

April 22

I say unto you, That every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. Matthew 12:36

IF, in the daily scrutiny of our ways, which is the duty of every Christian, we discover that in any particular our words have been dishonoring to the Lord, we

should remember that in the name of our Advocate we may approach the throne of grace, explain to our Heavenly Father our realization of the error, our deep regret at our failure to honor His name and His cause by a holy walk and conversation, and humbly request that the sin be not laid to our charge, but that it may be blotted out through His gracious provision for our

cleansing through Christ, humbly claiming that in His precious blood is all our hope and trust. Thus we should render up our account for every idle word; and by our words of repentance, supplemented by the merits of Christ applied by faith, shall we be acquitted. Z.'96-32R1938:3

R1937 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

BY THY WORDS ACQUITTED; BY THY WORDS CONDEMNED

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof on a day of judgment. For by thy words thou wilt be acquitted, and by thy words thou wilt be condemned."--Matt. 12:34-37

REALIZING that we, the Church, are at the present time under the inspection of our kingly Bridegroom, who is now present (Matt. 22:11) to gather out of his Kingdom [in its present embryo or formative condition] all things that offend" (Matt. 13:41), and to gather unto himself his jewels, his bride (Mal. 3:17), we cannot too carefully consider the principles upon which this judgment and this selection are made.

The above words of our Lord indicate that the heart and the mouth are under very special scrutiny, the former representing the individual character, and the latter being an index of the character. It is in this same view of the matter that those words of wisdom were penned,--"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee." (Prov. 4:23,24.) The indication is clear that a right condition of heart is necessary to right words; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," as experience testifies to every man. It is therefore just that our words should be a criterion of judgment in the Lord's estimation, as he tells us they are. True, honied words are sometimes only the masks of deep hypocrisy; but the mask is sure to drop off some time, as soon as selfish policy renders a change of tactics necessary. The fact therefore remains that the words, the entire course of conversation and conduct, are an index of the heart.

⁽¹⁾Our first concern, then, should be for the heart--that its affections and dispositions may be fully under the control of divine grace; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, brotherly kindness, love, faith, meekness, temperance, supreme reverence for God and Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles be fixed, established, in the heart, then out of the good treasure of the heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace.

Concerning our Lord Jesus, whose heart was perfect --in whom was no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, it was said, "Grace is poured into thy lips;" and again, "All bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth." (Psa. 45:2; Luke 4:22.) Moses, personating Christ, foretold the blessed influences of the Lord's words, saying, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain; my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." (Deut. 32:2.) And Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (John 6:63.) So wise, just and true were the Lord's words, that, though his enemies were continually seeking to find some fault, it is said, "They could not take hold of his words before the people; and they marveled at his answers and held their peace." (Luke 20:26.) And others said, "Never man spake like this man."--John 7:46.

Thus our Lord left a worthy example to his people, which the Apostle urges all to follow, saying, "Let your speech be always with grace [with manifest love and kindness], seasoned with salt [a purifying and preservative influence]." (Col. 4:6.) And Peter adds, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God,"--wisely, and in accordance with the spirit and Word of the Lord. Again, it is written,

"Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile [deceit]." "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles." "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious words: but the lips of a fool [an unwise, reckless talker] will swallow up himself. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talk is mischievous madness." "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."--Psa. 34:13; Prov. 21:23; Eccl. 10:12,13; 5:2.

Job, in the midst of all his afflictions, was very careful not to sin with his lips. (Job 2:10; 31:30; 1:21,22.) He knew that his words would be taken by the Lord as an index of his heart, and he was careful to keep both the heart and the words right, saying, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil [calamities, troubles--for discipline or refining]?... The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." There was no spirit of rebellion in a heart out of whose abundance came such words of loving submission, patience and faith under severe testings, and that, too, without a clear apprehension of the divine wisdom in permitting them.

The Psalmist puts into the mouth of God's consecrated and tried people these words of firm resolution:--"I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked [who tempts and tries the righteous] is before me."--Psa. 39:1.

How necessary to the stability of Christian character is such a resolution, and the self control which develops under a firm adherence to it. ⁽²⁾In an unfriendly world we can expect to receive only the reproaches of our Master; for the servant is not above his Lord. The world, the flesh and the devil oppose our way: there are fightings within and fears without, and many are the arrows and fiery darts aimed at the righteous. But what is the safe attitude of the soul under afflictions and severe testings? Is it not in silence before God, waiting and watching first to see his leading, his will, in every matter before presuming to touch things that often involve so much? So the Psalmist suggests, saying, "I was dumb with silence: I held my peace, even from good [even from doing or saying what seemed good in my own sight]; and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was hot within me, and in my self-communing there burnt a fire [description of a fiery trial]. Then spake I with my tongue"--not to the revilers, nor to others, but to the Lord.

Yes, ⁽³⁾it is always our blessed privilege to carry our sorrows and vexations to the Lord;

"For he knows

How to steal the bitter from life's woes."

He does it, as the Psalmist suggests (vs. 4-6), by showing us, through experience, the vanity of all earthly things and their utter inability to satisfy the soul's cravings, or to comfort the wounded spirit. Then comes the thought that the present life, with its cares, vexations and sorrows is passing away, that our days are but as a handbreadth, and however vexing our experiences, they will soon be over; and if we permit them to do so they will only work out in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and develop in us strong and

⁽¹⁾ Apr. 19 Manna, Mat. 12:34-35

⁽²⁾ Apr. 18 Manna, 1Pet 4:12-13

⁽³⁾ Apr. 29 Manna, Psa. 91:15

noble characters, disciplined to thorough self-control, thoughtful consideration, patient endurance of affliction and loving loyalty and faithfulness and trust in God. Then the assurances of the blessed rewards of righteousness in the life to come begin to have a new and deeper significance, and we are made to realize that this is not our continuing city, but we seek one to come. Thus the heart is separated from earthly things, and made to realize the superior worth of heavenly things. Nothing but the Lord himself can satisfy the longings of the soul, which, tempest-tossed and tried, comes to realize--

"How vain is all beneath the skies,
How transient every earthly bliss,
How slender all the fondest ties,
That bind me to a world like this!"

Thus chastened and comforted, we learn to look beyond the present to the glory that shall by and by be revealed in the faithful overcomers, who, by patient continuance in well-doing in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, seek for the prize revealed to faith alone. Thus disciplined and blessed under fiery trials by going to the Lord for comfort and help, the child of God begins to realize what it means to be dead to the world and alive toward God, with a keen appreciation of his love and goodness and grace; and being thus separated from the world, and more firmly united to Christ, the language of the heart is, as the Psalmist further suggests, "And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee." (Vs. 7.) 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."

Such is the blessed result of bridling the tongue under circumstances of trial and vexation, and humbly taking all our cares to the Lord in prayer, to the end that, when we speak, our speech may be with grace, seasoned with salt, and that under all circumstances we may speak as the oracles of God.

Considering our Lord's words above quoted--that we must give an account for "every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word"--in view of the fact that the present is our (the Church's) judgment day, we see what great importance attaches to our words. ⁽⁴⁾All our words are taken by the Lord as an index of our hearts. If our words are rebellious, or disloyal, or frivolous, or flippant, or unkind, unthankful, unholy or impure, the heart is judged accordingly, on the principle that, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Thus our words, in all the varied circumstances of our daily life, are bearing testimony continually before God of the condition of our hearts. So our Lord's words imply: and in this view of the case how timely is the admonition,--"Be not rash with thy mouth; and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God [And remember that "all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do."--Heb. 4:13]; for God [our Judge] is in heaven [upon the throne], and thou upon earth [under trial before the bar of God]: therefore let thy words be few." Let them be thoughtful and wise, as uttered before God, and not rash, hasty and illy considered.

Again, in harmony with the Lord's statement of the responsibility incurred by our words, it is also written, "He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction." (Prov. 13:3.) What a fearful responsibility attaches to the tongue that wags in an evil, or even in a flippant, way, which is also dishonoring to God! And how necessary is the injunction of the Apostle Peter, "Be sober and watch unto prayer!"--1 Pet. 4:7; 1:13; 5:8.

The Psalmist puts this prayer into the lips of all who feel this responsibility, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth: keep a guard at the door of my lips. Permit not my heart to incline after any evil thing." "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." "My lips shall utter praise when thou hast taught me thy statutes. My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness. Let thy hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts. I have longed for thy salvation [from all sin, and for the perfection and beauty of holiness], O Lord; and thy law is my delight."--Psa. 141:3,4; 19:14; 119:171-174.

⁽⁵⁾That, as imperfect beings, we may always be perfect in word and deed is not possible. Despite our best endeavors we will sometimes err in word as well as in deed, yet the perfect mastery of our words and ways is the thing to be sought by vigilant and faithful effort. But, nevertheless, for every idle word we must give an account in this our day of judgment. ⁽⁶⁾If, in the daily scrutiny of our ways, which is the duty of every Christian, we discover that in any particular our words have been dishonoring to the Lord, we should remember that, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1); and in the name of our Advocate we may approach the throne of grace, explain to our Heavenly Father our realization of the error, our deep regret at our failure to honor his name and his cause by a holy walk and conversation, and humbly request that the sin be not laid to our charge, but that it may be blotted out through his gracious provision for our cleansing through Christ, humbly claiming that in his precious blood is all our hope and trust.

Thus we should render up our account for every idle word; and by our words of repentance, supplemented by the merits of Christ applied by faith, shall we be acquitted. Otherwise the idle words, dishonoring to the Lord, will stand against us and condemn us, and we will be obliged to suffer the consequences. The first consequence will be self-injury, for every evil thought or word indulged hardens the character and inclines it the more toward unrighteousness. The second consequence is a bad example to others, and the stirring up of evil in them. "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." (Prov. 15:1.) Thus, as the result of unwise or unkind words, we may stir up about us difficulties which will become the agents of retributive justice to teach us the lesson of self-control, and consideration for the feelings and opinions of others. It is often the case that the Lord (or the devil) is blamed for sending trials which are simply the natural results of our own mistakes. And those who fail to locate the root of the trouble (*in themselves*) pray in vain for the Lord to remove miraculously what they themselves could obviate by obedience to the Word, and vigorous self-discipline. "If we would judge [and correct] ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord [largely by the experiences through which our own faults put us], that we should not be condemned with the world." (1 Cor. 11:31,32.) But even should it be admitted that the difficulties are not directly caused by God, or the devil ("Every man is tempted [tried] when he is drawn away of his own lusts [desires] and enticed"), the natural tendency is to blame the matter on some one else, and to think that our loss of patience, our hasty word or act was the fault of another. How many deceive and encourage themselves with the thought: "If every body else had as reasonable and generous a nature as I have our family or church gathering or community would be a veritable heaven upon earth!" Beloved, let us examine *ourselves*, let us be very humble, lest the very words of self-congratulation and self-satisfaction which we consider in our hearts (if we do not utter them aloud) bring our condemnation. "If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye [what merit is there in it]?" (Luke 6:33-38.) It is only when we "endure grief, *suffering wrongfully*," that our suffering is acceptable to God as a sacrifice of sweet incense. "What glory is it if, *when ye be buffeted for your faults*, ye take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God; for even hereunto were ye called." (1 Pet. 2:19-21.) Beloved, let us see to it that our sufferings are for righteousness' sake only, and let us not charge God or our neighbors for tribulations resulting from the indulgence of our inherited or cultivated faults.

"In many things we are all faulty. If any one does not err in word, he is a perfect man, able to control the whole body." (Jas. 3:2.) But such a man does not exist. We all need and must continually plead the merit of our Redeemer and Advocate, while we strive daily to bring every thought into captivity to the will of Christ, and to perfect holiness in the fear (reverence) of the Lord.

In view of this fact, which we trust all of the Lord's people will endeavor more and more fully to realize, viz., that we now stand

⁽⁴⁾ ½ Feb. 14 Manna, Mat. 12:37

⁽⁵⁾ ½ Feb. 14 Manna

⁽⁶⁾ Apr. 22 Manna, Mat. 12:36

before the bar of judgment, we inquire, in the words of Peter, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"⁽⁷⁾ God-likeness certainly cannot include any harmful gossip, any unclean or unholy conversation, any disloyal or rebellious words. Let such things be put far away from all who name the name of Christ in sincerity and truth. And let us remember daily to settle our accounts with the Lord, to make sure that no record of idle words, unrepented of, and consequently unforgiven, stands against us. "Let your conversation be as cometh the gospel of Christ." "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things

⁽⁷⁾ Mar. 30 Manna, 2Pet 3:11

August 1 Manna "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." Proverbs 18:21

The tongue's influence exceeds that of all our other members combined: and to control it, therefore, in the Lord's service, is the most important work of the Lord's people in respect to their mortal bodies and the service of these rendered to the Lord. A few words of love, kindness, helpfulness,--how often have such changed the entire course of a human life!-- yea, how much they have had to do with moulding the destiny of nations! And how often have evil words, unkind words, slanderous words, done gross injustice, assassinated reputations, etc.! or, as the apostle declares, "set on fire the course of nature"-- awakening passions, strifes, enmities, at first unthought of. No wonder he declares such tongues "set on fire of Gehenna"--the Second Death! Z.'99-75 R2447:

R5517 "CONTROL OF THE TONGUE A NECESSITY "I say unto you, that every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment."--Matthew 12:36...

More and more the people of God realize the wisdom of the Apostle James' statement that although the tongue is a little member, yet it is the most dangerous of all, because it has the widest influence. If a man sin not with his tongue, he is a perfect man. (James 3:2.) We cannot estimate the possible results of our words. This influence may reach even to the ends of the earth. Therefore we are to consider carefully what we may say, in order to determine whether our words will glorify God or whether they will dishonor Him--whether they will stir up good thoughts and impulses in the minds of others or whether they will stir up that which is evil.

In His Wisdom God has seen fit so to create us that our conduct of today has much to do with our character of tomorrow. Thus we are either making or breaking character continually. It is well that all should know this fact. Not only worldly people, but Christians also, should understand this principle; for Christians are now on trial for glory, honor and immortality. Therefore by neglecting to weigh carefully their words they might lose the great prize for which they are striving.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

By way of emphasis our Lord declared that every idle word--every unprofitable utterance--must be accounted for in a day of reckoning. With the Church, we understand the Scriptures to teach that this day of reckoning is this Gospel Age. Daily are we to go to our Heavenly Father and say, "Forgive us

of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Thus out of the good treasure of the heart we shall be able to speak the words of truth and soberness, to honor our Lord by a godly walk and conversation, to subdue the evil tendencies of our fallen nature, and to have our conversation "honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." --Phil. 1:27; 4:8; 1 Pet. 2:12.

If daily we render up our accounts to God and seek his grace for greater overcoming power with each succeeding day, we shall be acquitted in judgment and stand approved before God through Christ, having the testimony of his holy spirit with our spirits that we are pleasing and acceptable to him.

our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us." Not only must we render up our account daily, but at the end of our course there will be a general summing up. By this we do not understand that at the end of our race course we shall be lined up and questioned about every word of our experience, but that each one who comes into contact with the Truth is either building up character or else breaking it down, and that his character at the end of his probation will determine his reward. As a pupil daily learns his lessons and prepares himself for the final examinations at the end of the year, when there is a general testing of his knowledge, so with the pupils in the School of Christ. Day by day our Master deals with us; but at the end of our course there is to be a summing up...

OUR LORD'S ESTIMATE OF SLANDER...

There is a spirit which shoots out bitter words. From the standpoint of the Lord, this is MURDER...

SPECIAL BRIDLES FOR THE TONGUE

Under stress of sudden temptation the Lord's people, who are now on judgment, might impulsively say that which is not pleasing to the Master. But we must learn not to speak thoughtlessly; we must learn to weigh our utterances. Since we are servants of God, we should ever take heed to our ways, in order to render the best possible service. We are not merely to have a good will to do that which is right; we are to seek to bridle our tongues. Whatever vows or resolutions or restraints we may seek to put upon our tongues may be considered as bridles, by which we are determined to bring ourselves into full subjection to the will of God.

So long as Satan and his demon host are at large, the Lord's people will do well to take heed to their ways, that they sin not with their tongue. Satan and his angels are seeking to subvert those who have given themselves to the Lord and to catch them in their words. So while we are in their presence we must be especially on guard, that they may not entrap us. As the Psalmist says, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked [One] is before me."

AN IMPORTANT LESSON FOR ALL...

It is very natural for one to recognize his own rights in any matter, but the fallen nature does not so quickly perceive the rights of others. Therefore one of the most important lessons for the Lord's people to learn is to do unto others as they would have others do unto them-- simple justice.

We fear that many of the Lord's dear people have not fully realized that obedi-

ence to the rules which govern the New Nature means absolutely the "Golden Rule" on their part toward all others. They must not do to others what they would not have others do to them. It is the duty of the New Creature to bring the body into such subjection that justice shall rule in every act and word, and so far as possible in every thought. One must be just in his thoughts before he can properly be just in his dealings. Whoever thinks unjustly will act unjustly in spite of endeavors to the contrary.

THE TREASURE STORED IN OUR HEARTS

As we reflect that the Church is standing before the Bar of Divine Judgment, under the personal inspection of our Lord, and that in His estimation our words are a criterion of judgment, we cannot weigh too carefully the underlying principles upon which His decision will be made. Our Lord's words, as recorded in Matthew 12:34-36, indicate that both the heart and the mouth are under special scrutiny. How necessary therefore is a right condition of heart, in order that the words of our mouth may be acceptable to our Lord and Redeemer!...

THE CLASS APPROVED OF GOD...

Shall we give up the struggle for the prize because we cannot do perfectly? No! The Lord assures us that He looks at the heart, not at the flesh; that He has made a very gracious arrangement through our Lord Jesus by which the imperfections are cleansed away. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Therefore all His children may come with courage to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, there to obtain mercy and help in every time of need.

CHIPS OR APPLES--WHICH?

The good things brought forth from the treasure of a good man's heart will be those things which he has stored up from time to time. As the Psalmist says of the godly man, "His delight is in the Law of the Lord; and in His Law doth he meditate day and night." And of himself he declares, "Mine eyes prevent [anticipate] the night watches, that I may meditate in Thy Word," Law, precepts --the spirit, the purpose of that Law, not merely the outward form. So should we meditate upon the spirit of the Law of God. The sentiment of our heart should be the desire to get the Divine Mind as nearly as possible on every subject. All who are eager to be in harmony with God and to attain His character-likeness will think upon things that are good, pure, holy.--Psalm 1:2; 119:148; Philippians 4:8.

As one thinks upon things that are good, the mind becomes stored with good. Wherever there is a mouth disposed to

speaking upon things that are evil, there is an evil disposition--a mind in which evil has been stored. Whatever one has stored up in the mind will be *topmost* and sure to be spoken. An evil treasure will show itself, despite all endeavors to hide it; and likewise a good treasure will manifest itself; for the mind can hold only a certain amount. -- Luke 6:45.

A father saw his son reading a novel. He knew that his son was in the habit of reading along this line. Calling the boy, he said, "John, I wish you to empty the apples out of that basket, and then take the basket to the woodshed and fill it with chips." The son did as he was directed. When he returned the father said, "Now put in the apples." The son replied that he could not do this, because there was not room enough in the basket for both chips and apples. Then the father said, "That is just what you are about to do with your mind. You have been filling your mind with chips; and when you try to put in apples, there will be no room." Thus it is with all of us. If we fill our minds with jokes, foolish sayings, etc., we shall not be able to fill them with the things of the Holy Spirit.--Ephesians 5:1-7.

Many of the Lord's people find that, while their hearts are good, there is in their flesh a tendency for certain things that are not good. Thus there is a continual struggle between the flesh and the spirit as to whether the treasure stored up shall be chips or apples, so to speak. It is for each New Creature to decide which shall fill his mind--what kind of society he will choose, where he will go, what he will read, what kind of influences he will come under, what kind he will resist, etc. If in the past he has to any extent treasured up evil things, he should now try to rid himself of them. If his mind has been filled with jokes and levity, things not proper to the child of God, he should seek to put these away.

HOW CHARACTER IS BUILT

Finally, there is a relationship between this laying up of a good treasure in our minds and that of which our Lord spoke when He said, "Lay up for yourselves treasure in Heaven." In laying up treasure in our minds and hearts, we are building character. Whoever goes into a man's house and sees what he has gathered in the way of treasures can easily perceive the direction in which that man's mind is bent. His preferences demonstrate his character. Thus it is with us all; the things which we cultivate are an index to our character.

When we come to render up our account as New Creatures, character will decide whether we shall be esteemed worthy to be of the Lord's elect Little Flock. Only those who have laid up the treasure of a character like that of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Pattern, will be fit for an inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven. Our eternal destiny therefore will be decided by the way in which we now use our minds and the thoughts which we now accumulate. Whoever cultivates good thoughts will receive a blessing, not only in the present life, but throughout the future.

Our first concern, then, must be for the heart--that its affections and dispositions may be wholly under the control of Grace Divine; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that

justice, mercy, benevolence, meekness, self-control, faith, brotherly-kindness, love, supreme reverence for God and for Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles are established in the heart, we shall have no difficulty in controlling our tongue; for out of the good treasure of our heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace."

(Gal 6:7-8 KJV) "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. {8} For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

(James 3:14-16 KJV) "If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. {15} This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. {16} For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."

(Eph 4:29-32 KJV) "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. {30} And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. {31} Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: {32} And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

R5519 "THE IMPORTANCE OF DAILY SELF-SCRUTINY *"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."* -- 1Cor. 11:31,32.

"IN THESE words the Apostle seems to be saying that if we as Christians should properly criticize ourselves, examine ourselves, correct ourselves, the Lord would not find it necessary to take us in hand and give us judgments, or criticism. But if we fail to do this judging, or criticizing, of ourselves, then it will be necessary for the Lord to do it...

The object of this chastening on the part of the Lord is not to vent His displeasure upon us by causing us pain; but it is as the Apostle states, "that we may not be condemned with the world." We judge ourselves when we criticize our own conduct, our own words--our own thoughts, even--and try them by the principles laid down in the Word of God--justice, kindness, mercy, love. As our Master admonishes us, if we find that we have done wrong, we should leave our gift before the altar--we should first go and make apologies to the one whom we have injured or wounded by any word or act of unkindness or rudeness. Then we may come and offer our gift.

Such a course would be forcing one's self, obliging one's self to do the right thing. It is not enough that one should say, "I know that I was wrong; I should not have done as I did; but, then, I am imperfect; I cannot do just what is right in everything." This course would not be in harmony with

the spirit of our text. Our text shows that if we do wrong we have a solemn duty to make it right, to the best of our ability. If we have had an *uncharitable thought against another* it is not necessary that we go to the person and tell him this; for we might make the matter worse by so doing. But we should judge ourselves in the matter and give ourselves a thorough setting-down. We ought to give ourselves a good lesson, a lasting one. Thus we would be right in heart, in intention, approved of the Lord...

"I JUDGE NOT MINE OWN SELF"

In regard to judging in our own case, no one should be so well able as ourselves to know our heart. But St. Paul shows us that we should use a certain amount of leniency in judging even ourselves. He says, "Yea, I judge not mine own self;...but He that judgeth me is the Lord." This is not a contradiction of the words of our text, but his thought seems to be that when we come to realize how high is God's standard, we might be inclined to judge ourselves too severely, not taking into account that we were shapen in iniquity. We might better think somewhat along this line: I realize that I have failed again today to live fully up to what I had hoped. I feel condemned before the bar of my own judgment because of it. But I hope the Lord will be able to make some allowance for me in this matter. I trust He can make some excuse for me that I do not see for myself. I am not sure how much allowance should be made; I am not able to judge myself accurately.

We should then go to our Father in earnest prayer, telling Him of our sorrow that we have not succeeded better in glorifying His name. We should plead the merits of the blood of our dear Redeemer, promising the Lord that we will strive to do better, if possible, by His assisting grace.

There are some of the Lord's children who possess only a small amount of self-esteem and who therefore would be inclined to be too severe in their judgments of themselves, and hold themselves to the strictest account for every imperfection. Such should try to judge themselves justly. All judgment should be just, even when we ourselves are the culprits. Justice is the foundation of the Lord's Throne. We should never lose sight of the fact that we have the covering of the robe of our Savior's righteousness and the Mercy-Seat, to which we should go every day for cleansing from every defilement. But it is not only proper, but indeed a duty that we daily scrutinize ourselves, and see that we keep the body in subjection to our new mind. Thus doing, and thus applying daily, nightly, for the application of our Redeemer's merit to cover our unwitting mistakes and faults, we shall be kept in our Father's love and approval, and shall not need so much chastening from the Lord.

This daily taking stock of ourselves, the discernment of our gains and losses as New Creatures in Christ, and of how and where these came to us in our constant warfare with all our spiritual foes within and without, will surely prove profitable to each child of God who takes such account of himself in the fear of the Lord, desiring only to be pleasing to his Father in Heaven, to become all that God would have him to be--a saint indeed."