

Sanctify Them Through Thy Truth

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need"—Heb. 4:16

WE meet each Sunday because God has spoken, and has called us to Him. If He had not called us we would have been still wandering in the way which in the end would lead to death.

He has not spoken to us personally, but through His Son and through the prophets. And through His wisdom and His love, He has caused the things which were spoken to be written down, so that those of latter times might read, understand, and believe.

We, gathered this morning, have read these words and we believe, and through understanding have developed faith in what we have read. We believe that what God has spoken He will surely perform.

This is what brings us together every Sunday—Faith. We believe that by taking a firm grip upon God's commandments and holding steadfast until the end that we will, at His Son's coming, receive a crown of glory which shall never fade away. We will receive the blessing of God which is eternal life and a place in the restored Kingdom of Israel which will cover the whole earth. Paul in Hebrews, says—

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should come short of it." (4:1).

unto "For we are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast the end." (3:14).

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (4:16).

Being a part of Adam's sinful race, we find that we are always in need of help: not from man, but Divine Guidance to show us the way—to shed a light upon our paths—for narrow is the way to life and few there be that find it. But broad is the way to destruction and many there be that go therein.

Without instruction and guidance we could never become partakers of Christ and his glory. We MUST realize just how helpless we really are when left to ourselves. Man would have long ago destroyed himself if God did not take part in world affairs.

* * *

WE can see today that the conditions for the return of Christ are in perfect harmony with the prophetic Word. We know this by reading and understanding, which brings faith. Peter adds to this saying—

"To your faith add virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

"For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1: 5-7).

What a wonderful character we would have if we possessed all these attributes! Jesus had all these, and many more, when he was on earth. He is our example and we must follow in his footsteps. He obeyed the Father in all things, even unto his death on the cross.

And what did he receive for his obedience? He is sitting on the right hand of God with everlasting power and glory, and soon, in the near future, he will set himself up as King of the whole earth. We also shall reign with him if we "follow on to know the Lord."

We can see that at the time of the end, there may be times when we may think it impossible to continue in well-doing, to keep the light of the Truth clearly in the forefront of our minds. Jesus said of such times:

"Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."

"And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass but the end is not yet."

"For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my Name's sake."

"And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another."

"And many false prophets shall rise, and deceive many."

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. 24:4-13).

We know that at the time of the end many will leave the Household, and will go back into the same condition they were in before baptism. Only then they did not have to answer for the way they lived; they were as the beast of the field which dies and returns to the dust.

But once having received the light of the grace of God, they will have to stand before the throne of Christ and give an account of their lives during probation.

* * *

LET us therefore be prepared with our lamps full of oil and burning, that we may enter into the wedding when the bridegroom calls. For once the doors are shut it is too late. Beware lest he should come as a thief in the night and find us sleeping. Jesus continues in this same place (Matt. 24:29-31)—

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."

the "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

And again he warns us against that day (Matt. 24:42)—

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

"The spirit is willing." How true this is! We have the light of the Gospel, and nothing would please us or God more than for us to follow His commandments and do His will. But while we would like to engage our lives wholly in the Truth, we find that there is always a force within us pulling in the opposite direction.

This is the natural man, the fleshly mind which is always present. This is what we must guard against, for from it come evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, wickedness, deceit, pride and foolishness. All of these go to make up the mind of the flesh, which is at constant war with the Spirit. It takes much time, much study, and much understanding to overcome.

As children of light, we must be unceasing in its application to ourselves. We must study at all times to show ourselves approved workmen that need not to be ashamed.

It is written that the Word of God is "able to make us wise unto salvation."

Paul, speaking to the Ephesians (Acts 20:32), says—

"We commend you to God and the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all them who are sanctified."

And Jesus prayed—

"Sanctify them through Thy Truth" (John 17:17).

It is the Word that sets us aside for God's purpose.

"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

* * *

THAT is why we are here this morning, to hear the Word of God, to give thanksgiving and praise unto Him, and to remember the death of His Son, whose broken body and shed blood are set before us here in these symbols.

Let us strive to partake of this memorial in an acceptable manner before God. Let us put on that golden plate (or holy crown) upon which is inscribed:

"Holiness to the Lord."

This was worn upon Aaron's forehead—

"That he might be accepted before the Lord."

And the coat of fine linen, which is the symbol of righteousness. And all the priestly attire worn by the High Priest, "for Glory and for Beauty."

Having thus clothed ourselves with the things which these garments represent, we would be rendered acceptable, as Aaron was, and would show ourselves concerned with God's requirements.

Our allotted time here is short. Let us not waste it. Let us live our lives each day as unto the Lord. Let us take no thought of tomorrow. Let us concern ourselves with today—this moment—being sure each moment we are in harmony with God, for Christ could come at any time.

Paul says to the Corinthians—

"Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Again he says (2 Cor. 7:1) —

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

And again (Phil. 2:3-5)—

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves.

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

* * *

LET us, for a moment, imagine the Lord Jesus having returned, and in the earth now. What thoughts would occupy our mind? What would we think of first? "What does HE think of us?" would be our only concern then. "Is he pleased with the way we have lived?"

One thing is sure—in that moment our worldly cares would be forgotten. We would realize then that Christ is the only important calculation of life.

Many, of course, would be ready with tears and all manner of show and desire, to give themselves to the one needful thing. But then it would be too late. Christ will give unto every man according as his work has been.

Therefore, NOW is the time for action. Let everyone of us look to what we are doing now; and let us remember that our daily lives, dull as they may be, are forming our destiny.

Everything depends on how we occupy our time now. Our future position will be determined by how we make use of the present. Whether we invest our time in Eternal things, or squander it on the vanity of this life, we will receive our just reward.

The important thing for the present, then, is that we be "filled with the knowledge of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."

Any effort spent in this pursuit will be to good account. This wisdom and understanding must come from the Word of God, not from man. Human opinions and professions will disappear in the Divine presence.

We can see that the only true wisdom is close adherence to the Word of God, as a lamp to our feet, a light to our path.

Christ will not be concerned with a man's position in the estimation of his fellow-men. He has told us that that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. The all-important question at that time will be—

"Have we done what has been commanded us?"

We all know what we are doing for Christ at the present. No matter what we say about ourselves when we stand before him to give an account, Christ will manifest what we really are. Oh, to hear him say—

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant! Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!"

Baptism is only the beginning—the opening of the door—the first step toward salvation. This part is easy. But after this, we must be obedient. Herein lies the difficulty. We cannot live by knowledge alone; we must be obedient to the things which God has commanded that we should do. Everything depends upon how we walk after having received the light of the Gospel.

Our only hope of being delivered from this present evil world was accomplished when Christ gave himself. Our position for the present should then be to deny ourselves ungodliness and worldly lust, and to wait for the blessed hope of his coming again.

We are not our own. We should reckon ourselves purchased and owned—joyful slaves to Christ who has bought us. We should reckon ourselves dead and buried, so far as this present life and its affairs are concerned.

Let us not allow the shedding of his blood to be in vain by not taking full advantage of the opportunities we now have. Let us be doers of the Word, and not hearers only. —R. J.