

CALENDAR 1950

JANUARY							MAY							SEPTEMBER						
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CALENDAR 1951

JANUARY							MAY							SEPTEMBER						
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Christ's Greetings

By

V. T. Houteff

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1:17.

The Universal Publishing Assn.

Mt. Carmel Center

Waco, Texas



A GIFT

Greetings to you, loyal friend of God's Book!—You who would cleanse yourself from the corrupting customs of the heathen. Unto you are here poured out the purging tidings of the truth of gifts!

May they make room in your heart for the blessings now waiting at your door to fill your heart, your life, your home, as the new years wait to take the place of the old.

Indeed, may every day find your life abounding with health, happiness, prosperity, and all good things for you and yours, while each of you rejoice in the glorious prospect of the soon-coming Kingdom, and make ready for a home there.

*Some books are much bigger
And say more, it's true;
But none could WISH MORE
Than this WISHES YOU—
Showers of blessings
At once and for long,
To revive and keep you
Wise, happy, and strong,
Today, tomorrow—eternity through!*

CHRIST'S GREETINGS

A GIFT TO GIFT GIVERS AND GIFT RECEIVERS

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1:17.

For over nineteen centuries the institution of Christmas, the popular gift-exchanging day, has been acclaimed throughout Christendom as one of God's good and perfect gifts. And this sentiment has been glorified and perpetuated in the face of the widely-known facts that Christmas is not the birthday of Christ, that He was not, in truth, born in December at all, that the observance of the day is simply a Christianized heathen custom perpetuated in charming Christian guise, and that it is not a gift from God.

"The Christmas Spirit was traced back in history today," says an associated press dispatch under date line of Chicago, December 23, 1935, "and identified as a one-time 'public enemy.'"

"Branded a pagan outlaw, it was banished from New England by the Puritans in 1659.

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"Yule gaiety and feasting so irked those solemn pillars of the church, declared Prof. William Warren Sweet, University of Chicago church historian, that they passed a law in the general court of the colony of Massachusetts saying:

"Whosoever shall be found observing any such day as Christmas or the like, either by forbearing of labor, feasting, or any other way, as a festival, shall be fined five shillings."

"Only during the last half century was the Christmas spirit generally accepted in America, even in the church, Professor Sweet asserted."

In view of these widely-known historical facts, this phase of the subject needs no further treatment beyond the Lord's simple warning involving

Christmas Observance and Christmas Gifts.

While to a multitude of Christmas-observers, Christ means scarcely more than any ordinary man of fame, to an even greater Christmas-observing multitude of "not-at-all-Christians," He is but a storied figure by which to conjure holiday revelry; although they meaninglessly lip His name in conventional acknowledgment of the supposed origin of the religious occasion of the season! Thus to many, like a light in the darkness, stands out the fact that Christmas is not, in reality, observed

to the honor of the Saviour, but to the glorification of a heathen custom and to the gratification of the carnal heart. Consequently, "altogether-Christians" cannot therefore consistently participate in celebrating the Christmas myth. Indeed, to do so is openly to set at naught the Word of God, for "thus saith the Lord. Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe.

"They deck it with silver and with gold: they fasten it with nails and with hammers: that it move not. They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good." Jer. 10:2-5.

And the traditional gift-exchanging which is part and parcel of the spirit of Christmas observance, is a jealousy-breeding custom, all too often only cankering the receiver's heart and emptying the buyer's pocketbook. Thus while it goads one multitude to display of pride, even luring them into revelry, debauchery, and immorality, it drives another, the multitude of poor, either to envy or discouragement, or to both, also not infrequently to despair, and sometimes to insanity—even to committing murder and suicide.

The whole Christmas institution consequently being but a species of heathen worship that is demoralizing the nations, the Lord's servants will invariably shun the exchanging of Christmas gifts, shun the evil attendant upon the occasion's pretentious spirit and spurious humanitarianism. Christians cannot, indeed, take part in its unholy traffic of gift-trading and reveling, and at the same time be "altogether-Christians."

"Who would not fear Thee, O King of nations? for to Thee doth it appertain. . . . They are vanity, and the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered." Jer. 10:7, 15, 21.

Exchanging Christmas gifts, however, is not the only evil-breeding custom: another no less evil, is the custom of exchanging

Anniversary Gifts.

Though birthday gifts in honor of the newly born are in accord with the most generous and noble impulses of mankind, the practice of giving gifts to one another on birth anniversaries, is like the kindred practice of exchanging yuletide gifts, a convention which engenders pride, extravagance, hardship, dissatisfaction, jealousy, sorrow, and a host of related evils. Being

obligatory, birthday gifts, just as with Christmas gifts, are in the last analysis not gifts at all, but merely formal exchanges which, in most cases, are useless, extravagant, and harmful. The follower of Christ who wholeheartedly cherishes His counsels, will eschew this baleful custom and habit, whether the occasion be Christmas, Easter, birthdays, or whatever. He will, in short, shun bestowing any but

Love Gifts.

If you wish to give a love gift, not a time gift, let it be something useful, never a luxury or a vanity, and not beyond your means; let it be prompted by an unselfish and generous spirit rather than by compulsion of pride, custom, or recompense. Let it, in fine, be a genuine love gift in honor of the receiver, not in honor of a time which not only suggests a recompense but even demands it. Christians should be givers, not traders!

Finally, the same unselfish spirit which moved Mary to break the "alabaster box," and to pour out the precious ointment in honor of Him whose matchless blood was spilled to cleanse all, should prompt both the giver and the receiver, and the gift should have the same effect now as the ointment had before the burial, and as the blood had before the resurrection.

Not only ought Christians be wise and unselfish givers at the right time, but also

wise and appreciative receivers. Indeed, they should rejoice in the glorious gifts of God more than in the perishable gifts of men. Such Christians are happy in giving love gifts, but their greatest joy and blessing will be in the observance of

The Commemorative Holy and Eternal Rest Gift.

The largest tangible gift ever bestowed upon mankind is the beautiful earth and the "fulness thereof," crowned with the Eternal Day of Rest—the Rest which establishes its observer in the truth that the Lord created all things in six days and "rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Accordingly, of all the days of the week, it alone is holy. Therefore, "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it" such. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day." Ex. 20:8-11.

By faithful Sabbath observance now, every true Christian will show his appreciation of this all-wise and loving provision for the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of mankind, and thereby

his faith in his Creator, so that he may be granted the privilege of

Keeping the Sabbath Gift Forever.

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. 4:1-3.

"Remember ye [all who shall witness the destruction of the wicked described above] the law of Moses My servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments." Verse 4.

This command to keep the law which Moses received in Horeb, is, according to the Scriptures, to all who are to be living in the great and dreadful day of the Lord—living when God sends to the world His last prophet, the antitypical Elijah: "Behold," He says, "I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Verse 5.

Plain it is that we are to remember His

Holy Gift, the law of Moses, not only before the promised prophet arrives and while he is proclaiming the great and dreadful day of the Lord, but even forever: "For as the *new heavens* and the *new earth*, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from *one sabbath to another*, shall *all flesh* come to worship before Me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." Isa. 66:22-24.

"Pray ye," bids the Lord, looking forward to the time of the "great tribulation," "that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Matt. 24:20. So not only should we cherish the Sabbath Gift, but also should we earnestly pray that circumstances so shape themselves as not to bring upon us a Sabbath-breaking plight from which there could be no escape. For, the Sabbath being made for man, not man for the Sabbath, it obviously is for a blessing to him, not him for a blessing to it.

Christians know experientially that Satan tries harder to rob men of the Sabbath Gift than he does to rob them of any other gift of God, even to inspiring the beast to

speak for him against the Most High God, and to attempt to change "times and laws." Dan. 7:25. So be ye not a follower of the beast, but be ye a follower of Christ, and by your good behavior "establish the law." Rom. 3:31. And remember, this Holy Gift, the Sabbath, is a Gift, not alone to the children of Jacob, but

A Gift to "All Flesh."

"Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

"Neither let the son of the stranger [him who is not an Israelite], that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from His people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree.

"For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep My Sabbaths and choose the things that please Me, and take hold of My covenant; even unto them will I give in Mine house and within My walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

"Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, *every one* that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant; even them will I bring to My

holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon Mine altar; for Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people." Isa. 56: 2-7.

Right evaluation of this Eternal Rest Gift will insure right evaluation of

Other Precious Gifts.

A true Sabbath-keeper will be no ingrate. Rather, he will be grateful in all things, giving thanks to the Lord for the gift of abundance as well as for the gift of want; and whether in weal or in woe, will from the heart say with Paul: "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." Philip. 4:11, 12.

So every true Christian will, in foul weather or in fair, learn to lead others to Christ, remembering that "to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to

mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace." Eccles. 3:1-8.

True to his faith, the faithful follower of Christ will, in reverent appreciation and gratitude, give thanks for the gift of every time and season, for the gift of abundance and for the gift of want, also for the gift of a home and for the gift of loved ones—a husband, a wife, and children; a father and a mother; relatives and friends. And he will gratefully honor the Lord's command:

"HUSBANDS, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man

leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." Eph. 5:25-31.

"WIVES, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." Verse 22-24. "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband." Rom. 7:2.

"I SAY THEREFORE TO THE UNMARRIED AND WIDOWS, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn.

"AND UNTO THE MARRIED I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord:

"IF ANY BROTHER HATH A WIFE THAT BELIEVETH NOT, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the

unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

"LET EVERY MAN ABIDE IN THE SAME CALLING wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.

"NOW CONCERNING VIRGINS I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be.

"ART THOU BOUND UNTO A WIFE? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Never-

theless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.

“But this I say, brethren, the time is short [the kingdom soon cometh]: it remaineth, that both they that have wives [now] be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away [and there cometh the Kingdom of God wherein all shall be alike]. But I would have you without carefulness [let not the things of this world trouble you; they are for but a season; whereas the kingdom is forever].

“HE THAT IS UNMARRIED careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.” 1 Cor. 7:8-16, 20-34. The unmarried, therefore, are less encumbered.

“IF A MAN DESIRE THE OFFICE OF A BISHOP, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good

behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

“LIKEWISE MUST THE DEACONS be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

“These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God,

the pillar and ground of the truth." 1 Tim. 3:1-15.

"HE THAT SAITH HE IS IN THE LIGHT, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

"I WRITE UNTO YOU, LITTLE CHILDREN, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.

"I WRITE UNTO YOU, FATHERS, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning.

"I WRITE UNTO YOU, YOUNG MEN, because ye have overcome the wicked one.

"I WRITE UNTO YOU, LITTLE CHILDREN, because ye have known the Father.

"I HAVE WRITTEN UNTO YOU, FATHERS, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning.

"I HAVE WRITTEN UNTO YOU, YOUNG MEN, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

"IF ANY MAN LOVE THE WORLD, the love of the Father is not in him. For

all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (the end of the world). 1 John 2:9-18.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure. 'Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.'" 1 John 3:1-5.

Finally, beloved, "give the more earnest heed" to

THE GIFT OF HOLY SCRIPT

I

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

II

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.

III

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

IV

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

ON TABLES OF STONE.

V

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI

Thou shalt not kill.

VII

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII

Thou shalt not steal.

IX

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's. Ex. 20:3-17.

These "He gave unto Moses, when He had made Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone,

an end of communing with him upon mount written with the finger of God." Ex. 31:18.

This supreme and universal law, the decalogue, originally written by God Himself on two tables of stone, is given to the willing for the preservation of their precious gifts: their religion, their homes and their very lives, the homes and lives of their families, their properties, their cities, their nations; and peace and goodwill to all mankind.

Thus Jesus decreed: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments [one on each table of stone] hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. 22:37-40.

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:10-12. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." 1 John 2:4.

Moreover, "give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

Matt. 7:6: And you who have no pearls to cast, do not attempt to cause those who have, to lose theirs, but rather jealously cherish and safeguard

The Gift of Religious Liberty.

"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." Rom. 14:1. Be charitable.

"For one believeth that he may eat all things," good or bad; "another, who is weak, eateth herbs," for in them he findeth strength for his body. "Let not," therefore, "him that eateth," even if to his own hurt, "despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Rom. 14:2-4), but no man can make anyone stand.

"One man," moreover, "esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind [not in the mind of another]. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." What is that, therefore, unto thee? "He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks."

Verses 5, 6. Be not troubled henceforth with these concerns.

Both he who believes and he who believes not, should not meddle with each other's business. They should control their tongues, and should be charitable each to the other. Let each keep peace with all men. Especially should the believers do so with those who are of the household of faith.

Forbid not marriage, and command not any "to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." 1 Tim. 4:3-5.

You who know the Truth, may eat every day of everything for which you can with enlightened conscience give thanks, for only such things are "sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that

which is to come. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation." Verses 6-9.

Be not like "Diotrephes, who," loving "to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not, . . . and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church." 3 John 1:9, 10.

If you are cast out for the Truth's sake, do not become angry or discouraged, but rejoice in the divine consolation: "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." Isa. 66:5.

Neither force upon one anything which he does not want, nor withhold from him anything which might be his. And never stand between him and his God, to Whom alone he is answerable, and Who alone is to resolve all issues: ". . . the Lord will come with fire, and with His chariots like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by His sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord." Isa. 66:15-17.

Restrain or deter none from an in-

vestigation of purported truth, but help them to "prove all things," and to "hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. 5:21. Do not try to make invalids of them or a fool of yourself by expecting them to accept your say-so. Urge them to see for themselves and to bear their own responsibility.

For "precious light is to shine forth from the Word of God, and let no one presume to dictate what shall or what shall not be brought before the people in the messages of enlightenment that He shall send, and so quench the Spirit of God. Whatever may be his position of authority, no one has a right to shut away the light from the people. When a message comes in the name of the Lord to His people, no one may excuse himself from an investigation of its claims. No one can afford to stand back in an attitude of indifference and self-confidence, and say: 'I know what is truth. I am satisfied with my position. I have set my stakes, and I will not be moved away from my position, whatever may come. I will not listen to the message of this messenger; for I know that it cannot be truth.' It was from pursuing this very course that the popular churches were left in partial darkness, and that is why the messages of heaven have not reached them."—*Testimonies on Sabbath-School Work*, p. 65; *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 28.

Remember that everyone has the right

to believe as he will, and that he must give an account of himself to the Lord only, not to you. Grant to all the freedom of religion that you would have them grant to you. And though a Christian will never sacrifice principle, yet he will ever be as courteous to those who disagree with him as to those who agree.

"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." Matt. 7:12. Yea, thus is the teaching of both. And so to receive all these holy gifts, you must

Forsake Egotism, Self-Confidence, Pride of Opinion, Prejudices.

"God calls upon those who hold responsible positions in Sabbath school work to put away all egotism, all self-confidence, and pride of opinion; if a message comes that you do not understand, take pains that you may hear the reasons the messenger may give, comparing scripture with scripture, that you may know whether or not it is sustained by the Word of God. If you believe that the positions taken have not the Word of God for their foundation, if the position you hold on the subject cannot be controverted, then produce your strong reasons; for your position will not be shaken by coming in contact with error. There is no virtue or manliness in keeping up a continual warfare in the dark, closing your eyes lest you may see,

closing your ears lest you may hear, hardening your heart in ignorance and unbelief lest you may have to humble yourselves and acknowledge that you have received light on some points of truth.

“To hold yourselves aloof from an investigation of truth is not the way to carry out the Saviour’s injunction to ‘search the Scriptures.’ Is it digging for hidden treasures to call the results of some one’s labor a mass of rubbish, and make no critical examination to see whether or not there are precious jewels of truth in the collection of thought which you condemn? Will those who have almost everything to learn keep themselves away from every meeting where there is an opportunity to investigate the messages that come to the people, simply because they imagine the views held by the teachers of the truth may be out of harmony with what they have conceived as truth? Thus it was that the Jews did in the days of Christ, and we are warned not to do as they did, and be led to choose darkness rather than light, because there was in them an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. No one of those who imagine that they know it all is too old or too intelligent to learn from the humblest of the messengers of the living God.”—*Testimonies on Sabbath-School Work*, pp. 65, 66; *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, pp. 28-30.

The Lord alone, moreover, is responsible for your salvation, and to Him alone are

you accountable for your sins. “Cease ye” hereafter “from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?” Isa. 2:22. Do not become an invalid by letting others think for you, but

Make Use of the Gift of Mind and Reason.

“All should be careful about presenting new views of Scripture before they have given these points thorough study, and are fully prepared to sustain them from the Bible. Introduce nothing that will cause dissention, without clear evidence that in it God is giving a special message for this time.

“But beware of rejecting that which is truth. The great danger with our people has been that of depending upon men, and making flesh their arm. Those who have not been in the habit of searching the Bible for themselves, or weighing evidence, have confidence in the leading men, and accept the decisions they make; and thus many will reject the very messages God sends to His people, if these leading brethren do not accept them.

“No one should claim that he has all the light there is for God’s people. The Lord will not tolerate this. He has said, ‘I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.’ Even if all our leading men should refuse light and truth, that door will still remain open. The Lord will raise up men who will give the people the mes-

sage for this time.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 106, 107. A truth-seeking Christian will not only treasure all the aforementioned gifts of God but also equally respect

The Gift of Government.

Wherefore “let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.” Rom. 13:1, 2.

God’s authority being supreme and absolute, “altogether-Christians” will ever prefer homage to the King of heaven and earth, while faithfully seeking to render “unto Caesar the things which be Caesar’s, and unto God the things which be God’s.” Luke 20:25. “. . . to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.” Rom. 13:7.

Such will “owe no man anything” so long as their debtor’s demands or requirements conflict not with God’s laws and statutes. As “altogether-Christians” they will be as true to God and to man as was Daniel and as was Joseph.

When “the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; . . . they could find none occasion nor fault.” Dan. 6:4. Finding him thus faultless, his enemies “consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to

make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of” the king, should “be cast into the den of lions.” Verse 7.

By securing the king’s signature on the decree, they sought to create a situation that must necessarily involve Daniel in an act of rebellion against the king. They knew that though he purposed to render unflinching allegiance to the king, he would not do so at the price of showing disloyalty to his God. And so as he continued to petition his God as he was wont to do, he was cast into the “den of lions.” But the One to whom he prayed saved his life from the ravenous beasts.

And amid the slaves of ancient Egypt looms the majestic stature of Joseph, the greatest provisioner the world has ever seen. Behold him in steadfast loyalty to his government, rising in honor till he is given to share the very throne of Pharaoh himself!

From these and other Bible examples, it is clear that one’s loyalty to his government is his pledge of allegiance to it—a salute to its flag. Altogether, therefore, we see that while on the one hand a man’s disloyalty to the divine government is a sin against God, on the other hand his disloyalty to his nation’s government is a sin against it, also indirectly against God, for disloyalty to one’s government is disobedience to God’s express command: “Put them in mind to be subject to principalities

and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." Tit. 3:1. "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well." 1 Pet. 2:13, 14.

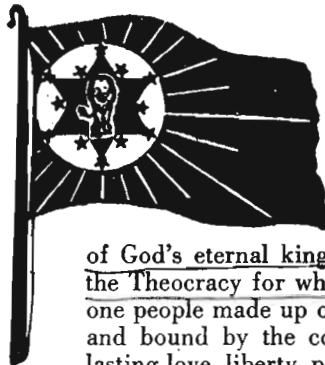
As the flag of a nation is not an idol or a fetish but a symbol, a standard, so the salute to it is not idol-worship, as some think, but rather public confession of one's loyalty to the government of his nation, just as baptism is one's confession of loyalty to the government of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

At divine behest, the Israelites made standards (flags) according to their tribes, for purposes both of identification and emblemification of their loyalty to that for which the standards stood. (See Numbers 2.)

Clearly, then, to attribute idolatry to one for saluting his nation's flag, would be to accuse God of forcing idolatry not only upon His ancient people but, by their example, also upon the faithful of all time since!

So every Christian who would be obedient to God's commands, must be loyal to the country in which he lives. Wherefore as Christians *in America*, devoted to God, and consequently loyal to the just principles of this free "government under

God," we pledge our hearts, our minds, our hands, our all, first to the



of God's eternal kingdom, and to the Theocracy for which it stands, one people made up of all nations, and bound by the cords of everlasting love, liberty, purity, justice, peace, happiness, light and life for all; and second, as Americans, to the



"of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Na-

tion, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

And so long as Old Glory unfurls itself as the emblem of the inviolate principles of the Constitution of this land of freemen, so long is our pledge of allegiance to it an inviolate thing.

And now let us hear

The Sum of the Whole Matter.

To each one who truly cherishes these precious gifts, who earnestly holds fast that which he has, that no man take his crown (Rev. 3:11), rings out the joyous tidings: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to *give* every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12.

"To him that overcometh will I *give* to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

"He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. . . . be thou faithful unto death, and I will *give* thee a crown of life."

"To him that overcometh will I *give* to eat of the hidden manna, and will *give* him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I *give* power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers:

even as I received of My Father. And I will *give* him the morning star."

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels."

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new name."

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne."

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Rev. 2:7, 11, 10, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21, 20, 22.

And finally, if you feel your need of Him, and are eager to receive all the gifts through Him, even the gift of the Spirit to lead you into all Truth (John 14:17; 16:13), then may you in the realization that only the prayer of a righteous man availeth much, solemnly bow down while

reading, and let the All-righteous One bring to you heaven's blessing in

His Prayer.

“Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.” Matt. 6:9-13.

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