Resurrection Morn

See how the stone is rolled away,
He in the grave no more doth lay,
All hail Him now the King of Kings,
Earth is attuned, all nature sings.

Glad skies and golden rays adorn
To greet this happy Easter morn,
Death conquered all, He died, now lives,
Salvation to His own He gives.

How bright the dawn of morning glows,
Morn of all morns when Christ arose,
He hath e'er vanquished grief and scorn,
Forever hail this Easter morn.
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COVER—The poem appearing on the cover was written especially for this issue by Mrs. J. A. Pastoor
WHAT A GLORIOUS season for the Church of Christ in the midst of the world is Lent! During the six weeks prior to Easter she fittingly commemorates the suffering and death of her Saviour. And how significant is this base of the revelation of our Lord! To us significance attests the very fact of its lengthy treatment in the Gospel narrative as compared to all other events concerning Him. Also, we surely understand, exactly this suffering and death is the purpose of His incarnation; thru it only is Easter possible. The sacrifice of our Savior is the keystone in the beautiful arch that begins with Christmas and ends in His glorification in the sanctuary with the Father.

Inexhaustibly rich is the gospel in its picture of the suffering Christ. From many angles the Church may meditate on this perfect work of her Priest-Prophet-King. And, too, how varied the points of view that can be taken to see the great significance of His ransoming work.

Looking at the program of suffering as a whole in this brief article it is certainly impossible to say "all". Only a bare suggestive outline can be given. To this we submit for thought; the significance of the passion of our Lord Jesus from the point of view of its eternal ordination, its temporal realization, and its eternal fruit of glory.

That the suffering of Jesus finds its ultimate cause and origin in God's eternal counsel will stand without contradiction before the consciousness of the believing Church. After all, even the very details of life, often apparently insignificant, are there engraved for causal realization. Also, none of the glories of the church can be understood or be of comfort apart from the certainty of its eternal decree. Then it certainly must follow that such is the case in regard to this momentous, forever unfathomable, infinitely comforting sacrifice of our Lord, God's very own Son in the flesh. The Father from eternity ordained not only the coming of Jesus but also His whole earthly sojourn among us, including all His suffering between His birth and resurrection. Anointed there-was He with all its implications. That anointing is so rich in comfort for the Church because it signifies not only the appointment but also the capacitation to this work. And even so the picture is not complete, nay, even incorrect. The suffering of our Lord is not one of many
to-be-realized events but it is the very central hub of them all—without which all others would make no sense, would even be impossible. Because of that central significance in the counsel of God, it is plain that there must always be the starting point of every profitable contemplation of Christ's suffering and death after it has been realized in the fulness of time. Lent without the Scriptural background of the counsel is worse than vain, is modernism, and robs the Church of her “only comfort”.

But in the light of the above the realization in time of the decree also (and only) becomes detailedly rich. Then every step of the suffering becomes a treasure of comfort inexhaustible and always again new. Ever again, year after year, we can then follow “the man of sorrows” along the way from dark Gethsemane to the tomb without depletion of the wonder of grace. His lowly birth ceases to be offensive, seen in the light of the decree; His innumerable reproaches become guarantees of His genuineness when viewed as the revelation of the eternal will; even His shameful death on the accursed tree, with all the attendant mocks and jeers of sin’s children about Him, becomes a treasure beyond human computation when once it is evident that “the Christ ought so to have suffered”. Then we see Prophet-Jesus as He knows and reveals the Father; we see King-Jesus as He battles sin, Satan and all wickedness to the finish and thru (not in spite of) suffering and death become the royal Victor; we see Priest-Jesus, whose perfections of that office lay among other facts, herein that he united in Himself both priest and sacrifice, thru that sacrifice of Himself gained entrance into the holiest of all, never again forced to leave. Verily the passion and decease of our Saviour is properly and, if correctly done, profitably observed by His church. And for that the Church has an abundance of material in the Scripture upon which she may meditate to reach those “visions of comfort”.

So too, and finally, we can and shall behold Jesus, of Whom it was “written in the volume of the book”, having answered to the “will of Him” that sent Him, seated at “the right hand of God” in glory. In faith now we contemplate the glory of it for “He appeared...to put away sin” and DID it. His resurrection attests to that, for it is the Father’s seal of approval of all His work and so of our justification. In hope, which ever grows and becomes stronger thru prayerful and diligent, individual and congregational commemoration of this season of events, we reach forward to the eternal rejoicing of heaven. For we know that “the glories that abide” will be, consciously, only possible in and thru the “Lamb slain”...yet now for ever “standing before the great throne because only in the face of the slain Lamb can we SEE God.

The passion season reaches back for ground, beholds the realization in time and stretches forth to the “hope perfect”. May this lent season thereunto profit us and our Lord be glorified among us.

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far to small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my a...
EQUIPPED TO BE A GOOD SOLDIER

IN A RECENT issue of Beacon Lights we discussed the "uncertainty of the times" and its implications and effects upon the decisions of our young people, especially insofar as service in our armed forces creates problems in regard to the choosing of a life vocation and marriage.

We expressed the thought at that time that other departments of their lives are also touched and effected by these things, upon which we would perhaps comment at a later date.

The lives of our Christian young men who face induction are not run in the normal course which we and they would choose. The normal way would be that they live at home under parental guidance and control; that they finish their education to equip them for whatever their calling or vocation may be; that they live with and in the midst of God's people in His church, being active in the affairs of the church such as catechism, societies, singing, etc.

They normally would commence their chosen vocation or calling and seek out a suitable life partner. This is the way we and they would choose to arrange their lives.

Now God in His providence has arranged things in such a way that the normal life of most of our boys is not to run in this usual channel. If these young men are really God's people then this interruption of the usual routine and this channelling of their lives in other ways also comes to them in His grace, for ALL things work together for good to those who fear God and who are the called according to His purpose.

Under the present stress of troublous and uncertain times, our young men face the disruption of their lives for a time and at a time when they are in their formative years; years during which their home-life and their church-life serve as a means in God's hand to instruct, guide and control them in the ways of God. They are compelled to leave the security of their homes and church and live their lives in surroundings and among companions who certainly would not be of our choosing.

The instruction in the home and in the church is designed to fit and equip the young man to assume his God-given place in the world in accordance with God's plan and purpose with him. Knowing that in all probability he will be faced with the necessity of serving a term of years in military service, his attention may be directed to giving special thought and attention to such instruction as may specifically fit and equip him for both the defensive and offensive needs that will be his while in the service.

Defensively he has need of a sound knowledge of the truth of Scripture and Reformed doctrine, in order that he may not be easily swayed from the truth by all the pseudo and half-truth with which he will come into contact. He will need a well-grounded knowledge of God's precepts and commandments in order that he may recognize the evil in the various and varied temptations which will continually surround and attempt to assail him. Just as his military service itself
instructs him in all the art of defensively protecting his country from all its enemies, so his pre-induction training in home and school and church must serve to equip him to do battle with all the evil forces to which he will be exposed while living in the midst of an evil world and far from home and church influence.

Not mere instruction and knowledge can so fit him. Prayerful instruction and instruction in prayer are needful; prayer for grace and strength to use the knowledge received and the instruction given that, by grace, they may serve as an armor, shield, helmet and buckler against every evil in the battle.

There is also an offensive battle that must be prepared for. The young man must be equipped with the knowledge of God and thoroughly instructed in His Word in order to testify before the world in which he will be living, of the God in whom he believes. Not only must he learn to testify against the evil surrounding him, but he may also be given the opportunity to witness for the truth positively at the proper time. God may lead across his path those whom He wills shall come to a knowledge of salvation through means of his witness and testimony. For this reason also he must be well equipped to tactfully and effectively expound the word of truth and the way of salvation; God working by His grace and Spirit in such as shall be saved.

Preparing for such a task is not an easy matter. It requires much time, much thought, much study and much prayer.

The preparation can't be put off. You will have to begin when you are very young because usually you are still quite young when the need for putting this instruction into practice becomes a reality. So—"study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."—S.D.Y.
SUFFERING FOR CHRIST’S SAKE

I WAS ALMOST going to begin this article with the question: Did you ever suffer? But, friends, suffering, as we all know, is common to all men everywhere. Sooner or later it becomes the experience of every man, woman and child, for even though we all dread it and try to avoid it, yet even the strongest, the wisest and the “best” cannot escape it. And therefore, as it stands, the question is far too general.

So we will have to change it a bit. And then I would like to put it like this: Have you ever suffered for Christ’s sake? That, friends, is the question which I really had in mind. And in that form, it is one that is extremely important, so important in fact, that unless we are able to answer it in the affirmative, we cannot and may not sing and confess that it is well with our soul.

For we have again come to that beautiful season of the year which is known among us as the Lenten season. We say “beautiful” for as we know, during this season we commemorate the suffering and death of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. We contemplate the fact that for our sake He was despised and rejected, afflicted and forsaken, in order that through His poverty we might be made rich.

And it is well that we do so, for apart from the suffering and death of Christ, there is no hope for us. In ourselves we are guilty and depraved, and no gold or silver, no man or angel, nothing in all the world can atone for our sin. But by the one sacrifice of the Lamb of God we are again reconciled with God and have been made heirs of eternal life. In fact, through that one sacrifice we are not only restored to the original position which once was ours in the first Paradise, but we shall once be exalted to the Paradise above, which no man, no devil or angel, shall ever take from us.

Therefore it is not strange that the redeemed church of God sings:

“When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.”

—and that she exclaims with the apostle: “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ, my Lord!”

And for the same reason this cross of Christ is the very heart of the Bible. Regardless where you turn to its pages, always again you stand face to face with the blessed truth, that He was afflicted in our behalf and that by His stripes we are healed. For that cross is the most glorious revelation of the wisdom and power of God, and it is the only hope of our redemption both for time and eternity.

But, friends, the same Bible which emphasizes that Christ suffered for us, emphasizes also that we must suffer for Him. It reminds us not only that He suffered for our sake, but also that we must suffer for His sake. In fact, it tells us plainly that unless we bear His suffering we must not expect to share
in His glory. Hence, according to God's Word, in spite of the fact that Christ suffered and died for us, we can have no victory without a battle, no crown without a cross, and no glory unless we suffer.

And the reason why this should be so is evident. For Christ not only suffered and died, but He also rose again. And today, He is not only seated at the right hand of God, in glory and majesty, but He also lives in the hearts of His people. And dwelling in their hearts, He imparts to them His salvation and life, so that His church has indeed become the light of the world, a city on a hill which cannot remain hid. Since He lives, we live.

And since we have this new life in a sinful world, it must needs spell suffering for us. For the world lieth in darkness, and hates the light. And also the devil and our own sinful flesh are opposed to it. Therefore, it cannot be otherwise, in the measure that Christ truly lives in our hearts, the world will despise and ridicule us. In the measure that we glory in the cross, we will be compelled to bear the reproach of Christ. And the more we reveal the life from above, the more we will experience that the world hates the light and that it is an enemy of the cross.

Suffering for Christ's sake, therefore, is an absolute must. Not because Christ's work for us is insufficient. Nor because the effect of His suffering depends upon our suffering. But because our suffering is the inevitable result of His suffering. Hence, you cannot have the one without the other. Wherever you find the blood of atonement, there you will also find tension, battle and strife for Christ's sake. While on the other hand, not to experience this suffering, can only mean that we are still strangers at the cross and that we are none of His.

And yet, friends, we find so little of that suffering today. The church today, generally speaking, is at ease. She has become rich and popular and enjoys the favor and friendship of the world. In fact, she seems to feel so well at home in this present world and gets along so well, even with the enemies of the cross, that it almost seems ridiculous to speak of suffering for Christ's sake.

And the reason for that, you may be sure, is not that the world is gradually getting better and is more tolerant today than in days gone by. For Scripture teaches us that the world does not improve, but rather develops in sin, and therefore is an enemy of the truth today more than ever before. But the reason why the church suffers so little today is because she has adopted the pattern of the world and fails to reveal the life of Christ.

To gain the favor of the masses, she has toned down the doctrine of the cross. To avoid the reproach of Christ, she has removed the lines of demarcation, by doing away with the doctrine of the antithesis. And by becoming more like the sinful world instead of more like the Master, she became a stranger to that suffering which is the very mark of the children of God.

But, friends, what is true of the church in general, is true only too often also of us. For we too hate to suffer and also for us it is difficult always consistently and willingly to bear the shame of the cross. In fact, our desire to be popular, our craving for money, and our urge for "fun" always again tempt us to deny Christ and to go the way of the crowd. And only too often, we do deny Him and fail to shoulder His cross.

And that is bad. For thus we take sides with the enemy, we hide Christ's glory, and we lose the assurance that we are children of light. And it is al—
foolish. For by grace it has been given unto us, not only to believe on His name, but also to suffer for His sake. And Christ’s word still stands: “Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you...for my sake...for great is your reward in heaven.”

Therefore, friends, during this Passion season, as we commemorate the suffering of Christ for us, may we be reminded also of our duty to suffer for Him. And by His grace may it spur us on more willingly to deny ourselves, to take up our cross, and follow Him. True it is, in the measure that we do, we will experience suffering for Christ’s sake.

But remember: “This is a faithful saying...if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him.” And until that day comes, let us be disciplined by that other word; “If we deny Him, He also will deny us.”

THE BIBLE—OUR COMFORT

When troubles and dangers beset on our way, When dark clouds gather from day unto day, Open your Bible, its’ rich truths then read, A tower of strength to guide and to lead.

All its precious pages satisfies our soul, Telling that all things are under His control, It eases all the pain for those in distress, Finding comfort that He in all things doth bless.

The Bible satisfies in all our yearning, These things were thus written for our learning, No need in darkness do we have to grope, Through patience and comfort of them we have hope.

It tells of joys to come, for each a place, Where someday we’ll see Him face to face, There’ll be no more sighing, no more sorrow, No more dying in that blest tomorrow.

There’ll be light after darkness, gain after loss, His own are saved by the way of the cross, Just open your Bible and comforted be, There is love, life and hope for you and for me.

Jeanette Pastoor
PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS

AGAIN THIS was news in our papers. Although it was reported last month in our newspapers, I thought it of such significance that we can devote space to it in our Current Comments.

This time anti-semitic propaganda and persecution broke out in Russia. That there was persecution and mass-murders in Russia is not a new thing for us. But that it was directed against the Jews caused us to take notice. It was repeating the same pattern as the Nazi’s hatred of the Jews and their plans for world domination. It again impressed us with the plight of the Jews since the Bible times.

The Jews are descendents of Shem. The Shemites, Semitic peoples, in the Old Testament were the recipients of the blessings of Shem. Noah had said of Shem, “Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant.” Of Japheth Noah said, “God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem.” These prophecies were spiritual for if we consider the actual history of the Shemites, it shows that the reverse is true.

In the New Testament times it is startling to read the record of the persecution of the Jews.

August, A. D. 70 — Destruction of Jerusalem: 1,100,000 Jews killed.
A.D. 132-135 — The defeating of Bar-Kochba: 500,000 Jews killed.
May to July, 1096 — 12,000 Jews killed in the Rhinelard, Germany.

November, 1290 — Expulsion of all Jews (over 16,000) from England, under the threat of punishment by hanging. Permission to return only after 370 years.
April to Autumn, 1928 — 100,000 Jews killed in Franconia, Bavaria, and Austria.
September 1306 — Expulsion of 100,000 Jews from France under threat of death.
August 1492 — Expulsion of 300,000 Jews from Spain by the Inquisition.
November 1648 — Slaughter of 12,000 Jews in Narol, Poland by the Cossacks.
1648-58 — Death of about 400,000 Jews in the Russo-Polish-Swedish war.
1939-45 — Murder of many hundreds of Jews during the years of the second world war.

This list you will find in The Dawn of World Redemption, by Erich Sauer, page 119. Probably all the Jewish persecutions are not listed here. The above list, however, is impressive enough. And with the present beginning of Jewish persecution in Russia we cannot help but ask ourselves, why? For undoubtedly the Russian hatred is not just a passing hatred. It will gather force and again we shall read of its force of destruction in the near future.

Some always point to the Jewish people themselves. Their character and manner of living becomes obnoxious to the peoples among whom they have been dispersed since the earliest times. That is given as the cause of their persecution. Without a doubt it occasions...
outburst of persecution, but it cannot be the underlying reason. Essentially they are not more obnoxious than some other peoples.

That the Jewish nation has been scattered over the earth and has become the “tormenting thorn of the world” is to be traced to its rejection of the Christ. When they cried out, “His blood be upon us and upon our children,” then the curse of God predicted began to be fulfilled upon them.

It is now a fact that they are a nation. But shall it become the permanent home of the Jews from all over the world, and shall the curse of God upon them be lifted? Not until there is a return to Christ. That is not yet the principle of the Jewish nation. God shall gather His people from among the Jews, of course.

This persecution of the Jews ought to be a matter of deep humiliation for all peoples, and for all Christians. Paul speaks to the Gentiles in Romans, exhorting them to deep humility in view of God’s rejection of the Jewish people.

In Romans 11:20, “Well, by their unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: 21. for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare thee.”

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AT GOLGOTHA

They mocked and scorned the Son of God
With cruel laughs and jeers,
The crown of thorns upon His head
Brought forth deriding sneers.

Away with Him they then did cry,
Of Him we'll have no part,
Contempt, disdain and haughty pride
O'erflowed within each heart.

Not only they, but also I
Would cast my Lord away,
Not blameless in His sight I stand,
“Forgiveness,” this I pray.

—Mrs. J. A. Pastoor
LABOR—ITS SPIRITUAL MOTIVATION

IF WHAT WE have said in previous articles about labor and the accompanying curse is true, then the question arises, how is there still sense and inducement for the Christian to be interested and faithful in his work?

Of course we can point to the precept of the Bible to direct our decision. The Bible teaches us that we shall do the good, seek the earthly welfare and advancement of our neighbor, that we shall also remember the poor and needy. And then to a certain rather large extent we do this quite spontaneously, without even knowing the Scriptural precept. It is very natural for the father and mother to labor and plan and exert themselves to establish their home and provide for the continual needs of their children to toil with boundless effort when they are sick or in danger. It is very natural and spontaneous when the government labors and toils to plan and provide the welfare and security and development of the nation.

How plainly this is given with the very nature of the creature, may surely appear from the fact also, that even the non-rational creature does this. Bird and beast go to great effort and pains to provide for and advance the welfare of their offspring, and also use great effort to preserve and advance their community, their colony or herd.

This also explains to some extent why the curse that is in the world does not destroy the creature or make impossible its development. There is an increased urge, an operation of law through which God provides for the maintenance and development of life in the historical process even when the creature is not conscious of it, or also as in the case of man when this law is not consciously, willingly, obediently heard, observed and followed.

But now this law which we have seen to operate in the providence of God has a very definite meaning for man as servant of the Lord and as Christian. It means that he shall see and know this law especially as it is verbally inculcated through God's spoken revelation.

To love thy neighbor as thyself, to seek his advantage, welfare, comfort, to labor with the hands to provide for self, the neighbor, the poor is the revealed will of God.

In many simple relations of life this is rather easy to discern and honor. It is quite simple for a father and mother to see the good of caring for their children, quite simple for a government official to be concerned for the welfare and prosperity of his constituency, also for a doctor serving his patients, for a nurse comforting and relieving her charge. And of course this can be extended to food production and distribution, clothing, housing, fuel-supply, and many more things.

However when we come to our more luxurious enjoyments this does not seem so simple. Can we also here apply the principle of doing good to our fellow man?
Is it really so that we must work with devotion and love in all these things. Is it out of love to our neighbor, out of the urge to do the good when as draftsman I toil with hand and mind and heart to make an even more luxurious car, an ever more palatial style of home? Is it by the urge of the law of God to love my neighbor and serve him, that I conceive and create new delicacies, new dazzle in clothing or even that I find my field of labor in things that are ultimately injurious, such as in the liquor industry, in questionable pleasures?

When we approach the question at this phase it evidently raises difficult problems.

For there are surely many Christians who are in some form or other engaged in these industries. And what is the motivation of their work? There are several possible answers or combinations of answers here. Can they say, "Well, I do the work for the wage it offers, for the means to support my family, my church, the poor, the kingdom of God?" Or shall we say that we work simply because it is expected of us for the wage we command, it is a matter of equity, of labor and pay, pure and simple, and we desire to give testimony in our honest effort for value received?

Or can we possibly take the attitude that it belongs to our calling in the culture mandate of history to develop all things and all of life so that the culture in history, the course of sin and grace can reach its full end also by our personal participation in labor?

These are apparently some of the possible attitudes that the Christian can assume in his labor in his life's calling.

And here is surely a field for serious Christian reflection. It is hardly possible that our whole field of daily work activity is not concerned with these questions. Insofar as the answer is hard to give we may be inclined to say these are indifferent things which are left to the individual conscience of the free Christian. However, it has been well said that the existence of indifferent things in the field of moral conduct is not a privilege, but a rebuke to our ignorance and insensitivity. God's law knows of no indifferent things. And in the measure that God's people grow in sanctification, the circle of indifferent things grows smaller, or rather shifts over so that the grosser fall out, as being spiritually solved by an enlightened choice, and new issues not noticed before, now enter the circle of serious moral consideration.

So it is with the question, the daily question, of our work.

Why do we engage in it? How do we fulfill the law of God in it, even in activities that seem to us rather useless, fruitless, vain?

Perhaps it is rather natural to turn to the Scriptures on the institution of servants and slaves, for this at least in part can shed light. There are also undoubtedly other light-rays in the Bible on this point. For it is not only the servant that works but also the master, the employer.

In a following article we hope to explore these Scriptural materials.
WHEN THE APOSTLE Paul preached the true God to the idol worshipping Romans of old, he stood upon a prominence known as Mars' Hill, named after the Roman god of war, from which our current month also derives its name. To the Romans, Mars was more than a mere fighter; they regarded him as a god who could do almost anything because he was so strong. On his altar were offered horses, sheep, wolves, magpies and vultures. In going to battle the Romans carried a cage of chickens sacred to Mars. Just before the battle, corn would be offered to these “sacred fowl”—if it was greedily eaten, Mars was on their side; if rejected, the day would go ill for them.

But it is not the affairs of the ancient Romans in regards to their idols that concerns us but rather the works of the Almighty God in nature. And although the name of this month has a heathen origin, we know that this transition month displays many wonders of God’s wisdom and power. It is a month that partakes of winter and of spring, being neither one or the other, but often a violent mixture of the two. We have been aware of the increasing length of days and of the growing power of the sun. The result is the often high wind and violent storms that characterize the month.

Weather is, broadly speaking, the clashing of air masses. The greater the variations in temperature, the more violent the weather. There are two main air mass sources that cause our weather, namely, polar air and tropical air. During winter the polar air has the dominance in the main, but as the heat of the sun increases in our hemisphere and this in turn warms the atmosphere, the tropical or gulf air is bolstered and begins shoving further northward. The colder Canadian air in disputing this advance gives rise to what we might term a battle of the masses resulting in turbulence, high winds, sudden temperature changes, etc. This explanation would sound naive to a trained weather man no doubt, but it is the main reason for the changeable weather of March and we know that all the wind, snow, rain, sunshine, cold, warmth are directed not by chance but by our heavenly Father, and serve His inscrutable purposes.

The first stirrings of the great annual spectacle of the resurrection becomes manifest in March. The first wild flower can be seen in bloom, often pushing through the melting snow in marshy places. It is not a flower to elicit exclamations because of its beauty or fragrance, for it is ugly and has a repulsive odor. It is called skunk cabbage. It appears as a thick fleshy stem on which are crowded tiny flowers, this in turn being covered by a green, brown or purple striped hood. Its fragrance can be noted by the fact that on sunny days it attracts the same flies that often are attracted to carrion. Its later manifestation is a rosette of pale green leaves that are quite handsome.

Toward the end of the month we sometimes find our next wild flower which—
the skunk cabbage heads in the Spring procession. It is the hepatica. It is a beautiful flower appearing above the dead leaves, born on hairy stems and gazing at the sun through leafless tree tops. The birds also are beginning their annual journey to the regions where families are reared and as far as casual observation is concerned, is heralded by the familiar robin, whose cheerful song of “cheer-i-u, cheeriup” is heard morning and evening in the lengthening days of March. Along the streams the pussy willows, always a harbinger of Spring, are showing their fuzzy catkins and in our childhood were synonymous with Spring as each child vied to be first to present teacher with a “bouquet” of pussy willows.

On sunny days we often see a butterfly that has a quick jerky manner of flight; dark brown with a yellow border on its wings. It is called the mourning cloak. It is one of the few butterflies that hibernates and is brought out by the warming rays of the March sun.

When we look upward in the month of March we can see that the constellations have changed position, telling us that not only the changing positions of the stars and planets but the northward advance of the sun is the means that God uses to awaken the earth from its winter sleep. This northward movement of the sun is apparent for actually it is the tilt of the earth that determines the angle of the sun’s rays striking the earth. If our eyes would be able to perceive all the activity below the surface of the earth in say an acre of land on a warm sunny day, we would be amazed—to put it mildly. Processes that science with all its research is not able to fully explain. Before the green grass and flowers can carpet our imaginary acre there must be complex chemical processes whereby sunshine, rain, water, and the elements in the soil are worked by the fingers of God to produce the beauty of nature. Were man to assemble these raw materials, he would not be able to produce one blade of grass, thousands of which he often carelessly crushes underfoot. Day by day, without noise or commotion, these wonderful processes continue and gradually the brown field becomes green and the buds of the trees become tiny leaves and so the resurrection becomes a reality before our very eyes.

It is all because these growing things contain life—life which only God can produce and without which these very building ingredients, namely, water, air, sun and soil would hasten the opposite state—death. If we dig a hole and place in it a sturdy fence post next to an insignificant sapling, we know that after a very few years the fence post will lie rotting and broken under the boughs of the former sapling. The same means have produced both; the healthy tree and the rotting post. May we as covenant young people be deeply thankful for that principle of life which God has instilled in our hearts for then His Word will cause us to grow not into dead rotting timber but into trees planted by the river, whose leaves shall not wither.

March is truly the resurrection month in nature when life is brought out of apparent death, but we know that after a few months all these beauties shall again fade and die. But we look for a resurrection from actual death—the eternal life—and beauty that shall never fade; the beauty of a new heavens and a new earth. May we thus strive to see and desire the spiritual fulfillment of these works of our heavenly Father in His works around us so that God’s resurrection in nature may make us yearn for His resurrection of our vile bodies into glorified bodies in which we can serve Him perfectly.
COMMUNISM
PART III
THE TACTICS OF ITS SECRET CONTROLLING POWERS IN BRINGING ABOUT THE "FALLING AWAY"

The dark councils of Communism's secret controlling powers (that is the devil and his "sacred cow" Freemasonry) in bringing the "falling away" (II Thess. 2:3) are fivefold. The first is the banishment of religion from all public institutions, and from all departments of government; and as a mark of triumph of this policy, the removal of all Christian symbols, such as the Cross, prayer, recognition of God's presence, Scripture reading, etc., from the legislative assemblies, the courts of justice, the public hospitals, schools, libraries, colleges, etc. I do not have to explain how well this has been accomplished within our own United States. Oh, yes, they offer prayer to God, but not to Christ Jesus. Therefore they do not pray to God at all. It is nothing more than sheer hypocrisy. John 14:6 will settle this matter once and for all. The second dark council is the secularization of marriage and of the family; that is by reducing the sanctity of the same to a level to that of the animal kingdom. The third council is the establishment of a state system of so-called education which at least in its primary stages shall be obligatory, free of costs, and conducted by the laity. It is interesting to notice that the atheistic and state-sponsored and controlled education in both Europe and America was not heard of before the American Revolution—after Freemasonry had been in existence some sixty years. The fourth dark council of Communism's secret controlling powers is the complete freedom of worship (at least for all religions except the true one). Here Satan uses another means to destroy true Christianity. He puts up a counterfeit; he suggests a substitute. He knows that the people are religious at heart and will worship something else if they do not worship God. This counterfeit Christianity does not look like a wolf at all. It looks just like a lamb which makes people think it is the Lamb of God or the Lord Jesus Christ. This creature of Satan is false religion. It has all sorts of forms and varieties, or it tries to suit everybody. It is found in those faiths which: that men are good at heart; that sin is a matter of the heart; that sin is not so bad after all; that God is too good to send anybody to hell; that Jesus came to save everybody; that human nature is all right; that heaven will be open to all those who are baptized, have a membership in some church, celebrate the Lord's Supper, try to keep the Golden Rule, etc. The mischief of these false faiths is that so often they profess to believe in the Bible; they sing the old familiar songs of Zion; they recite the Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer; they call themselves by the orthodox names; they look like lambs, but they have Satan's voice. For all their pleasant appearance and the "good" these religions do, they destroy the work of Christ as much as the anti-Christian governments do. The two work hand in hand. They are both tools in the hands of Satan. And I hasten to add that Satan always works his hardest and w.
of the True Church in order to disrupt all his might in the purest manifestation it and if possible deceive the very elect. This is the reason why the True Church is always at war and disrupted by all kinds of heresies and schisms. The fifth dark council is the unrestrained liberty of the Press, radio, and television, even in the propagation of irreligious doctrines, and of principles subversive of morality; similar freedom for the stage, the cinema, and for all manner of public activities even when most injurious to the public interest, such as the operation of the betting and gambling agencies, the operation of night clubs, dance halls, houses of prostitution, the liquor traffic, etc. To prove that the above statements are true, I will quote a few extracts from the secret documents of the Masonic Lodge, such as the Illuminati and the Alta Vendita. These documents were communicated by people who were at one time zealous supporters of Freemasonry and have been admitted to some of its inner secrets, but afterwards repented and left its ranks. The extracts are as follows:

"To reinstate man in his primitive right of equality and liberty, we must begin by destroying all religion and civil society and finish by the destruction of all property (viz., property rights). A time shall come when man shall acknowledge no other law but the great book of nature. This revolution shall be the work of secret societies.

"It is necessary to establish a universal regime and empire over the whole world.—Under the new empire all other governments must be able to pursue their usual progress except that of hindering the Order from attaining its end.

"Despotism has robbed men of their liberty. How can the weak obtain protection? —Nothing can bring this about but secret societies.—Princes and nations shall vanish from the earth. The human race will then become one family—and reason shall be the code of law to all mankind.

"Seek out those who are distinguished for their power, riches or learning. Spare no pains, spare nothing in the acquisition of such adepts. If heaven refuse its aid, conjure hell.—These (viz., men of wealth and rank) are a good type of people. They augment our numbers and fill our coffers.—Make these gentry to swallow the bait; but beware of communicating to them our secrets. For that species of adept must always be persuaded that the degree they are in is the highest.

"We must profess the warmest concern for humanity and make the people indifferent to all other relations. (viz., such as those of family, church and country)—We must endeavor by every means to gain over the booksellers as well as the reviewers and journalists, who in time will see that it is their interest to side with us.—If a writer publishes anything that attracts notice, but does not accord with our plans, we must endeavor to win him over or decry him.

"Only those who are certainly proper subjects shall be picked out from the inferior classes for the higher mysteries.—No religionist on any account shall be admitted into these.—Every person shall be made a spy on another and on all around.

"It is not in the blood of an isolated man, or even of a traitor, that it is necessary to exercise our power: it is upon the masses. Let us not individualize crime.—It is necessary to generalize it. —Let us not then make more martyrs; but let us spread vice broadcast among the multitudes;—let them breathe it into their five senses; let them drink it in and become saturated with it.—Make men's hearts corrupt and vicious, and
you will no longer have Christians. Draw away the clergy from their altars, and from the practice of virtue. Strive to fill their minds and occupy their time with other matters.—It is the corruption of the masses we have undertaken—the corruption of the people through the clergy and of the clergy by us—the corruption which ought one day to enable us to lay the Church in the tomb."

Oh, I need not explain that these dark documents of Communism’s global secret controlling power are very effectively being worked out in every civilized nation today. Any intelligent person can see this happening before his very eyes. More than ever before, the people of the earth are falling away in order that the Man of Sin may be revealed. It is very hard these days to find a church that preaches Christ and Him crucified. Most churches of our day give heed to and preach Modernism or Liberalism, the devil’s counterfeit religion, and another invention of Freemasonry. I need not go into a detailed discussion on Modernism as this subject was treated in former issues of Beacon Lights. The present day ring of great capitalists and international bankers dominating finance, are also identified as the secret international Jewish Masonic rulers, to whom all the various rulers of the earth, including Stalin, are but mere puppets. Financial control is today the great master weapon of Freemasonry, and the one by which all the other engines of destruction are kept in motion. This ring exercises, through their control of credit, such influence in every phase of the nation’s life that they are not inaptly described as the kind of irresponsible super-government. Manufacture, transportation, international commerce are very largely under the control of this small clique. The same half-hidden, anonymous power exercises the deepest influence on the State policy. It controls the Press, the international news agencies, the theatre, the liquor and dope traffic, the stock market, the gambling and vice dens, the radio, television, and the book market. It dominates fashions in dress, and almost decides what the ordinary multitudes eat, wear and read. It practically determines what particular industry is to succeed, and what is to be crushed out. For by means of the control of credit, it controls the amount of money available and its purchasing power. This control reacts on commerce, manufacture, trade and even agriculture. The spread of Rationalism and Hermeticism, the antichristian press propaganda, the numberless other agencies of Masonic activity, even the Socialist and revolutionary movements are all fostered and promoted in a most efficacious way, by the power and influence which financial control confers. It reminds me of Babylon that great whore that sitteth upon man’s waters, which we read about in Revelation 17 and 18. If you will take time to read this portion of Scripture, you will readily see that Communism’s secret controlling power, Freemasonry, is a perfect example of the great whore “which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

In this installment we have seen the tactics of Communism’s secret controlling powers in seducing the world to Atheism, and in my next installment we will hope to see the tactics of Communism’s secret controlling powers in destroying all the existing God-ordained institutions off the face of this earth, which to my mind may culminate in the final reign of Antichrist.
Many young men now days are being drafted into the armed forces. The plans of marriage were being arranged for the near future. In your opinion, should it be carried through, or should they wait until after he is discharged, and why?

A Reader

THAT IS indeed a very vital and important question which is worthy of our most careful and prayerful consideration. It is a problem with which many of our covenant young people are confronted in these days of compulsory military service. It is a question to which there is no single conclusive answer. In the final analysis each individual case, after prayerful consideration, will have to be decided on its own merits.

This does not mean, however, that there are no general principles by which we can and must be guided in regards to this question. One of these general principles is, that a young man or woman should never marry in haste. That is always true under any circumstances, but especially true in times such as these. Marriage is a blessed institution of God, by which God has determined to bring forth the seed of His Covenant. The young men and women of today, are the fathers and mothers of tomorrow. Hence marriage is not just a passing fad or fancy, but it is a very serious matter, worthy of our most careful and prayerful consideration. A matter in which the young people should ask the help and guidance of their parents.

The tragedy of today is, that just at the age when young people begin to think seriously of the opposite sex, and seek for themselves a life’s partner, the young men are called away into the service. Now the question is, should the contemplated marriage be postponed until after the men have been discharged from military service. My answer in almost every case would be in the affirmative. At present the length of compulsory military service is two years. Most young men are being drafted at the age of 20, which means that they will be 22 years old at the time of their discharge. The age of 22 years is still a youthful marriageable age for a young man, especially if we take into consideration that the young man does not reach the age of maturity until this time. Hence in the great majority of cases, there is nothing to be lost, but much to be gained by waiting until the young man returns from the service. I am certain, that if two covenant young people, after prayerful consideration feel that they are meant for each other, then the two years of absence will not weaken, but rather strengthen this conviction. It is a far greater strain upon both the young man, and the young woman, to be separated after marriage, than to wait until the happy day when together they may establish a home in the fear of God.

Dear Schuiler:
Do you think it is right for a minister to use profane lan-
guage off the pulpit, even just for illustrating?

G.W.

IF I UNDERSTAND this question correctly it is whether or not the minister in his sermon may illustrate the great sin of profanity, and of swearing, by repeating these sinful and wicked expressions from the pulpit. I do not only think it is right, but I think it is the duty of the pastor to call the attention of the congregation to these wicked and sinful expressions as they are used in the world, and are also evident among the children of God. It is the pastor's duty to point out that such expressions as "My heavens!" "Goodness Gracious", "O gee", "by gosh," and their like are sinful, and he must warn the congregation against the use of such expressions. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself warned against using profane language, and illustrated it when he said "and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Matt. 5:22.

THE EMPTY TOMB

'Twas early on a Sabbath morn,
The women Christ's grave would adorn
When much to their surprise
A vision they could not surmise,
An empty tomb!

"Fear not," the angel to them said,
"Seek not the living among the dead."
With great fear in each heart,
They from that place did ere depart,
The Lord is risen!

What meaneth this, an empty tomb
Ah, Christ hath erased all gloom,
His power He doth display,
His Saints shall live with Him for aye,
Our risen Lord!

He hath subdued all cares and woes,
Triumphant He o'er all His foes,
Eternal life doth reign,
Risen is He who three days hath lain
Within the tomb!

Death is conquered, exalted He,
After dying upon the tree,
Death's bands are torn aside,
His Church with Him is glorified,
Victorious empty tomb!

—Mrs. J. A. Pastoor
The Military Mail Bag

Hello Servicemen,

Just a word of appreciation to you for the wonderful response we have been getting lately. You don't know how much we appreciate your letters. We were beginning to think this little part of our BL was going to be a failure. Thanks for getting our hopes back up there where they belong.

January 4th, 1953

Dear Friends,

I received the October and November issues of BL and was happy to get them.

While I was reading the October issue I came across the page where the mail from the servicemen is supposed to be. What do you think I found?—There wasn't any.

So I thought to myself; "You have been in the Army for almost 11 months and haven't written to the BL yet."

I'll take the blame for not sending in a letter for that month.

I have been in Korea for three months now and at present am not doing too much. I'm in the 40th Hq. Btry. Div. Atry. in the survey section. My job is operating the transit.

The hardest job of all is walking up these hills in Korea. Most of our stations are on top of the hills.

There are nine men in our survey section and I'm happy to say that five are from my home state of Illinois. One of them is Dutch. (Good old Dutchmen)

Well, it's time I close and get a little shut eye. Don't get too much time to write but I'll try to slip a letter in now and then.

This letter is also to remind you that I appreciate your sending me the BL. It makes a fellow feel good to get the church papers.

May the Lord richly bless the work of our church and may the papers which are being sent out give a blessing to those who receive them.

Yours in Christ,
Jake Boer

Jake is from our church in South Holland.

Baumholder, Germany

January 14, 1953

Dear BL Readers,

Today I received my first issue of the BL and wish to express my hearty thanks for it. I certainly enjoyed every article.

My job here in Germany is supply clerk. It consists primarily of bookwork and in keeping the supply room in order. (Also in taking a fiendish delight in supplying the GIs with under or oversize clothing if my memory is correct. KE) I enjoy my work and find it interesting.

So far I have found Germany rather interesting. The customs of living here are much different than at home.
Germany has many beautiful cities although some of them were ruined during the war. One beautiful city that I visited, well heard of by most of us was the city of Heidelberg. It is quite a large city and has many beautiful cathedrals and churches.

Again thanks for the Beacon Lights and keep them coming.

Your friend in Christ,
Harold Van Weelden

Harold is from Oskaloosa and his address is
Pvt. Harold Van Weelden US 55216029
Hq. Btry. 16th A.F.A. Bn.
APO 42 c/o PM N. Y.

January 21, 1953

Dear Friends,

It is due time that I make it an obligation to write, especially after finding that the veil of censorship has been lifted.

I have been stationed at Port Tyantey, French Morrocco, for nigh onto three months now and had the occasion to see many unusual and interesting places.

For the most part though the command keeps the men occupied in long hours of work so as to have the planes ready for various operations.

But the type of work, plus the unexpected in Aviation has drawn my interest to the point where it seems Time has increased it's rate to a fairly rapid pace.

I am most grateful to receive the Beacon Lights and other church literature, for frequently it remains the only source of Christian instruction. It is not often we can receive any spiritual satisfaction from the type of gospel preached.

Only then do you appreciate the foundation you have in a thorough and true doctrine; then you realize the importance of a sermon preached long ago.

"Preserve the heritage of your fathers". We often neglect to see what a gem in religion we have. It ought to prompt us into preaching and teaching, proclaiming and maintaining this great truth which has missed so many people.

Sincerely,
Duane Heenstra

Duane, for our readers information is from First Church in Grand Rapids.

October 25, 1952

Dear Friends,

As you know I was due at Great Falls, Montana, the 13th of July. We reported in on time, and sat around for two days waiting for a flight to Elmendorf AFB, Anchorage, Alaska. The third day they transferred us by plane to MC Chord AFB, Tacoma, Washington, telling us that we'd stand a better chance of getting up there by sweating out a ride on one of their many cargo ships. While in Tacoma we took an overnight pass and visited the great port of Seattle. The fourth day there we finally got booked on a C-54 (A four engine cargo version of the DC-4), and after an eight
hour flight we landed at Anchorage. My first impression of the place was horrible, but I soon got adjusted to it. As the old saying goes, "Live with evil long enough and you begin to accept it"...which was the case with us.

Soon after my first month at Elmendorf I had an opportunity for detachment duty...so naturally I requested it, and got it. After much processing I arrived on Adak, better known as the "Rock".

The Navy completely runs this island. All of our supplies are received through them. We are living in an old hospital area which has been completely reconditioned by our men, and now it's very comfortable. Approximately 200 are attached to the detachment. Duty isn't quite as good here as it was in Anchorage, but the time element more than makes up for it. If we stay here we will rotate August of '53...And if we had stayed at Anchorage our rotation date would have been July of '54. Of course nothing is certain in life, and much less so in the military...I may find myself back on the mainland next week...one never knows.

The weather here is in a constant state of gloom. It's usually raining, blowing, or both. The Japanese current keeps the chain warmer than the mainland, but we still expect below zero temperatures this winter.

We work a nine hour seven day-a-week schedule. It's more than any of us are used to, but it makes the time go faster, so that's one point in our favor. Three of us are out here as a team. We have our own private office, and are given many additional privileges because of the nature of our work. We figure we have a fine deal, and would be very much disappointed if we were to go back to HQ in Anchorage.

Ralph Vanderlee, from Grand Haven Protestant Ref'd Church, is stationed here with me. Usually I'm able to get away long enough on Sunday to attend the regular chapel services on the base. That is about the only diversion from routine I have, and it is truly a welcomed hour. I have yet to see or hear a chaplain that could measure up to a civilian minister, but one has to take into account that our services are for protestants in general.

At the present time I am on duty, but the work slowed down to a pace where I was able to see my way clear, so I thought it best to drop a word of "hello" your way. I shall be looking forward to hearing from you when you find time...

Very sincerely,
Bill Kooistra

Bill's address is:
Pfc. William Kooistra
Detachment 31, 3rd RSM
Navy 230 Branch, Box 49
c/o PM Seattle, Washington.

That's it for this month men. Thanks so much. As we've said so often—it's up to you to make this column a success and lately you've been doing just that. Keep it up please. Let's hear from more of you!
LESSON 53
GOOD NEWS, THANK GOD
II Cor. 1:1-14

In II Cor. you see the infathomable love of Christ for His Church. Especially for a Church as infantile as Corinth. Christ, walking among the seven golden candlesticks.

That infathomable love reflects itself from the heart of Paul, the apostle. As parents lavish the more care upon an invalid child, so Paul, it seems was the more lavish in his affection for Corinth.

Paul has written them the letter we now have as I Cor. It was necessarily sharp, pertinent, corrective, because Corinth revealed waywardness. Having written the letter Paul did not proudly say: "There, I told them off, they can take it or leave it." Instead, he was highly concerned. Would they receive his letter? Would they obey it? Would they correct their errors? It's the love of God pulsating in Paul.

Paul had no rest. (II Cor. 2:13). How truly human. He trusted that God could and would do with the preaching what pleases Him, but Paul is anxious. He had sent Timothy to Corinth (I Cor. 16:10). The time is not ripe yet that he go there himself (1:23) but he has no rest. Timothy goes and he returns. Still no rest. That is the toil and labor of a true minister of the Gospel.

Then he sends Titus. And he instructs Titus to visit Corinth and then come back and meet him at Troas. At which time Titus can report on the conditions prevailing in Corinth. Meanwhile Paul travels on his missionary journeys. He comes to Troas. But, alas, Titus is not there as per the appointment. (2:13). Now what has happened? Paul is still restless.

So Paul travels on to Macedonia, and there he meets Titus (7:5-7). Glory to God. Titus has come. And he has generally good news about how things stand in Corinth. Thanks be to God. So we get II Corinthians. I pass by the various arguments about the how and what and when of this Second Epistle and assert it as my conviction that Paul wrote II Cor. as a re-action to the effect of I Cor., and it was written a few months afterwards. Calvin says that Paul writes II Cor., in order that he might perfect what he had begun in I Cor.

In our present passage we find Paul rejoicing. In all his sufferings, this comforts him that the Gospel triumphs. Paul is the minister concerned about his church, rejoices and is comforted by the tidings that God has been pleased to make his former letter effective toward strengthening of that which is weak.

Against that background I think we are to see the present passage. Paul begins with the salutation (vs. 1-2) emphasizing that he is not an apostle by his own initiative, but the will of God sends him. Timothy is writ
ing, while Paul is dictating and all the saints in Asia are to read this letter also. The Church is interested in the Church everywhere. Peace and grace proceed from the Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ (vs. 3). How can there be peace without grace, or grace without peace? Both come from God. Blessed be God, Father of the Lord Jesus and hence Father of all mercies and compassions to usward; and of comfort.

That last word, comfort, Paul will emphasize. Paul has had experience of tribulations, griefs, tortures. Recall his missionary journeys. God has comforted him (vs 4). God gave him relief. Was he not suffering these things as an apostle of Christ, in order that the Corinthians might have the Gospel? Was Paul not their "father" by the gospel? (I Cor. 4:15). A great factor in Paul's consolation was that his suffering and preaching (the two are combined) was effective for the salvation of many, including the Corinthians. He in turn can comfort the Corinthians, in order that the Corinthians might come to hear about the great salvation (vs. 12). Ye acknowledge me as such an apostle of the Lord. Ye rejoice (or boast) in what God has made me to be for you; and I rejoice (or boast) in what God has made you to be for me. (vs. 14). In the day of the Lord we meet each other.

Discussion

1. For the proper approach to the comfort of which Paul speaks here see II Cor. 7:4-11. He is not writing about comfort in general, but about a very particular experience of comfort. What is a minister's comfort today?

2. What are the "sufferings of Christ" in verse 5?

3. In vs. 14 he says to the Corinthians that they are Paul's rejoicing in the day of the Lord. In I Thess. 2:19 there is a like passage. Discuss this.

LESSON 54
NOT FICKLENESS, BUT SINCERITY
II Cor. 1:15-24

Paul has had to change his plans about visiting the Corinthians. He is on that account charged by some in the Corinthian church of being unreliable...you cannot depend on what that minister says. Paul could have dismissed these charges (as later he proves that they are unfounded) but an attack upon the minister's sincerity in this case constitutes an attack upon the sincerity of God, Christ and the Gospel which he preaches. Paul cannot allow that to happen. Therefore our present passage. Read it against that background.

In the confidence that the Corinthians would acknowledge him as of vs. 13, 14 Paul had intended to bring them a second visit (Cf. I Cor. 16:5-6) and thus bring them a second grace, a benefit in
grace (vs. 15). If Paul came he came as an apostle, not merely as a caller. The past tense in vs. 15 indicates that such had been his plan but he did not carry it out. Consequently Paul admits that vs. 16 had not been carried out either. It was this change of plans which some Corinthians used to accuse Paul of variableness.

I changed my plans, says Paul vs. 17. I did it purposely. In vs. 23 he will explain the reason for this conduct. There is however something much more important. He can easily enough clear himself but the Gospel must be kept above reproach. I did not use lightness (levity) when I changed my plans; I was not fickle nor frivolous, neither did I have carnal motives. I did not say yea, yea and nay, nay at the same time. Paul's yes is not also a no. In that case you could scramble them because his words would be unreliable anyway.

Paul declares himself to be a preacher of God. Timothy, Silas and he have been put in trust with the Gospel. The God we preach is true and reliable and our word to you has been true and reliable. The promises of God in Christ are reliable and sincere (18-20). And we who carry such sincere things as these have to be reliable and sincere. We are sincere. Notice how clear is Paul's conscience when in vs. 18 he says that the truth of his preaching is as reliable as God is faithful and true. Paul said something about his conscience and preaching in vs. 12. He repeats that now. God would not let Paul carry His beautiful Word if he were a flatterer or liar. The Christ Whom we preached among you (vs. 19) is not a Christ Who assumes one form today and another tomorrow but He is the Christ in Whom whatever promises God has given they have also been fulfilled (vs. 20). God has made many promises, not one of which He has not fulfilled, not one but it was fulfilled in the Christ of Golgotha. Because the promises are "yea" in Christ, therefore also through Him they are AMEN (Cf. Rev. 3:14). God promises salvation to all who come and believe, (Canons IV:8, Heb. 11:11) God accomplishes that salvation also without fail (Canons II:5-9, Rom. 4:21). We preach these immoveable things in order that through us and our sincere preaching the children of God may find their refuge in God and bring Him the glory. As Abraham who believed God—giving God the glory (Rom. 4:20).

And we know and experience the veracity of God, for the Triune God who makes the promises accomplishes them in Christ and confirms us in them through His Spirit (vs. 21-22). Not only we, preachers, but also you believing Corinthians, experience that God establishes us in these reliable things. And to make this all the more reliable for us God anoints us, seals us as gives us the earnest of the Spirit. Thus the promises are made sure to all the seed and we have the anchor of Heb. 6:19.

And, says Paul, as far as changing my plans is concerned, God was my counsellor (vs. 23-24). I did it to spare you. Shall I come with the rod? he had asked in I Cor. 4:8-21. No, says Paul, I delayed my trip that I might observe whether you correct your evils yourself. We are not tyrants (vs. 24) we preachers bring you the Gospel, admonish and correct you, then pray and wait for its effect. We further your joy, we come not to tyrannize you. By faith you stand, and Paul's desire is to confirm them in that faith.

Questions for discussion

1 That God is TRUE is frequently emphasized in Scripture. Cf. also II Ti 2:13, Rev. 1:5, Heb. 6:18. Canons 1,
LESSON 55
RECEIVING THE PENITENT
II Cor. 2:1-11

Study this passage against the background of I Cor. 5:1-5, the case of incest in the Corinthian Church. Paul does not mention the man by name, but "such a man" in vs. 6, and the pronouns following, refer to the man who committed fornication and concerning whom Paul had written in the previous letter. And I conclude that this man has been disciplined by the church, than come to repentance, and now the Corinthians must finish discipline by receiving this penitent one again.

The opening of Chap. 2 joins with the verses 23, 24 of Chap. 1 to explain to the Corinthians why Paul had not kept his original travel-schedule.

Paul has made up his mind that he does not want to come to them again in grief (vs. 1). If the Corinthians did not straighten out the evils in their Church, he would have to whip-lash them again when he came. He would that they walked the way of the Lord (vs. 2, 3) then he could come to them in happiness and scatter happiness among them. Here you see the heart of a pastor. He willingly rebukes the wayward, for that is the work His Lord gave him to do, but how eager he is to be made glad by discovering that the rebukes have led to repentance. Paul was anxious to come in joy, and to bring joy.

He reminds them in vs 4-5 how deeply distressed he was when he heard about the fornicator in the Church (I Cor. 5) and how great was his tribulation when he had to write them about this case and their neglected discipline. And how he would have to institute discipline when he came. Paul grieved them by that letter. But his love for them compelled him. The man who committed the sin, and you who winked at it, you both have caused me deep grief, and caused grief to you all. Sin brings grief along the entire church-front.

Now, says Paul let the case be closed. Titus had brought information about the fact that the Church at Corinth had used discipline (vs. 6). The word translated "punishment" in vs. 6 indicates that the fornicator had been brought to church-trial by the "many" or the greater part i.e. by the congregation itself. The erring member had also come to grief (vs. 7) i.e. he had come to repentance. THAT IS ENOUGH. Discipline has carried through. Now be careful that it does not mis-carry. Says Paul: (1) Do not crush the man with the weight of your inflated egos. Forgive him who has done this deed. Let him know that Christ has forgiven the penitent. Assure him that Christ has come seeking the lost. Comfort the man by good words, words which indicate that you are ready to restore him to a place in the midst of the saints. (3) Confirm your love toward the man (vs. 8). Let him know that as Christ and the church forgives, I too have forgiven him (vs. 10). That is Paul's apostolic authority. Christ forgives, and in Christ's Name Paul forgives (Cf. Matt. 18:17-18). The man has repented. It is suf-
ficient. Show now that discipline is wholly a matter of love, not of revenge.

It is the more necessary that the Corinthians conduct themselves thus toward the erring one. Because Satan is standing on the jump, eager to get an advantage of us. (vs. 11). That's how real Satan is. If it was his strategy to slay the Church through the incest of that one person, and if he has failed in this point, it is now his strategy to have you Corinthians act the part of pride against the man and thus shut him out from your fellowship. For we are not unaware of Satan's scheme. Be on your guard therefore, lest the Name of Christ be defamed because of your conduct and Satan overreach us.

Questions for Discussion

1 In vs. 3 Paul says that his joy is "the joy of you all". Cf. Heb. 13:17. Compare the two and find the instruction.

2 My interpretation of the penitent one in this Lesson is based also on the Form for Readmitting Excommunicated Persons. Look it up for your edification.

3 About Satan see also I Pet. 5:8. How does it apply in our church-life today?

LESSON 56
ALWAYS TRIUMPHING
II Cor. 2:12-17

The theme refers to the true and honest ministers of the Gospel, not to hucksters and peddlers of the same.

We have in our present passage another glimpse into the deeply concerned heart of the minister, Paul; another display of how anxiously he loved the Corinthian Church (vs. 12, 13). Paul had come to Troas and here a door had been opened to him. A church was probably organized (Acts 20:6). But he has no rest in his spirit because Titus does not come as per the appointment. In concern about meeting Titus and thus getting information on how things are going in Corinth, Paul takes leave of the brethren at Troas and comes on to Macedonia. When it says that he took leave of them at Troas I conclude that Paul could still profitably have labored here for some time, and they needed him here. But he goes to Macedonia, and there he finds Titus, and Paul rejoices in the good news coming from there.

The minister of the Lord is not therefore a feelingless creature. He is concerned about the welfare of the Church of God over which he has been placed a shepherd. God's ministers ought not anxious in selfishness, but they should anxious in Christ. Paul was restless. And the sad conditions in the church can bring anxiety, tears and prayers.

But yet, Paul and his fellow-preachers are always triumphing (vs. 14). They may be anxious and concerned about how the Gospel fares in Corinth but however it fares, God leads forth triumphantly. Christ is forever victorious, in them that are co-victorious, in the procession as well as in them that are led on behind in chains to the place of execution. Christ is forever victorious over all. And they that believe in Him, preach Him, are by the grace of God led forth to conquer with Him (Cf. Rev. 19, Psalm 149:6-9, Rev. 2:26 etc.). Therefore Paul thanks God, for all things are of Him and through Him. God makes all this a reality by letting ministers spread the savour (smell, aroma) of the knowledge of Christ everywhere it pleases Him. It is the smell of the Conqueror and Conquering Christ which swe...
over the country when the Gospel is preached. Always victorious too, (vs. 15) because the preaching of Christ IS a sweet savour to God. God rejoices in His Own wisdom. It is savoury to God always, in them that are saved (believing and being saved), the elect as well as in them that are lost (disbelieving and perishing Mark 16:16). The reprobate. Faith or unbelief does not determine who Christ is. Christ IS a savour well-pleasing to God. To some a savour from death to death, to others an aroma of life unto life. Christ triumphs always, both in them that are led forth to glory as well as the captives led forth to the execution. Calvin well says. “Whatever may be the issue of our preaching it is notwithstanding well-pleasing to God...and also that it does not detract in any degree from the dignity of the Gospel that it is not do good to all; for God is grieved even in this, that the Gospel becomes an occasion of ruin to the wicked, nay, it must turn out so.”

A far cry from Point I of 1924, this passage from II Cor.

And since we have such a Gospel, we ministers are not “hucksters” or “peddlers” who “mix wine with water” Isa. 1:22. We do not adulterate the Gospel in trying to make it palatable to wicked people (vs. 17). We preach not a Christ Whose glory hangs in the balance of our endeavours, nor a Christ Who has victory only when people believe but goes down defeated when people do not believe. We do not need to help Him come to victory. We are sent to preach the Christ, not to hawk Him. We preach a Gospel that God recognizes as commissioned by Him, a Gospel that can stand the sun-light; a Gospel with which we dare to stand before “s face. Speaking what Christ taught and commanded us. (Vs. 17)

Who is capable of preaching this? (vs. 16). God makes us capable.
Whatever transpires in Corinth and anywhere else, we follow the White Horse and are triumphers with Him in preaching the unadulterated Gospel.

Questions for Discussion

1 Why was Paul restless then at Titus’ absence (vs. 13) and so comforted at his coming (II Cor. 7:6 sq.)?
2 Discuss Point I of 1924 in this connection (cf. Standard Bearer, XXIX, pages 167, 168).
3 There is a confrontation here: Woe to us if we preach another Gospel (Gal. 1:8,9) and woe unto us if we want another Christ preached to us than the Christ of God.

THE STRIFE IS O’ER

The strife is o’er, the battle done; The victory of life is won; The song of triumph has begun. Alleluia!
The powers of death have done their worst, But Christ their legions has dispersed; Let shouts of holy joy outburst. Alleluia!
The three sad days are quickly sped; He rises glorious from the dead; All glory to our risen Head. Alleluia!
He closed the yawning gates of hell; The bars from heavens high portals fell; Let hymns of praise His triumph tell. Alleluia!

THE SCENE OF this story is laid in England a hundred or more years ago. The plot of the story concerns itself with the Redclyffe Estate, which is left without an heir and the circumstances that lead to the rightful heir receiving his inheritance. It gives a view of the lives of two youthful cousins of the house of Morville. There had been a deadly feud between the two branches of this house and as the story opens, Philip Morville represents one side, while Sir Guy is the sole survivor of the other side. Although the feud is a thing of the past because both young men are Christians, there are still evidences of it in their lives as they touch one another in the fellowship of the Edmonstone family.

At Hollywell, the home of the Edmonstone's, where Sir Guy comes to live as a ward of Mr. Edmonstone until the time that he is old enough to inherit the Redclyffe Estate, the entire family is impressed by the pleasant nature of this young man who is on the one hand helpful, kind, quiet and subdued, while on the other hand he is active, alert and sensitive. He has inherited the fiery nature of the Morville's and consequently has a severe struggle with himself to conquer a vehement temper. His humility and sincerity are, therefore, a manifestation of great spiritual strength.

Guy's cousin Philip, on the other hand, is a haughty, domineering character who continually casts suspicion on the character and motives of Sir Guy and justifies his evil designs by claiming to have a genuine interest in his cousin's well-being. Although in the course of the story Philip displays great strength of character he gives evidence of the fact that he is spiritually weak and wanting. When Philip finally perceives that Sir Guy returns good for evil and conquers wrong with right even to the point of sacrificing his life to save the life of one who has constantly wronged him, Philip is filled with remorse, shame and finally genuine sorrow.

In the fellowship of these two cousins with the Edmonstone family at Hollywell, one meets all the characters and characteristics of a typical Christian friendship. Since the members of the Edmonstone family are interesting and intelligent, they manifest a spirit of warmth, friendliness, understanding and loyalty that makes the relationship in every respect wholesome and stimulating. The double romance is natural and unaffected and each romance demonstrates in its own peculiar way the beauty of love, trust and devotion that is characteristic of ardent young lovers.

The weakness of this novel lies in the fact that it is a re-edition of a story originally written a century ago. The age of post-feudalism with its large estates of gentry and peasants reveals customs and ideas that are foreign to the lives of present-day young people.
Such things as sharp distinction between classes of people, the educational system under tutor and by means of reading to one another, the contempt for gentry who have become poor and the branding of certain practices as grave sin will cause parts of the story to have little affect upon people of our time. The fact that the secret engagement of two of the characters is repeatedly spoken of as an offence may cause some people to lay the book aside with disgust. It is only when we realize that the plot is laid in the time of post-medieval history, that is, in a time when the authority of the parents was paramount, that we can understand why the act of pledging one's affections before informing the parents was, to say the least, an insult to the parents. No doubt a little of the beauty of the original edition is lost in this condensation by Marian Schoolland. I felt at times that there were gaps in the story and wondered if this were not due to the abridgment of this edition.

The value of the book lies in the fact that in everyday life the spiritual norm, "Render to no man evil for evil, but contrariwise blessing," is held forth and practiced. Since practicing this norm is an intensely spiritual and, therefore, an unusually difficult task for any Christian, it is delightful to notice how the author develops that accomplishment in the main character of her story. Such Christian characteristics as self-abasement, confession of sin, a cry for mercy, a total absence of seeking revenge and self-justification are delicately woven into the story in such a way that the reader is stirred by them. This book is sound Christian fiction without being "preachy" as is the case with much of our modern evangelical fiction.

THE GLORY OF THE CROSS

Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand,
The shadow of a mighty rock Within a weary land,
A home within the wilderness, A rest upon the way,
From the burning of the noontide heat, and the burden of the day.

Upon that cross of Jesus Mine eye at times can see
The very dying form of one Who suffered there for me;
And from my smitten heart with tears, Two wonders I confess
The wonders of His glorious love And my own worthlessness.

I take, O cross, thy shadow For my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine Than the sunshine of His face;
Content to let the world go by, To know no gain nor loss,
My sinful self my only shame, My glory all, the cross!
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