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The WAY TO CHRISTIAN PROSPERITY

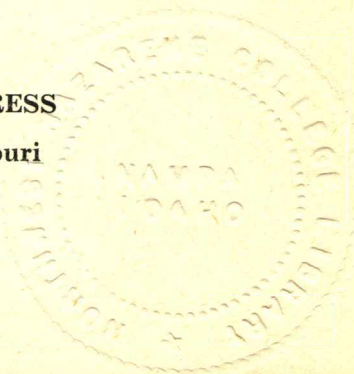
N. B. HERRELL

The Way to Christian Prosperity

N. B. Herrell

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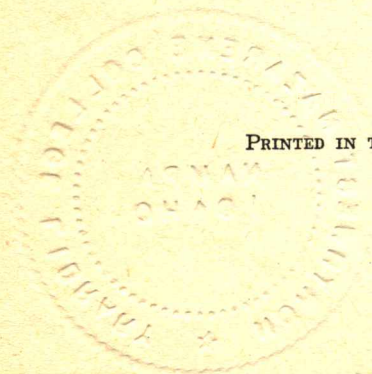


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INTRODUCTION

The practice of Christian stewardship in the local church is one of the major concerns of those who take Jesus Christ seriously. Before there can be intelligent and devoted practice of stewardship, there must be a clear understanding of what the Bible teaches concerning this matter.

Rev. N. B. Herrell has had a rich and abiding ministry in the church. As pastor, evangelist, district superintendent, and church leader, he has had opportunity to test the fundamental principles of stewardship in every phase of church activity. He has spent nearly a lifetime of study concerning this important theme. For thirty-five years he has preached and practiced the fundamentals of Christian stewardship. Contained in this practical volume is the heart of his message, the burden and passion of his ministry.

The General Stewardship Committee commends this volume to all persons seeking enrichment for their own lives. It may be used as a study guide for a course in Christian Stewardship; it may be read for personal inspiration and profit. In either case, *The Way to Christian Prosperity* will not fail to inspire those who read it and help them to live the Christian faith in a more meaningful manner.

GENERAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

S. T. LUDWIG, *Secretary*

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
SECTION ONE	
The Will of God Concerning Stewardship During the Patriarchal Period	7
SECTION TWO	
The Law of God Concerning Stewardship During the Mosaic Period	29
SECTION THREE	
The Will of God Concerning Stewardship During the Christian Era	47
SECTION FOUR	
God's Word for This Generation	61
In Conclusion	75

PREFACE

The material contained in this book is presented to my brethren in the church, both ministers and laymen, for the purpose of stimulating thought and inspiration in the teaching and promotion of Christian stewardship. There is no attempt to go into detail, leaving that matter to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Each Christian steward will need to seek God's will for a personal understanding of the measure of his stewardship. The Holy Spirit is unerring in leading us into all truth concerning God's will for our attitudes and relationships in life's service. The measure of our ability has much to do with our responsibility toward God and His cause.

There is no question that the systematic teaching of the obligations of Christian stewardship upon each member of the church has been only occasional in the most of churches. The resulting weakness is easy to discover. If the churches as a whole were taught the principles of Christian stewardship and its obligations, there would be no disgraceful and enforced retrenchments in our missionary work. No more than one half of the membership of the average church enters wholeheartedly into the stewardship life of the church.

If this book will assist in any way to augment the interest of the membership of the church in taking a more active service in the life and work of the church of Christ, we will feel well paid for our time and effort in gathering the material found herein.

N. B. HERRELL

SECTION ONE

The Will of God Concerning Stewardship During the Patriarchal Period

The length of the patriarchal period was about two thousand five hundred years, beginning with the creation of Adam and continuing to the birth of Moses. It is known as the Genesis or beginning period in the history of the human race.

GOD REIGNS

*God reigns in all the universe,
Wherever light doth shine;
His mighty works to all declare
His majesty divine.*

*God reigns in holiness sublime;
He maketh wars to cease;
From shore to shore the olive branch,
He offers all His peace.*

*God reigns today through Christ His Son.
No matter where we go,
We find the emblem of the cross,
His love and grace to show.*

*God reigns through stewardship of life,
As Landlord from His throne.
He never fails one trusting soul;
He claims him for His own.*

—N. B. H.

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WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

"In the beginning God." This is an exact statement of an eternal verity. God is the perpetual Beginning of all force and matter, all life and substance. He is the Source of all things—by Him all things exist. He animates the universe—by Him all things consist.

Our life from the beginning was a trust and not an outright gift without conditions and responsibilities. It was not then, and is not now, a possession to be held, used, wasted, or bartered without the consent and approval of the party of the first part. Life is not only a trust committed to us, but it is conditioned upon a plan and protected by certain principles. For this reason men are accountable to God for its proper use. In all the ramifications of life, God has been from the beginning and ever shall be man's Landlord and Overseer.

What Is Your Life?

1. It is a personal question of vital importance.
2. It confronts every person on the earth.
3. It calls for an answer from each succeeding generation.
4. It is a universal challenge to the race.
5. It demands a choice between life and death.
6. It holds our destiny for weal or woe.
7. Its awards and rewards are inescapable.

The First Law of Life Is Order

God is not the author of confusion. He brought law and order out of chaos in the very beginning. God challenges every man. He has a purpose for every life, but the dimensions of the plan depend upon our grasp of its spiritual import. The valuation put upon a thing depends

in large measure upon its duration. Life in its duration is eternal. In its ideals it is as high as the throne of grace; in its convictions, stronger than death; and in its influence, as broad as the race. It remains to be seen what a man plus God can accomplish in a lifetime. Life at its highest and best exists only under law and order. In this way alone is it conducive to progress, length of days, and usefulness. God rewards such, both here and hereafter.

In the Beginning

1. God created the light (Gen. 1:3-5).
2. God created the firmament (Gen. 1:6-8).
3. God created the seas and the land (Gen. 1:9-13).
4. God created the sun, moon, and stars (Gen. 1:14-19).
5. God created the fish and the fowl (Gen. 1:20-23).
6. God created the beasts of the field (Gen. 1:24-25).

Following this order, it is clearly seen that God in His wisdom first created the supply to sustain life, before He created the demands of life. God adapted the eye to the light, the birds to the firmament, the fish to the water, and the beasts to the verdure of the earth. Having thus created them, God sealed each realm and the species contained in it; and, as far as we know, this order continues to the present time.

God's Law of Supply and Demand

The matter of providing sustenance for the life of all creatures is involved in the major purpose of God; and this life line is found in the provisional redemption of His creatures by means of the incarnation of His Son. For this reason it was necessary that Christ be subjected to the temptation of turning stones into bread, after He had fasted for forty days and nights. If the life line from the first Adam to Christ, the last Adam (I Cor. 15:45), could have been destroyed by famine (as in the case of

Joseph, who overcame by the help of God), or by the slaying of the male children (as in Egypt when Moses was saved by the king's daughter), then it might have issued in the slaying of the child Jesus, when Herod slew all the male children of his day. Thus the law of supply and demand from the very beginning became a vital part of the whole scheme of things, and as such it will endure as long as time shall last. In this law of supply and demand, the sovereignty of God's ownership is supreme, and cannot be violated without the direst of consequences.

The Origin of Human Life

Of all that God created, not one of His creatures was in His own likeness, nor adapted to fellowship with Him, nor even possessed of the ability to choose his own pattern of life. "And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27). "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Gen. 2:18). "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (Gen. 2:21-23).

The Pattern for Human Life

The Lord God, in His infinite Personality with a plenitude of the divine nature and attributes, had not

one creature to reflect and enjoy the glory of His presence and the beauty of His holiness. For this reason, man the creature was created in the divine image and likeness, with a nature adapted to and capable of fellowship with God the Creator, through the Word and Spirit. The Lord God created man a little lower than the angels and crowned him with glory and honor. He created him with a capacity and a responsibility for following out the pattern of life set for him in the Garden of Eden. This pattern of life which the Lord God in His wisdom set for man in the garden includes three fundamental institutions:

1. *The Institution of Marriage.* The purpose of holy wedlock is to furnish man with the companionship of another being capable of receiving and returning his highest affections; and through this association enable him to establish a godly home and family, according to the will of his Creator. "And God blessed them [Adam and Eve], and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:28). "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24).

2. *The Institution of the Holy Sabbath.* The purpose of the holy Sabbath was to give man one day in seven to rest from his labor—except in case of mercy to man or beast—and also to provide man with the opportunity of worshipping the Lord God, his Creator. "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made" (Gen. 2:3). The "Holy Sabbath" is the Lord's Day, in His pattern of life for man.

3. *The Institution of Holy Stewardship.* We are using the word stewardship as we have used the word

marriage—in an accommodated sense. We are doing this for lack of a better term by which to express the proposition before us. Also, because it is the word commonly used in dealing with this subject. The word “steward” as used in the New Testament emphasizes the close fellowship between man and God as it concerns material or other possessions. It is an Oriental word which expresses the warm quality of intimate personal relationship and trust. While the dictionary defines a “steward” as one entrusted with the management of estates or affairs not his own, he was not in the Oriental use of the term a mere mercenary satellite, but the trusted confidant of his master. The Anglo-Saxon term “stigward”—literally a “styward”—was used to designate a man employed to manage domestic concerns, a caretaker of another’s property. Our word trusteeship is too legal and cold to express the affection which is implied in the term steward as used in the Bible. The steward of the Holy Scriptures is expected to interpret to others the mind of his ever-living Lord and Master. Because of this cordial relationship with his Lord, he shares the thought and understands the will of his Master, and thereby may act with the utmost liberty and devotion. All life is a stewardship. Vital energy in whatever form—physical or mental, moral or spiritual—is a trust given to us from God. It is related to material things only because material things are related to the higher levels of life. Let us keep this truth in mind as we consider God’s dealings with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Safeguarding the Pattern of Life

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and

the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads" (Gen. 2:8-10). "And the Lord God took the man, and put him in the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die" (Gen. 2:15-17). The pattern of life had been wisely instituted in the garden for a holy man and a holy woman—Adam and Eve, husband and wife. The one and only requirement was a challenge to loyal obedience in the realm of stewardship. This simple yet far-reaching demand, had it been obeyed, would have brought peace, happiness, and security, both to Adam and Eve and to their posterity. When disobeyed, it brought sin and death to the race. It was the acid test as to the *ownership of God and the stewardship of man*. The free moral agency of Adam and Eve, their power to obey or reject the will of God, exposed them to the temptation of Satan, that old serpent, the devil.

The Great Transgression

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, *Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?* And the woman said unto the serpent, *We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.* And the serpent said unto the woman, *Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.* And when the woman saw that *the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to*

make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Gen. 3:1-6).

1. The temptation to disobey God was presented in the form of a question to Eve, apparently in the presence of her husband and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

2. The temptation was presented to Eve with a subtle, indirect accusation against the requirement of God, who demanded wholehearted obedience in caring for the possessions entrusted to Adam and Eve.

3. The temptation was presented in a congenial atmosphere never before polluted by his satanic majesty, the devil. As far as we know, the conversation was of a friendly nature—not in the spirit of heated argument, but persuasive, with the subtle charm of a master salesman.

4. The tree was sold to Eve by Satan through the serpent, and Eve sold it to her husband, for its food value.

5. The tree was sold to Eve by Satan through the serpent, and Eve sold it to her husband, because it was pleasant to the eyes.

6. The tree was sold to Eve by Satan through the serpent, and Eve sold it to her husband, because it would make them wise.

7. Hence Eve, the woman, led in the great transgression and sold, as it were, the bill of goods to her husband.

The Double Sin of Adam

Adam's part in the great transgression which led to the fall of the race was the sin of omission as well as the sin of commission. He omitted to exercise his responsibility as head of the wife, the priest of his own household, the daily provider for the necessities of his family, as well as the responsible overseer of God's possessions en-

trusted to his stewardship. The best we can say for Adam is that he was an unfaithful steward in the pattern of life which the Lord God had set for him in the beginning. He was made the responsible head of Eve, his wife. When she was tempted by Satan through the serpent, it was his duty to go to the aid of his wife and take over for God and right. He faltered; he neglected; he failed. It was now too late, for his wife had yielded and eaten of the forbidden tree. "And [she] gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Gen. 3:6). It seems that Adam chose rather to die with his wife than to live alone as an unfallen man. So then, all died in Adam. "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he [God] said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (Gen. 3:8-12).

Adam Reaps What He Sowed

"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:17-19).

Fig Leaf Security: the Reaction of the Fall upon Adam and Eve

1. No sooner had Adam and Eve transgressed God's commandment than that which had given them the boldness of innocent trust was suddenly taken from their hearts and lives. This left them conscious of their spiritual, intellectual, and physical nakedness. They were ashamed and afraid. That which they had lost in their disobedience was the image and likeness of God, the glow and glory of holy personality. Their beautiful garments of holiness were gone, and they were indeed and in truth naked.

2. They sought for another covering to take the place of the divine, which had been lost. They improvised aprons or cloaks to gird about themselves, made of fig leaves sewed together (Gen. 3:7). These were poor substitutes for what they had lost, but carry with them a deep significance.

3. When they heard the voice of the Lord God in the early morning, they hid themselves because of sin-stained souls and guilty consciences.

4. The Lord God, not finding His children at the place of meeting, called unto Adam, and said unto him, "Where art thou?" (Gen. 3:9).

5. And Adam answered the Lord God: (1) "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid," (2) "Because I was naked," (3) "And I hid myself" (Gen. 3:10).

6. The Lord God asked these questions of Adam: (1) "Who told thee thou wast naked?" and (2) "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?"

7. And Adam confessed to the Lord God, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (Gen. 3:12).

The Lord God Taught Adam and Eve the Way of Sacrifice

It seems from the account in Holy Writ that the Lord tenderly undertook for His wayward children and taught them concerning an acceptable sacrificial offering as an atonement for their sins.

1. The Lord God based this sacrificial offering upon a promise made in the Garden of Eden concerning the coming of His Son as the Saviour of the world (Gen. 3:15).

2. The Lord God taught Adam and Eve how to choose a proper animal to offer as a substitute sacrificial offering until the coming of the promised Redeemer. The life of the animal was to be in its blood, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:28). Without the remission of sin there can be no restoration of man to the image and likeness of God, to purity and holiness (Heb. 12:14). Hence, without holiness, no one can hope to have a part in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:6), and a place in the Holy City for an eternal home (Rev. 21 and 22). No offering, however perfect, will be acceptable to God unless it expresses the full and undivided obedience of man to the whole will of God. Therefore the Lord God, in teaching Adam what was acceptable as an offering for sin, taught him also what was not acceptable. This fact was demonstrated in the case of Cain and Abel when making their first offerings to God for the remission of sins (Gen. 4:1-15). The sin of disobedience is the major sin of the human race (Rom. 5:16-19). Only in and through Christ is our obedience to the will of God acceptable (Rom. 6:15-22). The foundation of this truth was established between God and man in the promise of the Redeemer. The sacrifice of an animal whose life was in its blood, and whose skin served as a covering, was a fitting type of the righteousness of Christ, as the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. This is the Lord God's

answer to Adam's *fig-leaf* security, and Cain's *truck-patch* offering. Man left to his own religious inclinations drifts naturally to the left into materialism. This is a dangerous tendency, and we are sharply warned against it (Jude 11; I John 3:11-15).

The Covenant of the Rainbow

The flood waters abated, Noah left the ark and immediately erected an altar and offered sacrifice to the Lord God. This act of devotion was acceptable to God, who "said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; . . . neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (Gen. 8:20-22; 9:1-11). "And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will look upon it; that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth" (Gen. 9:12-16).

God Is Man's Landlord

The Lord God, in His wisdom, sets forth the future Church in a miniature pattern, by beginning with Melchizedek as a type of Christ and His ministers, and Abram as a type of the laity. For information and inspiration, we call attention to that portion of the Scriptures which deals with this prophetic-historical setting,

and thereby depicts the future development of the greatest institution of all time. "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all. And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich" (Gen. 14:18-23).

1. *Melchizedek Was a Priest of the Most High God.*

(a) The vital relationship among Christ, His ministers, and the most high God is by far the most important factor connected with the development of the future Church. This Church is to evangelize the nations of the world and prepare the bride for Christ. (b) The first major concern as regards both Christ and His Church is the calling and qualification of the ministry. Those placed in the responsible positions of leadership must evidence their love, devotion, and loyalty to God under any and all circumstances. (c) When a local church calls a pastor as an undershepherd over the flock of God, they seek first among his qualifications his relationship to God. Is he a Spirit-filled minister? Does he put God first, others second, and himself last? Is he a minister in deed and in truth? Yes, Melchizedek was the priest of the most high God.

2. *Melchizedek Blessed Abraham of the Most High God.*

(a) The attitude of the ministry toward the laity should be that of spiritual blessing. Melchizedek blessed Abram as representing the laity of the Church, and en-

couraged him by acknowledging that the laity belonged to the most high God in the same sense as does the ministry. It is no weakness on the part of a minister to acknowledge that he has faith in his people, and publicly to express appreciation for them as the people of God. The hearty confidence of the ministry in the laity will be reflected back in co-operation and good will. (b) The basis of a congenial unity and co-operative fellowship in service depends largely upon the consciousness of equal relationship to God on the part of ministry and laity. A discrepancy here will hinder the cause of God.

3. *The Lord God Possesses Both Heaven and Earth.*

(a) Melchizedek, representing the ministry of the Church, declared to Abram that the Lord God possessed both heaven and earth (Gen. 14:19). Abram, as the ideal layman, testified to the king of Sodom the same truth proclaimed by his minister. "I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God," he said, "the possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen. 14:22). Before man was created, the Persons of the Godhead agreed among themselves concerning the relationship man was to bear, both to the Holy Trinity and to the earth which They had created (Gen. 1:26). The question of ownership, whether of heaven or earth, is securely settled as belonging to the most high God. Any infringement by angels, men, or devils finds the Sentinel of God, the Holy Spirit, on duty for God and truth (Acts 5:1-11). *The ownership of God and the stewardship of man is a personal issue that must be settled by a heart covenant between God and the born-again soul.* (b) Not only the idea or theoretical belief that God is the Owner of all things in heaven and in earth is essential; this belief must be accompanied by a practical acknowledgment in everyday life. It is in the latter that men's failure is most evident. The question of ownership is the fundamental ground upon which we base our consecration in order to be sanctified wholly. This relationship between men and God has existed from

the beginning, and was fully acknowledged at Pentecost (Acts 4:32). Furthermore, the promises of God are based upon the acknowledgment of divine ownership (Ps. 24:1-6). (c) If the Lord God owns the ministry, and He does; if He owns the laity, and He does; if He owns heaven and earth, and He does, then no other being actually owns anything—whether angels, men, or devils. Man alone can choose to accept or reject God's will. God's ownership is the frontier defense of His absolute authority. This is brought out clearly in Adam's sin of disobedience.

4. *Melchizedek Brought Forth Bread and Wine.* (a) Strange as it may seem, the Lord God uses prophetic types and symbols to teach the human race concerning the sacrificial atonement which is to be made on the cross of Calvary. Here He institutes, in symbol, the sacrament of bread and wine. Melchizedek, the king-priest, brings forth bread and wine, which he sets before Abram, looking forward to the coming of Christ and His institution of the Lord's Supper. (b) No detail, even the smallest, is overlooked in the divine plan for a full and perfect redemption. His will is to save with a fullness of blessing all who will come to Him through Christ. This symbol, though it may appear insignificant, will find its ultimate fulfillment at the great marriage supper of the Lamb.

5. *The Lord God Strengthened Abram's Hands.* (a) Abram's relation to God, to the ministry, and to the Church did not prevent him from being tempted and tried, nor from being robbed and persecuted by his enemies. However, in and under all conditions, Abram had the presence and blessing of God; he was guided in every crisis, and in due time was delivered out of all his troubles (Gen. 14:20). (b) No sooner had Abram won the victory over his enemies than he reported his triumph to the minister, and received from him the commendation and encouragement in that the Lord had delivered his enemies into his hands. This is the spiritual relation-

ship which should ever exist between the minister and the laymen of the Church.

6. *Abram Gave Melchizedek Tithes of All.* (a) As far as we know, this is the first place in the Holy Scriptures where the word tithes is mentioned. As in all other matters, such as the order of the sacrifices, the covenant of the rainbow, and the sacrament of bread and wine, God now sets up the tithing system. We have no other reason concerning the selection of the tithe as God's portion than the authority of the Scriptures. But we know that the Lord God is its Author, as He is the Author of other teachings concerning His kingdom among men. St. Paul, in mentioning the promises, said: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect" (Gal. 3:16-17). The tithing system given by the Lord God to His servants Melchizedek and Abram was instituted upon the promises four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law to Moses on Mount Sinai. (b) The order of Christ's priesthood and kingdom among men is after the order of Melchizedek and Abraham (Heb. 5:6-10; 6:9-20; 7:1-22), and not after the order of the Levitical priesthood (Heb. 7:11-17). Hence, Christ, who is the Head of the Church, receives the tithes from all His people through His ministry and churches (Heb. 5:6; 6:20; 7:1-8). This system of tithes and offerings, as far as we know, has in nowise been amended, repealed, or abrogated. It stands until this good hour. (c) The Lord God is its Author; it is based upon promises; it is accepted by faith; and it is to be practiced by both ministry and laity in loyal obedience to the great and adorable Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, God's Son.

7. *Abram Was Loyal to His Minister and His Church.*

(a) The Christian life consists in the experiences of doing the right and shunning the wrong. In keeping with this rule of life, Abram did right according to the will of the Lord. But this was not without conflict on the part of the king of Sodom, who was a fitting type of Satan. No sooner had Abram decided to give tithes of all to Melchizedek than Satan, so to speak, said to Abram, "Give me the persons [or souls], and take the goods to thyself" (Gen. 14:21). Satan, like the Lord God, is after souls, not goods. The weakness of men is to save their goods and lose their souls. Abram met the acid test. What was his answer? "Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen. 14:22). Where did Abram learn that the Lord God most high owned the heaven and the earth? He learned it from the preaching of his minister. Think of it! A layman remembering and using what his minister had preached to him, and thereby defeating the devil and winning a victory which affected three worlds! Here the ideal minister and layman worked together to defeat the devil and destroy his works. (b) Abram then declared his loyalty to the service of God, to his minister, and to the Church. To Satan he said, "I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich" (Gen. 14:23). Remember this: If God owned heaven and earth, and Abram believed that He did; if Satan had a needleful of thread or a shoe buckle, then he would have been under the necessity of stealing whatever he had to offer Abram. To be found with stolen goods on Abram would never do, neither in this world nor that to come. Satan is a thief from the beginning and deals only in stolen goods. This is never safe at any time. (c) In disobeying God, we become servants of Satan. In drawing back from the will of God, we find ourselves in the snare of the

devil. Obedience to the will of God is the only defense against Satan and his hidden snares. Our late Dr. Goodwin said that tithing was the touchstone of Christian stewardship. After due consideration, we find that our brother is consistent and right. God has instituted tithing in the Church, after the fashion of the tree which He planted in the midst of the Garden of Eden. Concerning the tree, God said to Adam, "Thou shalt not eat of it" (Gen. 2:17). Concerning His tithes, He says, "All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy [sacredly] unto the Lord" (Lev. 27:30). "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 3:10). The first was a command, "Thou shalt not"; the second was an exhortation, "Thou shalt bring." Abraham obeyed God's positive exhortation and faithfully brought in God's tithe which had been entrusted to his care. Abraham was called the friend of God (James 2:23).

When Abraham Was Sanctified

About twenty-four years after Abram had obeyed the call of God (Gen. 12:1-5), we read that "when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect," i.e., inright, outright, upright, and downright, sound and sincere to the core of his being. "And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will

establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God" (Gen. 17:1-8).

1. At the time Abram was sanctified wholly, he was brought into a oneness with the Almighty God, a oneness he had never before known.

2. Abram was consecrated fully to God, to walk with Him in full obedience to His will, according to the covenant made between them.

3. The covenant was sealed by the change of Abram's name to that of Abraham.

4. The covenant on God's part was the promise to people the earth with nations descended from Abraham.

5. The covenant also included the promise to continue to be God to Abraham and the many nations descending from him.

6. The covenant bound Abraham and his seed to the seal of circumcision—every man child when eight days old, throughout their generations.

7. Abraham believed God and it was imputed to him for righteousness. He thereby became the father of us all ("As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations"—Rom. 4:16-25). The personal influence of Abraham on his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob may be seen and appreciated in the following account.

Jacob Influenced by Family Religion

In the twenty-eighth chapter of Genesis, it is recorded of Jacob, the grandson of Abraham the tither, that when sent by his father Isaac to Padan-aram he lighted on a certain spot where he tarried all night and there had a dream. He dreamed that a ladder was "set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold

the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. . . . And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee" (Gen. 28:10-22). Here we see the daily life and influence of sanctified Abraham the tither, together with Isaac, his son, and his grandson Jacob, who later became the father of twelve sons. These sons became the heads of the twelve tribes which bore the name of their father Israel, which he had received from God when he was sanctified (Gen. 32:24-32). The far-reaching reputation of Abraham and the other patriarchs who were faithful tithers so influenced the nations round about them that they, too, began to pay tithes to their gods. This brings us to the close of the patriarchal dispensation.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND STUDY

1. In what book and chapter do we read of God's creating heaven and earth?
2. What does the word Genesis mean?
3. What all did God create and make in six days?
4. For what purpose did God set apart the seventh day?
5. Which was created first, Adam or Eve?
6. How did God make a wife for Adam?
7. What three institutions were established before the fall?

8. Who tempted Eve to disobey God?
9. Who persuaded Adam to disobey God and sin?
10. What did Adam and Eve do after they sinned?
11. What did Adam and Eve say when God called them in the garden?
12. What seed did God promise would come and destroy sin?
13. Why did Cain kill his brother Abel?
14. Who was the first to pay tithe?
15. Where did Jacob learn to pay tithe to God?

SECTION TWO

The Law of God Concerning Stewardship During the Mosaic Period

The Mosaic period began with the birth of Moses, and continued until the advent of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. It is known as the time of the law and the prophets, and covers the second period in the history of the human race.

GOD'S STEWARDSHIP CHALLENGE

*In Malachi three and ten,
Read God's challenge made to men.
Saith the Lord of Hosts: "Prove Me.
Bring My tithes from heart and bin
To My storehouse. I will then
Cleanse you from all innate sin.
Prove Me."*

*There's a promise ever true,
And a blessing waiting you.
Saith the Lord of Hosts: "Prove Me.
If you'll trust Me, dare and do,
From My storehouse, old and new,
I'll pour blessings out on you.
Prove Me."*

*God has windows in the skies
That will fill you with surprise.
Saith the Lord of Hosts: "Prove Me.
If you'll lift to Me your eyes,
Through My windows in the skies,
I'll reward your gifts and tithes.
Prove Me."*

*"Pentecost I will outpour
On My people more and more."
Saith the Lord of Hosts: "Prove Me.
Like a gracious springtime shower
All My Church I will empower.
Heed My word this very hour.
Prove Me."*

—N. B. H.

THE LAW, OUR SCHOOLMASTER

All Life Must Have Law

The law given to Moses on Mount Sinai was based upon the righteousness of faithful Abraham, and included all the principles of the covenant which He had made with Abraham and his wife when their names were changed. These names were representative of character, and the changes were therefore significant—the name Abram being changed to Abraham, and Sarai to Sarah. The law was a confirmation of the righteousness which is by faith, rather than an additional code. It was our schoolmaster to instruct and prepare the people of God for the coming of the Messiah. Christ came to fulfill the law, not to ignore it or by-pass it. In fulfilling it for our sake, He lifted us by grace through faith into the highway of holiness. We are, therefore, to remember His holy covenant, "The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" (Luke 1:70-75). The law leads to Christ all who would be saved by grace through faith.

1. The law was given by Moses (John 1:17).
2. The law is holy, just, and good (Rom. 7:12).
3. The law directs life in that holy and just way (Psalms 19:7).
4. The law is not against the promises of God (Gal. 3:21-23).
5. The law was added because of transgressions (Gal. 3:19).
6. The law justifies no man in the sight of God (Gal. 3:11-18).

7. The law is the foundation of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:6-7).

Three Institutions Classified by Moses

The marriage law (Lev. 18:1-30), the Sabbath law (Exod. 31:12-17), and the stewardship law (Lev. 31:30-34) are the three institutions with their attendant laws founded by the Lord God in the Garden of Eden. They were later confirmed by the law of Moses, and have become the basis of all civil and criminal codes of law in the civilized world. Life without controls would mean chaos in the home, the church, and the school.

TITHING, THE KEYSTONE OF STEWARDSHIP

The Tithe Is Holy unto the Lord

"And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord. And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof" (Lev. 27:30-31).

If a man should have a good crop of apples and a poor crop of potatoes, he could afford to redeem his tithe on the potatoes with apples. However, his landlord, who in this case is the Lord God, grants him the privilege of redeeming his tithe of potatoes, provided he adds one-fifth more apples than he would have tithed in potatoes. There is a reason for this. Had there been a good crop of apples and a poor crop of potatoes, the price of the potatoes would doubtless be higher than that of the apples, and the fifth part added to the tithe of the apples would make up the difference in value.

The Tithe of the Herd and the Flock

"And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord. He shall not search whether it be

good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed" (Lev. 27:32-33).

The Lord God does not ask for any kind of advantage in the tithe of the herd or the flock. We are not to search out the best either for God or for ourselves. We are not to make any change either way for the advantage it might afford. There is no redemption offered for the herd or the flock. "These are the commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai" (Lev. 27:34).

How the Rich Fruit Grower Was Sanctified

Some years ago the writer was conducting a stewardship service under a large tent. We asked the pastor to get us a pointer, as we were using a large canvas chart to illustrate our lesson. We requested the laity to do the reading of the scripture texts presented. The pastor returned with an apple tree limb that looked more like a brush or a club than a pointer. We arose and showed the club to the audience. They smiled, and at this point a man in a car passing by saw us, pulled over to the curb, stopped his car, and came into the tent. We asked the pastor to give him a Bible and a card with a scripture reference on it. In the course of the service we asked the gentleman to read his scripture, which he did, coming forward to the front and reading as follows: "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord." The man finished reading, handed the Bible to me, left the tent, entered his car, and went on his way.

About three months later, as district superintendent, I visited that church for the purpose of holding a service. To my surprise, when I arrived at the depot a well-dressed man stepped up to me and asked my name. He took my luggage and informed me that he was to take

me to the church. No sooner were we seated than he asked me if I recalled the service in the tent. I informed him that I did. He then asked if I remembered the man who stopped his car and came over to the tent.

"Yes," I said, "and I gave him a Bible and he read a certain scripture and left immediately."

"Yes," he said, "I had been seeking to be sanctified for four years, in revivals and camp meetings; but up to the time of that tent meeting I did not know what was hindering me from receiving the blessing. When I read that verse of scripture," he continued, "like a flash the Holy Spirit revealed to me my trouble. I was the richest fruit grower in the state and president of the fruit growers' association. There was too much *self*. I was too proud, too big, too important. My life centered in me, and mine, and ours. I left that tent conscious of my need, and made up my mind that when I reached home I would go to the haymow in the barn and settle the question as to who owned the fruit orchards, and what I was to do concerning the tithes and offerings."

The Battle of the Haymow

Like Jacob of old, we all have our battle of Waterloo when we come to squaring accounts with God. Here we must make a full and perfect consecration if we would be sanctified wholly. Our brother told me that he had no sooner settled down to pray than he became conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit. He waited for God to speak, and then the Spirit began to present God's plan for him and his life.

"1. 'Will you acknowledge that God owns you as well as your business, your wife, and your family?' I said, 'Yes, Lord.'

"2. 'Will you acknowledge that you are related to Me, to your family, and to your business simply as a steward, no more and no less?' I said, 'Yes, Lord.'

"3. 'Will you make a record of your business, keep books, and make an annual report to Me, and see that My tithe is used for My glory and the salvation of souls?' I said, 'Yes, Lord, and I will begin tomorrow morning.'

"4. Then last but not least, the Spirit whispered to me, 'You have many neighbors who are your friends. Will you purchase a large car and take your neighbors to the church and seek to compass their salvation?' I said, 'Yes, Lord'; and the Holy Spirit fell on me in such a manner that I was filled and thrilled with a sense of cleansing, and billows of glory rolled over my soul. I managed to get down out of the haymow and into the barnyard. I shouted for joy, and my family heard the shouts and came running to see what had happened. I told them that God had sanctified me wholly."

A Carload of Sixteen for Church

He told me that he had purchased a seven-passenger Buick, just to be able to take his family and neighbors to church that they might be saved and sanctified. He said, "I brought a load of sixteen tonight to hear you preach, and I am praying that God will save at least some of them." His prayer and effort were rewarded, for eight were at the altar and prayed through to victory. This brother kept up his good work until there were a sufficient number saved and sanctified to start a church in his own community, and I was privileged to dedicate the new building. The spreading of scriptural holiness is the best way to conserve the work in the home church. Entire sanctification and stewardship go hand in hand in the glorious cause of God's kingdom among men.

God Is Looking for Sanctified Business Men and Women

We have a host of splendid business men and women who honor God as faithful stewards of the possessions entrusted to their supervision and care. We know of two businessmen who give God's cause nine-tenths of their earnings and retain and support themselves on the one-

tenth remaining. God is interested in the prosperity of His people as long as they are loyal stewards of His possessions and support His cause. God must be first in life, in law, and in grace.

The Tithe of All Things

"As soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly. And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the Lord their God, and laid them by heaps. In the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finished them in the seventh month. And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed the Lord, and his people Israel. Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the Lord hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store. Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare chambers in the house of the Lord; and they prepared them, and brought in the offerings and the tithes and the dedicated things faithfully" (II Chron. 31:5-12).

1. As soon as the commandment came abroad, the people began to act. The alertness of a people is indicated by their reaction to moral and ethical duty. There is no time like the present to begin.

2. The children of Israel brought the tithes and offerings into the house of the Lord. Why not? This was published abroad as the will of God.

3. The children of Israel and Judah brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the Lord their God. The adjustment as to the ownership of God and the stewardship of man is perfected when we consecrate all in order to be sanctified wholly. If our consecration is effective, our giving will be immediately forthcoming.

4. After the people began to practice the bringing in of God's tithes and offerings to the house of the Lord, they had plenty to eat and some left to give to others. This is the way it should be.

5. The inference is that as long as the people withheld their tithes and offerings they had to skimp along with hardly enough to eat and nothing left over for others.

6. God's law demands that we first tithe and give offerings of what we have, regardless of how small it may be, and He will give the increase. God says, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over." Try Him and prove Him.

7. The price of success with God is faithfulness in whatever place of trust and duty He places us. God is our Landlord and we are His stewards. What will I do with my stewardship?

The Poor-mouthed Honey Man

Twenty tons of honey handled in one year! The big, yellow leather bag full of God's tithe! Read what happened to the poor-mouthed honey man.

It was in the fall after the crop of honey was gathered and marketed. As district superintendent of P—— District, we were preaching in the city of L——. This honey man, our good personal friend, with his family drove into the city to attend the service and take us home with them for the night. The meeting over, we were soon settled in a fine new car and on our way

to the little town of P——. On arriving home, the good wife set out a lunch with some hot tea. We asked our brother how his business had been during the past year.

"Oh," he said, "my business has been by far the best this year. We have handled twenty tons and the market has been the best. You rode home in our new car, and we are really in a good financial condition. Would you like to see my tithing bag?"

"Yes," I replied with interest.

He went back somewhere and from a secret place brought out a yellow leather bag about the size of a half-gallon bucket packed full of tithing money. Setting it on the table, he said to me, "There is my tithe from my honey business. When I want to give some money to the Lord's cause I just go to my tithing bag and get what I want and give it." Then he returned the bag to its secret hiding place.

I Could Not Sleep for That Yellow Bag of Tithe

This good brother's pastor, Rev. M——, was working in a radio factory to make a living for his wife and baby while the church suffered for the attention of a full-time pastor. Then too, the church property was run down, unpainted, the roof leaked, and two old coal stoves served to keep the church warm. The building was lighted with old-fashioned coal-oil lamps. Yet this man had a bag of the Lord's tithe hid away. The church carried little or no part in the district and general budgets. They thought they were too poor. I prayed almost all that night, and as I prayed I could see nothing but that yellow bag of tithe. The next morning I asked the good brother to take me over to T——, as I was to speak at a special meeting on stewardship. He said if I would stay with them until about four o'clock in the afternoon he would be glad to take me over.

The Honey Man and a Big Fish Dealer

At the church in the city of T—— we had a good man who was in charge of one of the largest fish markets in that section of the country. He had never been a consistent tither and was slow in supporting the church and its many interests. This fish dealer always sat on the front seat immediately in front of the preacher. We had our honey man sitting next to him. When the latter stood up to read his scripture, he stood close to the fish dealer, who took no little interest in his visiting brother. This was the scripture text which he read: "And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey" (II Chron. 31:5). The honey man stopped reading when he reached the word "honey."

"With your permission," he said, "I will read this text again."

I said, "Well and good."

He began to read again, this time much more slowly, as if considering every word. When he came to the word honey, he stopped, turned to me and said, "Did you know that word honey was in this text when you gave it to me to read?"

I said, "Yes, I have known that it was there for a long time."

He replied, "If I had known that it was in the Bible last night, I would not have shown you that bag of tithes." He turned to the audience and said, "It is not the question of tithing that has struck me with such force and power; it is the word 'brought.' I have my tithes in a leather bag safely tucked away in a closet at home. I see by this verse that the place for the tithes is in the church treasury, that they may be used to promote God's cause. If God permits me to get home safely, I will take my tithe to the church treasurer the first thing in the morning."

This is exactly what he did. The fish dealer was so stirred by the honey man's testimony that he was all broken up, and likewise testified that he had not been faithful to God and the church, but from that time on promised to be faithful in his stewardship of tithing. God blesses His people when they gladly obey the word of promise.

Some Months Later We Visited the Same Church

We found the pastor at home when we arrived.

"What! are you not working today?"

"No, no, we have not been working for some time now. We are serving as a full-time pastor. Wait until you see our church and meet our people. Our Sunday school has about doubled in attendance, and we have seekers and finders at our altar almost every Sunday."

The wife spoke up and said, "What did you do to the honey man over at T——?"

"I exposed him to God's Word."

"Well," she replied, "it took hold, for the next morning he brought a bag of tithe money to our house, for I am the church treasurer. He poured the contents of the bag in the center of the table. His face was shining, and the big tears were rolling down his cheeks as he told us about the scripture verse and the good he had obtained from it. On the next Wednesday at our prayer meeting, he read the verse and then addressed one of our good men, a farmer who sold many hogs. 'Brother B——,' he said, 'you told me that you had your tithe bag at home as I had, and this verse is meant for you as well as for me; so let us all bring into this church all of our tithes, repair the church, pay our pastor a living salary, and all go in for a soul-saving time.' The people rallied, and when you see our church and people you will not find them discouraged."

The church is still on the march, serving God and the community, and the influence of its people has spread abroad. It pays to walk in the light.

Was Malachi the Prophet, Melchizedek the Priest?

Whoever Malachi was, he gave us the last prophetic message of the Old Testament. We have no introduction to this messenger other than that he proclaimed "the burden of the word of the Lord to Israel." His book is a blanket indictment against the children of Israel, broken up into seven specific accusations. However, these are so stated, both in content and order, as to be at once historical and prophetic. In rejecting them, there must be a denial of historical facts; in accepting them, they become a prophetic message. Malachi's message was the last word from God to the human race for four hundred years. It was the sunset message for a rebellious people, and the sunrise promise of a new day to the true people of God. There are in this last message of the Old Testament *Seven Specific Indictments Against Israel*.

1. A break in their love for God (Mal. 1:2).
2. A break in their devotion to God (Mal. 1:6).
3. A break in their service for God (Mal. 1:7).
4. A break in their testimony for God (Mal. 2:17).
5. A break in their interest in God (Mal. 3:7).
6. A break in their support of God's cause (Mal. 3:8-9).
7. A break in their desire for God (Mal. 3:13-15).

The Challenging Pre-Pentecostal Text

Over against these seven accusations, God challenges His people to prove Him by bringing all their tithes into the storehouse, that there may be grace and means in His house. Read this challenge of God, to you, to me, and to all His believing children. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and

pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 3:10-12). Consider the scope and depth of this text:

1. It is universal in its application to God's kingdom.
2. It is all-inclusive in its application to the tithes.
3. It is a positive challenge both to personal and to mass obedience.
4. It is essential for the present and future success of the Church.
5. It is God's bid for a continuous and Church-wide revival.
6. It is the promise of world-wide influence for God and good.
7. It is the quest of God for an open channel of evangelization for all nations.

Pentecost Is the Earnest of Our Redemption (Eph. 1:1-14; II Cor. 5:1-10)

Seven is a perfect number in the Bible. In the Book of Malachi we have seven different kinds of tithes, which when grouped together make up the perfect whole of the tithe. They scale downward from one to seven according to the value of each as related to the Christian experience of stewardship. The scale begins with our love for God. The tithe, then, is our love for God, devotion, service, conversation or loyalty, interest, support, and desires. We are to bring into God's house the tithe of all seven of these elements of life in Christ as a pledge or earnest of our faith in God. Thus we reciprocate with God in the expectation of our full and complete redemption in His Son, Christ Jesus. The following is a scale of our personal stewardship as Christians.

Bringing into God's House Our Sevenfold Tithe

We give tokens of appreciation to those whom we love and esteem. God has asked, not for flowers, diamonds, or apparel, as tokens of our love and esteem for Him, but has indicated that we are to bring to His house those things that would contribute to spiritual worship and become a means of grace to all. These are the tokens of past favors and future promises He would have us bring to Him. Consider the acceptable tokens we can all bring to each worship service that we attend.

1. Bring to the house of God the tithe of our love, as a token or earnest of that love of the whole heart, soul, mind, and strength which has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. This alone is the greatest token we can offer to God our Father, His Son our Saviour, and the blessed Holy Spirit.

2. We are to bring to the house of God the tithe of our devotions. We must leave outside His court every other interest of life, worshiping Him alone in meditation, prayer, the singing of hymns and spiritual songs, and with all the saints making melody in our hearts as unto the Lord.

3. We are to bring to the house of God the tithe of our service. We must close the door to all other demands, while in the inner sanctuary of our soul we worship God, who is our Strength, and our Fortress in time of trouble.

4. We are to bring to the house of God the tithe of our conversation. We are His witnesses. We must shut out of our hearts all other communications and commune with God alone while in the courts of His sanctuary. His sheep know His voice, and they need to hear it often in the place of worship.

5. We are to bring to the house of God the tithe of our interests in life. Every secular interest must be put aside as we enter the place of worship. To worship God

with lip service while the heart is far from Him is but mockery, and should have no place in our lives, much less in the house of God.

6. We are to bring to the house of God the tithes and offerings of the material possessions which He has entrusted to us as stewards. We must give unto the Lord as freely as His grace is given to us. He sees each sparrow that falls; He numbers the very hairs of our head; He knows the number of pennies in our pockets; and He understands the motives behind our giving. When we give of our material possessions, we are to worship Him in the beauty of holiness.

7. We are to bring into the house of God the tithe of our desires in life, putting aside all self-seeking. David said on this point: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple" (Psalms 27:4). We are to have but one supreme desire in life, which like a polar star will keep us on our course. If we are to increase in our gifts and graces, we shall need to focus our desire upon God, and in communion with Him be filled with perfect love. Out of the heart are the issues of life.

We are not trying to build a bridge from the Old Testament to the New, but we are following the highway thrown up by our Lord for the redeemed to walk in as they journey to the city foursquare. The words faith, consecration, service, tithes, and offerings, as they are concerned with stewardship, are used in much the same way in every period of the human race. Hence Christian consecration should include: (1) the quality of our love for God, (2) the practical and effective nature of our devotion to God, (3) the wholeheartedness of our service for God, (4) the joyful testimony which we bear for Him, (5) the zeal of our interest in God's cause,

especially that of soul saving and the evangelization of the nations, (6) the tithes and offerings from the possessions entrusted to our care, (7) the motivating impulses of our lives both for the present and the future. We should ever look to the Holy Spirit as our Teacher, Comforter, and Guide in thought, word, and deed. Amen.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND STUDY

1. Who was the fair baby boy born and hid by the river Nile?

2. Whose daughter found the baby boy and took him to raise?

3. Why did the new King Pharaoh kill all the baby boys in Israel?

4. Who appeared to Moses in a burning bush?

5. For what purpose did Moses and Aaron appear before King Pharaoh?

6. What three institutions were classified by Moses?

7. What kept the rich fruit grower from being sanctified?

8. Why did the fruit grower bring sixteen persons to church?

9. What was wrong with the tithe of the honey man?

10. What happened to the honey man and the fish dealer?

11. What were the seven charges Malachi made against Israel?

12. What scripture verses are called the Pre-Pentecostal text?

13. What are the sevenfold tithes we are to bring into God's house?

14. What did God promise to do if all His tithes were gathered in?

15. Does this promise hold good as a challenge to the Church?

SECTION THREE

The Will of God Concerning Stewardship During the Christian Era

The Christian era began with the advent of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, and will come to a close with the second coming of the Lord. It is known as the dispensation of the Holy Spirit or the Church age.

THE UNVEILED CHRIST

*Once our blessed Christ of beauty
Was veiled off from human view;
But through suffering, death, and sorrow
He has rent the veil in two.*

*Now He is with God the Father,
Interceding there for you;
For He is the mighty Conqueror
Since He rent the veil in two.*

*Holy angels bow before Him;
Men of earth give praises due;
For He is the well beloved
Since He rent the veil in two.*

*Throughout time and endless ages,
Heights and depths of love so true,
He alone can be the Giver
Since He rent the veil in two.*

—N. B. H.

ALL LIFE AND LAW NEED GRACE

Pentecost the Crowning Miracle

Pentecost is the crowning miracle of all time. The crucifixion of Christ on Golgotha's hill marked the close of the old covenant regime. The resurrection, ascension, and seating of Christ at the right hand of the Majesty on high, together with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the hundred and twenty assembled in the upper room at Jerusalem, was the opening event of the new covenant in the Christian era. With God the Father on the throne, with Christ seated in intercession at the mercy seat, and the Holy Spirit in full possession of the newly established Church, the program of the Trinity for world evangelism was inaugurated.

All the resources of the Holy Trinity are at the disposal of the Son, who before His ascension declared that all power in heaven and in earth had been given to Him. Jesus testified of himself: "I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:17-18). Jesus said to Peter, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). The Holy Trinity is infallible, and the closer the Church lives to God the Triune, the fewer mistakes she will make and the more success she will enjoy. There can be no successful substitute for the Church, or for her message to the nations of the earth. The Church can be as potent in her work as God has made provision for her. It is the human element in the Church that is to blame for her weaknesses and failures. Who will come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty? Who will release the Holy Spirit in the congregation

of the righteous? Who will be a witness for Christ, clothed in the power of the Holy Spirit? Who will go in the power of the Holy Spirit to those afar?

Christ, the Head and Builder of His Church

1. Christ is the Architect of His Church (Eph. 2:19-22).
2. Christ is the Master Builder of His Church (Matt. 16:13-20).
3. Christ is the Chief Cornerstone of His Church (Eph. 2:2-20).
4. Christ gathers His material from all nations (Matt. 28:19-20).
5. Christ is building His Church out of lively stones (I Peter 2:4-5).
6. Christ's Church overcomes the gates of hell (Matt. 16:18).
7. Christ's Church is the habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph. 2:22; I Peter 2:4-10; Eph. 5:23-32).

The Order of the Priesthood

As the Head and High Priest of His Church, Christ is sitting at the right hand of God to intercede for penitent sinners and reconcile them to God. The office of Christ's high priesthood is, so to speak, the clearinghouse at the throne of grace for redemption from sin. By prayer and faith we have access to the throne of grace, Jesus Christ being our great High Priest, our Attorney, and our Elder Brother, and we are to receive through Him all things needful for our good and His glory. Jesus never fails.

1. He is the High Priest of our profession (Heb. 3:1).
2. He is the High Priest of good things to come (Heb. 9:11-12).
3. He, as our High Priest, can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb. 4:14-16).
4. He, as our High Priest, weeps over the lost (Heb. 5:7-9).

5. He, as our High Priest, can save to the uttermost (Heb. 7:24-28).
6. He, as High Priest, is after the order of Melchisedec (Heb. 7:21-22).
7. He, as High Priest, receives our tithes and offerings (Heb. 7:1-8).

Not Like a Jug Full of Water

Not like a jug filled with water were the hundred and twenty, filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, but somewhat after the fashion of a sponge. A jug isolates its contents from influencing those about it. A sponge when filled with water influences those coming in contact with it. Empty jugs, like empty sponges, are of little value; they are valuable only when filled. We as Christians are likewise effective in spreading the glorious gospel of Christ only when we are filled to overflowing with the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit in our lives that convicts the sinner of his sins. As Christians we must not shut up our blessings in a jug and thereby grieve the Holy Spirit; we are to release Him through our lives, that we may bring others to know the power of Christ to save from all sin.

The Holy Spirit Takes Over the Church

Jesus, in His earthly ministry, prepared His people for the change from the old to the new order of things. He plainly stated that His kingdom was not of this world. He announced that the Holy Spirit would be sent in His name by the Father, to take over the work of the Church militant.

1. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come,

- a) He will reprove the world of sin,
- b) And of righteousness,

- c) And of judgment:
- d) Of sin, because they believe not on me;
- e) Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

f) Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (John 16:7-11).

2. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come,

- a) He will guide you into all truth:
- b) For he shall not speak of himself;
- c) But whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak:
- d) And he will shew you things to come.
- e) He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:12-14).

3. "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

- a) A little while, and ye shall not see me:
- b) And again, a little while, and ye shall see me.
- c) Because I go to the Father" (John 16:15-16).

Praying in the Name of Jesus

The new order of things demanded a change in the manner of praying. Heretofore, no one had been praying in the name of Jesus. Now the new order has one name that is above all other names (Phil. 2:9-11).

a) We are to pray the Father in Jesus' name (John 16:23-24).

b) We are to seek salvation in Jesus' name (Acts 4:12).

c) We are to be baptized in Jesus' name (Acts 2:18).

d) We are to pray for healing in Jesus' name (Acts 4:10).

e) The Gentiles are to bear the name of Jesus (Acts 15:14).

f) We are to give thanks to God for all things in Jesus' name (Eph. 5:20).

g) We are to hold fast the name of Jesus in the Church (Rev. 2:13).

h) We are to bear the name of Jesus forever (Rev. 3:12).

Christ Seeks Holy Personality

Christ, being the Holy One of God, seeks to gather to himself men and women of like character. Since ample provision has been made through His own shed blood to make them pure and holy, He longs for the communion and fellowship of the wholly sanctified (Eph. 5:25-27). The Pentecostal experience is a challenge to our faith. The gift of the Holy Spirit to purge out the dross of sin and to empower for life and service is a distinguishing feature of the Christian religion. The promise of this dispensational gift challenges us today as no other promise of the sacred Scriptures. The record of Pentecost is the spiritual standard for the soul-winning church. There is no excuse for lack either of purity or of power in the present-day Church. Christ still baptizes His people with the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:11; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:4). Christ sanctifies His people when He baptizes them with the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:16; Acts 15:6-9; Eph. 5:23-32; I Peter 1:2). Christ refreshes His people with the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:1-2). Christ gives the Holy Spirit to enable His people to pray aright (Rom. 8:26-27).

The Law of the Spirit in Christ

There can be no escape from law in the present world. Grace, love, and faith are declared to be the end of the law, but each of these is subject to the law by which it operates. There are the law of faith, the law of grace, the law of love, and law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:2). While the child of God is set free

from the law of sin and death, he has simply exchanged the kingdom of darkness with its laws for the Kingdom of light with its new law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. There is a "free-lance" doctrine concerning the spiritual life which is sometimes advanced that ignores personal responsibility for the law of the Spirit of life. This law cannot be ignored and we still retain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There must be respect for the law of the Holy Spirit and a deep reverence for Him who seeks to glorify Christ in the hearts of His people. Paul the Apostle declares that Christians are the epistles of Christ, written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart (II Cor. 3:3).

The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus

The value of the Christian life is measured by the degree in which it manifests the Spirit of Christ. *The moral quality of an act depends largely upon the spirit which prompts it.* It is the spirit that counts. The most careful observance of technique never made an artist, a statesman or an orator, much less a friend or a lover. Where the Holy Spirit is in control, there is liberty to do the will of God, for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). As Christians we have our life in the Holy Spirit, a life by no means lawless, but subject to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

The Law of the Spirit Is the Key to Christian Stewardship

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus continues by means of propagation, but there is no propagation without co-operation. This is pre-eminently true in the life and work of the Church militant. The Heavenly Father depends upon His high-priestly Son for the revelation of

all life and truth; and the interceding Son in turn depends upon the Holy Spirit for both revealing and enabling grace. But this is continued further, for they all depend upon the Church for world evangelization.

The human agency of the Church must be taken into consideration as well as its divine side. God can be no more effective than the channels of His Church will permit. The Church is the earthly agency and either by its obedience manifests the power of the Holy Spirit or by its disobedience hinders the flow of the spiritual life. We can be faithful or unfaithful stewards of the mysteries of God (I Cor. 4:1-2). We need a new releasing of the presence and power of God through the Church which will give a new emphasis and impetus to the work of world evangelism. This can be brought about by a united effort on the part of God's faithful stewards of grace and faith (I Peter 4:10). This can be done and ought to be done, and we are the ones to do it. Let us resolve to begin now.

We Are Stewards of the Christian Faith

Christ is the Author of our faith (Heb. 12:2); and He is also the measure of our faith (Rom. 12:1-3; Eph. 4:1-16). Finally, He will be the victorious Finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2; I Cor. 8:23-24). This faith was once delivered to the saints (Jude 3). The saints of God are to earnestly contend for this faith on the battlefield of everyday life; and our good works will prove whether or not it is alive and alert. As stewards of faith, we shall have the quantity and quality of the faith which we sincerely seek. Faith comes by hearing the words of God's promises. Read the promises; meditate upon them; live by them. Learn the promises by heart; take them to work with you and feast on them during the day. Feed your mind and heart on the promises of God, and then watch your faith grow.

The Stewardship of Prayer

God revealed to Isaiah the prophet the acceptable fast which He had chosen (Isa. 58:6-12). This is the kind of a fast that brings results (Matt. 25:35-40). The Church is commanded to fast (Acts 13:1-3); and fasting, like prayer and faith, is a means of grace. Fasting is a proper weapon to use against the lazy, sluggish indifference that sometimes creeps into one's life. Jesus fasted forty days and nights, and then defeated Satan in the greatest conflict ever waged in this world. We likewise have battles to fight, and must not forget the weapons of our warfare. Faith, prayer, and fasting coupled with courage and obedience will rout the devil and bring deliverance when everything else fails. There is no easy road to victory.

As a steward over my life and well-being, what shall I do about fasting as a means of grace? Shall I study the Bible and learn its benefits, and then practice it along with my prayer life, or shall I neglect it and fail to be at my best as a Christian? There can be no legitimate excuse for the lack of the Spirit and power in the Church. If the Church fails, I as an individual member am to blame for my part of the failure. I cannot be a faithful steward without prayer and fasting, for the glory of God and the spiritual benefit of my own soul.

The Stewardship of Personal Work

"Others" is the motto of God's love. "Others" is the heart cry of the Holy Trinity. "Others" is the theme of the glorious gospel. The angels sang of "others" when Christ was born. There is no theme in heaven above like "others"; there is no theme on earth like "others." "Others" is the theme song of the Holy Spirit in every newborn soul; soul winning, the deepest motive of the wholly sanctified life. The dynamic purpose of the Church is to publish the gospel of glorious redemption to every creature of every race on earth. We are the

stewards of our own personal interest in the salvation of our loved ones, our friends, and our neighbors, with all those we can reach by person or by the means at our command. We too, like the Holy Trinity, can make the theme of our life "others."

The Stewardship of Our Talents

The most important thing in our lives is the development and devotion of our talents to God, whether the preparation be long or of but brief duration. We are told that Moses spent forty years in acquiring his education in Egypt, also that he spent forty years in the desert with God in order to secure the necessary preparation for the task to which he had been called. God can grow a mushroom overnight, but it takes centuries to grow an oak tree. The number of years we live is not so important as what we are able to accomplish while we live. Trained workmen is the great need of the Church today. Apparently we stay long enough in school, but not long enough with God in spiritual communion. Mere human knowledge alone would never have got the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; neither will it bring spiritual success to the Church. Like Moses, we need to attain a spiritual equilibrium, a perfect balance between acquired knowledge and spiritual insight. This alone will save us from embarrassment when we reach the summit of life's opportunities. We are, therefore, the stewards of our own destiny, both in this world and in the world to come. There is always room at the top. Prepare fully, and then make the most of your God-given opportunities.

The Stewardship of Time

David said that our times are in God's hand (Psalms 31:15). Peter tells us that we must render an account for the use we make of our time (I Peter 1:17-20). Paul exhorts us to redeem the time because the days are evil (Eph. 5:16). Time is an important factor in life; it is,

in fact, the major stuff that life is made of, and essential to it. God alone dispenses time. We owe to God, to ourselves, and to society one-seventh of our time each week to worship God, replenish our spiritual life, and rest our bodies for the toil and care of the next six days.

There is a time to live, to pray, to sing, to give, to sow, to reap, to laugh, to cry, to love, and to die. We are to take time to weep with them that weep and rejoice with them that rejoice. Yet we cannot buy or sell time. It comes, it is here, and then gone forever. It is said that time and opportunity wait on no man. We offer a suggested schedule for our stewardship consideration.

1. Time every day for our private devotion and Bible study.
2. Time every day for family devotions at the table or elsewhere.
3. Time every day to meditate on the goodness of God.
4. Time every day to do some kind of personal work for souls.
5. Time to go to Sunday school on Sunday mornings.
6. Time on Sunday morning to stay for the worship service.
7. Time for the midweek prayer service.
8. Time to attend special revival meetings in our own church.
9. Time to call on someone in the interest of the church.

Think this list over and compare it with what you are doing with your time as a Christian steward. Try to improve your time.

The Stewardship of Christian Marriage

Christian marriage is only possible where the husband and wife to be have accepted the gracious work on Calvary for their personal needs through the saving and sanctifying grace of our common salvation.

Even in a normal Christian state of grace, every vibration of the soul is registered in the chemistry of the nerve cells, and transmitted to the substance of the body. Thus parents may affect their offspring, and all suffer the rest of their lives for thoughtless indulgence.

Marriage is honorable among all men and should be so taught in the home by example, in the church, and in the school. Christian ethics give no license for wrongdoing. The home is the oldest and most honored institution in the world. It is the keystone of civilized society. Nothing else is so important to the state and the nation as Christian homes. There are many promises made to fathers, mothers, and children of Christian homes that are not made to those where Christ is excluded. (Cf. Psalms 127 and 128.) Regardless of how humble the Christian home may be, there is no place like such a home. There is no stewardship in life so vital and far-reaching as that of the responsibility of the Christian home.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND STUDY

1. When did the Church age begin and when will it close?
2. Is the Church a divine institution? Support your view with several scriptures.
3. What is the work of Christ as Head and High Priest of His Church?
4. Who is God's representative in the world today? What is the nature of His work?
5. What is meant by the term "the law of the Spirit"? How does it affect one's life?
6. What is meant by the statement, "We are stewards of the Christian faith"?
7. Indicate several ways in which the stewardship of our lives can be expressed.

SECTION FOUR

God's Word for This Generation

GOD'S PURE LOVE

*It takes more than sunshine
To make life worth living;
It takes more than smiles
To drive clouds away;
It takes more than songbirds
To keep hearts believing.
It takes God's pure love
In the soul each day.*

*It takes more than rainbows
To make life's day cheery;
It takes more than songs
To clear skies that are gray;
It takes more than roses
To change life that's dreary.
It takes God's pure love
In the soul each day.*

*It takes more than culture
To make living restful;
It takes more than creeds
To save from decay;
It takes more than lucre
To make life successful.
It takes God's pure love
In the soul each day.*

*It takes more than sighing
To purge from sin's leaven;
It takes more than will
To find life's true way;
It takes more than dying
To fit men for heaven.
It takes God's pure love
In the soul each day.*

—N. B. H.

GOD'S WORD FOR THIS GENERATION

Stewardship for Youth

Today we have the ideal of Christian stewardship, and this ideal seems to be peculiarly suited to the youth of our time. Youth thinks of religion in terms of experience and service. Christian stewardship is religion in practice. It is Christian experience expressed in terms of everyday life. For this reason youth readily responds to the challenge of its teachings. Because of this fact we offer the above slogan, "*God's Word for This Generation.*"

Stewardship as a Partnership

When young people desire to adopt Christian stewardship as an ideal in life, they will soon come to see that it is a partnership with Christ, not only as Saviour, but as Lord and Master. As soon as one recognizes Christ as Lord, he at once recognizes his own personal stewardship as a Christian. He is immediately challenged to surrender himself and all his possessions in a world-wide conquest for Christ. Nothing can be withheld in such a partnership. All the resources of both parties are pooled for the mutual benefit of the parties concerned. Both parties share the purpose and the conditions of this royal partnership, and both share its responsibilities.

Stewardship of Example

Christ offers young people His example. We sometimes forget that Jesus was once a youth. We are likely to overlook the fact that Christ as a youth was tempted as youth are tempted today, yet without sin. Christ as

a young man faced the same evil world that young people face today. While the world holds modern allurements—perhaps greater than in any previous generation—yet by the power of Christ youth can overcome and be stronger than any group of young people that the world has ever produced. Jesus came from the battlefield of temptation a mighty, living Example of young manhood for all time. It is the example we set as young people that creates an influence which follows us throughout our whole lives. At study, work, or play, we are stewards of our example as Christians, and we are personally responsible for the kind of influence we radiate to others, in thought, word, and deed. The most effective way to teach Christianity is by example. May we always remember that it is the example we set that helps or hinders others. As a Christian steward of my daily life, I want others to see Jesus in the example I set, as the silent Partner of my personality and behavior.

Stewardship of Unselfish Purpose

Jesus exalted service as one of the highest ideals of life, and made it the test of true greatness in His kingdom. He set us an example of service that has never been exceeded by anyone. In the service that He rendered there was no thought of reward. He found His reward in the joy which He brought to those whom He served. He served the poor as well as the rich, the sick as well as those in health. He was the humble servant of all who needed His help. He tells us, His followers, that “inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” No service which we do as a Christian steward, however humble, will go unnoticed by Him. Even a cup of cold water given in His name will not go unrewarded. The world about us needs the unselfish love-service of Christians to win them from the way of sin to the way of life in

Christ. Where there is a will to serve, opportunities will abound on every side.

Stewardship of Courageous Faith

Stewardship of the Christian life presents a real challenge to young men and women because of the obligations involved in the daily partnership with Christ. It costs something to be a faithful steward of our Lord. No challenge in life has ever called for sterner heroism than this teaming up with Christ in a spiritual partnership. Its dividends, however, are the equal of its cost in service. Because of the courage and faith demanded, many young people are slow to accept the responsibility. When we seek to follow our Lord in the way of life as it is related to modern times, it is a severe test of our mettle. Because Christianity is a religion for heroes and martyrs, our complex way of modern life demands a courageous faith which will make a clean-cut choice between life in Christ and that of the world and nominal church members. Christ expects His copartners to learn His new and living way, the way of life eternal. This life never grows dull or heartless, nor does it fade out in the process of time. The Christian life is measured by its duration, and we must not fail to see in it this quality of eternity. This present evil world is doomed to death and destruction. The worth-while things are Christ's death on the cross for our sins, His resurrection, ascension, and the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. As Christians we are not left orphans, nor are we the prey for Satan; for we have the Holy Spirit to comfort us in all the vicissitudes of life. Those who are partners with Christ have a portion of His courageous, heroic spirit, that would rather die than fail Him on the field of conquest.

Stewardship of Motives

There is one major difference between the relationship which unites Christ and His copartners in Christian

stewardship and that which exists between non-Christian partners in business. Christian partnership is based upon love as the motivating power that binds together the collaborators in the business of eternal life. Jesus so loved that He gave himself, and His copartner responds with a love that springs from a heart full of gratitude and appreciation. A partnership motivated by love will endure throughout the ages and grow sweeter with the passing of the years. Stewardship which springs merely from a sense of duty is not the ideal partnership. Both parties must be animated by perfect love, for it is the love of Christ that constrains us. Stewardship rises to its highest level when the service is generous, spontaneous, and flows from a grateful heart. Christ is our Landlord, and we are His happy stewards. What a privilege, what an inspiration, what a responsibility!

Stewardship of Mental Powers

Mental powers constitute one of youth's most important assets. While the mind of youth is immature, yet it has a freshness of outlook, a receptivity for truth, and a straightforwardness all its own. Are you putting your mental powers into your Christian service? How many offices in the young people's societies and in the churches would be better administered if the officers put the same thought and effort into the work of Christ that they do into their daily work! Christ needs our best in order to promote the greatest work in the world. This is a day of confusion inside and outside the Church. The opportunity for trained workers was never greater than at the present time. Young people should not allow these opportunities to slip. They are not to drift with the tide of lazy and indifferent souls. Our young people cannot give themselves over to the pleasure-mad age in which we live, and get the most out of life. They should seek God's best for themselves and do their utmost to serve in places of opportunity and responsibility.

Stewardship of Social Opportunities

Social opportunities form another part of youth's daily stewardship. Young people are constantly mingling with other young people, and these social contacts can be used to win others to Christ. Day after day we are in touch with others, whether at work or play. Are we neglecting these opportunities and leaving Jesus to stand alone in the shadows? Can we become a faithful partner of Christ if we allow these opportunities to pass by without speaking a word for the Saviour? We can train ourselves to be alert, to be on the spot when opportunity affords, and speak the word that may win a soul to Christ.

Stewardship of Influence

It is not only by our words that we can exalt Christ and draw others to Him. A Christlike life and a quiet spirit radiate an influence that counts for God as we lead others to the Christ that we serve. The stewardship of our influence is one of the greatest responsibilities of young people. If others can see Jesus in their lives, they will come to better appreciate them as Christian stewards. They will soon say, "I wish that I could be like that!" Youth can win youth as no others can. Paul the Apostle said that we are epistles, "known and read of all men." Men and women, boys and girls are forming their ideas of religion by observing those who are Christians. Is your partnership of Christ alerted to win others to Christ?

*Christians are the only Bible the sinful world will read,
They are the living Gospel, the wicked scoffer's creed;
They are the Lord's given message, in thought, deed, and
word.*

What if the type is crooked? What if the print is blurred?

Stewardship of Moral Standards

We are living in a complex society where moral standards are constantly undergoing changes, some for better and some for worse; but all need to be measured by the yardstick of the gospel before being accepted by Christians. It is normal and proper for the people of God to hold to those principles which have been tried and approved by the majority of the church in its General Assembly. Youth to be safe needs to go very slowly in accepting modern changes. It is well to keep in mind that more changes will follow, and consequently the trends need to be taken into careful consideration. When one's bark is launched on the shifting tides of time, it is a difficult matter to turn back and recover that which has been lost. It is better to be safe than sorry.

However, it is not wise to reject changes simply because they are new. Many times it will be found that the new is better than the old. As Christians we cannot let down the bars of moral standards in the church, and accept without question the untried standards of those who are not responsible for our spiritual well-being. We must be sure that we are right before deciding on new standards. It is the part of good judgment to weigh the matter in the light of the holiness of God, in the light of clear scriptural teaching, and in the light of the experience of entire sanctification. We must never forget the holy character of our Saviour and the price He paid to redeem us from sin. The choice must be made between the Saviour and the world. All moral ideals must be measured in the light of His will for my good and His glory. The moral standards I hold will add to or detract from the glory of my Saviour. This question of moral standards is a major consideration in our partnership with Christ. My attitudes and relationships must coincide with those of Christ if we are to be successful partners in life. This demands an honest answer from every young man and woman. Here is the question, Will the

change add to my effectiveness as a partner with Christ? If it detracts from my influence as a Christian, I cannot accept it at any cost. The moral principles of my life are the show-window of my influence as a Christian. One has said: "If I cannot be a highway, then I'll just be a trail. If I cannot be a sun, I'll be a star. It isn't my size that causes me to win or fail; but I'll be the best that I can be, by the help of God's power."

Stewardship of Right Choices

There are three outstanding choices each young person is called upon to make: *first*, the choice of an education; *second*, the choice of a vocation; and *third*, the choice of a life companion. All three choices are vital and fundamental in the life of youth. If a mistake is made in any one of these choices, there will be more or less suffering in all. However, there is a safeguard to aid one in making these decisions. If as Christian youth we hold rigidly to our partnership with Christ, He, through prayer and the counsel of older Christians, will enable us to reach our final decisions with confidence and with the assurance that we have in all things earnestly sought God's will for us. We are the masters of our own destiny. After we have done the best we know, we can in faith look away to God and trust Him to guide our steps in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Stewardship of Recreation

Recreation is a carefree form of relaxation for the whole man—spirit, soul, and body. Each day demands some form of relaxation in order to keep us, God's temple, from the undue strain of the times in which we live. Some need one type of recreation, some another. Those who work inside need to get some form of outdoor recreation. As Christians we can consistently take part in wholesome recreation. As young people, we are stewards of right recreational activities. Choosing the right

form of recreation is a part of life, as is also the extent to which we engage in it. By all means we must keep right attitudes and pure motives in all that we do.

Stewardship of Bible Reading

The Holy Bible is the gift of God as a textbook concerning the stewardship of life. It is, however, very personal in the application of its benefits. It can be said that the Bible is the world's greatest library concerning human survival and destiny. The Bible contains 66 books, 1,189 chapters, 31,173 verses, 773,692 words, and 3,566,480 letters. The longest chapter in the Bible is the 119th psalm. The middle verse in the Bible is the eighth verse of the 118th psalm. The shortest and also the middle chapter in the Bible is the 117th psalm. The longest name in the Bible is found in the eighth chapter of Isaiah and the first verse. It has eighteen letters in it. The word "and" occurs 46,227 times. The word "Jehovah" occurs 6,855 times. The thirty-seventh chapter of Isaiah and the nineteenth chapter of Second Kings are almost alike. The longest verse in the Bible is the ninth verse of the eighth chapter of Esther. The shortest verse in the Bible is the thirty-fifth verse of the eleventh chapter of John. The alphabet (except j) is found in the twenty-first verse of the seventh chapter of Ezra. The finest bit of literature is found in the twenty-sixth chapter of Acts. The name of God is not mentioned in the Book of Esther. The Holy Bible teaches the philosophy of God's wisdom, the truth of His knowledge, and the power of His love. "God's word for this generation" is a gripping challenge to present-day youth. Right living is the world's greatest need. The Holy Bible is a book on life—living, achieving, giving, loving, marriage, family life, home, sweet home, church, school, citizenship in this and the world to come, sowing and reaping, awards and rewards, profit and loss, life and death—and then comes the judgment. All this and more is included in Christian stewardship. The Bible

is the best-selling book of all time. It is a Book we can live by, die by, and be judged by.

Stewardship of Christian Vows

I have resolved, as a Christian, that:

1. I will live for Christ day by day.
2. I will attend to my stewardship vows every day.
3. I will choose only Christian habits and customs.
4. I will never be halfhearted in my service for Christ.
5. I will face the ordeals of life honestly.
6. I will learn to endure patiently that which I cannot cure.
7. I will learn to live a positive Christian life each day.
8. I will not become discouraged, but try and try again to win.
9. I will always try to be reasonable with everyone.
10. I will claim only that which I know to be mine.
11. I will try to win and hold the confidence of others.
12. I will strive to grow each day in the grace of God.
13. I will always be courteous and kind to everyone.
14. I will plan to read a portion of the Bible each day.
15. I will strive always to keep my poise as a Christian.
16. I will overcome my handicaps at any cost.
17. I will try to memorize poems and old gospel hymns.
18. I will study to show myself worthy of trust.
19. I will always bring God's tithes and offerings into His church.
20. I will try to witness for Christ each day.

These vows are only suggestive, and the reader can add to this list or revise it as he desires. In this manner, he will adopt such vows as are applicable to his own particular case.

Stewardship of Opportunities

Many new fields are opening up for young men and women at the present time. These afford opportunities for Christian service. We need to be alert as to the

choice of open doors where our own peculiar talents may be employed. Opportunities come to those who are prepared for them. The young people of this generation will be the leaders of the generation following. In the church there are many open doors for well-qualified young people who look forward to Christian service at home or abroad. No time properly spent in preparation is wasted. There is no easy way to win in the struggles of life. God will never fail in His part of the contract if we do our part faithfully and well. There is always room at the top. Brains and brawn, plus God, will win if we faint not.

Stewardship Conclusions

To sum up our conclusions concerning the stewardship of life as applied to present-day youth is no small task. Youth have many resources that Christ can use. It is youth's responsibility to develop these, and in so doing make it possible for Christ to call them into some form of life service. This is the duty of young people as Christian stewards. They must be faithful and never yield to discouragement. Christ, our great Leader, has gone on before and has left us to carry forward that for which He came into the world, and that for which He died. He has committed His work to us as a trust. The question is this, Are we ready to answer when He calls? Should He call us today, are we ready to go where He bids us to go? When God called in olden times, Isaiah, the young prophet, said, "Here am I; send me!" When God called Moses in the desert, he had spent forty years in the schools of Egypt. He was attending his father-in-law's sheep when God called to Him out of a bush that was on fire and yet not consumed. It was before this burning bush in the desert that Moses received his call from God to lead nearly three million people out of Egypt to the land of Canaan. Moses was ready to go when God called. Christ will be calling the youth of

today. Will the youth answer the call? Can we say we are ready?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND STUDY

1. Why do we call the four Gospels Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John?
2. In what books of the Bible do we read about the birth of Christ?
3. In what little town was Christ born, and in what place in the town?
4. What was the name of the woman who was the mother of Jesus?
5. When Herod the Great ordered all babies to be killed, where was Jesus taken for safety?
6. When Herod was dead, where was Jesus taken when brought back from Egypt?
7. When Jesus was a youth of twelve years, He baffled the wise men in the city of Jerusalem. What kind of professional men were they?
8. Ask yourself the question, Is it my desire to find God's will for my life?
9. Ask yourself, For what line of work am I best fitted in life?
10. Ask yourself, What kind of steward do I want to be for Christ?
11. Do you think that young people should give God the tithe of their money?
12. Do you think that young people should spend time in prayer?
13. Do you believe that God calls youth to His work?
14. Are your motives in life pure and upright?
15. What was the first miracle Christ performed?

IN CONCLUSION

I'M HEAVEN BOUND

*My mind is fixed on things above,
On Christ the Son, God's gift of love.
My faith has found believing ground.
Oh, praise the Lord, I'm heaven bound!*

*My heart is thrilled with love's old song;
For joy I sing the whole day long.
My path grows bright, grace doth abound.
O happy day, I'm heaven bound!*

*My heart is set on things of worth;
No more I crave vain things of earth;
My hope is built on firmer ground.
Oh, praise the Lord, I'm heaven bound!*

*My home, sweet home is on that shore,
Close by the throne, forevermore.
Soon I shall hear the trumpet sound.
O blessed thought, I'm heaven bound!*

—N. B. H.

THE SUNSET BAY OF ETERNAL DAY

The Hour of His Passion

Christ's hour had come. The Cross was to be His preparation for the Resurrection, Ascension, and His high-priestly work at the right hand of the throne of God. Here He received the Promise of the Father, the gift of the Holy Ghost poured out upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost. These events are all interlocked in the opening of the new covenant dispensation. It was the crucial hour in the history of three worlds. It was the hour of His triumph over Satan, sin, and death. He proved himself immortal and invincible, the Lord and Master as well as the Saviour of the world.

It was the hour of His triumph. He prayed, "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Not one note of defeat was ever sounded by our adorable Lord and Saviour. He later bore witness to His victory when He said, "I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Again he announced to His followers, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." In His prayer for His little flock He said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." Earth is only the dressing room for eternity. We as His stewards have an invitation to spend eternity with Him in the Holy City, in the presence of His Father's throne.

Stewardship's Triumphant Completion

Christ has promised to all the faithful Christian stewards of His Church on earth a place in the first resurrec-

tion (Rev. 20:6). Stewardship on earth will not close with our home-going at death. If our wills and annuities are so arranged before death, when we pass on, our good works for which we have planned will continue to bless the world and win souls for God. The Bible tells us plainly, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13).

The Way to Christian Prosperity

Many people these days risk all to gain material prosperity and financial security. In doing so they violate the sacred pledges of life and, most important of all, forget God and act as if He did not exist.

This is not the Christian pattern. Those who love God supremely will want to put Him first in their lives. Prosperity is not worthy that does not have the Christian perspective. Christ plainly says, "Man shall not live by bread alone." Christian prosperity goes far beyond financial security. It takes in the whole personality of man and involves his relationships on earth as well as his relationships throughout eternity.

Thus a person may be poor in this world's goods and yet be prosperous in his relationship to God and the Kingdom. Paying faithfully one's tithes and offerings does not guarantee financial success, but it does establish a person's relationship to God and reveals that love is the tie that will bring the abundant blessings of God.

The way to Christian prosperity is the way of pardon and peace, the way of surrender and commitment, the way of consecration and holiness. A life lived in this divine relationship will discover the challenge to live a full-orbed life here and now, and possess the promise of that eternal day with Christ which has no end.

God's Pattern of Life Has No End

In the weaving of an Oriental rug in India, only the master weaver knows what the design of the rug is to be. There are so many weavers working on the same rug that only the master mind is able to give the detailed directions. So according to his orders each weaver patiently throws his shuttle, knowing that if he gives perfect obedience his bit of the weaving will be a part of a beautiful rug, perfect in design and complete in size—a masterpiece which cannot be improved. During our stewardship of life in the Church of Christ, He himself, being the Designer and Builder of His Church through the Spirit, gives us direction as His co-workers. In doing our bit as faithful stewards, we are weaving our lives into a pattern of the whole which will issue in the Church Triumphant—a universal masterpiece for all eternity. We may not be able to see all that we are accomplishing as we co-operate with God's people. But someday, if we are faithful and obedient, we shall then see what we but faintly dreamed of here. All that now seems so mysterious will then take shape and do honor to our Christ, the great Head of the Church Triumphant forevermore. Amen.

The Harbor Bells

*John on Patmos, we are told,
Saw a city of pure gold
Just beyond the harbor bells;
To that city built foursquare,
Through twelve gates we'll enter there,
Just beyond the harbor bells.*

*There our loved ones watch and wait,
Through a friendly, open gate,
Just beyond the harbor bells.*

*Broken families will unite
In that golden city bright,
Just beyond the harbor bells.*

*Toils and cares forever past,
Gathered home with Christ at last,
Just beyond the harbor bells;
Gone the sorrows of the years;
No more heartaches, pain, or fears,
Just beyond the harbor bells.*

*There we'll lay our burdens down,
Change our crosses for a crown,
Just beyond the harbor bells;
Safe across the ocean foam,
Evermore with Christ at home,
Just beyond the harbor bells.*

—N. B. H.