

March 9

God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. Hebrews 6:10

"LABOR OF LOVE"

Heb 6:10

R2231 "He marks the degree of our love by the measure of our self-denials and self-sacrifices for his sake, the truth's sake."

(Gal 6:9 KJV) "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

R5332 "Let us be watchful, active, alert, and co-labor with God and with the Lord Jesus Christ. We are to consider the offer made to us--the great High calling--the most wonderful thing ever known in all creation! We shall never have another opportunity of showing God and our Lord Jesus our zeal for righteousness and our earnestness of spirit."

R5854 "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!"

R957 GOD WILL NOT FORGET *"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."*--Heb. 6:10.

"Can a woman forget her sucking child? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee [Zion, the Church]. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."--Isa. 49:15.

As we read these assurances of tenderest love on the part of our heavenly Father, and then consider our low estate, we can scarcely realize that we are indeed the objects of that love. Yet if we are humbly walking in the narrow way, these assurances are for our comfort and consolation.

Your sphere may seem to be a narrow one; your opportunities for engaging in the special work of the present hour may be necessarily very limited: yet if you are lovingly laboring to do all you can under circumstances which you cannot control to improve, and doing that service with your whole heart cheerfully, then be assured that the Lord appreciates it. And he is not unrighteous to forget it because it is small and does not amount to much.

God is not measuring us by the magnitude of the results of our labors, but by the spirit which we develop and manifest in their performance. If we have the spirit of our Master, our constant aim and effort will be not only to do something, but to do all we can in the special work which God has marked out for this special time. In some cases that all is a great deal more than in other cases. We are more likely to underestimate than to over-estimate our abilities

NO child of the Lord should be content to let the days of the present harvest time go by with their golden opportunities for service and co-operation without seeking each day to lift the royal banner himself, and to publicly show forth the praises of Him who

and opportunities, and thus to accomplish much less than we might. But if faithful stewards, we will endeavor to invest our talents to the best possible advantage, according to our best judgment, so as to secure the largest possible results. The efforts of such will also be directed in the exact line which the Lord indicates--first to the saints, to minister to them and build them up in the faith, and to encourage and strengthen the weaker ones among them, and in brief to serve them in any way.

Such service and labor of love the Lord will not forget. Sooner could a mother forget her infant child than could God forget these precious ones."

LABOR OF LOVE IN A PERILOUS TIME

R5413 "THE END OF THE AGE A PERILOUS TIME *"In the last days perilous times shall come; men shall be traitors, heady,...lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."*--2 Timothy 3:4...

The Great Company class, while still loving the Lord, are becoming immersed in the spirit of the world. Even those who are living nearest to the Divine standard will be more or less imperiled through this spirit, unless they continue diligent in prayer and the study of God's Word. What we see going on about us seems natural to our minds. The way in which other people spend time and money is a temptation to the Lord's people which must be *steadfastly resisted*.

A SUBTLE TEST

The Lord's people spend and are being spent in His service--by volunteer work, by attending meetings, by holding meetings and in various ways, according to opportunity. They are living separate from the world -- distinct lives, lives of consecration. The world now has an eight-hour day. The Lord's faithful people would, on the contrary, make theirs a sixteen-hour day. But all these present-day conditions constitute perils. For us to do what others do, and to devote to the Lord's service only what the world considers a reasonable day's work, would not be fulfilling our Covenant of Sacrifice at all...

But the Little Flock will serve the Lord with such delight that they will scarcely know how to cease their efforts. They recognize that their bodies are fully consecrated to the Lord, and they are daily putting them to death in a reasonable, rational manner. In view of these perilous times, let us each ask himself the question, *To which class do I belong?*"

OUR LOVE LIKE PETER'S IS BEING TESTED

R941 "Arrangements made, boats, nets, etc., procured, they make a fresh start at the old business. Who can doubt that the Lord was among them often, whilst they were prepar-

hath called him out of darkness into light, or without assisting and co-operating with others whom the Lord in His providence has placed in more advantageous positions for public service. Z. '03-59 R3152:3

ing, and that he had all things arranged which would make this a valuable lesson. If they should have great success and become swallowed up with interest in the business, they would soon be unfit for the higher service, yet if they should have no success, it would seem like forcing them, so the Lord adopted a plan which taught them a lesson which he often teaches all his followers, viz., that the success or failure of our efforts in any direction he can control if he please.

They toiled all night and caught not a fish and began to feel disheartened. A stranger on shore calls to them to know of their success. Poor success! they answer, Caught nothing! Ah! says the stranger, now cast your net on the other side the boat and try. No use, stranger, answers one, we have tried both sides all night long, and if there were fish on one side, there would be on the other. But we will try again and let you see. They did so and got an immense haul...

And when they got to shore, they found that Jesus had bread as well as fish, and learned the lesson, that under his direction and care, they would not be left to starve, because he "knoweth that ye have need of these things."

...This was the Lord's opportunity to impress a lesson upon them all, so specially addressing Peter, the leader, pointing to the fish, and boats, and nets, he said, Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these? You left these things once to follow me and be a fisher of men; have you changed your mind, Peter? Are you *sure* which you love most--me and my service, or this business to which you have returned? When our Lord asked this the third time, it began to imply to poor Peter that the tendency with him was to love and serve business more than Christ... Peter was grieved... "Lord, thou knowest all things," thou knowest my weaknesses, yet "Thou knowest that I love thee." Then said Jesus, Feed my sheep and lambs; make that, not fishing, your business, Peter... God had made him an overseer, *proved* by his faithfulness even unto death in his service, that he did really and truly love the Lord more than the fishing business, and that his love was not in word only, but in *deed* and in *truth*.

Had Peter continued in the fishing business and neglected the sheep and the lambs, which the great Shepherd had asked him to seek out and feed, would his actions not have *contradicted* his reply to our Lord's question--"Thou knowest that I love thee" above all? This would have been loving in word, but not in deed and in truth. (See 1Jno. 3:18.) Had this been the course of the apostles, had they loved the Lord with their mouths, or professedly only, and not *acted* in harmony with their profession... Had their love for the Lord been overcome by their love for business, or honor, or family pride, or love of peace and ease, they would have been "drowned," or "choked," and would have become unfruitful...

He tells us plainly (Matt. 10:34-38.) that such as love business, pleasure, self, ease, honor of men, or family, or even life itself, more than they love him, so that they would not sacrifice *more* for him and his word than for these, are NOT WORTHY to be of the class he is *now* selecting."

MINISTERING TO THE SAINTS

Heb 6:10 KJV "For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."

R5726 "I have found some very dear children of God who seemingly found it much easier to do something for the world than for the Church. That is not the proper sentiment. It is God First, the Lord Jesus next, the brethren next; and after that, all men as we have opportunity..."

"HE THAT LOVETH GOD, LOVETH HIS BROTHER ALSO"

Brother Russell, if you love all the brethren, you are going to love some pretty rude characters...

Suppose some of those who profess to be consecrated to God are very, very weak indeed every way? Very well, my dear brother, perhaps the Lord sees you are weak and that you get into trouble too. Do you not know that He has many things to overlook in you? We are to be of as little trouble to others as possible, but we are to bear with the infirmities of the weak brethren and not merely to please ourselves. Let me repeat. We are to bear with their weaknesses and infirmities, and *not* to please *ourselves*. How much that means!...

It is the Father's will that we should cooperate with Him in assisting the brethren in every way possible. There are various trials and difficulties for these brethren that you and I know about. All the soldiers of the cross have a narrow way, a battle with the world and with the flesh and with the Adversary. You and I have battles due to the fallen condition of our own flesh. What sympathy it should give us with all other soldiers in the battle!... It is our privilege to love our brethren."

R4444 "Love...is not merely a form of loving words, nor merely kind words and smiles, but that it goes deeply into our natures and includes our deeds and our heart sentiments. — 1 John 3:18."

R4224 "If we find ourselves sacrificing nothing in the interest of the Lord's cause, let us not delude ourselves by saying that we love the Lord."

(1 John 3:18 KJV) "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

R5948 "Each one of us is under this testing. If not yet, sooner or later, *undoubtedly*, this willingness to sacrifice in the interests of the brethren will *prove each one of us* either *loyal, faithful* to our covenant, or *contrariwise*—unfaithful. Let us make this

matter of love for the brethren and laying down of our lives for the brethren a matter of personal study and of practical application to our own hearts, minds, thoughts, words, actions. And let us pray for one another, as well as exhort one another along these lines, striving to be filled with our Master's Spirit."

HEBREWS 6:10 CONTEXT

R566 "FAITH AND WORKS "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.—Heb. 6:9,10.

This expression refers us back to the *preceding verses of this chapter* and the *latter part of the fifth*. Paul was disappointed in those he addressed, in finding less growth in grace and knowledge than he had reason to expect. They were still merely at the "first principles" of the doctrine of Christ, and not even very firmly rooted in them. And with his characteristic plainness of speech, Paul told them that for the time they had spent, as pupils in the school of Christ, they ought now to be teachers, but instead they needed some one to teach them again which be the first principles of the doctrine. They were still babes, having need of milk, and unable to receive the strong meat. For strong meat (advanced truth) belongs not to babes, but it is necessary to those more matured.

Paul then exhorts them to leave the first principles and go on unto perfection, and not to be forever laying the foundation of Christian character by repentance and faith in the plan of God for their redemption, and renewing their consecration; this they had done long ago, and now their faith should *rest* in the ransom—the foundation (provided) of God which standeth sure. (2 Tim. 2:19.) And they should diligently proceed in the work of building up a symmetrical Christian faith and character on this sure foundation...

While showing the necessity of a firm establishment on first principles, and the impossibility of reclaiming such as had left them entirely, the Apostle assured the church that he believed they had not rejected the favor of God, for he says: "We are persuaded better things of you, though we thus speak."

...All should make sure that the first principles are correct, and firmly established by the word of God; but if we go no further, we will never reach perfection... Go on unto perfection.

In the few *verses following*, Paul shows that the hope of the High Calling depends on our *works*—built, of course, on the finished work of Christ, the sure foundation. For God is not unrighteous to forget your *work and labor of love*." Is it possible, we sometimes say, that God will thus esteem our poor, imperfect works? And what are they? They seem so small that we feel ashamed to mention them; and yet it is our *little all*; rendered with carefulness according to our covenant, and though imper-

fect, it is rendered acceptable through him *whose imputed righteousness* makes up all the deficiency.

Our small influence is all cast on the side of truth, both by word and example; our little reputation we gladly part with in our effort to advance the truth and obey it; our few talents for preaching the truth, we use to the best advantage, according to our best judgment; perhaps some of us have no ability to tell the blessed story straight ourselves, but such can read it to others, or give it to them to read; and all can show its moulding and transforming effects in daily walk and conversation... If our *all* is consecrated to the Lord, and used with an eye single to his glory, it is acceptable and well-pleasing to him—"in the beloved."

Paul here mentions specially their labors of love in *ministering* to the saints. Many Christians seemingly fail to appreciate their privilege in this direction, and spend their principal effort for the world, forgetting the injunction: "Do good unto all men as you have opportunity, *especially* to the household of faith." The time is coming, and is not far distant, when there will be abundant opportunity to do good to the saints, the body, the bride of Christ, will not long continue. Soon they will be glorified and no longer need your ministrations.

Remember the Master's words: A poor woman had brought a box of very precious ointment and poured it on his head as he sat at meat; and when his disciples saw it they said, "To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor." But Jesus answered, "The poor ye have always with you, but me ye have not always; she hath wrought a good work upon me." (Matt. 26:7-13.)

So, the body of Christ will not always be here to be ministered unto. Whatever we can do now for our fellow members of the body of Christ, the Head will reckon as done unto him. And our Father will not forget our labor of love in ministering to the saints. It is needless for us to suggest that as God is not unjust to forget labors of love for the saints, neither is he unjust to credit us with them, if we have done no labors for such—if we have not ministered. Paul urges that we continue to be very diligent in this labor of love, and suggests that continued diligence will give the *full assurance of hope*.

O, how great is the inheritance which our little insignificant labor of love secures, when supplemented by the all-sufficient merit of our Lord! Let us appreciate our privilege of ministering to the saints in whatever way we find it possible, whether in temporal or spiritual things. In the language of our beloved brother Paul: "We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the *full assurance of hope* unto the end." Since our covenant is to sacrifice and spend ourselves completely, *full assurance* of receiving the reward can only come by diligence in self-sacrifice—ministering.

Let us see to it that we have a right faith, rooted and grounded in the infallible word of God; and being thus assured, let us

leave the firmly established first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection—*work out our salvation as new creatures*—rendering the justified human in exchange for the promised divine nature.”

R5818 “THE LABOR OF LOVE TO BE REWARDED” *“God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.”*--Hebrews 6:10.

DISCOURAGEMENT is a hindrance to growth in grace; St. Paul was seeking to encourage his readers. The context implies that they had experienced some setback, some discouragement. He intimates that while they had begun well, their zeal had cooled to some extent. In this chapter and on to the tenth inclusive, he points out the danger of falling back and away after we have become Christians. And to those who are likely to become discouraged he gives the exhortation of our text, “God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love.”...

DANGER OF LOSING THE REWARD

...Do not, he urges, forfeit this reward by turning away from the Lord and becoming cold or lukewarm, which condition might lead on to entire rejection of God. Rather go on, and be of good courage; and the Lord, Jehovah Himself, shall strengthen your hearts; wait expectantly on Him.

In the 10th Chapter, the Apostle tells them of how some of them had in the past

endured a great fight of afflictions, and of how others had suffered with those in affliction in that they had been sympathizers and companions of those who had been so persecuted. All this was endured for the Lord's sake, for love of the brethren, and in harmony with God's arrangement. Therefore they should have confidence in God, that He loved them and appreciated all they had borne for Him. The Apostle exhorts them again not to turn back, not to be discouraged, but to be encouraged; and again he assures them of his confidence that they would persevere to the end.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF MINISTERING TO THE SAINTS

St. Paul declares that their labors of love were shown toward God's name. This honor toward God's name consisted in their ministering to the saints. This was a proof of their love for the Lord...

Every service lovingly and gladly rendered to the saints is rendered unto His glory. This is true in a very special sense; for there are people in the world who might be naturally more admirable in character, and it might be more pleasing to serve them than to serve many of the saints, who might be ruder, cruder, in some respects. But in the service to the saints there is a special blessing from the Lord. We are to have this in mind when meeting and fellowshiping with those who have become children of God, and when we have opportunities to assist or comfort them. They must have our love, our cooperation, our sympathy, our aid...

PERSEVERANCE IN THIS MINISTRY

The Apostle says, “In that ye have ministered unto the saints, and do minister.” This signifies that they were still in this proper attitude ...

The work now being done by those in such relationship with God will be worthy of His notice and reward. In the 13th Chapter of 1st Corinthians, the Apostle points out that, with the Body of Christ good works alone are not sufficient to indicate God's favor. He declared that if he should give his body to be burned, and should give all his goods to feed the poor, there would be no real merit in it unless it was done from the motive of love. “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal,” was his further declaration. One might do these good works to have the honor of men. If they were done for any such reason, God would not consider them good works to be rewarded...

And so St. Paul says... “God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love.” ...It is important for us to see to it that our motives are those of love toward the Lord and His Cause and His brethren. Such good works, if persevered in according to our ability and opportunity, will not fail of a blessed reward.”

(1Cor 16:14 Diaglott) “Let all your deeds be done in Love.”

R3152 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

BAPTISM UNTO REPENTANCE NOT BAPTISM INTO CHRIST

--ACTS 18:23-19:7.--MARCH 1.--

“If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?”--Luke 11:13.

AFTER leaving Corinth the Apostle completed his second missionary tour, and returned to Antioch, stopping en route at Jerusalem, where he greeted the Church and, no doubt, gave them an account of the Lord's blessing upon his recent ministries in Europe. Aquila and Priscilla went with the Apostle as far as Ephesus, and the vessel on which he traveled remaining over the Sabbath at the port, he improved the opportunity to speak for Christ in the synagogue of Ephesus. His discourse was no doubt in the nature of a preparation for a future work which he hoped to do there. He doubtless spoke only along the lines of first principles--respecting the glorious prophecies of Messiah, and the fulfilment which should now be expected. His discourse was well received, and he was urged to remain longer, and gave his promise of a later return.

We are not informed how long the Apostle remained at Antioch, but “after he had spent some time there he departed and went over all the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, establishing all the disciples.” While the Apostle was energetic in the establishment of new companies of the Lord's people, he was not slack in looking out for the spiritual welfare and growth of those which he had already established, as is evidenced by this statement--this being his third visit to these churches.

When the Apostle returned to Ephesus he found that in his absence a Christian brother named Apollos had come and had preached eloquently in the synagogue, using very close, logical and convincing arguments, and securing twelve converts to Christianity. He was a Jew, born at Alexandria, one of the chief cities of that time, specially noted for its schools of learning, and extensive libraries. The common version says that Apollos was “eloquent”; the revised version, that he was “learned”, and the Greek word seems to be with equal propriety translatable either way: in all probability he

was both learned and eloquent. However, he was not as thoroughly advanced in the knowledge of the Lord and of the truth as were Aquila and Priscilla who had for a time companied with the Apostle; and as soon as they heard Apollos in the synagogue they recognized him as a Christian brother, and took him to their own home, where they had good opportunity for communicating to him “the way of the Lord more perfectly.”

We have here a beautiful illustration of how the Lord is pleased to use his consecrated people. He had use for the talents and education of Apollos; he had use also for the less talented Aquila and Priscilla who, though not qualified to speak in public in the synagogue, were, nevertheless, used of the Lord to bless his more eloquent disciple, and thus to be sharers with him in the fruits of his more public ministry. The same is true today, as the Apostle explains. (1 Cor. 12:12-26.) ^[1]No member of the body of Christ can say that he has no need for another member, and no member may say that there is nothing whatever that he can do in the service of the body. Under the guidance of our glorious Head each member who is filled with his spirit, and desirous of serving him, may do so. When the time for rewards will come, who knows how much of the usefulness of Paul and Apollos may be accredited to some of the humble ones such as Aquila and Priscilla, who in various ways ministered to and encouraged and supported their abler brethren in the Lord's work. The Apostle mentions very tenderly some of this class who collaborated with him, supporting his work by their influence and by their means. (Phil. 4:3.) Similar opportunities are still open, and

[1] Mar. 8 Manna, 1Cor. 12:8

⁽²⁾no child of the Lord should be content to let the days of the present harvest time go by with their golden opportunities for service and cooperation without seeking each day to lift the royal banner himself, and to publicly show forth the praises of him who hath called him out of darkness into light, or by assisting and cooperating with others whom the Lord in his providence has placed in more advantageous positions for public service.

Apollos, hearing from Aquila and Priscilla of the glorious work accomplished by the Apostle Paul at Corinth, went thither, taking with him a letter of introduction from his newly found friends at Ephesus, who had so recently left Corinth. Incidentally we are told that his going to Corinth proved a blessing to the Church there, because of his thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures and his ability in expounding them, so that he could "forcefully confute the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." That the Corinthian brethren were greatly pleased with the masterful ability of Apollos as a teacher of the truth is implied by the fact that some of them were disposed to say that they were followers of Apollos, while others, also sectarian in spirit, claimed to be followers of Paul, and others of Peter--all of which sectarianism the Apostle distinctly reproveth subsequently in his epistle to them.--1 Cor. 3:3-7.

There is room for all the ability of all the brethren in the Church, and such a thing as rivalry or partisanship is entirely out of place. We have one Lord, one Head: we all are brethren, and our highest aim should be to honor our Head and serve the fellow-members; and each one who so endeavors should be highly esteemed, whether his talents are greater or smaller than those of others. Another lesson here is the importance of being well versed in the Scriptures. The sword of the spirit is the Word of God, and he who would serve the cause best must know how to use this weapon which the Lord himself has provided--forcefully, convincingly and yet lovingly. The Scriptures with which Apollos was familiar were the Old Testament writings, since the New Testament was not yet compiled, though doubtless a few of its books had already been written. Whether Apollos had seen these or not, he had from some quarter "been instructed in the way of the Lord," before meeting Aquila and Priscilla, and was now, through them, still more thoroughly furnished for his ministry of the truth. Let us each resolve that by the Lord's grace we will put on the entire Christian armament, supplied us by the Lord, not neglecting the sword of the spirit--the Word. Let us learn, too, to be ready to accept further instruction as from the Lord, however humble may be the channels through which he may send it to us. Humility is one of the graces highly esteemed by the Lord, and one of the points upon which he frequently tests his followers: "Except ye become as little children [teachable, guileless], ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of heaven."

It was while Apollos was at Corinth that the Apostle Paul came to Ephesus, according to promise, and began a ministry there which lasted two years (19:10). Aquila and Priscilla had seemingly left Ephesus by this time, as they are not again mentioned; but the Apostle speedily found those whom Apollos' ministry had reached, twelve in number. (Vs. 7.) Our Common Version would seem to give the inference that the Apostle was surprised that these believers at Ephesus had not yet received gifts of the holy spirit. But not so; he merely wished to bring to their attention the fact that such gifts were possible to them, for only an apostle could convey the gifts of the holy spirit, as we have already seen. (Acts 8:14-17.) The preaching of Apollos was merely along the lines of first principles of the doctrine of Christ, represented in the baptism of John to the Jews, while these believers were, evidently, by nature Gentiles.

Apollos had explained the gospel merely to the extent of repentance from sin and faith in Christ as the Redeemer. He had no

knowledge of the fuller meaning of baptism as explained by the Apostle (Rom. 6:3-5) --a baptism of consecration, to suffer with Christ --to be dead with him, to participate in his resurrection to the new nature and to be ultimate sharers with him in the heavenly Kingdom. The Apostle explained to them this "mystery" of fellowship with the Messiah-- participation in his sufferings, and by and by in his glory (Col. 1:26,27): and when they heard this they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus--as members of his body, to fellowship in his sufferings, even unto death.

How many believers there are today who, like these described, are members of "the household of faith," but not members of "the body of Christ"-- who have gone so far as a baptism of repentance and reformation, and faith in the Redeemer, but who have not been instructed respecting the great privileges which belong to this dispensation--that we may become "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together!" Wherever we go, let us each seek by the grace of God to explain the way of the Lord more perfectly to these already partially indoctrinated ones. So long as there are a plenty of such to labor with, it would be unwise, yea, contrary to our covenant and commission, to specially devote our lives and energies to the world; for although we are to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, it is to be chiefly to the household of faith. All around us, in the churches of the various denominations, are, we believe, hundreds, yea, thousands, who are in the condition of these mentioned in the lesson, knowing only the *baptism of repentance*, knowing not the *baptism of Christ*--the baptism into his death, the baptism of full consecration. Let us be diligent in this highest department of the work of the ministry, feeding, instructing, the Lord's flock.

After instructing them thus respecting the true baptism, and after performing upon them its water symbol, the Apostle laid his hands on the believers and they received the holy spirit--that is to say, the "gifts of the spirit" were manifested in them--they spake with tongues, prophesied, etc., as described in 1 Corinthians 12. We have no power to communicate such gifts today, nor have others this power. It was an apostolic power, not transferable to others, as it was not the Lord's intention that those gifts should remain with the Church, but merely should be a witness in its infancy period;--until the New Testament writings should be within reach, and until the fruits of the spirit could be developed.

However, let none envy the primitive Church this special blessing, so necessary to its progress and joy; but remember that under the Lord's providence our conditions in some respects are still more favorable, in that we have the written Word for our admonition. Let us remember the testimony of the Apostle in our last lesson, too,--to the effect that faith, hope and love, *fruits* of the spirit, far excel the tongues and interpretations and miracles of the *gifts* of the spirit: so that, as he explained, if one had all these gifts, and lacked the one fruit of love, he would be "nothing";--it would profit him nothing as respects a share in the body of Christ, and in the glorious blessings, present and future, which belong to it.

Our Golden Text evidently refers, not to the miraculous gifts of the spirit enjoyed by the primitive Church, but to the holy spirit, or disposition, "the mind of Christ," the common privilege of all who are baptized into Christ's death, and who seek by faith to walk in newness of life. The miraculous gifts of the primitive Church could come only through apostolic hands; but the spirit, in the sense that we still enjoy it, the mind of Christ, the mind of God, with all the fruits and graces thereof, is still the privilege of the Lord's people, and dependent not upon apostolic or other hands, but upon our heavenly Father and upon the zeal with which we seek by prayer and every endeavor to have his mind, his disposition, controlling our thoughts, our words, our conduct. It is God's good pleasure to give us this spirit of love; but he gives it only to those who desire and seek it with patient perseverance.

⁽²⁾ Mar. 9 Manna, Heb. 6:10