

September 17

Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:27

EVERY true child of God must have a definite individual Christian character which is not dependent for its existence upon the spiritual life of any other Christian.

A81 "Paul declares (Col. 1:27) that this mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, now made manifest to his saints, is

"CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY"

This is the great mystery of God which has been hidden from all previous ages, and is still hidden from all except a special class--the saints, or consecrated believers. But what is meant by "Christ in you?" We have learned that Jesus was anointed with the holy Spirit (Acts 10:38), and thus we recognize him to be the Christ--the anointed--for the word *Christ* signifies *anointed*. And the Apostle John says that *the anointing* which *we* (consecrated believers) have received *abideth in us*. (1 John 2:27) Thus the saints of this Gospel age are anointed company--anointed to be kings and priests unto God (2 Cor. 1:21; 1 Peter 2:9); and together with Jesus, their chief and Lord, they constitute Jehovah's Anointed--the Christ.

In harmony with this teaching of John, that we also are *anointed*, Paul assures us that this mystery which has been kept secret in ages past, but which is now made known to the saints, is that *the Christ* (the Anointed) is "not one member, but many," just as the human body is one, and has many members; but as all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Anointed--the Christ. (1 Cor. 12:12-28) Jesus is anointed to be the Head or Lord over the Church, which is his body (or his bride, as expressed in another figure--Eph. 5:25-30), and unitedly they constitute the *promised "Seed"*--the Great Deliverer: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's *seed*, and *heirs* according to the promise." Gal. 3:29"

FURTHER MEANING AND IMPLICATIONS OF THIS AND SIMILAR TEXTS

R1570 "Let us consider the Apostle's meaning when he speaks of "Christ in you, the hope of glory." He uses the same figure again in his letter to the Galatians (Gal. 4:19), saying, "My children, whom I am bearing again, till Christ be formed in you," etc... The Apostle sought to nourish and sustain those germs of spiritual being with his own spiritual life until, apart from his personal work and influence, they would be able to appropriate for themselves the God-given elements of spiritual life contained in the Word of Truth, until the Christ character should be definitely formed in them...

Paul feared, and had reason to fear... He said, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain" (Gal. 4:11); for already they were giving heed to seducing teachers and departing from the faith, showing that they were not established in the Truth, and consequently not established in the spirit of the Truth, which is the spirit of Christ, and hence that Christ was not yet formed in them.--Verse 19.

He must from the Word of Truth, proclaimed and exemplified by other Christians, draw those principles of life, etc., which give him an established character, a spiritual individuality of his own. So positive and definite should be the spiritual individuality of every one, that, should even

Alas, how often we see among those who bear the name of Christ...that Christ is not yet formed in them! that they have not yet reached that degree of development which manifests a distinct spiritual individuality! They depend largely upon the spiritual life of others, and if their spiritual life declines these dependent ones suffer a similar decline; if they go into error, these follow... Apply the question to yourselves--Is Christ formed in you so fully that none of these things move you? that, however they may grieve you at heart, they cannot affect your spiritual life? This is what it is to have "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

IMPORTANT WAYS TO ESTABLISH A FIRM INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN FAITH & CHARACTER

R4448 "The armor which the Lord provided is to be put on individually."

B172 "While many may prefer to take a statement without the trouble of verifying it from the Scriptures, this will not be the case with the real truth-seeker. He must, so far as possible, make every point, argument and proof his own, direct from God's Word, by tracing all the connections and thus convincing himself of the truthfulness of the account presented."

F263 "We now call attention to the Apostle's declaration, "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things." Gal. 6:6

"HIM THAT IS TAUGHT" AND "HIM THAT TEACHETH"

This scripture, in accord with all the others, shows us that God designed to instruct his people by means of each other; and that even the humblest of his flock shall think for himself and thus develop an individual faith as well as an individual character. Alas, that this important matter is so generally overlooked amongst those who name the name of Christ! This scripture recognizes teacher and pupils; but the pupils are to feel free to communicate, to make known to the teachers any and every matter coming to their notice and seeming to bear upon the subject discussed--not as desiring to be teacher but as an intelligent student to an elder brother student. They are not to be machines, nor to be afraid to communicate; but by asking questions, calling attention to what seems to them to be misapplications of Scripture or what not, they are to do their part in keeping the body of Christ and his teachings pure--they are thus to be critics; and instead of being discouraged from doing this, and instead of being told that they must not criticize the teacher or call in question his expositions, they are, on the contrary, urged to communicate, to criticize.

We must not, however, suppose that the Lord wished to encourage any hypercritical spirit, or combative, fault-finding disposition. Such a spirit is entirely contrary to the holy Spirit..."

the beloved brother or sister whose spiritual life first nourished ours and brought us forward to completeness of character fall away (which the apostle shows is not impossible--Hebrews 6:4-6; Galatians 1:8), we would still live, being able to appropriate for ourselves the Spirit of Truth. Z.03-375R3250:6

R768 "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some shepherds and teachers, not that the other members should receive their teaching without investigation, but in order to aid them in that work. Every thought suggested and every exposition of Scripture advanced by these must be brought to the test of the Word; and the testing may be of great service, if the assemblings of the saints be largely devoted to this important work, not in the spirit which so often marks controversy, each more anxious to maintain and establish his own opinions than to discover truth, but in the spirit of meekness which totally ignores such base considerations, in an all-absorbing desire to discover the Lord's will and plan."

F264 "Next to the Lord, the Truth is the most precious thing in all the world..."

(1Th 5:21KJV) "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

R1719 "This is the victory [the conquering power] that overcometh the world, even our faith."--1 John 5:4...

Let us see, then, that we have the faith of Christ--the faith well founded in the Word of God, a faith examined and proved, deeply rooted in the heart as well as in the head, and therefore *established* as the motive power of life...

Faith, to be a conquering power in us, must go deeper than the head: it must go into the heart, and thus permeate and energize the whole being, bringing not only the outward conduct but every thought into subjection to Christ."

(Col 2:6-8 KJV) "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: (7) Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. (8) Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

R5800 "Every feature of Present Truth sent by God as 'meat in due season' for His saints is promptly *counterfeited* to 'deceive if possible the Very Elect.'"

R1356 "Having received all these favors of knowledge and grace, our use of them becomes the test of our loyalty and faithfulness. If we are ashamed to bear witness to them lest we offend those who advocate false doctrine, preferring their favor to God's favor; or if we hold the truth lightly, with an open ear for every doctrine opposed to the doctrine of Christ, and a God-speed for every advocate of error as well as of truth; or if we make no effort to withstand error, or to help the weak, or to spread abroad the knowledge of the right ways of the Lord, we are surely unfaithful to our trust and must lose it."

(1Th 2:4 KJV) "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."

R766 "THE LORD YOUR GOD PROVETH YOU.... Even after coming out of these anti-christ or false-christ systems, there are many false prophets who assume authority to direct the consecrated, who teach theories subversive of the truth and pervert the Scriptures to support them. Such false prophets always have been and always will be found, so long as Satan has power in his hands; that is, until he is bound.

And our Heavenly Father permits it so to be: why? To prove his people: "For the Lord your God doth prove you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." The Lord would prove whether we have received the truth in the love of it and of its Author. It is very often the case that truth is received by some because of their love for those who bear it, and without personal searching to prove that it is from God. Such have not received the truth in the love of IT, and sooner or later some circumstances will unsettle them. If the prop falls into error such will surely fall with it; or if love for the prop grows cold, the love for truth thus received grows cold with it. But love for our brethren in Christ, and special love for those who serve us most, will never overthrow the faith of those who receive the truth in the love of it.

Should controversy arise because the way of truth is evil spoken of even among those through whom the blessed Gospel has been received, and who have been greatly loved for their work's sake, it will only impel those who are wholly the Lord's, to a more diligent searching of the Scriptures, and thus more earnest inquiring of the Lord to make very plain the way.

Peter reminds us that there were false prophets in Israel, even as there should be false teachers among us; (2 Peter 2:1) and Moses declares that it was permitted to prove Israel. If faithful to God, no consideration of a personal character, should lead them to turn away from God's truth after these false teachers...

The Lord proved Israel's determination to obey him at the sacrifice of any earthly friendship if need be. And in this Israel was a type of both the world in the age to come, and also of the church in the present time. Temptations even from dearest friends to depart from the living God and serve idols, whether those idols be self-exaltation, or any other thing, must be resolutely met with a fixed purpose to follow the Lord wholly. Such suggestions may not be harbored nor consented to by those fully consecrated to God, even though they come in the most deceptive disguise, and by dearest friends. And not only so, but deceptive errors and influences must be put to death; they must be pelted to death by the stones of truth. Our weapons are not like those of fleshly Israel--not carnal but spiritual, and mighty in pulling down the strongholds of error. 2Cor10:4

Ever bearing in mind that the Lord your God doth prove you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and whether your love to him is paramount to every other love, however strong, we may meet the trials of severing friendships and dissolving

earthly ties, with firm unflinching confidence in God, who will crown with everlasting joy, the faithful overcomer who has fought to the end the good fight of faith."

R4841 "CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY"...In view of the various statements of Scripture relating to this subject, we see how Christ is represented in us. In proportion as we have the Holy Spirit, in that proportion we are faithful members of His Body, and have the anointing in us. As the Apostle says, "The anointing that ye have received of Him abideth in you"; "Ye have an unction [or anointing] from the Holy One, and ye all know it." (1 John 2:27,20) It manifests itself to us as it would not to the world. We know that we have the mind of Christ--the opposite of selfishness. This we can more and more discern in others--better than in ourselves. As every good seed will bring forth good fruit, so we, if we abide in the Vine, shall bring forth the fruits thereof--meekness, patience, brotherly-kindness, long-suffering, love."

R4808 "The farmer who puts into practice only what he has learned by accident, in a haphazard way, and who is goaded to effort only by sheer necessity, must not expect the fruitful fields, the abundant harvests...

The faithfulness with which we cultivate this reckoned new nature, by persistently weeding out old habits of thought and action, supplanting them with new virtues, and training them to activity in the Divine service, is to prove our worthiness or unworthiness...

It is our business, therefore, to *grow*; to cultivate in ourselves those dispositions which are worthy of us as spiritual sons of God, called to be "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ."

(Col 3:12-14 KJV) "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;"

R2481 "The Apostle urges upon our attention the necessity, not only of putting off the evil dispositions of our fallen flesh, but the necessity also of putting on, cultivating, the various graces of the Spirit exemplified in our Head, Christ Jesus. He specifies these: (1) Bowels of mercies, or, in more modern language, *compassionate sentiments*; a disposition toward largeness and generosity of heart toward everybody and everything--toward the saints, toward our neighbors and friends and relatives, toward our enemies, and toward the brute creation. Amplifying, he continues, showing that it would imply (2) kindness toward all; (3) humbleness of mind, the reverse of boastfulness, headiness, arrogance; (4) meekness, or gentleness of disposition; (5) long-suffering, or patient endurance with the faults and weaknesses of others...

He adds, "And *above* all these put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." Love is thus pictured as the "girdle" which binds and holds in place the folds of the robe of Christ's righteousness, with its various graces. In other words, the Apostle would have us see that forbearance, meekness, patience, etc., must not be matters of courtesy merely... The wearers will not be perfected in heart, not be fit for the kingdom, until they have reached the place

where these various graces of their wills, or intentions, are bound to them by the cords of love -- love for the Lord, love for righteousness, love for the "brethren," and sympathetic love for the whole groaning creation. Love is indeed the bond of perfectness, the very spirit of the Lord."

R1273 "CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY" *"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I stand in doubt of you."*--Gal. 4:19,20.

The wealth of God's wonderful favor to the church of Christ is briefly comprehended in that one expression of the Apostle Paul, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. 1:27.) Christ in you, dear ones, is the only Scriptural foundation for that good hope of the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. If Christ be not formed in you, then indeed is your hope vain...

There comes a time during the period of natural gestation, shortly after the formation of the new creature, when life begins to manifest itself in activity. This manifestation of activity is called the quickening. If this quickening never takes place, the sure indication is that whatever of dormant life there may have been is becoming or has already become extinct, and the birth of the new living creature will therefore never take place unless the dying embryo can in some way be resuscitated...

But let us inquire more particularly what it is to have Christ formed in us... We answer, It is to have a Christ-like character distinctly formed in us as a result of the begetting power of the truth and of the exceeding great and precious promises, inspiring in us *love* to God and to all his creatures; *faith* in his sure Word of promise and in his ability and willingness to accomplish all his purposes; *obedience*, or full consecration to the will of God at any cost to self, and a fixed determination ever to abide by his expressed will; and *zeal*, which makes manifest this disposition of heart in activity for the accomplishment of the purposes of God, in so far as the Scriptures inform us that human agency can affect them...

If we have merely a little love for God which appreciates but slightly his blessings and promises, and a little faith which indolently says -- This good news seems to be true, but I do not exactly know; many smart men read the Bible quite differently and arrive at opposite conclusions; it is difficult to discover which is right and I shall not trouble myself trying to find out, so I have a general charity for all and am *no bigot*;--and if we are willing to obey God only so far as it suits our convenience, to trust him as far as we can trace him, and to advance his truth only so far as our indolence will permit us to discover it, and as our temporal interests may be served by it--if such be our condition of heart, then *the Christ character is not formed in us*. And though we may have been begotten by the exceeding great and precious promises to a good hope of life in Christ, the germ of the new life is in a dying condition and will never come to the birth unless it can be resuscitated...

If we hear the truth and merely say that we consecrate ourselves to God, and then go on living just like the rest of the world, spending all or nearly all of our time and our means merely for our stomachs, our

backs and the temporal interests of our families and the business pursuits of the present life, what evidence have we that we are quickened, that the Christ character is formed in us, or that the hope of glory is ours? Many seem to make this mistake, and the evidences of the shipwrecked faith of many such lie all about us...

Let all who aspire to the inheritance of the saints make sure that they have the Christ character *formed* in them, that the principles so notable in Christ's character are established in them... Have you *love*? Is it manifested in fervent zeal for the honor of God, the spread of his truth and the blessing of his children? Are you seeking and finding opportunities for thus showing the Lord how much you love? Have you *faith*? Is it unmistakably manifested, not merely in profession, but in bold and definite acts of faith? If a million dollars were promised to any man who would walk from Pittsburgh

to Buffalo, and a dozen men professed faith in the promise, and yet only one actually started out and walked... If they had the faith in such a promise it would rouse them to activity. And just so, any man who appreciates fully and believes the exceeding great and precious promises of God to the church, will make haste and run for them; and he will closely observe the directions, too, that he may not run in vain.

And if Christ be formed in him, those established principles of Christian character will hold him firm and steady in the midst of temptations and error, and he will not be easily moved either from the practice of righteousness or from sound Scriptural doctrine. He will demand a "Thus saith the Lord" for every doctrine, and on that sure word he will dare depend. And the language of his heart as expressed in his daily life will be, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed. I will praise thee, O Lord, among the

people." "Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever; for they are the rejoicing of my heart." "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts."--Psa. 57:7,9; 119:111; Jer. 15:16.

While such must be the personal condition of every heir of the Kingdom, the special work of every such one should be to help those begotten by the Word of truth to arrive at this condition of *fixed* and *quickened* Christian character. Be not satisfied, beloved fellow laborers, when those within the range of your influence are merely begotten by the Word of truth, but, by instruction, example and assistance, labor diligently to have Christ formed in them, the hope of glory; and then, so far as possible, minister also to their further development, that they may eventually be born in the glorious, divine nature."

R3250 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

"CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY"

--COLOSSIANS 1:27--

LANGUAGE is but a medium for the communication of thought, and words are but symbols of ideas. When words are so framed in sentences as to express an impossibility or an absurdity, when considered literally, but do forcibly illustrate a known truth when symbolically interpreted, we instinctively recognize the figure, and are instructed by it. In this way many of the deep things of God--the spiritual things--are expressed to us, since they are often forcibly illustrated by things familiar to us on the natural plane. Thus, for instance, the resurrection, both natural and spiritual, finds an illustration in the processes of vegetation (1 Cor. 15:35-38); and the processes of the beginning, development and final perfecting of the spiritual sons of God find a remarkable illustration in the begetting, quickening and birth of the natural man. (James 1:18; Eph. 2:1; John 3:3.) But if, when we read these symbols or illustrations of spiritual things, we pervert and dishonor our God-given reason by accepting palpable absurdities as their interpretation, we deceive ourselves, and in so doing are not blameless. In parables and dark, symbolic sayings our Lord opened his mouth and taught his disciples, expecting them to use their common sense in either interpreting them themselves, or in judging of the correctness of any interpretation offered by others as they should become meat in due season. And when on one occasion, instead of using their brains to draw from it the implied lesson, the disciples asked for the interpretation of a parable, Jesus suggestively and reprovably replied, "How then will ye know all parables?" (Mark 4:13.) He would have us think, consider and put our God-given mental faculties to their legitimate use.

Bearing in mind these wholesome reflections, together with the fact that the Scriptures abound in these symbolic expressions of truth, let us consider the Apostle's meaning when he speaks of "Christ in you, the hope of glory." He uses the same figure again in his letter to the Galatians (Gal. 4:19), saying, "My children, whom I am bearing again, till Christ be formed in you," etc. Here the Apostle is likening his care and labor and endurance for those who had been begotten by the Truth to the new nature, to the physical endurance of a mother in nourishing and sustaining the germ of human life until the new human creature is formed and able to appropriate for itself the life-sustaining elements of nature, independent of her life. So the Apostle sought to nourish and sustain those germs of spiritual being with his own spiritual life until, apart from his personal work and influence, they would be able to appropriate for themselves the God-given elements of spiritual life contained in the Word of Truth;--until the Christ-character should be definitely formed in them.

In no other reasonable sense could the Apostle bear those Galatian Christians; and in no other reasonable sense could Christ be formed in them, or in us. The thought is that ⁽¹⁾every true child of

God must have a definite individual Christian character which is not dependent for its existence upon the spiritual life of any other Christian. He must from the Word of Truth, proclaimed and exemplified by other Christians, draw those principles of life, etc., which give him an established character, a spiritual individuality of his own. So positive and definite should be the spiritual individuality of every one, that, should even the beloved brother or sister whose spiritual life first nourished ours and brought us forward to completeness of character fall away (which the Apostle shows is not impossible--Heb. 6:4-6; Gal. 1:8), we would still live, being able to appropriate for ourselves the spirit of Truth.

Paul feared, and had reason to fear, that the Galatian Christians had not yet come to this condition of established character--that the Christ-life was not yet definitely formed in them. He said, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain" (Gal. 4:11); for already they were giving heed to seducing teachers and departing from the faith, showing that they were not established in the Truth, and consequently not established in the spirit of the Truth, which is the spirit of Christ, and, hence, that Christ was not yet formed in them.-- *Verse 19.*

Alas, how often we see among those who bear the name of Christ, and who have truly received the spirit of adoption as sons of God, that Christ is not yet formed in them! that they have not yet reached that degree of development which manifests a distinct spiritual individuality! They depend largely upon the spiritual life of others, and if their spiritual life declines these dependent ones suffer a similar decline; if they go into error, these follow, as did many of those Galatian Christians to whom Paul wrote. How is it, beloved, in your several cases? Apply the question to yourselves--Is Christ formed in you so fully that none of these things move you? that, however they may grieve you at heart, they cannot affect your spiritual life? This is what it is to have "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

A cloak of mystery and superstition has been thrown around this expression of the Apostle, evidently by the great Adversary of the Truth and the Church, to the effect that in some secret way, known only to the initiated, Christ personally comes into the consecrated soul and uses that soul simply as a machine; and that, consequently, the machine is about infallible, because Christ is using it; that for them to speak, or think, or act, or interpret the Scriptures, is for Christ to do it, in whose hands they are merely the passive agents. With this idea they generally go further, and claim that Christ personally talks with them and teaches them independently of his Word; and some go so far as to claim that they have visions and special revelations from the Lord. Some speak of this presence as Christ; some as the holy Spirit; and some speak of them interchangeably.

⁽¹⁾ Sept. 17 Manna, Col. 1:27

While there is a semblance of truth in all this, and while we remember that Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them...shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him;...and we will come unto him and make our abode with him" (John 14:21,23), it is true that a more serious error could scarcely be entertained than this idea of personal infallibility because of the supposed mysterious presence of another being within.

Notice that this promise of the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is to those who *have* and *keep* the commandments of the Lord Jesus. Those, therefore, who ignore the Word of the Lord and have not his commandments--who do not know what they are, and hence cannot keep them, but who hearken to the voice of their own imaginations and note all the changing states of their own feelings, mistaking them for the voice of the Lord and follow the impressions arising from this source, instead of the commandments or teachings of the Lord--are quite mistaken in claiming this promise. Under their delusion they are following another spirit than the spirit of Truth; and unless recovered from the snare they must inevitably plunge deeper and deeper into superstition and error.

The first difficulty we meet in attempting to dispel this delusion from the minds of those infatuated with it, is the claim that this is a higher attainment in the spiritual life, up to which we have not yet measured. If the testimony of the Scriptures bearing on the subject is brought forward they say, "Oh, I see you have the head-knowledge, but you have not the Spirit, you have not Christ in you." They then proceed to tell how Christ is in them, and that he is "teaching them wonderful things," which we shortly discover to be quite out of harmony with the Word of God. The case is indeed a sad one when all Scripture testimony contrary to their belief is set aside with claims of superior revelations of Christ or the holy Spirit which other children of God do not enjoy, and that Christ personally dwells in them, etc., etc.

Who but these deceived ones cannot see that, if their theory be true--if God talks with them and answers all their queries aside from his written Word, the Bible, through mental inspiration, or by dreams, or by audible sound--then the Bible is to such a useless book, and time spent in its study is so much time wasted. Who would "search the Scriptures" as for hid treasures, as the Lord enjoined and as all the apostles searched, if they could shut their eyes, or kneel, and have God make a special revelation to them, respecting the information desired. Surely any sensible person would prefer a special revelation on a subject, rather than to spend days and months and years examining and comparing the words of our Lord and the apostles with those of the prophets and the Book of Revelation ("searching what or what manner of time the spirit did signify"), if they could ask and have an inspired and infallible answer in a moment. None of God's consecrated ones should be thus misled of the Adversary. It is the stepping-stone to pride and every evil work;--to *pride*, because those who are thus deceived soon feel themselves honored of God above the apostles, who even in conference judged of the mind of the Lord as read in his Word and in his providential leadings in harmony with his Word (Acts 15:12-15); to *every evil work*, in that those thus puffed up fancy themselves infallible, and, separated from the anchor of truth, the Bible, Satan can soon lead them rapidly into the outer darkness of the world, or into yet darker delusions.

But the testimony of the Scriptures is quite contrary to this vaunting spirit. Paul says, "Know ye not...that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" and then he exhorts that we examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, or whether we have rejected the faith and thus become reprobates-- no longer acceptable to God. (2 Cor. 13:5.) Every *true* child of God has respect to the commandments of God: he searches the Scriptures that he may know them, and is not left in ignorance of them; and, learning them, he endeavors to keep them, and the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is with all such so long as they continue to hold and to keep (obey) his commandments--to hold the Truth in righteousness.

To have the Truth and to keep it is not merely to accept it on the recommendation of some friend, and because it gives some comfort and costs nothing, and to hold it until some other presumed

friend dazzles the unsettled mind with some fanciful theory. The promise of the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is not to such. Christ is not in them; Christ is in the humble and sincere ones. He and the Father love and abide with them.

But how? To illustrate--a friend accompanying another to a railway station said, as he was about to board the train, "Remember, I will be with you all the way." He meant that his thoughts would be with his friend and that he would be concerned for his welfare, etc. In a similar, and yet in a fuller and broader sense, ⁽²⁾the Lord is ever present with his people. He is always thinking of us, looking out for our interests, guarding us in danger, providing for us in temporal and spiritual things, reading our hearts, marking every impulse of loving devotion to him, shaping the influences around us for our discipline and refining, and hearkening to our faintest call for aid or sympathy or fellowship with him. He is never for a moment off guard, whether we call to him in the busy noon hours or in the silent watches of the night. And not only is the Lord Jesus thus present, but the Father also. How blessed the realization of such abiding faithfulness! And no real child of God is devoid of this evidence of his adoption. Sometimes it is more manifest than at others; as, for instance, when some special trial of faith or patience or endurance necessitates the special call for special help, and forthwith comes the grace sufficient with a precious realization of its loving source. Thus

"E'en sorrow, touched by heaven, grows bright,

With more than rapture's ray,

As darkness shows us worlds of light

We never saw by day."

Every true child of God has these precious evidences of sonship, and the roughest places in his pathway are so illuminated with divine grace that they become the brightest, and memory continues to refer to them with thankfulness; and faith and hope and love grow strong and inspiring.

⁽³⁾Our Lord always links the progress and development of our spiritual life with our receiving and obeying the Truth, and every child of God should beware of that teaching which claims to be in advance of the Word, and that Christ or the holy Spirit speaks to such advanced Christians independently of the Word. The snare is a most dangerous one. It cultivates spiritual pride and boastfulness, and renders powerless the warnings and exhortations of the sacred Scriptures because the deluded ones think they have a higher teacher dwelling in them. And Satan, taking advantage of the delusion, leads them captive at his will.

These symbolic expressions of the Scriptures must be interpreted as symbols, and to force any unreasonable interpretation upon them manifests a culpable wilfulness in disregarding the divinely appointed laws of our mind, and the result is self-deception. When we read, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 Jno. 4:16), the only reasonable interpretation is that we dwell in the love and favor, and in the spirit or disposition of God; and that his spirit or disposition dwells in us. Thus God by his indwelling spirit works in us to will and to do his good pleasure (Phil. 2:13); and we are reckoned as not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in us.--Rom. 8:8,9.

Let us endeavor to have more and more of the mind, the Spirit of God--to have his Word abide in us richly (John 15:7; Col. 3:16)--to have and to keep his commandments, that the abiding presence of the Father and the Son may be with us; and that, realizing that the Christ-character and life are definitely formed in us, the hope of glory may be ours; for our Lord said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21.) How careful then should we be in seeking both to know and to do the will of God. Many indeed will come forth with the plea of their wonderful works, hoping to be admitted into the Kingdom, but only those will be recognized who have done the will of the Lord, and who have no theories or works of their own whereof to boast.

⁽²⁾ Sept. 18 Manna, Ex. 33:14

⁽³⁾ Sept. 19 Manna, John 17:17