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HIS SERVANTS WE ARE TO WHOM WE RENDER SERVICE

"For ye were sometimes [once] darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light." – Ephesians 5:8.

JOHN the beloved Apostle of Jesus wrote, "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." This figure of speech pervades the entire Bible. Everywhere light stands for Truth, for righteousness; and darkness represents error, superstition, sin. Our Lord Jesus being in full harmony with the Father, was the Light of the world. To this end came He into the world. One of the titles He assumed was "The light of the world." (John 8:12.) Although He was in the world, the world knew Him not. They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

The Apostle Paul explains that the darkness on the part of the world comes either directly or indirectly from the Adversary. He says that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." Then he proceeds to tell us why this is so. Satan does this "lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," shine into their hearts. In order to keep mankind away from God, Satan has put light for darkness and darkness for light. This has been largely through good people, whom Satan has more or less used, ignorantly on their part, as his tools. As a matter of fact, darkness is very gross in the world, and light is seen only by the few. Thus the Apostle prays for the Church that the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened, indicating that the eyes of even the consecrated people of God are not fully enlightened, not fully opened. He prays for this in order that they may [R5719 : page 200] be able to comprehend what is the length, the breadth, the height and the depth of the love of God, the love of Christ, which passeth all understanding.

We perceive, then, that to see God – to see the Truth, to know the deep things of God – is to have a very glorious conception of the Almighty, of His character and of His Plan. We see that the Adversary tries to keep us in the dark, and that God is permitting this for a time – permitting the ignorance, superstition, sin, darkness, which envelops mankind. But those who learn of the Savior whom God has provided, who put themselves into His hands, who study God's Word, and thus struggle against the darkness of error, superstition and infirmity, get their eyes more widely open. As they do this, they become stronger of character. So there is a good purpose served in these battles. We are, therefore, to maintain a good fight against sin and against selfishness.

THE TRANSFER FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

A question may be asked as to how we pass from the one class to the other, how we were changed from being children of darkness to being children of light. We were once of the darkness class. We were once in ignorance and misunderstanding of God – in unbelief. We were confused with the gloom of the Dark Ages. But now we are enjoying the light. No one of us as yet has full light, but some grow more rapidly than others in grace, in knowledge and in love. After our begetting of the Spirit we progress in the development of the fruits of the Spirit; we are transformed in mind and finally perfected in the First Resurrection.

This transfer from darkness to light, then, is accomplished in a more or less gradual way. The first thing we needed was knowledge – to have some measure, some glimpse of light. So if we were fortunate enough to have, as natural men and women, some glimpse of God's goodness, some appreciation logically of what is Truth and what is falsehood, what is reasonable and what is unreasonable – to that extent we were favored in our birth. The Lord intimates that not all are called, not all are drawn. (John

6:37,44; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29.) To have this measure of light before we consecrate ourselves to God through Christ indicates that circumstances have favored us; either the circumstances of our birth or of our lives have been favorable to us. Under these favorable influences our eyes have been to some degree opened; and we have become more and more ready to sacrifice everything to obtain the light.

But if we are not of the right disposition, when we get a little light we prefer to fall back into the darkness rather than to walk in the light and to have the difficulties and trials which loyalty to the light will bring. In order to be worthy of more light we must have the character which will follow the light as it is seen. "If any man will be My disciple," said the Master, "let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me" – let him give up his own will, deny *himself, die* to himself, and give himself fully into the hands of the Lord.

"CHILDREN OF LIGHT" TO BE PROVEN

To those who see but dimly, this is a large contract. But those who love righteousness and hate iniquity to the extreme will follow the light *whatever the cost*. The **[R5719 : page 201]** Lord is gracious to these; and when they consecrate themselves to Him, on His terms, He gives them the begetting of the Holy Spirit. This is the start of a new influx of light; for the natural man cannot receive the deep things of God, because they are spiritually discerned. Only the spiritual can grasp them. (1 Corinthians 2:9-14.) Then the Apostle proceeds to say that we, the Church, are able to understand these things, yea, the deep things of God, because we are begotten of God, begotten as New Creatures, to the new nature. We do not understand them *all* from the start, but more and more they are revealed to us as we progress in the narrow way. This spiritual understanding is a guiding light, an inspiration to righteousness; it

creates an enthusiasm for righteousness. Thus we become children of the light.

After we have once become children of light, there are testings, provings, for us to undergo. The Lord Jesus tells us that if we would be faithful to the light we must let our light so shine as to show forth the praises of our Father in Heaven. He forewarns us that many will not appreciate our good works, but will say all manner of evil against us falsely, for His name's sake. He assures us that the children of darkness hate the children of light; but He admonishes that in these experiences we should "rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in Heaven." Such is the sentiment of the children of the light that they will rejoice even in persecution and in tribulation. As they let the light, the Truth, shine out, the error will be manifested to those of right understanding and of noble heart. The children of the darkness, of the error, will be angry with us for showing up the error in which they are entrenched, and will persecute us as they did the Master.

THE FINAL TEST OF THE CHURCH

It is reasonable to expect that the time will yet come when all who are faithful to the Lord will be treated in like manner as was our Lord. Indeed, it is already coming. It behooves us individually to put on the whole armor of light, that we may be able to withstand whatever persecution comes upon us from the blinded followers of the Adversary. It does not necessarily follow that the instruments of Satan are murderers and thugs. When we look back at our Lord's First Advent, we see that those who were most successfully used of the Adversary against our Lord Jesus were the chief religionists, the Scribes, the Pharisees, the Doctors of the Jewish Law – professedly men of God and leaders of His people. But "His servants ye are to whom ye render service," said the Lord. Those, therefore, who rendered service in the way of persecuting the

Master, and finally in crucifying Him, were the servants of Satan, no matter whose servants they thought they were.

But we are not to think that because of this they will be condemned to eternal torture. We are to remember, too, that they were servants of Satan partially on account of ignorance. As the Apostle Peter said to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." St. Paul also bears witness of this fact, saying, "For if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." They did these things because they were the *blinded* servants of Satan, though if their hearts had been true and humble, they would have been able to see, as did the faithful "remnant" of Israel – the "Israelites indeed." The Jews who crucified Jesus went into an awful time of trouble therefor; but soon now, we believe, they shall "look upon Him [with the eye of faith] whom they pierced, and shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for His only son"; and God "will pour upon them the Spirit of prayer and of supplication." – Zechariah 12:9,10.

And so presumably today there are really good men who are servants of Satan and do not know it. If any know and yet do such evil works, it would seem that they will have a very serious account to settle. God alone knows the culpability of each. Their enlightenment too is near, and great will be the confusion of face of those who, because of unfaithfulness, have been instruments of the Adversary to persecute, malign and afflict the true children of God, who faithfully proclaimed the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

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