

A PROBLEM, A SOLUTION, A TRIUMPH!

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"From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not" - James 4:1,2.

Why do believers get discouraged, doubt God, fail God, grow cold, and backslide? Why do Spirit-anointed saints do outlandish things, commit sin, "bite and devour one another," and bring disgrace upon the Name of Christ and the Gospel which they love? Why are there schisms, envyings, and all sorts of carnal actions among the saints of God? There is one answer - "Sin in the flesh" - Romans 8:3.

This is the verdict of one who not only was a believer, but who also had the anointing with the Spirit which he received three days after he had received Christ - Acts 9:9,17,18. It certainly was not possible for-him to learn during those three days, all that he teaches in Romans seven. He needed the Holy Spirit to dwell in him to show him by personal experience, the nature, sinfulness, and slavery of sin, and the weakness of the flesh. He needed to know also the way of deliverance from it, that he might teach others. Thank God for Paul and for this record of his experience with sin and for the way of victory over it. We repeat, therefore, that there is one answer to the above questions. That answer is found in Romans seven.

"SIN IN THE FLESH"

"Hold on, Brother," someone exclaims. "Romans seven describes the cry of an awakened sinner." To this we reply by the Word. Is the awakened sinner free from condemnation, so that he can say, "It is no more I that do it?" - 7:17. Does he know the evil of his flesh, and has he a renewed will? "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" - 7:18. Does the sinner hate sin? "What I hate, that do I" - 7:15. Does he "delight in the law of God"? - 7:22. Nay! "The carnal mind (of the flesh) is enmity against God" - 8:7. It is "the inward man" that is daily renewed and "strengthened with might by His Spirit" - II Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16. "The hidden man of the heart" does not dwell in a sinner - I Peter 3:4.

The first six verses of this seventh chapter speak of a believer who is under law, because he has not seen his deliverance from it; and, hence, he is still in bondage to the sin in the flesh as shown in these verses. There are yet other evidences also, in this chapter, of the same facts. Here it is declared that sin "dwelleth in me," and there is "sin in the flesh" - 7:17,20; 8:3,13. Romans 7:18 shows that "me" and "my flesh" are the same. "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Then verse twenty-three speaks of "sin which is in my members," and 6:12 locates sin in the "mortal body."

Here, then, we find four undeniable statements of sin's home - the

"mortal body," "my members," "me," and "my flesh." In this locality, sin is dwelling, working, and reigning - 6:12,13. Could anything be clearer? The aged John says nothing about sin in the heart; yet he declares that "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us"; "but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin"-I John 1:7,8.

Beloved Reader, do not denounce this interpretation. Look into it closely, comparing Scripture with Scripture. If this is not correct, why does the apostle exhort those who have "put off concerning the former conversation the old man ... and put on the new man"? Why does he say, "Speak every man truth ... sin not ... steal no more ... let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth ... grieve not the Holy Spirit of God"? Why does he say, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice"? Do you answer, "Those Ephesians were either backslidden or not sanctified"? They were even "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" - Ephesians 4:22-30; 1:13.

Why does he write to the Galatians, saying: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh"? "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another"? - Galatians 5:16,25,26. Why write thus, if there is no sin in the flesh?

The church at Colosse - "Have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man." They were "risen with Christ." Their life was "hid with Christ in God" - Col. 3:1,3,9,10. Christ was their life, and they were to "also with Him be manifested in glory" - Col. 3:4 Revised Version. Paul addressed them as "holy ones and faithful brethren in Christ," and commended their "faith in Christ Jesus," and "love ... to all the saints"; and they "knew the grace of God in truth" - Col. 1:2,4,6. But if there were no sin in their flesh, why did Paul admonish them, saying, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry ... But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth" - Colossians 3:5-8. Why such exhortations?

In First Corinthians we find recorded the manifestations, or the actual out-workings, of sin in the flesh. Those people were "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called holy ones," "unleavened," "the temple of God"; and the Spirit of God was dwelling in them a holy temple" - I Cor. 1:2; 5:7; 3:16,17; 6:19. Yet, Paul finds among them "envying, and strife, and divisions," glorying in men, glorying against one another, sitting in judgment over the apostles, "puffed up"; and one of them fell a victim to a rare kind of fornication, and the apostle must needs give advice about the "covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner" - I Corinthians 3:3,21; 4:5,6; 5:9-11. That record is simply a miniature picture of the Christian Church for all time. If "sin in the flesh," "in your mortal body,"

in "your members" was not then, and is not now, the cause of such conduct - pray tell us what is?

Oh, Beloved Saints, let us not cry, "backslidden," "lost the anointing," "not sanctified," "lost his sanctification," and other suchlike unscriptural accusations. Let us honestly acknowledge the root cause of all our failures, put the blame where it belongs, throw up our hands and exclaim: "It is no more I (the new creation life within) that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me"; that is, in my flesh. For here is the need of sanctification. Some, who have renewed their consecration many times, need it. Some, who have supposedly experienced the second work of grace, need it. Some who have the anointing with the Spirit, need it. God be thanked, for those who see their need.

AN UNFAILING REMEDY

Let us consider the basis for our sanctification, its meaning, and the time and manner of obtaining it. In the Divine plan, there is Christ's work for us and the Holy Spirit's work in us. The first is termed judicial, and has been finished. The second is experimental, and has both its finished and continuous phases. Much confusion has arisen because of not seeing these differences. The work finished on Calvary is only wrought in us as we trust the Holy Spirit to make that good in us. To illustrate: Peter writes - "By whose stripes ye were healed" - I Peter 2:24. That was provisional. But Isaiah had said long before, "With His stripes we are healed" - Isaiah 53:5 This is experimental. Faith in the PROVISIONAL fact brings the EXPERIMENTAL fact.

The same is true of sanctification. "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." In God's "will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once." "He hath made Him to be sin for us." He "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" - Hebrews 13:12; 10:10; II Cor. 5:21; Hebrews 9:26. He put it away from God's Presence. We died with Christ. "Our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin" - Romans 6:6 Revised Version. Sin is a rebel, an outlaw in our flesh.

Further, we "also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ," that we might be released from that wherein we were holden. Then, by this same "one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" - Hebrews 10:14.

This is wholly provisional - a completed Divine provision according to the decision of the highest Court of the universe. Hallelujah! This is the foundation for our sanctification.

Now, on this account, all who believe in Jesus "are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called holy ones," the very moment they believe. Because they accept Christ as their Savior and are in Him, God counts and calls them holy, unleavened, a holy temple. As to experience, they may be sinful in

some sense and must needs be exhorted to "purge out therefore the old leaven and mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth" - I Cor. 5:7; Col. 3:5. Similarly to this are an unbelieving husband and unregenerated child counted holy, because of the faith of the wife and mother -1 Corinthians 7:14; Romans 4:16.

Here then, we see a judicial provision in the finished work of Calvary. Then, faith in this provision gives us a standing with God as holy and perfect forever. Faith has ground on which to expect an experience of holiness. Yea, indeed, the faith that saves the sinner brings an actual experience of sanctification the moment he believes, as the next section will show. That is, the "new creation," the heavenly "treasure," "the inward man," is always and only holy -1 John 3:9. But "the old man," "our earthly house," our "mortal body," the "fleshly mind" is not actually holy - Ephesians 4:22; II Cor. 5:1; Romans 6:12; Col. 2:18. Hence, the necessity of constant cleansing, and the oft recurring exhortations and prohibitions in the epistles to the saints as mentioned above - II Cor. 7:1; I John 3:3. Jesus never needed these, because He had only the new creation nature. Consider this well.

EXPERIMENTAL SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification is a state, an inward condition. It is a cleansing of the heart, a purifying of the soul - Acts 15:9; I Peter 1:22. It is expressed as sanctification of the Spirit" - II Thess. 2:13; I Peter 1:2. This may be termed the negative aspect. But there is also the positive aspect, the actual obtainment of the holy nature of Christ. This is indicated by such statements as these: "born of God," "born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible," "renewing of the Holy Ghost," "partakers of the Divine nature," "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," "partakers of Christ," "partakers of His holiness."

Do you object to some of these citations, because they refer to regeneration or the new birth? What is the new birth, but a partaking of the holy nature of Christ? "That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God," was said to Mary about Jesus - Luke 1:35. That Holy Thing which is begotten in us constitutes us "sons of God" - I John 3:2. All of this is because "Christ Jesus... is made unto us... sanctification" -1 Corinthians 1:30. This is the meaning of sanctification.

Justification is a change of relationship, and is imputed to us when we believe in Jesus. But sanctification is a change of state or nature; and is not only imputed, but also imparted, unto us when we believe on Jesus. One act of faith brings to us both these changes at the same moment. To say that one is justified and has sin in the new man is most illogical and unscriptural. The Scriptures often quoted to prove such a theory are simply wrested from their connection or real meaning.

There is not one line to support it. On the other hand, the Word clearly teaches that pardon and purity are simultaneous. For example: "If thou shalt ... believe in thine heart ... For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness" - Romans 10:9,10. Can such a heart be unclean, or sinful?

Can there possibly be any room or need for an added experience to sanctify that heart? How is the heart purified? Peter declared that the Gentiles purified their hearts by faith," evidently when they heard and believed the Gospel which he preached; and to this faith, "God which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us, the apostles. - Acts 15:7-9. Furthermore, in I Peter 1:22,23 we read: Ye have purified your souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit ... being born again" - two facts in connection with each other without the slightest hint of time between. This is then the time of sanctification.

A GRAVE ERROR CORRECTED

Ignorance as to the exact locality of sin has brought great confusion. This ignorance is the source of the two schools - "The Finished Work" and "The Second Work"; hence, their harrowing disputes. We all know that sin is in the heart of every sinner; and, of course, in his flesh. But, we have seen by the foregoing Scripture citations, that a man's heart is purified when he believes. Nevertheless, every saved person experiences, sooner or later, a bondage to sin. He may not know where in his being it is located. The holiness people have taught that it is in the heart. But we see that that cannot be. Some take the stand of an absolute expulsion of sin, so that there is no sin in a believer. But this is also contrary to experience and Scripture, as Romans seven has shown us. "The flesh," our "mortal body," our "members," is the exact locality of the sin that enslaves us and gives us trouble after we are saved and have the anointing with the Spirit. Again we declare, that the answer is "sin in the flesh" - Romans 8:3.

Is there no deliverance from sin in the flesh? Yes, verily. God be praised! We saw that God "condemned sin in the flesh," that we died "with Christ," that "our old man was crucified with Him in order that we might be no longer subservient to sin." Now, as we believe these facts - that is, reckon ourselves to be dead to sin through Christ and alive unto God through Christ - we will maintain toward our mortal flesh and sin the same attitude that God showed by the crucifixion of His Son. As we yield to God, the Holy Spirit makes us free from its dominion, free from its warring, free from its pollution, free from its power. This is the process of sanctification. It is by faith in the work of the Cross for us; and the time is whenever we appropriate that finished work. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" - Romans 6:22.

OUR TWO HUSBANDS

"So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man" - Romans 7:3.

In Romans six, the apostle teaches how God provided for us a victory

over sin, and the process by which we obtain that victory in experience. Briefly put, Christ died for our sins, by dying in our stead. Thus, God reckons that we died with Christ - "Our old man was crucified with Him" - 6:6 R.V. Now, by observing one simple basic rule, we get the victory over sin - "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" - 6:11. There is another simple rule - "Yield yourselves unto God" - 6:13. RECKON and YIELD. These twin brothers obtain and hold the victory for us. Put them to work and prove it. The law is mentioned twice in Romans six, only to intimate that believers are not in the legal realm - "not under the law" - but in the grace realm, "under grace." Romans six discusses our relation to sin, but not to the law.

Then, in Romans seven, our relation to the law is considered. Here, also, another important truth is set forth - that there are two distinct and opposite natures in every saved person. Verse three speaks of two husbands of diverging characters. Romans six implies this, but does not clarify it. Romans eight announces triumph. But Romans seven records a struggle. The struggle, wretchedness, and defeat are attributed to the fact of the two natures. Here the law comes on the scene and has a hand in the conflict; for the law claims jurisdiction over one of the husbands. Where one woman admits two husbands, trouble is inevitable.

Now, be sure that you see the two opposing natures, in this struggling fellow. In giving his own experience as an example, Paul said, "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I" - Romans 7:15. One life was contrary to the other life. The one life in him agreed with the law - 7:16,20. Then he located the root of that evil fruit. "Now then it is no more I (the life which agrees with the law) that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" - 7:17. Note by verses eighteen and nineteen that "me" and "I" are two distinct pronouns - "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" - 7:18 19 There is an "I" which is good and loves the good, and there is another!" which is evil and it harbors sin.

Someone may object, saying that Paul is describing the condition of a sinner. I say, "No." A sinner has only one nature, which hates God and His law. Paul said, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" - 7:22 But the unregenerate person has no "inward man." He cannot delight in God's holy law because his nature is unholy. He does what he wants to do and wants to do what he does. He may try to reform from some gross habits for the sake of conscience; but his heart attitude toward God's will is unchanged.

FOUR MEN AGREE

Not only did Paul declare the two discordant natures in believers but listen to Jesus - "That which is born of the flesh is flesh (which has no good in it); and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" - John 3:6. James agrees

with Jesus and Paul, saying, "A double minded (literally, two souled or two lived) man is unstable in all his ways" - James 1:8. James found his flock in the seventh of Romans; but he did not show them the way out by his epistle. John also taught this practical truth. In his first epistle he says "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man (a believer) sin, we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the Righteous" - I John 2:1. But, later, he says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin because he is born of God" - I John 3:9. There is only one explanation of John's seemingly contradictory language. In the first instance, the flesh or old nature (which Paul calls "me") might sin; but, in the second case the new nature (which Paul calls "I" and "the inward man") "cannot 'sin" because it is born of the Seed or Word of God.

Reader, do you now see clearly that two distinct diverging natures out of harmony with each other, are on the stage in Romans seven? Do you see that these two opposite natures characterize the two husbands of verse three? If you do, you will readily understand Paul's riddle. Paul's statement of the marriage relation and law, is plain. It needs no explanation. Nor is he here giving advice concerning marriage and divorce. No. He is simply teaching necessary spiritual lessons by means of a common logical household rule. Observe verse four - "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead (were made dead, R.V.) to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to Another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Chapter six announced our freedom from sin - "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Chapter seven announces freedom from law, and how it is obtained.

SYMBOLISMS EXPLAINED

The woman and the two' husbands, here mentioned, figure certain personalities in the spiritual realm. "The woman" figures the Church, here (addressed as "my brethren." The "Another Man," a second husband, figures Jesus Christ who was "raised from the dead." But who does "the husband," the first one named and still living, figure? Do not pass over this query carelessly. A wrong answer will cripple your understanding of the meaning of the whole chapter.

The law is not the first husband, by any means. Verse two names "an husband" and "the law" as distinct objects. The law has dominion over the woman and her husband as long as he lives. The law binds them together. If the husband dies (the law never dies), she is loosed from the law of a husband. If the law were the husband, then the woman would be bound by the law to the law as long as the law lives; and the law would have to die in order for her to be free. But the law never died. Who, then, does that first husband figure? Romans 6:6 holds the answer. "Our old man" is the first husband. This old man is the "me," and "my flesh" named in 7:18-20. He is called "the natural man" in I Corinthians 2:14; 15:44-47. In him, "dwelleth no good thing."

Now what might befall my husband, death, actually did befall our first husband in the spiritual realm. "Our old man is crucified with Him (Christ)." By his deserved death, we were loosed or discharged from the dominion of the law; for "the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine" - I Timothy 1:9,10. In Christ, we are a new creation, a spiritual creation; and, hence, are not under law but under grace. By the judicial death of the old Adam head, over which the law had dominion, the new man is delivered from the law.

In the spiritual realm, Christ is our rightful Husband or Head. Therefore, if we still admit the headship of the old creation, we are guilty of spiritual adultery. This we surely do, if we do not see and maintain the fact of the two natures in believers and count the first Adam dead. We will never emerge from the struggling experience of Romans seven into the victorious and growing life of Romans eight. We must, therefore, "reckon" the old man dead, having no rights, and off the scene. The death of Christ for us has divorced us forever from all the claims of the old self-life, even from its whinings of weakness and unfaithfulness.

CHRIST IN ME - THE SECRET

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but CHRIST LIVETH IN ME: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" - Galatians 2:20. Paul's new Husband not only died for him, so that Paul should live of Him and unto Him; but He was his very life. His Husband was revealed in him, and dwelt and walked in him - Gal. 1:16. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" was the very center and inspiration of his entire career - Col. 1:27.

My own heart and soul exclaim a triumphant "Amen" to all the apostle's words. Long ago, He showed me the way out of the "wretched" experience of Romans seven into the contented, yielded, all glorious life of experimental sonship portrayed in Romans eight. Christ forbids me to talk disparagingly of myself, and thus display any infirmities; for that would reflect on His keeping power. I am a new creation. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" - II Cor. 5:17. I have a new life, a new Husband. He bids me say of myself what He says of me in Him, and because of Himself. For example, "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" - Romans 6:14. Hence, "your life is hid with Christ in God" - Col. 3:3. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" - Phil. 4:13. "They which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ" - Romans 5:17. Christ "was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we

shall live with Him by the power of God toward you" - II Corinthians 13:4.

Once I was sinful and ruined; but I am not so now. When Paul speaks of "weakness" or "infirmity," he has no reference to harshness of spirit, or acts of disobedience, or stubbornness; but to our helplessness and dependence upon God. We dwell in bodies of humiliation, and are in a scene of limitations and necessities. We are cast on the arm Omnipotent. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" - II Cor. 3:5. Some people consider themselves able to do what they want to do; but they know nothing of Paul's weakness, neither have they learned the secret of the sufficiency of God's power. Jesus Christ is not only a loving compassionate Husband, forgiving me if I fail; but He is my Husband, and keeps me from failing.

Some men's interpretation of I Timothy 1:15,16 is utterly out of harmony with God's might and faithfulness. They claim that he called himself the chief of sinners after he had enjoyed God's full salvation for a score of years. Note his words - "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." He came to "save His people from their sins" - Matthew 1:21. How can one be saved from his sins and still go on sinning and be the chief fellow at the business? What is the apostle's meaning? Simply this - he means that he was the chief sinner before God saved him. Verse sixteen declares that fact. "For this cause (because I was chief) I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all His longsuffering, for an ensample of them that should thereafter believe on Him unto eternal life" - I Timothy 1:16 Revised Version. Therefore, if Jehovah could save the chief of sinners and keep him from sinning He certainly can save any other sinner and keep him. If Jesus Christ proved a loving devoted and all powerful Husband to him, whose first husband made him the most wretched man, how will He not prove Himself the same to us if we reckon with God and yield to Christ? "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" - Romans 8:32. The victory over sin and the fellowship with Christ, which Paul experienced and rejoiced in as joined to another Husband, are for the entire Church if she will reckon and yield. Romans seven is the prevailing state of most believers; but that is not the enticing standard. Our last Husband lives in Romans eight. How foolish then, for us to cling to the old man and wear ourselves out, as "wretched" ones struggling and defeated; while others are enjoying the Lord and bringing forth abiding fruit unto the Father? The problem is found in Romans six; the triumph in Romans eight. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" - Galatians 5:1.

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness" - Romans 8:10. A healthy body is one of the items of a victorious life portrayed in Romans eight. Christ died for us, which also means that we died with Him. That death with Him includes the death of our bodies. Sickness and pain cannot stay in a dead body. Now, if God counts our bodies dead we, too, should count them dead. If He reckons them free from pain and disease, so should we. If sin is a usurper, a rebel, an outlaw in our flesh, then so is disease; for it is the offspring of sin. If we get the victory over sin by reckoning ourselves

dead to it, so do we get the victory over sickness by reckoning ourselves dead to disease.

"But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" - Romans 8:11. We are exhorted to a double reckoning, even as with the sin problem. We should count the sick body dead, and we should count it quickened or made alive by the Spirit of resurrection. This is wonderful! The Triune God has planned for and now works for our healing and health. He does not patch up the old sinful dead body. Medicine does that. God imparts a new order of life, even the life that was in His Son when He was raised from the dead. In a fuller sense, we may say, "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" - II Cor. 5:17. Divine healing is a supernatural touch. Divine life is not the old life revived. It is resurrection life poured in. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all (to save us and give us victory over sin in the flesh and to give us well bodies), how shall He NOT with Him also freely give us all things?" - Romans 8:31,32.

OUR FULL INHERITANCE

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My Name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" - Matthew 19:29.

Many objections have been filed against the precious doctrine of everlasting life. We wonder why no one has ever quoted this verse and I Timothy 6:12 against it. They both teach the obtainment of eternal life by our own efforts. How shall we reconcile these two citations with the plain and emphatic teaching of obtaining eternal life by faith? Jesus explains.

When answering the rich young ruler's ardent question - "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" - our Lord taught that eternal life is not only an experience received by faith, but it is also a blessed career. It has a living beginning, a progress, a perfecting, and a glorious consummation. This is exactly the laid-open meaning of Paul's words - "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life" - I Timothy 6:12; II Peter 1:3-11. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" - I John 5:11. Jesus said, "He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" - John 5:24. This is the commencement of, or the introduction into, eternal salvation which is obtained absolutely by faith in Jesus Christ. It is God's free gift by grace, put into the fingers of faith by the Holy Spirit.

Some people only paddle in the shallow waters (comparatively) of their entrance into eternal life; but never launch out into the deep, bottomless, boundless ocean of life everlasting. Hence, many honest folk, having a high standard of what a Christian's walk should be, are afraid of the teaching of eternal life. Therefore, observe that Jesus named eight conditions upon

which eternal life becomes our inheritance in Christ Jesus. One or all of those eight items block the way against enjoying spiritual wealth here and a full inheritance in the ages to come. That inheritance is for everyone that forsakes all. Everyone "shall receive an hundredfold" more in this life than he gives up. Think of it. For every house you forsake, you receive a hundred other houses. For leaving one father, you receive a hundred others.

How about a mother with half a dozen children? Must she leave them literally to follow Jesus? Oh, no, no. Paul explains this in I Corinthians 7:29-32. "Brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice (over material things), as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not." It means to put Christ and His interests first, and make everything and everybody serve Him. God works miracles for such saints. You put Christ first, and you will be first to have attention from Him. Trials you will have, of course; but He will turn those trials into lasting triumphs which will culminate in an inheritance.

"And shall inherit everlasting life." This is the Lord's promise of reward. But it may be asked again, how may eternal life become an inheritance if it is obtained by faith when one is saved? Or, how may one lay hold on what he already possesses? Be it remembered that eternal life is a definite career, distinct from a life of sin in the old creation. It is a new career under another Head - Christ, the last Adam. Eternal life is in Him, and He is that eternal life. Our inheritance of everlasting life includes all that He has purchased for us by His death, for time and eternity. We, as sinners, gain an entrance 'into life' by childlike faith in the Savior - Matthew 19:17. But by meeting the eight prescribed conditions, we enjoy some of the inheritance day after day. Hence, Paul said, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life" - I Timothy 6:12. The fight of faith swallows up all the other conditions and compels them to swing into line.

How to live a successful and victorious Christian life is a problem. The Apostle Paul solved the problem in Romans six. The consequent triumph is portrayed in Romans eight. That triumph will climax finally in a full and glorious inheritance - an abundant entrance into, and a rapturous enjoyment of, eternal life. Reader, are you laying hold of it?

THE REST OF THE WAY

Joshua 1:5

Oh, fathomless mercy! Oh, infinite grace!
With humble thanksgiving the road I retrace!
Thou never hast failed me, my strength and my stay:
To whom should I turn for the rest of the way?
Thro' dangers, thro' darkness, by day and by night
Thou ever hast guided, and guided aright.
In Thee have I trusted, and cheerfully lay
My hand in Thy hand for the rest of the way.
Thy Cross all my refuge. Thy blood all my plea -

None other I need, blessed Jesus, but Thee!
I fear not the shadows at close of the day,
For Thou wilt go with me the rest of the way.