompense. It seems strange to us, sometimes, that God should purpose to reward faith rather than works. Surely almost anybody else would have made a Plan which would have said, I will reward you according to what you can accomplish. But God has declared that He will reward us according to our faith, our confidence, our honesty, our sincerity. Under the present conditions God can do nothing with a dishonest man. During the Millennial Age this class will receive the necessary stripes – just exactly what they need – to bring them rightly into accord with righteousness. But for the time being, God is making an appeal only to the honest-hearted.

As we come to the Bible and get it clearly before us, as our eyes become anointed with the Holy Spirit and we see into the deep things of God, we find that He has a great, a wondrous Plan. When His Kingdom shall be established, then all the families of the earth shall be blessed, and the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth. None shall need to say to another, Know thou the Lord; for all shall know Him, from the least unto the greatest of them. – Jer. 31:34.

God is not dealing with the world yet, but is dealing with the few. There was a time when He dealt with typical Israel alone. Then, beginning with our Lord Jesus, who kept the Law which the Israelites could not keep, and who obtained the blessing accruing

from the Law Covenant – from that time God's Plan has been, we see, to gather out of all nations and out of all parts of the earth a people for His name, to bear the name of Jesus, to be the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

As a woman is joined to a husband and bears his name, so this company is called out from the world to bear the name of Christ. The word Christ signifies, as we know, The Anointed of God, and includes Jesus, the Head of The Christ, and all the members of the Church which is His Body. God purposed the selection of the Church, and He purposed that it should not be accomplished by force, by compulsion. If any have thought that God has been dealing with the world, they have been mistaken. We are told in the Bible that God has been *drawing* a class, *calling* a people, a very different thought. Our Lord Jesus is the great Shepherd of the sheep. The sheep hear His voice and follow Him.

It is a wonderful privilege to become a member of the Body of Christ. God is not forcing any one to become a member. How strange it would be for us to think that He said, If you do not become a member of the Bride class, you shall go to eternal torture! Nay, dear brethren, He lays before us the grandeur of the Divine Plan, that seeing it, we might be eager to become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. This is set before us in the Bible as a great Prize, "a Pearl of great price." If we do not care to come in under the invitation given, then we need not come at all.

AN HONEST HEART – A WILLING MIND

We remember that the Apostle declares that the Gentiles rejoiced that they had been accounted worthy to hear. (Acts 13:48.) Do we realize what an honor it is that God has asked us to hear His Message? It is a great honor, to our understanding. The one thing that is the basis of God's favor is *sincerity*. There are people who are born dishonest, born insincere. The Message was never designed of God for a dishonest mind.

There is something about the dishonest, insincere, self-sufficient, that would surely lead them to take a wrong course. We think of a gentleman – a well educated man, an engineer. He was well-balanced mentally and could talk on any subject. One day we told him something of the Divine Plan and of the call of the Church. He replied, "Well, I do not care to have anything to do with it. I do not *wish* to have my sins *forgiven*; I wish to bear the penalty of my own sins. If other men are going to get along, I shall get along, too."

Jesus said that if one would receive His Message, he must receive it as a little child – in that pure, simple manner that a little child would receive a message. It is natural for a little child to be full of confidence. How often we hear a child say, "My papa can do anything! My papa says thus and so." And so the Heavenly Father would have us honest, faithful, full of confidence in Him, trusting what He has said, not doubting. He would have us to be loyal to Him.

"Cast not away, therefore, your confidence," said the Apostle. He had been telling these Christian Hebrews that they had a good degree of confidence. They had accomplished a good work. They had endured hardness in various ways, partly while they themselves were made **[R5594 : page 376]** a gazing-stock, and partly while they were the companions of those who were so used. The Apostle went on to say that God was not unjust to forget their labor of love.

A POTENT TEST OF LOYALTY

But, dear brethren, it is not enough to make a good consecration; it is not enough that for a time we fight a good fight. No, indeed! God is not accepting to the Kingdom those who once were faithful. He desires to have those who were once faithful, who were afterwards faithful, who are *always* faithful! He desires to have in the Kingdom class those whom He can trust implicitly, those to whom He can safely give the glory, honor and immortality that He has promised to the faithful. And before they receive this

high reward and exaltation, they must be thoroughly tested and proven. We see the reasonableness of this arrangement in every particular. If "He has called us to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ," He expects us to be found worthy of that honor – not that we could *do* anything to make ourselves worthy of so great exaltation, not that we could merit it in ourselves, but He expects us to be true overcomers, and to develop the character necessary for so high a position of responsibility and glory.

Have you given God the glory in all the affairs of your life, in whatever measure of success you have attained in His service? or have you often taken the glory to yourself? This is a good question for each one of the Lord's children to ask himself. We know that we have deserved no glory whatever in connection with what we possess or what we have accomplished. If any have attempted to take glory to themselves, they have taken the glory from the Lord. We must be so loyal that in presenting the Truth to others we will say, "This is not *my* Plan. I am glad to tell you anything that I know about it, but it is not man-made. It is all *God's* Plan."

So, then, let us remember the Apostolic injunction: "Cast not away your confidence." What confidence are we to have? Confidence in God. In whom else could our confidence be placed? Many of the world have no confidence except in themselves. Others place their confidence in some earthly hero. One man says, I have confidence in King George; I will follow him to death. Another man says, I have full confidence in Kaiser Wilhelm; I will follow wherever he leads. A third man declares, I have great confidence in President Wilson. What does President Wilson or any of these rulers know about the future? No one but God and He who is executing God's will, know to a certainty, except in so far as God has seen fit to reveal His purposes.

We as the Lord's people look up and see our great Creator's wonders in the heavens, and we say, How great is our God! Then

as we look at ourselves and find how wonderfully we are made by our Creator, so that by thinking, by the power of the mind, we can move the different parts of the body – the hands, the feet, the eyes – oh, we say, this is the most wonderful machine in all the [R5595 : page 376] world! And so we are led to exclaim, Surely this great God, our God, our Father, is willing to tell us, His people, who love Him and desire to know His will, what His will *is!* He must have a good Plan; for He is wise, He is loving, He is just.

CONFIDENCE PROPORTIONATE TO KNOWLEDGE

And so we have found our old Bible, which perhaps was long covered with dust, and we have studied about God's Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power. And we have learned to have confidence in that dear old Book; for its Message is so consistent, so reasonable, so loving. The Bible explains how sickness, sorrow and pain came to be in the world. It informs us that all these came as the result of sin, and that from the very beginning God foreknew the fall, and purposed the restitution of mankind from sin and death. The Bible points out that the blessing to all men would come when Messiah would come.

Thus we have confidence in the Word of the Lord and in the great Plan presented in that Word. And we have confidence that God has invited us to be joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom, that He is taking out a people for His name – those who will confess their sins, will acknowledge that they themselves are not great – those who will, when they receive God's favor, be so loyal to Him that they will be ready to lay down their lives.

Ah, yes! Others lay down their lives for earthly kings, and *we* have a King of kings and Lord of lords, and if we could not lay down our lives in loyalty to Him, what would we think of ourselves! We have a good God, worthy of all confidence, and we trust Him. In proportion as we have knowledge of God, of the Bible, in proportion as we have grown in grace by seeking to walk in the

narrow way, in that same proportion our confidence is growing stronger and stronger.

CONFIDENCE INDICATIVE OF HEART CONDITION

The only question remaining is, Will we be found faithful? The Scriptures declare that He is faithful who has promised, and that He will do exceeding abundantly more than we could ask or think. He has determined that all who will receive the great blessing will be those who will demonstrate their loyalty to the fullest degree. Hence the Apostle urges, "Cast not away your confidence, which hath *great recompense of reward.*"

God will one day reward our confidence. Why is it that the Lord will especially reward our confidence? The reason is this: Our confidence in God represents our heart condition, and it will go down like a barometer in falling weather if we lose our faith. Our hearts cannot be wholly stayed on God except as we are strong in faith. The only instances in which Satan will be permitted to take away the confidence of God's people will be in the cases of some who have not been living up to their light. The Lord will permit such to go gradually into darkness.

So we are to keep firm hold of our confidence; for this assures us that God is our Father. We all know something of the wireless telegraphy which is now being used in a marvelous manner on the sea and on the land. And this is only a feeble illustration of the wireless communication that maintains between the true Christian and the Heavenly Lord. In every circumstance this confidence, leaning on the Lord, will look to Him. There will be the wireless communication between Father and child.

When the Lord's people find themselves in difficulty, they should reason like this: What is the Lord's will? What does His providence indicate? He has said that *all things* shall work together for good to me because I love Him; therefore, having confidence in

God, I am sure that all things shall indeed work out for my good. I have faith in His Wisdom and His Power and His Love. He could have protected me from this difficulty had He seen best. So the fact of its reaching me proves that He saw fit to permit it for a wise reason. He has promised that He will not suffer me to be tempted, tried, beyond what I am able to bear. As He is faithful, He will never fail to keep that good promise. So then, I will "not cast away my confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

CONFIDENCE IN GOD TO BE TESTED

If God would reward according to *works*, some of His children would get very little. The very ablest of God's people cannot do very much. We spend one-third of our [R5595 : page 377] time in sleep; we need perhaps eight hours more for preparing our food, etc.; and we have a thousand and one things to do in the remaining eight hours. How little time we have, after all, even if we have cut off many things that once took more or less of our time! The most intelligent people have very little time to spare.

Do your very best, and try to note how little you will be able to accomplish by the close of the day. Think of those five minutes, that half hour, etc., and count up and see how much you render to the Lord your God daily. We fear that each of us would be ashamed to see how little time the sum total would make. And if the reward depended on our works, it would surely be a very small reward. God knows also that some have more time at their disposal and some less, and that some have more talents and some less.

Some are able to give ten times as much as others. How much would you like to do for the Lord? How much do you *strive* to do for the Lord? It will be in proportion as you have confidence in Him. As you come to have more trust in the promises, you will try harder and harder to live up to all the terms and conditions of discipleship. If you have but little confidence in the Lord, you will be like the man who was told that if he would go to a certain place

he would find a fortune, and who replied, It is absurd to consider anything of the kind! If some one should say, Behind a curtain in a certain corner there is hidden a bag of gold, and any one who will go there for it may have it, it would be safe to say that not two persons out of a hundred would go to look for it.

God is testing your faith, your confidence, and our own. And, oh, that is worth so much more than all the wealth of the world! We have been invited to try for the great Prize. We said, Yes, Lord! Yes, Lord! Then He said, Will you be faithful under the conditions which I impose? I am watching to see how faithful you are every hour, every minute. I will protect you from the pitfalls in the way, as you strive to show forth My praises; I will uphold you in every trial. My dear children, I want to give to you a great blessing. You have all entered on a common basis. You would be very unequal in the race if I should take you according to your natural qualifications. I will judge according to your heart and how you do in little things. He that is faithful in the little things, in that which is least, will be faithful in that which is greatest. I will *reckon* the matter thus. That is a fair proposition, and exactly what the Lord says. God purposes to reward greatly all faithfulness.

THE NATURE OF THE PRESENT TEST

But there is another phase of the confidence. Bible students all over the world have been expecting certain things to occur; and we have been hoping that the Lord's time is near for the setting up of the Kingdom, the time for the fulfilment of the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come." We have been hoping for this; but if it should not come as soon as expected, we will still hold fast our confidence.

There are not many people in the world who are hoping to die soon; and it is only *our confidence* that makes *us* have this hope. If we did not have a strong confidence in the outcome, then we would not have the desire to pass beyond the veil. We are speaking of our confidence to those whose eyes of understanding have been

enlightened to see the lengths, the breadths, the heights and the depths of the love of our God, and to know something about the times and seasons of our Father's Plan.

The Apostle tells us, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that Day should overtake *you* as a thief. *Ye* are all children of the light, children of the Day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness." (1 Thess. 5:4,5.) God has promised that He will give His true children the light at the time appointed, and that they shall have the joy of understanding His Plan at the appropriate season.

"What more can He say
Than to us He hath said!"

The Editor has been rejoicing in these blessed experiences. Even if the time of our change should not come within ten years, what more should we ask? Are we not a blessed, happy people? Is not our God faithful? If any one knows anything better, let him take it. If any of you ever find anything better, we hope you will tell us. We know of nothing better nor half as good as what we have found in the Word of God. As the hymn expresses it:

"It satisfies my longings
As nothing else can do."

Personally, we can say, If God has some further experiences for us, we are glad that He has; if we need further polishing, we hope He will give it to us. If it takes a year to get the polishing necessary, we desire to have this time allotted. Or if He desires to have us do some work in the polishing of others, and if we should not get into the Kingdom ourself, we would be glad to have His will done.

We have sometimes asked, How many brethren would be willing to take a thousand dollars for what they know of the Truth? Not a hand was seen! Who would take ten thousand dollars? None!

Who would take a million [R5596 : page 377] dollars? Who will take the *whole world* in exchange for what he knows about the Divine character and the Divine Plan? Nobody! Then we said, You are not a badly discontented crowd, dear friends. If you feel so rich that you would take nothing in exchange for your knowledge of God, then you feel just as rich as we do.

CONFIDENCE LOST

The Editor has known from earliest childhood what it is to call God his Heavenly Father; for he had Christian parents. And then, when fifteen years of age, we gave Him our heart, and revered and worshiped Him with what amount of knowledge we had. Although indoctrinated along Calvinistic lines to believe that only the Elect would reach glory, and that all the non-elect would experience eternal torment, we were accustomed to think of ourself as one of the Elect, and to appreciate the Love of God, which had provided for the salvation of the Elect.

A few years later, however, reason began to assert itself over superstition. We inquired of ourself, Where *is* this Hell which you preach? What do you really *know* about it? Confessing our own ignorance, we went to our teachers and Elders; but to our amazement we found that they knew no more about it than ourself. Then we stopped preaching and began to think and to examine the creeds. We found that the difference between them was trivial. All had the one foundation of Heavenly salvation for the few and eternal woe for the thousands of millions.

The more we investigated, the more sure we felt that a great mistake had been made; that a *real God* could not have made such an arrangement as our creeds declared. We threw them all away; and thinking that the Bible was the basis for them all, we threw the Bible after them.

SOUL-HUNGER FOR GOD

But having once known our Heavenly Father, we could find no rest without Him. Our soul hungered for His love and care. We still held to the great fact that our Universe had an intelligent, personal Creator; for His Wisdom and Power were before us on every starry night. The more we studied anatomy, the more thoroughly we became convinced that all humanity, yea, every creature, is "fearfully and wonderfully made," and that the eye, the [R5596 : page 378] ear, the nerves, the power to move in response to mere thinking, could not have come by chance, could not have been evolved by a nature god. We worshiped the God of Wisdom and Power, and sought to know more of Him, confident that we should find Him good.

Left to the resources of our own brain, we reasoned, Could others and ourself possess as the gifts of our Creator the qualities of justice and love, which we esteem to be the very highest of our faculties, and yet the Creator Himself be devoid of these attributes? Our mind answered, Surely He who formed the eye to see and the ear to hear and who gave humanity the qualities of justice and love must possess these qualities in infinite measure.

Thus with the eyes of our understanding we beheld the great God of the Universe, infinite in Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power. Again we worshiped Him, rejoiced that we could have confidence in our God and realize that He had made neither the earth nor the race of mankind in vain, but that He had some wise, just, loving purpose in connection with our creation.

CONFIDENCE REGAINED

Our next thought was, Would not a just and loving God be pleased to make known His purposes to those of His creatures who desire to do His will? Would He be ashamed of His purposes? Would He ignore the qualities of mind which He has given us?

Again our mind answered, You may confidently seek God's Message to humanity. Thinking that we had already examined the Bible sufficiently, we turned our attention to heathen religions, only to find them less rational in some respects, though less fiendish, than our own creeds. Evidently the most intelligent peoples have been the most thoroughly seduced by Satan and his doctrines of demons, into believing the most horrible things respecting the Creator and His purposes toward His human creatures.

Finally, we resolved to begin anew the study of the Bible, first assuring ourself that our colored creed-spectacles were thoroughly broken and our mind entirely untrammelled. Gradually the Lord led us to clearer and yet clearer light upon His Word, until we found that the basis of all our difficulty lay in the fact that we had followed Satan's lie told to Mother Eve in Eden – "Ye shall *not* surely die." From that time onward the entire Bible became illuminated, grand, beautiful, harmonious; and now it stands pre-eminent before our mind as God's Word!

No tongue or pen can tell the peace, the joy and the blessing which a clear knowledge of the true God has brought into our heart and life. The Story of God's Wisdom, Justice, Power and Love fully satisfies the cravings of both our head and our heart. We are seeking no further. There is nothing more to be desired than to get this wonderful Story more clearly before our mind, and to appreciate more and more the Divine character as illustrated by the great Divine Plan of the Ages, which our Heavenly Father is gradually outworking for the blessing, first of the Church, and afterwards of all the families of the earth.

