

March 19

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. 1 Peter 1:14,15

SOME Christians have the erroneous idea that God does all

R5854 "HOW WE OUTWORK OUR GREAT SALVATION *"Beloved, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."*—Philippians 2:12,13...

We cannot work out our own justification; but being justified by the blood of Christ and being called with the Heavenly Calling, we can do our share in this great work of our own preparation for our future station and glory. We do this by giving heed to the instructions of our Lord, by following the example which He has set us. We can never attain perfection in the flesh; but from the beginning our heart, our intention, must be wholly loyal, and day by day this heart intention must become more and more crystallized, fixed, in the way of righteousness. We must continue the work of bringing our body into subjection, and enlisting in the service of the Lord...

THE MARVELOUS GRACE OF GOD!

This is a wonderful work, a marvelous transformation! Selected from a race of bondslaves of sin, beings of a fleshly nature, depraved, death-stricken, sin-cursed, we are lifted out of the miry clay; we are washed, cleansed, from our pollution, our soiled rags of unrighteousness, and a new nature has been begun

the fashioning, and that His children are to be merely passive in His hand; but Peter does not so express it. He exhorts us to fashion ourselves according to the divine instructions. There is work to be done in us and about us, and those who are not up and doing, but who passively sit and wait for the Lord to work mira-

in us. Then our earthward tendencies are gradually bent Heavenward. We are transformed day by day, rising up, UP, until, our resurrection completed, the work of transformation fully accomplished, we are exalted to heights unimaginable—passing the nature and rank of angels, of cherubim, of seraphim, and every name that is named, and seated upon Messiah's Throne, beside the Infinite Son of God, partakers of His glorious nature—the nature of Jehovah Himself—the Divine nature!

Can mortal man conceive so marvelous a glory? The very thought of such a Calling should cause us to bow our hearts in the dust before our God, realizing our great unworthiness of such stupendous grace—of bliss so transcendent! What can we render unto the Lord that can fittingly demonstrate our gratitude, our thankfulness, for so unspeakable a favor? Surely, the most faithful service we can give is but a very feeble return to Him who has so loved us, so blessed us, so honored us!

We are joint-heirs with the Lord of Glory to this wonderful inheritance, if only we are faithful unto death and keep our garments white. To us "old things have passed away, and all things have become new." As old creatures we had no standing with God; we were feeding on the beggarly elements of the

cles in their behalf, are greatly deceived and are giving the enemy great advantage over them, which he will certainly use to bind them hand and foot and cast them into outer darkness, unless they bestir themselves to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. Z.'03-55R3150:1

world. We were dead in trespasses and in sins. It is only as New Creatures that we have any standing, that we can please God, that we can work for Him. It is this New Creature that the Apostle is addressing in our text.

OUR GREAT RESPONSIBILITY

As we have made a consecration of ourselves to God, our sins are all under the blood, and the new life has begun in us. We are under a solemn contract to see that the work of transformation steadily progresses. When the Father accepted our offering and our vows to Him, and granted us His Holy Spirit, He did not give us the full consummation of our hopes, but merely an "earnest of our inheritance." Our agreement was to be dead to the world, dead to earthly things, and alive toward God. It is therefore for each of us to demonstrate in our words, in our actions, in our thoughts, that everything in this contract is bona fide on our part—that we *meant* every word of it. When we become children of God, our one ambition should be to prove our loyalty to God, our loyalty to our Covenant of Sacrifice. Was it not so with our Lord Jesus?...

"PAY THAT WHICH THOU HAST VOWED"

But this is not a matter in which we are to judge one another. It is not for me to say to

you that you are not sufficiently earnest in your sacrificing. Neither can you properly say to me that I am not faithfully fulfilling my sacrifice. To his own Master each one stands or falls. It is for the Lord and ourselves to settle this important matter in our individual cases. And we may not fully judge even ourselves. We are to strive to do our best, and then leave the results for the Lord's determining. The Father will apportion to each faithful member of our Lord's Body his own place in the glorious Temple.

The brethren may give a word of suggestion to each other along these lines, but that is all. The Lord alone is to decide whether or not we are each living up to the terms of our covenant. He expects faithfulness in each one who has taken His Covenant upon him. It were far better that we never covenant to sacrifice our earthly life and its interests than that we take this vow upon us and then fail to pay that which we have vowed. (Ecclesiastes 5:4-6.) This is a most solemn matter, and the Lord will certainly require of us the fulfillment of our vows. If death is not voluntary, He will destroy our flesh. If we resist this, it will mean the hopeless death of our being.

OUR FAITHFUL, UNCHANGABLE GOD

"It is God who worketh in you," declares the Apostle Paul. We did not begin this work ourselves. It would never have occurred to us, uninvited, to endeavor to obtain a share in the glory, honor and immortality of the Lord Jesus. It would have been the height of presumption for us so to do without an express invitation. It is God who planned the whole matter. He has

been working in us by His promises, by His providences in our daily experiences, and by all the instructions, warnings and counsels of His Word, and we rejoice in this. There is no changeableness with God; and when once He made this proposition, He meant it to the full. It would never mean anything else. He never makes an arrangement which He would wish to abrogate or amend.

We are assured by the Apostle Paul that "He who has begun the good work in us will complete it, unto the Day of Jesus Christ." The only condition is *our own* faithfulness. *God* will never fail. "We are His workmanship." He is really doing the work. We are submitting ourselves that God may work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. He is the great Master Workman. Thus the work of grace goes on in our hearts and lives, making us ready for the exalted position to which we are called. And it is only if we are negligent of these great privileges granted to us that God will take them from us and give them to others.

Those who are constructing a fine building need special power to accomplish the work—to hoist the great steel frames, the blocks of stone, the brick, etc. Now God purposes to furnish the power by which we may accomplish the work on our character-building, this wonderful structure we are setting up. But the Lord will not accomplish this great work in us unless we diligently cooperate with Him. He gave us the calling, the inspiration, and furnishes all the necessary assistance day by day; so we are to persevere in the building of this character which is essential and which He purposes shall be in all those

whom He will make joint-heirs with His Son.

"DO ALL THINGS WITHOUT MURMURINGS"

In following in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus, we are not to *murmur* by the way, finding fault with its difficulties and its narrowness; nor are we to dispute how or where we are to be led, nor to seek to have any other way than that which Divine providence marks out for us, realizing and trusting that the Lord knows exactly what experiences are necessary to our development in the character-likeness of Christ. We should realize also that if obedience were possible while our mouths are full of complaints and dissatisfaction with the Lord and with our lot, which He has permitted, it would indicate that we are out of sympathy with the spirit of His arrangement.

Such an obedience, if it were possible—and it is not—would not meet the Divine approval nor gain us the prize. Hence, as the Apostle exhorts, we should "do all things without murmurings and disputings, that we may be the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom we shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of Life."

HOW WE ARE TO FEAR AND TREMBLE

In the expression of our text—"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"—we are not to understand that the Lord wishes His children literally to tremble with fear before Him. We should exercise the same judgment in interpreting the words and expressions of Scripture that we would in reading any other book, or in understanding the words of our

friends. One called to a position of great responsibility will sometimes say afterwards, "I accepted that position with fear and trembling." He would not mean that he actually quaked with fear; but this is an expression used to indicate that one feels the need of great carefulness—that he realizes his great responsibility and his liability to fail to meet all the requirements without the most earnest attention. It means that one realizes that the matter is not one to be taken up lightly, as if it were a mere bagatelle, but that failure in it would bring serious consequences.

Just so when we read this Scripture, we are not to think that we should tremble with fear before our God; but we believe the Apostle's thought to be that in this great work that we have undertaken—of walking in the footsteps of Jesus that we may attain the prize of our High Calling—*so much* depends upon our

faithfulness, our diligence. We have not undertaken a light thing. It is a very heavy responsibility. Our eternal interests are in the balance—the issue of life or death. Those who win the prize will be heirs of God to the highest honors and glories which have ever been offered—to a glory and honor beyond human power to imagine! We believe that no such offer will ever again be made.

The Son of God holds the position next to Jehovah, and can never have but one Bride. Surely, then, there is need that we work out our salvation with fear and trembling—with great carefulness, with great earnestness, in respect to everything in connection with it! We should be keenly appreciative of the fact that it is the most wonderful thing in all the Universe of God! We believe that if we do not make our calling and election sure and win in this fight within

a very brief time now, the opportunity will be gone forever. No amount of wailing and gnashing of teeth will then avail. When the door is shut, it will never open again. Like Esau, those who fail will find "no place for repentance," though they seek it "carefully with tears." The glorious birthright will have slipped from their grasp forever.

But, beloved fellow-laborers, who are earnestly striving day by day to "so run as to obtain," "we are persuaded better things of you, though we thus speak." But it is well that we have our "pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance," that we may keep our eyes upon the Heavenly City and the prize set before us. The wearisome march will, we believe, soon be ended. At most it is only a *little while*. And so, with steadfast hearts, let us run with patience and perseverance to the end of our course."

R5481 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

FASHIONING OURSELVES AS OBEDIENT CHILDREN

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."--1 Peter 1:14,15

THE APOSTLE is not addressing the world, but those who have become children of God -- those who have passed out from their position of condemnation with the world, and have been justified by faith in the precious blood, who have been accepted of the great Advocate Jesus, and have been begotten of the Holy Spirit. But it is not sufficient that we become children of God; for these newly begotten children are only started in the Narrow Way, they are in an imperfect, undeveloped condition. They have this standing as children because they have put themselves into the hands of God and desire to do His will, loving righteousness and hating iniquity.

On the basis of this stand that we took--of enlisting under the banner of Jesus, to fight against sin and self and Satan--God purposes to prove how thoroughly in earnest we were when we espoused His cause. He wishes us to attain to that develop-

ment of character which will fit us to be associates with Jesus in His great Kingdom, which is to bless the world.

If we are obedient children, everything will work well. We shall get the proper tests, the proper chiseling and polishing, everything that will make us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." But if we do not prove obedient, this will hinder us from ever getting into the Elect company, although we may have a place in that company of children who have had to be chastised and finally brought to proper obedience.

By this we are not implying that any of God's children are exempt from discipline; for we are told that every son receiveth chastisement. (Heb. 12:6-11.) Those chastisements that came to our Lord Jesus were not deserved, but were experiences by which He proved His thorough loyalty and worthiness of exaltation. And so the chastisements that

come to His followers are to fit them for future service and to demonstrate their worthiness of being counted in as members of His Body.

The chastisements which are in the nature of punishments for sin should bring about a thoroughly loyal condition of heart in reasonable time, or the one chastised will lose his place in the Body. If he prove ultimately disobedient, he will be counted unworthy of any of God's favors, and will die the Second Death. The exhortation of our text, therefore, is to the highest attainment and the utmost loyalty to the Father.

HOW TO FASHION OUR MINDS

There is a fashioning of our *minds* in progress. It is *not* the fashioning of our *will*. The will is *given up to begin* with. But the will has to do with *regulating* the *mind* as well as the *body*--the will has to do with this fashioning. We *will* that our minds shall be educated along the lines of obedience, that we may be properly exercised by all the trials which God has purposed for us.

We as New Creatures should learn to think as God would have us think, to develop habits of thought which upbuild the New Creature. We should eat and drink according to His will, and our clothing should be regulated according to His will. We are to seek His guidance in our life in all things--because of the weaknesses of the flesh, the promptings of the Adversary, and our environment. The Lord has made provision, and has given us definite instructions in the Scriptures, by which we may regulate our lives in harmony with His Word; and we should seek more and more to know the will of God and to profit by His providences in our lives, and to apply the knowledge gained, so that whether we eat, or drink, or sleep, or labor, we shall do all to the glory of God.

Our organism of flesh we receive by heredity. These bodies of ours have various weaknesses and inconsistencies --some in one direction, and some in another. But they are all, more or less, perversions of the true ideal which God originally gave. Centuries of sin have left their mark upon us, upon our minds and bodies; and this mark is seen in the theories which have come into our minds. These errors in the past had control of us.

Before we saw the Lord's way, we thought it was right to follow after earthly pleasures and pursuits and to put *self first*. We naturally said, This is the proper course for us to take. We see that the prominent and the great are following this course, seeking first the affairs of this present life--praise of men, how finely they can be clothed and housed,

how fine a carriage or automobile they can have. They seek--and are in large measure able to secure--the gratification of the taste for earthly things, whether it be for the satisfaction of the mind, as various kinds of literature, or for the body, as for certain kinds of foods or drinks, etc.

But when we become children of God, we ask, What is God's will in respect to what we shall eat or drink or wear, as to the use of tobacco, as to the cut of our clothes, etc.? It is not for us to decide *now* whether we shall go to the theater or play cards or dance. All these matters should have been decided before we consecrated ourselves. Now, in harmony with the Covenant we have entered into with Christ, we are to know strictly the *Father's will*. As we learn to see things from God's standpoint, we change our ideas as to what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, etc. And this change going on in our minds is the "fashioning."

THE FASHIONING A GRADUAL PROCESS

Although we discover some things very quickly, we do not learn all things at once. Some things are less conspicuous before our minds than are others, and represent the finer shadings of what would be proper for a New Creature. We gradually come to note these things more and more; and we ask, Which things shall we continue to choose? The knowledge of God's will is a matter of *education*. We come to see that *this is right* and *that is wrong*. (The world sets such a style for evening dress, such a style for morning dress.) When we become Christians we have new standards, and it takes some time to get everything harmoniously adjusted therewith.

In line with this thought, the Apostle says, "Be ye *transformed*, by the renewing of your *minds*"--not by the renewing of the new *will*. We already *possess* the new *will*. But we see that the *body* is regulated by the *mind*. Therefore the new will says, I must begin with the *mind* I must get my mind to *see* things correctly, according to God's will. I will use the Bible and all the providential indications that will give me a knowledge of God's mind, and I will begin to conform my mind thereto. Thus our minds become gradually fashioned--transformed into the mind of the Lord. As we come to *see* more and more what is the will of God, our minds decide to *do* His will. Our reason plays an important part.

God wishes to appeal to our reason, because we are thus better developed than in any other way. We are all in the School of Christ--under the tutelage of our Lord. In this School we are learning to do His will. We have the teachings of our Lord Je-

sus and the writings of the Apostles; and our Lord declared that whatsoever the Apostles should bind on earth would be considered bound in Heaven; and whatsoever they should loose on earth would be so considered in Heaven. Our education progresses, until, at the end of this life, those who have thoroughly learned the lessons of this School will be those who have been *obedient children*. These will have been transformed by the renewing of their minds, that they might prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."--Romans 12:2.

OUR STANDARD--JEHOVAH'S
RIGHTEOUSNESS

The new *will* is, in substance, a will to be like our Father in Heaven. The Apostle Peter exhorts, "As He who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy." Holiness is the standard of perfection. Our *will* must be holy when we first make our Covenant with God. Nothing less than a holy will is acceptable to Him. If we had had an unholy will, a will not submissive to God, we would not have been accepted. So if our *will* be holy, we shall, as far as we are able, *do* His will.

As He who has called us is holy, so we, as far as our will is concerned, will be holy. And we will so direct our mind, as to be holy in life so far as is possible. We will apply the principles of God's holiness to every affair of life. We will observe the Golden Rule, that we should do to others as we would that others should do to us. Whoever neglects to apply these principles of holiness to his

own life is not growing in the new life, not being transformed. We should seek to have our minds fully in accord with God's mind, and our conduct as far as possible also in alignment.

If our mind is not running in the proper groove, we must see to it that we turn it into the proper groove. We want to render obedience to our highest conception of what is the Lord's will, as far as we are able. Our will will be determined by God as loyal in proportion as it has been on the *alert to watch* the *mind* and the *body*, the tongue and everything pertaining to our conduct.

The Apostle enjoins upon us that we shall be "holy in all manner of conversation." (1 Pet. 1:15.) The word *conversation* here has its broad meaning. It relates to our intercourse with others--all of our conduct with respect to others--our manner of life. We are to be holy in *everything* that pertains to our lives--in our thoughts, words and deeds. This is a very high standard; and no wonder that the Lord has set a high standard! It is for us to learn what this standard is, and to help others to know what it is.

This is why we spend a few years this side of the veil after we have given our hearts to Jesus. We *say* that we have taken up our cross to follow Jesus, and the Lord wishes to *demonstrate* whether this is true. He is watching our course, and the foreordained number will be found for the Bride class. Others will be given another position not so good; and those who manifest that they have not the true spirit of obedience will die the Second Death.

R2021 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)
WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?

When the morning paints the skies,
And the birds their songs renew,
Let me from my slumbers rise,
Saying, "What would Jesus do?"

Countless mercies from above
Day by day my pathway strew;
Is it much to bless thy love?
Father, "What would Jesus do?"

When I ply my daily task,
And the round of toil pursue,
Let me often brightly ask,
"What, my soul, would Jesus do?"

Would the foe my heart beguile,
Whispering thoughts and words untrue?
Let me to his subtlest wile
Answer, "What would Jesus do?"

When the clouds of sorrow hide
Mirth and music from my view,
Let me, clinging to thy side,
Ponder, "What would Jesus do?"

Only let thy love, O God,
Fill my spirit through and through;
Treading where my Savior trod,
Breathing, "What would Jesus do?"

THE APOSTLE PETER'S EXHORTATION

"Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy."--1 Pet. 1:13-16

TO APPRECIATE the exhortations of the apostles, we need to become acquainted with their several characters; to note their circumstances; to mark their zeal and faithfulness; and to remember that every word of exhortation addressed to the Church has the substantial backing of their worthy examples. They endured hardness as good soldiers, and suffered much for the privilege of declaring the truth. In their writings are blended a high degree of the power of logic, eloquence and pathos, combined with an inspiring enthusiasm which must awaken in every student of their teachings a measure, at least, of the same sacred flame.

Though written so long ago, the above words of exhortation lose none of their force to us. They were penned for the instruction of the whole Church, down to the end of the age. The introductory, "Wherefore," refers us to the glorious hope of our high calling, and of the necessarily severe measures required to fit us for our exalted inheritance, as mentioned in the preceding verses. Peter would have us appreciate what it is to be called with such a high calling--to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith. (Verse 4.) He would have us know that, if faithful, we are to be made even "partakers of the divine nature," and that we are to be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, of all things.--2 Pet. 1:4.

As the spirit of God draws our hearts into closer fellowship and sympathy with the divine mind, the value of these "exceeding great and precious promises" is more and more fully realized, until there glows in our hearts the same holy enthusiasm that so filled the hearts of the apostles. And only when our hearts are thus warmed and our minds thus awakened, are we prepared to understand the Apostle's "Wherefore," upon the inspiring comprehension of which depends our ability to heed the earnest exhortation which follows.

If our hearts are not duly inspired with this hope --if we have begun to esteem it lightly, or to forget it, or to think of it as an idle tale--to heed the counsel of Peter, here given, will be impossible.

^{1}If, therefore, we realize that a spiritual lethargy has to any extent been creeping over us, imperceptibly benumbing our spiritual senses, so that the truth is losing its inspiring power upon us, our first duty is to betake ourselves to prayer and to communion with God and his Word, that its sanctifying power may be realized.

"Wherefore," then, you that discern the prize of your high calling, and who are endeavoring to press along the line toward the mark, "gird up the loins of your mind"--as in the illustration; strengthen and fortify your purposes and efforts; renew your determination; redouble your diligence; cast aside the weights of unnecessary worldly cares; increase your zeal; and, as the Apostle Paul also urges, run with patience the race set before you. Run, not like one who is merely beating the air, but like one who has a purpose in view, and who, in desperate earnest, is *determined* to make his calling and election sure.-- Heb. 12:1; 1 Cor. 9:26.

^{2}Having thus "girded up the loins of your mind" for a long, steady and determined effort, he further counsels,--"Be sober:" do not allow yourself to become excited and, under the spur of excitement, to exhaust all your spiritual vitality in a very short time, and then to suffer a relapse into coldness or discouragement; but thoughtfully to consider and prepare for a long and patient endurance of all the discipline and trial of faith and patience necessary to prove an overcomer and worthy of the blessed reward promised "to him that overcometh." The race before us is not one to be run by fits and starts, but by "*patient continuance* in well doing." Soberly, thoughtfully, we are to weigh and endeavor to realize the import of the exceeding great and precious promises and to gather from them their invigorating inspiration; earnestly we must apply our minds and hearts to the instruction of the inspired Word of God, availing ourselves also of such helps--of "pastors and teachers" and their literary productions--which prove harmonious with, and helpful to, the study of the Scrip-

^{1} Mar. 10 Manna, Heb. 3:13

^{2} Mar. 18 Manna, 1Pet. 1:13

tures; diligently and patiently we must submit ourselves to all the transforming influences of divine grace and truth; and then, loyally and faithfully, we must devote our consecrated talents, however few or many, to the great work of preaching this gospel of the Kingdom to all who will hear.

Such a sober view of the situation fortifies the mind against discouragement, and enables us, as the Apostle suggests, to "hope to the end for the grace to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Such a sober view keeps Reason on the throne of our minds. And Reason says, The divine call to joint-heirship with Christ clearly implies eligibility to the exalted office; the divine promise clearly insures divine grace to enable us to fulfil the conditions; the divine provision for my justification, by faith in the precious blood of Christ, releases me from the condemnation to death; and the righteousness of Christ, imputed to me by faith, fully supplements all my weaknesses, so that before God I stand approved in him. Sober Reason also says, The directions given in the Scriptures to those who would run the race are clear and explicit, and make plain every step of the way to those who are truly and fully consecrated to the Lord. The examples of the Lord and the Apostles shine on the pathway with a moral luster and glory that cannot lead us astray. If we walk in their footprints we will assuredly reach the same goal.

Therefore in this sober view of our high calling and its privileges, and the abundant resources of divine grace, let us not be discouraged or overcome in any way, but let us hope to the end for the grace (favor) that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ--at his second advent. The Church has enjoyed much of the divine favor all through the age of her probation and trial; but the grace to be revealed at the revelation of Jesus Christ--when he comes to reign in power and great glory--is her exaltation with him to sit with him in his throne. This glorious consummation, the Church all through the age must steadily keep in view: but how glorious is the privilege of those of its members living in this end of the age, when already, even before our change into his glorious likeness--in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye--we begin to enter the joys of our Lord.

Those who are still sober and faithful, and who have not cast away their confidence, have been led into the secret of the Master's presence; and they have been made to sit down to meat, and the Master himself has come forth and served them. Yes, our hearts have been made to burn within us while

he has opened up the Scriptures and made us understand, from the testimony of the law and the prophets and the apostles, that the time is fulfilled--that the end of the age is now here, and that the Lord of the harvest is present to direct and supervise the great work of reaping the fruit of precious seed long ago sown in tears, and now to be gathered with joy and singing; while he has opened up to us the treasures of divine wisdom and grace displayed in the plan of the ages, which God purposed before the foundation of the world, which he has been gradually working out in the ages past, and which is now nearing its glorious consummation.

Oh, what feasting, what rejoicing there has been around the table of the Lord, as one after another the treasures of divine grace have been opened to us, revealing the glories of the new heavens and the new earth, and the blessedness of all the obedient subjects of him who sitteth on the throne to reign in righteousness; how all tears shall be wiped from off all faces, and how the reproach of God's people is to be taken away! Well indeed did Daniel prophesy, saying, "Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred, thirty and five days!"--the days of the Lord's second presence, when all that is written to be accomplished by his glorious reign shall begin to come to pass.

Seeing, then, that such are our privileges and hopes, "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and god-likeness?" (2 Pet. 3:11.) Being purified by this hope, ought we not, as the Apostle exhorts, to fashion ourselves, not according to the former lusts (desires and ambitions, which we had) in our ignorance, but as he who has called us is holy, should not we also be holy in all manner of conversation --in all our words and ways? Since it is written, "Be ye holy; for I [the Lord] am holy (1 Pet. 1:15,16), should not we who are called to be partakers of his own nature and glory be holy also?"

^{3}Some Christians have the erroneous idea that God does all the fashioning, and that his children are to be merely passive in his hand; but Peter does not so express it. He exhorts us to fashion ourselves according to the divine instructions. There is a work to be done in us and about us, and those who are not up and doing, but who passively sit and wait for the Lord to work miracles in their behalf, are greatly deceived and are giving the enemy great advantage over them which he will certainly

^{3} Mar. 19 Manna, 1Pet. 1:14-15

use to bind them hand and foot and cast them into outer darkness, unless they bestir themselves to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, while God, cooperating with their earnest efforts,

works in them, to will and to do his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:12,13.) "Watch and pray," beloved, lest any of these snares of the enemy entrap you and beguile you of your reward.

R5735 *"Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness." --2 Peter 3:11...*

The things of the Present Order are soon to pass away--its banking institutions, its monetary affairs, its stocks and bonds, its politics, its great religious systems, indeed, the entire social fabric. The whole arrangement is now about to be melted down. An entirely New Order is about to come in...

Selfishness is the great motive power of the world.... The Apostle points out that all these things that occupy men's minds and absorb their energies are to pass away. None of them are to be permanent...

Surely the knowledge of these things, of the transitoriness, the trifling value of the most alluring of earth's gifts, should cause us to turn from them and to set our affections and hopes upon the Heavenly things, which are infinite in value and which shall never pass away. We should lay up treasure in Heaven, where the institutions will be permanent, and where armies and revolutions will not destroy

the Government... The more we discern, then, the teachings of the Bible, the more we imbibe its spirit, the more shall we live for and prepare for the great blessings promised for the future to those who love God."

R1622 "A SERIOUS QUESTION *"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."--2Pet. 3:11*

IF this was a serious consideration in the Apostle's day, how much more weighty does it seem to-day, when we stand at the threshold of the new dispensation, and in the very midst of all the disintegrating influences of the old. A few more years will wind up the present order of things, and then the chastened world will stand face to face with the actual conditions of the established Kingdom of God. And yet the course of the Church is to be finished within the brief space of time that intervenes.

Seeing, then, that all these things--present political, social, religious and financial arrangements --are to be dissolved, and that so soon, and also how apart

from these things are the real interests of the saints, how comparatively unimportant should the things of this present order seem to us: they are not worthy our time or words, which should go to the things which alone will survive. And, having such hopes as are set before us, and so clear a knowledge of the grand outcome, as well as of the minutiae of the divine plan, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? And yet with what carefulness we need to guard against being overcharged with the petty cares of this present time, and against imbibing the spirit of the world, which is all about us, and mixed with every question of the hour.

Only by constant watchfulness and prayer can we keep ourselves unspotted from the world. We need to keep a vigilant watch over our general character to see that it bears the divine likeness: that meekness, sincerity, moderation, temperance and truth are always manifest in us. And then we should see that all our conversation is such as becometh saints."