Articles by A. C. Dellandrea

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Keep Thyself Pure (Apr 1956)

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When we were small our parents were very careful to keep us clean, knowing that this would be beneficial to our health. Remember how Mother, almost ceaselessly, tried to make us and keep us clean? This she did not only because of the effect upon us, but because the appearance of the child reflects the character of the parents; hence her repeated admonition, “Keep yourself clean.”

Our Heavenly Father, not wanting His children to disgrace His Name nor to spoil their lives by sin, commands, in the words of Paul to Timothy, “Keep thyself pure” (1 Tim. 5:22). He wants us to steer clear of the defiling pleasures and practices of this present-day Sodom. He would also have us, pilgrims and strangers, purge our lives from any uncleanness contracted on the way home to heaven. Let us consider:

Possible Defilement

First of all, the Lord wants us to keep our minds clean from evil thoughts. “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Prov. 4:23). Listed in 1 Timothy 6:4-10, are sins of the corrupt mind: pride, envy, evil surroundings, and covetousness, which should have no place in the Christian’s life.

Secondly, we are to keep our lips from uncleanness. “Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile” (Psa. 34:13). Railing and perverse disputings of men are to be avoided by the Christian (1 Tim. 6:4-5).

Slang expressions should have no part in our vocabulary, for most of these are but a modification of the blasphemer's oaths. "Evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. 15:33).

In the third place, we should be careful to keep our ways clean, not walking in the counsel of the ungodly nor standing in the way of sinners (Psa. 1:1). "Touch not the unclean thing" (2 Cor. 6:17).

Possible Consequences

There are at least four reasons given in Paul's first epistle to Timothy why we should keep ourselves clean from sin.

First, our lives are being watched. They are watched by God our Father, Whom sin grieves and dishonours (5:21; 6:13). They are watched by the Lord Jesus, Who suffered for our sins on Calvary (5:21; 6:13); watched by angels (5:21); by the people of God (4:12); by the devil, who is the accuser of the brethren (5:14); and watched by the unsaved (6:1).

Second, our testimonies may be spoiled by sin. Sin always pays cruel wages. King David's record is one of gloom, groaning, and grief, because, on one occasion, he neglected to keep himself clean from sin (Psa. 32:1-4). In 1 Timothy 6:9-10, we read of the snares of Satan, the hurtful lusts, the shipwrecked testimony, and the piercing of many sorrows.

"I am the most miserable person on earth!" Such were the words spoken to me by a man who was away from God, and whose life was being spoiled by sin.

Third, suffering may be the result of sin. Those whom God loves He chastens for their wrong-doing. Failure to

keep ourselves clean may bring us under church discipline; such as, public rebuke or excommunication (1 Tim 5:20; 1 Cor. 5:4-13).

Fourth, eternal loss may result from sin. After the coming of the Lord, we shall all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10). “Then every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:12).

Possible Protectives

Four ways to keep ourselves clean suggest themselves in Paul’s instructions to Timothy.

First, we must be careful of our companionships. Timothy is urged to lay hands suddenly on no man (5:22), and to withdraw from men of corrupt minds (6:5). This would imply that we are to be cautious of the company we keep. For example, as long as the people of Israel remained separated from the wicked nations about them, they were holiness unto the Lord (Jer. 2:3). On the other hand, when Samson chose an ungodly companion among the Philistines, he lost his strength to serve God.

Secondly, we must be careful about our reading. We are exhorted to give attendance to reading (4:13), and to be nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine (4:6). The Bible is described as wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as doctrine which is according to godliness (6:3). “Where-withall shall a young man cleanse his ways? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word” (Psa. 119:9), Christ, our Lord and Saviour, sanctifies and cleanses us with the washing of water by the Word (Eph. 5:26). The daily study of the Scripture and the reading of good books will

draw the soul after Christ. Let us not waste our time on profane fables (4:7) which will only corrupt the mind.

Thirdly, we must be busy for God. One has well said that silver tarnishes when in disuse, but a rolling stone gathers no moss. When King David chose to remain at Jerusalem, rather than go forth to battle, he was tempted to commit a great sin. We are urged to exercise ourselves unto godliness and to neglect not the gift which God has given us (4:7 and 14). In service for the Best of Masters, there is much work for us to do, such as, visiting the sick, comforting the afflicted, and spreading the gospel among sinners. Such activities will keep us busy for God and preserve us from defilement.

Finally, we must be watching for the Lord's coming. "Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (6:14). If we are daily expecting our Lord to come, we will purify ourselves (1 John 3:3). When Joseph learned in the prison that he was to be called to appear in the presence of Pharaoh, he immediately shaved himself and changed his raiment, and so was ready to stand before the royal throne. The King of Kings will shortly summon us into His presence. Therefore, in order that we be not ashamed before Him at His coming, let us keep ourselves clean.

We would do well to pray, in the words of David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psa. 139:23-24).

Why Ashamed? (July 1958)

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Audrey Delandrea

Christians are not supporters of a dying cause; the Lord has triumphed gloriously, therefore, they need not hang their heads like soldiers retreating in shame from defeat for they are more than conquerors through Him that loved them (Rom. 8:37). Their Captain has never lost a battle. Although He is now the Rejected One, He will reign supreme, and the thousands He has conquered by His love, will reign with Him. Let all of us who are Christians “Rejoice in the Lord” (Phil. 4:4), “Sing forth the honour of His Name” (Psa. 66:2), and fix our hope on Him (Heb. 6:18-19).

In the Epistle to the Romans, three reasons are given why the Christian should not be ashamed. Firstly, because he belongs to a wonderful Person; secondly, because he possesses a wonderful power; and finally, because he has a wonderful prospect.

The Wonderful Person

“Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed” (Rom. 10:16). This verse is a quotation from Isa. 28: 16, where the spotlight of prophecy is focused on our Lord Jesus Christ as the Highly Exalted One, the Tried Stone, the Precious Corner Stone, the Sure Foundation.

Peter in his First Epistle (chapter 2:6-7) quotes this Scripture, and links it with another prophecy of our Lord in Psalm 118:22, “The stone which the builders refused

is become the head stone of the corner." When the Lord Jesus was rejected as the stone set at nought by the builders, Peter was ashamed to be associated with Him, and thrice denied that he was one of His (Mark 14:66-71). Nevertheless, fifty days later, in the very city in which he had denied the Lord, he fearlessly and fervently preached Him as the Risen One.

We might ask, "Peter, why are you not ashamed of Him now? Why do you even risk your life for His sake?" How thrilling and clear is his reply! "This Jesus hath God raised up… therefore let all … know assuredly, that God hath made Jesus, Whom ye crucified …, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:32-36).

You and I, dear brother and sister, belong to this same highly-exalted and glory-crowned Prince of princes, Lord of lords, and King of kings, Who is the Creator and Sustainer of all things (Heb. 1:3); Who has spread out the heavens like a curtain, His almighty hand having flung the several planets and the myriad of stars into the courses in the heavens; Who has guided them with divine accuracy to fulfil His will; and, Who is our Redeemer (Isa. 47:4). He has bought our souls at Calvary with the currency of precious drops of blood (1 Pet. 1:18-19). Moreover, He is our Lord and our King Who is far above all principality and power, and might and dominion (Eph. 1:20-21). He is the One to Whom "all power is given … in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and His dominion endureth throughout all generations" (Psa. 145:13). Truly we belong to a wonderful person, our wonderful Lord Jesus.

A Wonderful Power

The Apostle Paul asserts, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth” (Rom. 1:16). Like him, in a somewhat limited manner we can say, “The glorious gospel of the blessed God, was committed to my trust” (1 Tim. 1:11 and 1 Thess. 2:4).

Now, the gospel is a power that really works, for that is the meaning of Rom. 1:16; it produces results. No cases are too hard for it to soften, no life too vile for it to change, no one too far away for it to reach, and no one too asleep for it to awaken. None are too dead for it to quicken, nor are any too blind for it to enlighten.

To three thousand in the crowded streets of Jerusalem (Acts 2); to a lonely man riding through a desert (Acts 8:26:29); to a few gathered by a riverside (Acts 16:12-15); and to some of the throng on Mar’s Hill (Acts 17:22-34) the mighty message concerning the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ was given. Many of these believed, and were transformed by its mighty saving power.

Saul of Tarsus the proud Pharisee; Cornelius the praying centurion; Sergius Paulus the prudent deputy; the Philippian jailor, and certain members of Caesar’s household were moved and melted by the very same glorious evangel, and were likewise converted to the Lord.

Our own rebellious hearts, similarly, have been softened and subdued by the glad tidings. The fetters of ritualism and reformation could not reach us in our need, but the blessed gospel of Christ has triumphed, and we rejoice

in an uttermost salvation. With delight, we now tell of the great things the Lord has done for us.

That gospel was the power of God unto salvation in the first century. It has been the dynamic of conviction and conversion down through the succeeding centuries, and today it still is the power of God unto salvation.

It conquered the hardened heart of Dick Lane the notorious Chicago gangster. One day from behind prison bars, he heard the story of redeeming love from the lips of a young convert who was giving out gospel tracts. Dick Lane's response was one of hate. He feigned interest, and offered to shake hands with the gospel messenger. Taking the extended hand in his, he broke the Christian's arm.

Tears moistened the young man's eyes, and holding out his other arm he exclaimed, "I would give you this one to break too, if so doing would break your heart, and lead you to bow at the feet of my Saviour!" As the sufferer was led away from the cell, Dick heard him quote these words, "From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ."

These words pierced and penetrated the gangster's soul, and he could not get rid of them until one night, years later, as lonely and weary he walked the streets of the great city a disheartened and dejected man, his ear suddenly caught the sound of singing. He entered the building from which it came, and sat down. When the speaker arose, these were the very words that he read from the Bible, "From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal. 6:17).

Dick Lane's heart was pierced afresh. He remembered the gospel message spoken to him from the lips of the one whose arm he had broken. He was convicted of his life of sin; of the greatness of God's love for one so unworthy as he, and that night, at the close of the service, he bowed his knees beside the chair and accepted Christ as his Saviour. His life was immediately changed, and until the day of his death he sought to win others for Christ.

Should we ever be ashamed of this sin-covering soul-saving message? Never! Let us spread the tidings near and far for we are in possession of a wonderful power, the power of the indwelling Spirit of God.

A Wonderful Prospect

We should not be ashamed because we have a wonderful hope, "Hope maketh not ashamed" (Rom. 5:5). Before the Saviour went back to heaven, He gave this promise, "I will come again" (John 14:3). The very first message from heaven after our Lord ascended on high was, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Further more, the last message from the Lord Jesus before the Canon of Scripture closed was, "Surely, I come quickly."

In March 1942, General MacArthur was ordered by President Roosevelt to leave the Phillipines for Australia, where he was to prepare the Allied Armies for the return to the Phillipines and the recapture of all that has been lost to the Japanese. On his arrival, he gave reporters of The Press this message for those he had left behind, "I shall return." These three words became the slogan and watchword of the guerilla movement. The simplicity and

definiteness of this short clause imparted strength and determination to the forces of resistence. Although there were 87 different dialects in the Phillipines, these three English words were soon learned and understood. On every item sent to the people and to the guerillas, these words were printed, “I shall return.”

For over two years, this promise strengthened and encouraged the people in spite of the oppression of the enemy. Eventually, on Oct. 20, 1944, General MacArthur landed at Red Beach, Palo, Leyte. He walked along the beach to where a mobile broadcasting unit had been set up, and stepping to the microphone, said in a calm voice, “I have returned.”

Beloved Christians, soon He Who promised, “I will come again,” will call all His own saying, “Rise up My love, My fair one and come away.” The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:16-18).

Truly, we have a wonderful prospect, for, “Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.”

* * *

God Incarnate is the end of fear; the heart that realizes that He is in the midst, that takes heed to the assurance of His loving presence, will be quiet in the midst of alarm. “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in

judgment thou shalt condemn.” Only be patient and be thou quiet.

F. B. Meyer

* * *

The harvest is proportional to the sowing, but the sowing depends upon a studious application of the teacher’s mind and heart to the Word of God. Every exercised teacher might well make Paul’s instruction to Timothy the chief guide in his endeavours to sow more of the good seed: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

Spiritual Prosperity (Mar 1959)

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Aubrey Delandrea

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth,” are words which were written by the Apostle John to his dear friend and son in the faith, Gaius. Only recently had he received information from certain brethren about his condition.

The welfare of Gaius was the concern of John, for he was a true elder watching over the well-being of his children in Christ as one who had to give an account before the Judgment Seat of his Lord. This he hoped he might do with joy.

What John heard from the brethren greatly rejoiced his heart, and prompted the splendid comment, “Thy soul prospereth.” It is certain that the spiritual prosperity of Gaius not only gladdened the heart of John, but also the heart of Him who said, “The life is more than meat.” “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Matt. 6:25 and 33).

Brother and sister, we who live in an age of material prosperity, which after all is of little account with God, might well take stock of our spiritual state as it is known to Him Who “searcheth the reins and the hearts” (Rev. 2:23). Could He possibly say to either you or me, “Thy soul prospereth”? It is this commendable prosperity that really counts both now and in the life to come. The Judgment Seat is before us, and only “treasures laid up

in heaven" are secure from decay and certain of approval.

Now, what did John mean when he said to Gaius, "Thy soul prospereth"? What are the indications of a spiritually prosperous man? Some of the marks of such a person are intimated in our Scripture reading; let us look at them.

Prompt Obedience

John detected the attitude of obedience in the heart of Gaius, and refers to the truth that was in him. This beloved brother not only read the Word of God, but he gave it a place in his heart and life. Like Jeremiah, Gaius could have said, "Thy Words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart: for I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts" (Jer. 15:16). Like the Psalmist he could also have said, "Thy Word have I hid in my heart" (Psa. 119:11).

Our souls will not be blessed by the Word of God unless we "receive the Word with all readiness of mind" (Acts 17:11). Some of old were not profited by the Word when it was taught, for it was "not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Heb. 4:2).

Gaius not only gave the Word a place in his heart, but he walked in the truth (V. 3); that is, he put into practice what he had learned. He did not hide his candle under a bushel or under a bed; he placed it upon a candlestick that all might see the light.

James, the Lord's brother, tells us that "If any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth

what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (Jas. 1:23-25). The Lord Jesus said, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (John 13:17). Again He said, "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him" (John 14:21).

Are we obedient to our heavenly calling? Have we said, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Have we "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered" us? Have we said with the Psalmist, "I will run in the way of Thy commandments" (Psa. 119:32)? We shall not prosper if we do not whatsoever the Lord commands us.

Genuine Love

Love toward the people of God contributed greatly to the soul prosperity of this beloved son in the faith. "Beloved," wrote John to him, "thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; Which have borne witness of thy charity (love) before the church" (Vv. 5-6). Gaius surely fulfilled the commands of the Lord: "By love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13). "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers" (Heb. 13:1).

As we consider the love of Gaius to the brethren, even to those who were strangers, we are reminded of a future scene when our blessed Lord Jesus will say to those on His right hand: "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: Naked, and

ye clothed Me: … Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me" (Matt. 25:35-40).

The Christian who does not love his brother, but who is like Diotrephes (3 John 9-10), will live his life in misery as did king Saul, the man after the flesh (1 Sam. 18:8-10). "He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not wither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes" (1 John 2:11), are words that should search and stir every heart. The Apostle Paul declared, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity (love), I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal … And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor. 13:1-3). The person who lacks love for his brother in Christ, whose heart is filled with bitterness, jealousy, and hatred cannot prosper in spiritual life.

Practical Generosity

Giving of his substance to the work of God was the constant exercise of Gaius. He probably was a man of some means, as is suggested by verse six. God was able to trust this brother in financial matters for, without doubt, he honoured the Lord with his substance and with the first fruits of all his increase. John made mention of his doing well in providing the travelling expenses of those who "went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles."

This act of Gaius reminds one of the record in the Holy Scriptures of the wise men from the East who gave to the Christ child, "gifts, gold, and frankincense, and

myrrh" (Matt. 2:12). Their offering of gold, possibly paid the expenses of the journey into Egypt of Joseph and Mary when they fled with the infant Jesus from the wrath of the wicked king Herod.

Gaius was a generous person and of such we read, "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Prov. 11:25). Gaius was one of the cheerful givers whom the Lord loves; consequently, God made all grace abound toward him, and enriched him in everything to all bountifulness (2 Cor. 9:7-11).

The promise that God would open the windows of heaven upon His people was made to those who bring their tithes into the storehouse (Mal. 3:10). The saint that robs God; the one who does not lay by him in store as the Lord has prospered him (1 Cor. 16:2), puts his money in bags with holes, and suffers from an inward drought (Haggai 1:6-11). May we seek to follow the example of Gaius; moreover, may we, by God's grace, say in the language of another:

"Take my love: my Lord, I pour

At Thy feet its treasure store!

Take myself and I will be

Ever, only, all for Thee."

In closing, let us notice that Gaius was as the Blessed Man of Psalm one, our Lord Jesus Christ. He walked not in the counsel of the ungodly. He stood not in the way of sinners. He did not sit in the seat of the scornful as did the wicked Diotrephes. His delight was ever in the law of the Lord; consequently, He was like a tree planted by the rivers of water, bringing forth His fruit in its season, and whatsoever He did, it prospered.

Scenes in the Life of Christ (Sept 1960)

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Aubrey Dellandrea

On display in art galleries hang paintings by famous artists of landscapes, flowers, animals, and birds; of romances and war scenes; and of persons who have contributed to the welfare of mankind. None of these no matter how important, is worthy to be compared to the sacred word pictures of Christ found in the Bible. In this article your attention is directed to five beautiful and awe-inspiring scenes in the life of our adorable Lord. May the Holy Spirit make that lovely One, the Lord Jesus, through the consideration of these, more precious to us.

A Babe

In Luke chapter two we view our Holy Lord lying in a manger. When His virgin mother brought forth her firstborn son, she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. Later, angels brought these good tidings to certain shepherds who “came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.” Behind the loveliness of this simple family scene lies the mystery of the incarnation.

How great was that mystery? Isaiah has expressed it thus, “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulders: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The

Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). This mystery was intimated to Mary by the angel, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

This mystery we consider great because of how He was born. The birth of the Saviour was predicted by God in the Garden of Eden; He declared to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel" (Gen. 3:15). It was prophesied by the Lord through Isaiah, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:15). The historical record by Luke asserts that this great miracle was accomplished by the Holy Spirit through the virgin bride of Joseph (Luke 1:31-35).

This mystery might also be accepted as great because of where He was born. We read, "There was no room for them in the inn." We are not told how many rooms there were in that inn, but the only place for Christ at His birth was in the stable. He, the Eternal One, knew in advance that a manger would be His cradle; nevertheless, "He made Himself of no reputation."

A Suppliant

Let us now consider another scene in Immanuel's life, a scene in a garden. "And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me; Nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto Him from Heaven, strengthening Him. And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great

drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:41-44). The suffering of Calvary He must endure on the morrow, so our Lord was bowed in the misery of anticipation. Some have experienced to a degree the misery of anticipation; they have waited in the dentist's office for their turn, or they have lain in a hospital cot awaiting an operation, or have sat by the death-bed of a loved one awaiting his passing. Some as soldiers on the battle-line have anticipated the order to charge the enemy, and have known the mental anguish of tension and suspense; but no one has endured what our blessed Saviour endured as He faced the dreadful cup of sorrow. His agony was such that He sweat as it were great drops of blood, in spite of the fact the night was so cold that Peter warmed himself by the fire. How dreadful that cup must have been! He accepted it for our sakes.

A VIctim

With holy wonder we gaze on Him hanging on a tree (Acts 10:39). Under the law of Moses a rebellious son was to be stoned to death and hanged on a tree, "He that is hanged on a tree is accursed of God" (Deut. 21: 18-23). Such was the curse that fell upon Absalom, David's rebellious son (2 Sam. 18:9-15). Behold, the Son of God who always did those things which pleased the Father hanging on a tree, surrounded by a raging mob. We might in our imagination address the elements, saying, "O Heavens, how can ye gaze upon such a scene and remain silent? O Earth, why open you not your mouth to swallow those blood-hounds baying for that perfect Man's blood?" We can also imagine their replies. Heaven responds, saying, "My justice must be satisfied, and He only of all who lived can render what I demand."

Earth echoes, “This Man must bear the curse that makes me sigh, therefore, He must die.” Here we witness the marvels of redemption. We, the rebellious ones, deserved the curse of God, but “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree” (Gal. 3-13). As we look upon that scene so sublime, we bow our hearts with adoring wonder and exclaim:

“O Jesus Lord, and can it be

That Thou would’st give Thy life for me:

To bear the cross and agony,

In that dread hour of Calvary?”

The Psalmist said, “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” (Psa. 30:5). The night of Calvary was over, and on the morning of the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to find the sepulchre empty, wherein for three days her Lord had lain. Her heart was broken so she stood there weeping. Suddenly she perceived two angels in the tomb, who asked her why she wept. “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him,” she sobbed. She did not recognize the Lord who now stood beside her by the empty tomb. He was there witnessing her tears, ready to heal her broken heart. Such was, and is, His ministry in resurrection.

He called her by name, “Mary,” as much as to say, “You are Mine.” (Compare John 10:3); and told her that He must ascend to His Father and her Father, to His God and her God. With joyful heart she hurried to tell the disciples.

The Ascended One

The last scene is of His ascending into Heaven (Acts 1:9-11). While blessing His own He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. From two heavenly messengers the disciples heard the message at His ascension, “This same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven.” Our Saviour shall come again! The very same Jesus will appear a second time! His last message to His pilgrim waiting Church is, “Surely, I come quickly” (Rev. 22:20). May her response be, “Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus.”

Jesus Christ—The Challenge (May 1964)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 10 No. 5, May 1964.

D. A. Dellandrea, B.Sc.

What about Jesus Christ?

The Bible claims and He claims that He is the Son of God and that by dying on a Roman cross He accepted the penalty for the sins of every individual. The further claim is made that an individual, by placing confidence in Jesus Christ as having done this for him, obtains eternal life.

What about Jesus Christ, then?

It is immediately obivious that such fantastic claims demand a thorough investigation before they are believed. Any person who believes these claims without first completely examining the evidence concerning them is being intellectually dishonest with himself. But any individual who rejects them without submitting them to the same thorough examination is making just as great an intellectual mistake.

What about Jesus Christ and His claims, then?

One thing is certain: they demand investigation. You cannot afford to toss them off with some cheap irresponsible explanation. To do so is folly and intellectual suicide.

What do we do about it?

Let us look at the facts which have a bearing on the many questions raised by Jesus Christ and His claims.

Predictions Made in the Bible Concerning Jesus Christ.

I think we can agree that the claims of Jesus Christ stand or fall with the Bible for it claims to be God's revelation of Christ.

What does the Bible say about Jesus Christ?

The Bible predicted the exact day of the crucifixion of Christ 445 years before He was born! In Daniel chapter 9 it is stated that from the time that the commandment was issued (by Artaxerxes Longimanus in 445 B.C.) to restore and rebuild the city of Jerusalem until the time that Messiah the Prince (or Christ the Prince, i.e. Christ, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word "Messiah") would enter Jerusalem to be cut off would be seven weeks and three-score and two (69) weeks (of years). Sir Robert Anderson K.C.B., L.L.D., former Chief of Scotland Yard, in his book The Coming Prince points out that the number of days between the commandment of Artaxerxes and the crucifixion of Jesus Christ is 173,880 days. The Babylonian year consisted of 12 months of 30 days each. The time interval then of 173,880 days is exactly 69 periods of seven years, just as was predicted by Daniel hundreds of years before!

What conclusions can we draw?

Either this happened by chance or else God did reveal, through the Bible, the coming of Jesus Christ. There are many other predictions which we could examine just as readily.

What the Historians Say About Jesus Christ

Flavius Josephus who ranks with Heroditus as one of the greatest historians says, "When Pontius Pilate, at the

suggestion of principal men among us had condemned Him (Jesus Christ) to the cross (A.D. 33 April 3) those that loved Him did not forsake Him, for He appeared to them alive again after the third day as the prophets had foretold these and other wonderful things about Him." (Ref: Works of Flavius Josephus, page 166). Other historians such as Justin Martyr, Celsus, Polycarp, have similar. accounts

The Self Description of Jesus Christ

He described Himself as the "Redeemer," the "Saviour," the "King," the "Judge," and the "Son of God."

1. He stated that He was the final revelation of God.

2. He was the astonishing paradox who condemned others but never Himself.

3. He never once hinted that He was unworthy to teach all others moral truth.

What conclusions can we draw about such a Man?

There are great intellectual problems posed on any other grounds than accepting Him for what He claims to be. We cannot reject His Diety without casting a great slur on His character. If He is not what He claims to be, we are perfectly justified in calling Him an imposter, a deceiver, a blasphemer, and a fool. He must become infamous as the supreme example of egotistical megalomania. And yet at the same time He has caused men of all ages to stop and wonder if He really did rise from the dead.

In conclusion, we are faced with the fact that we cannot withdraw without considering Him carefully. His person,

His message, and history itself demand that we scrutinize Him carefully and come to a conclusion.

If we fail to do this, we are fools!