

THE LORD'S MARKET PLACE

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I am thankful to the Lord for the privilege of being here today and sharing with you some rich treasures from the store house of God. May our considerations bring a response to our hearts and may they be a stimulus for good to each of us during the few hours of our fellowship in this Convention and the days that follow.

In considering the lesson for today, we thought we would browse a little in the Lord's "market place" to find what good things He has for us to buy, and what some of the price tags may be on those things we are to purchase.

We know that our Heavenly Father, in His divine wisdom, has been mindful of the variety of minds among us; our different backgrounds, various nationalities, educational advantages or disadvantages and other impediments natural to the human flesh. To make sure that all aspects of our Christian life are covered in some way in the scriptures, God uses various ways to teach us. Some find the Truth in the great pyramid of Egypt; to others the study of the Tabernacle may be of great support in an appreciation of the Divine Plan.

Today, we hope to leave with you some of God's arrangements, necessary for us to follow if we hope to enter into "that beyond the veil." In His Pilgrimage on earth, our Lord was most thoughtful of the Brethren whom He served then, and also those who would be served down through the Gospel Age, including ourselves today. He desired that we understand fully what consecration really meant, what the conditions of consecration would involve, and some of the privileges of sacrifice required to prove our loyalty to God. So, as we begin our lesson, we will see that our Lord places before us one great objective—we have something to buy. We have a home to furnish. We are promised a "heavenly home" but the rooms are barren, so this home on high must be furnished with things necessary for our use "beyond the veil," things we will use and occupy when we are found faithful. We also realize that we have certain present spiritual requirements and we buy them in the Lord's "market place." If we are unmindful of these things so necessary for our spiritual use, to that extent or degree we lose a corresponding blessing or lesson.

In Matthew, chapter seven, verses 13 and 14, our Lord gave a very simple outline of consecration, yet very deep in value of meaning—"Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." We realize from this testimony of our Lord's own words, that of those actually seeking to buy the responsibility of entering into the narrow gate, the narrow way to life, few are willing to pay the price to obtain its arrangements or acquire

its privileges. On the other hand, we can look with one sweep throughout the earth, and give testimony of the fact that the billions of earth are seemingly enjoying the “broad way of destruction”—knowing however, that for them it does not mean eternal condemnation, with no hope of recovery, yet we see that for a while they are on the wrong road. During the “mediatorial reign” of the Kingdom, they will then reverse their path and in taking a “pathway unto life,” will enjoy the benefits of God’s great plan as they taste His love, basking in the sunshine of blessings if obedient to the terms of the Kingdom. Thus we see that for a time “favor to man” must wait until the “privileged class” are complete in glory.

Continuing in the Parable of Matthew 7, we will note how our Lord made the lesson just a little deeper for us. Let us consider verses 24 and 25:—“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended the floods came, the winds blew, and beat upon that house and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock”—and verse 26—“and everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, etc.”—our Lord continued on showing that this structure could not possibly stand. He established the fact that not only is the way narrow, but it must be established upon a foundation that is firm. Actually that firm foundation is our own heart determination, in that we have determined to be immovable concerning the things pertaining to God, determined that come what may, we are going to pursue a course of faithfulness and righteousness. We have reckoned ahead of time, the necessity of having a firm determination because we know there will be storms that will beat upon us; there will be tongues that will wag against us, families may forsake us—leave us—these things may come, hence, we need the firm foundation of heart and mind—flint-like concerning the Lord and in our disposition toward faithfulness. We have resolved these things “in our hearts.” None of us could stand ten, twenty, fifty or more years without having a large degree of immovability concerning our determination to serve the Lord. We can all take courage in the fact that we have complied with these simple beginning arrangements in our life of consecration and we realize the lesson does not suggest as time goes on that the narrow way becomes broader and the rocks softer upon which we have established our house. These two conditions—the narrowness of the way and the hardness of the rock—continue throughout our life in Christ. And so we are not surprised if after many years we still have the same warfare day after day. We still have the same fight because the way has not changed nor has God changed His standard to measure us by. Today may be a calm period in our experience, but tomorrow we may face a storm with new force, to test our growth. The graduation test may demand a review of all previous lessons.

Our Lord gave another illustration along this line in Matthew, the sixth chapter, verses 19 and 20. “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, where thieves do not break through and

steal.” Here, our Lord gives another aspect of our life in Christ. He suggests that there is something to do concerning our eternal welfare—he is saying—“Brethren, be conscious of the fact that you are to lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” and “these treasures will not be subject to the elements of corruption or decay and waste through the passing of time as are things of the earth.” As we pursue the lesson, our Lord may be suggesting that setting aside Blue Chip stocks for personal use is of the flesh or earthly and is subject to vanity death and change—these are the values of human society which surround us. Our Lord is saying, Brethren, be conscious of the fact that there is something you can buy; there is God’s “lay-a-way” plan, designed for you and one day you will arrive at the “call desk” and there receive your package, laid aside through your ten, twenty or fifty years of Christian discipleship. We hope to find that package, don’t we? We hope to find that treasure which we have “laid away” during our present earthly discipleship.

Another illustration along this line is found in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, verse 44. “Again, the Kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field.” In this aspect of our lives, Jesus is saying, “I want you to visualize my Brethren, that you are going to be engaged in a life of buying and selling.” “If you are going to be my disciples,” he adds, “I want you to be good merchants, shrewd merchants and to be able to evaluate that which you buy against that which you sell.” Brethren, we are engaged in a buying and selling program that is going to continue throughout our Christian life. Do we not find this in our natural everyday lives? In one way or another we are involved with buying and selling or exchanging one value against another. We all experience this—you enter a store or market—you see a price tag and knowing the amount in your purse or bank account, you place the value of that article against the amount in your pocket and the price tag. You must resolve a decision. Is it worth the price or not? Do I need it or not? You make the exchange accordingly.

As New Creatures in Christ, we are doing the same, our Lord is telling us, the difference is that the “new mind” is directing the buying, no longer a mind of human values. The fabric of the nominal religious society, to a very large extent, is made up of the framework of evaluating earthly values and joys and pleasures. These things we should not reckon with. We should not begin from a plateau of measuring an earthly pleasure against a spiritual pleasure. To use an earthly “tape measure” to measure a “standard in Christ” is an evidence of human mindedness. What did we resolve to do when we were buried in death with our Master? We died to the flesh and its order of things, hence we are not to reckon an earthly arrangement against spiritual fellowship. But we are proper in evaluating matters in our Christian discipleship against another, as to which the Lord may be most pleased with. The human demands of “providing things needful” require little consideration—the scriptures are positive on this matter. There are times, however, when earthly circumstances do involve our lives very materially and by the Lord’s choice and not ours. He may require our being off in a corner, or settled in a place where

conditions are not to our liking—a selection not ours. We might desire other scenes of quietness and peace—fellowship with the Brethren.

The Lord controls and directs some things for our highest good and in Matthew 3:45 and 46, He gives us another picture. Not only do we sell all that we have to buy this “life in Christ,” which may be suggestive of this one aspect of the parable—He says, “The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.” Although the parable teaches that our Lord sold His “all” to buy the “church” in the field—it also creates the picture that we “sell all that we have” to buy “privileges in Christ,” and we buy the Truth with all of its responsibilities. The pearl of great price is the kingdom joys and blessings and its entire involvement into kingdom glory. We have obtained that great and marvelous value by selling something that we thought the Lord would be pleased with. What do we sell? We believe, that basically we sell “ourselves” into full consecration, because this is something we have to offer. We come to our Lord, our Heavenly Father, in particular, with a fully open heart because we realize that no one has commanded us to do so. It is not a must arrangement, at the present time, it is a privilege. We yield ourselves and then through life continue to pay our “vows of consecration” to buy those things necessary to furnish our home on high.

In Philippians, chapter three, verses 12 through 15, the apostle Paul summarizes how we may come to a better appreciation of these aspects of life—our Christian life. Using the Weymouth translation, Paul says—“I do not say that I have already won the race or have already reached perfection. But I am pressing on, striving to lay hold of the prize for which also Christ has laid hold of me. But this one thing I do—forgetting everything which is past and stretching forward to what lies in front of me, with my eyes fixed on the goal I push on to secure the prize of God’s heavenward call in Christ Jesus. Therefore (and this is the point)—“therefore, let all of us who are mature believers cherish these thoughts; and if in any respect you think differently, that also God will make clear to you.” “But whatever be the point that we have already reached, let us persevere in the same course.” In other words, the apostle has suggested that there are degrees of maturity among Brethren. We are aware that age with some can make this difference as well as other conditions, but as Paul says, and we can be certain of, giving thanks to God for the same—that it is in respect to our placing one value against another. The degree of “pressing” we make “toward the prize,” the apostle suggests that then in time, our Heavenly Father will reveal to us matters or values upon which we may “think differently.” Not that there are different standards in Christ, but rather degrees of “maturity in Christ.” And this is where love takes its great hold upon us in our fellowship together in Christ, realizing there are degrees of growth, we are not to expect the same from all, for not all have the same ability. It is not always years in the Truth that make the difference, but our Christian reaction and value of Truth standards.

There is something in the background of Paul's writings that is encouraging, as we continue to review and consider this portion of these texts:—"if in any respect you think differently, that also God will make clear to you." The true basis upon which this "revelment" will come seems to be found in verses 27 through 30 of chapter one. Using the Weymouth translation again, note the beauty of language and the positiveness of its command, "Only let the lives you live be worthy of the Good News of the Christ, in order that, whether I come and see you or, being absent, only hear of you, I may know that you are standing fast in one spirit and with one mind, fighting shoulder to shoulder for the faith of the Good News. Never for a moment quail before your antagonists. Your fearlessness will be to them a sure token of impending destruction, but to you it will be a sure token of your salvation—a token coming from God. For you have had the privilege granted you on behalf of Christ—not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer on His behalf; maintaining as you do, the same kind of conflict that you once saw in me and which you still hear that I am engaged in." In other words, Paul spoke to us very kindly, as being a united group of Brethren the cause of the common arrangement which Christ has brought by the course God has designated for us. For this reason our previous values will change into a positive high standard of truth and righteousness.

In thinking of our lesson for today, "The Lord's Market Place," the use of this expression may seem peculiar, suggesting something not found in the scriptures. But we will find that our Lord did speak about a "market place"—and He asked that we buy at this "market place." We will find this account in the first ten verses of Matthew 25—the parable of the "ten virgins." Most of us are quite familiar with this parable. It tells us that the time came when the bridegroom returned—that five of these virgins were wise in that their vessels were filled with oil (the Holy spirit), and with this light "went out to meet the Bridegroom"—notice they acknowledged Him with a cry, a shout, "Behold the Bridegroom"! Then they busied themselves with "following Him," wherever He would lead. During this time, the other five virgins, with drowsy eyes awoke from their slumber, a bit late; they found the light in their vessels dim, barely flickering, unable to follow the "wise virgins" in heralding the bridegroom. They had need of light for their own walk, suggested by their request, of the wise—"give us of your oil"—"for our torches are going out." Let us consider the translation of Ferrar Fenton at this point, it reads: "But the prudent made reply, 'Lest there is not enough for us and for you, run rather to the shops and buy for yourselves.' While they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went into the wedding; and the door was shut." So we see in this setting, a "market place" is the Lord's arrangement.

The necessity of "oil in the vessels" is unquestioned in the parable. In fact, there are other points in this parable we could consider from a different standpoint—we could say that this parable teaches a lesson of "preparedness for a wedding" and that not all who enter into the privilege of preparing for the wedding are final participants. It appears that a sufficiency of oil was a condition required for entering "into the marriage" and the

“wedding feast.” We could also say that the parable teaches the need “for oil” and the need to “buy oil,” and also “the place” to purchase the oil. In addition, another lesson is shown, that at the time of the bridegroom’s return, being awake to this all important event would be a necessity, and yielding response to it, would be an indication of heart loyalty to the Master and would measure our faithfulness in service, activity and love.

This is not the only incident in which our Lord taught that the time of His return would need to be a time of specific faithfulness and wakefulness and a test as such to His Brethren. Many prophecies were given to foretell that His return would be at the “end of the age,” a time of harvest and a time for the conclusion of His Church class and the full establishment of the Kingdom. Yet, we might question further Brethren, what does it mean to buy oil? What does it mean to have a larger measure of the Holy Spirit? How do we acquire a larger measure of the Holy Spirit? We have stated the reason for the question—the Lord gave the reason, suggested in the background lesson of the parable. The wise virgins not only had oil in the lamp itself, but one translator says that they had a flask of oil they carried also. A separate container, a reserve quantity of oil—thus proving that they were fully prepared to meet the conditions that would arise at this particular time. We believe that we are entering into a time in world affairs, a time in which we will each need a “reserve flask of oil.” We are not prophets of doom or even for the future, but we do realize that the Lord is bringing an end to the Church class midst a storm of spiritual fire and testings. We will need our “reserve flask of oil.”

Seeking to possess the Holy Spirit, and to be filled with it, is a requirement of God. When we made our consecration, we lacked the Holy Spirit, but with determination and a desire for His Holy Spirit we came to Him, and in accepting our consecration, the Lord acknowledged our determination by begetting us with the Holy Spirit. We remind you Brethren, that “begetting” of the Holy Spirit is not the filling of the Holy Spirit. Begetting is putting into motion the arrangements by which we may obtain the Holy Spirit, and only as we determine to follow the Lord and its privileges. Being “filled” with the Holy Spirit is a work that should follow our “spirit begetting” and is made manifest by the degree of obedience shown in our life. The Lord places us in the midst of conditions best suited for our receiving the Holy Spirit in larger measure.

In our text of Philippians, already considered, Paul tells us that we are to share or possess the mind of Christ, which means to be filled with the determination that our Master had as we are followers of Him. He tells us of the characteristics or patterns of the Holy Spirit—things we may use as “measuring rods,” for our own hearts, not someone else, but our own hearts, to see if we have filled the conditions required for a greater measure of the Holy Spirit within us.

We would like to suggest some qualifications that will help manifest to each of us as to whether or not we are enjoying a full measure of the Holy Spirit—as full as our own flask

can ever be.

First:—To be filled with the Holy Spirit means a prompt, fully devoted consecration to the doing of the “will of God.”

Second:—It promotes self-sacrifice and self-discipline to assist in fighting the foes of the New Creature.

Third: It produces an energetic zeal to serve the Truth at great cost—this is an excellent measure or evidence of the Holy Spirit. With this evidence of the Holy Spirit, we can readily see what is wrong with Babylon—no desire to pay this price on the part of most. We begin on a higher plateau in Christ, finding joy in the consecrated life, and as we continue growing find delight in the cost of sacrifice.

Fourth:—To have a full measure of the Holy Spirit, produces the spirit of love for the “family of God.” Here we check our individual hearts, asking ourselves, how deep is my love for my Brethren? Is there partiality? Am I influenced by monetary standards between Brethren?

Fifth:—It extends sympathetic love to those that oppose us, even our enemies.

Sixth:—It creates the disposition of a “mind in Christ” in all the affairs of life. Whether in the kitchen, in our shops, or in our cars, thus we know in our individual hearts and minds, we are “at one with Christ” and with our Heavenly Father. We have this constant evidence while we are busy with the most mundane things, for we see another mind at work—a “mind” to give us balance, objective, direction. There is joy in the thought that this New mind, fully influenced by the Holy Spirit is the “wise virgins vessel” filled with oil.

Finally Brethren, a “full vessel” of the Holy Spirit will complete our growth of maturity of mind and in character, and in heart reliance upon God. These suggested thoughts are some of the ways of determining the size of our “flask of oil” and how well we have purchased at the “Lord’s Market Place.”

Some of us have cars with a special light on the dashboard to indicate when the “oil” is low. My car has a red warning light when the oil pressure is low or when the oil is gone. Would it not be wonderful if our Heavenly Father placed a “red-light” before our mental dashboards to inform us that our Holy Spirit is low? If we had such a warning from God, we would quickly stop at the next station. I believe that our Heavenly Father does just that—grants us spiritual warning signs that our “oil” is low.

Let us note a few “red light” warnings on the dashboard of our spiritual minds.

- 1—A decrease of zeal for service of the Truth.
- 2—A lessening desire for fellowship and study with the Brethren.
- 3—An increased love, or a dominating love for earthly pleasures and for our earthly families and possessions.
- 4—A willingness to have peace at the cost of compromise of Truth.

The first line of hymn number 4 “My Goal is Christ” is a good test as we sing “Ah tell me not of gold or treasure, of pomp and beauty here on earth! There’s not a thing that gives me pleasure, of all this world displays for worth.” Do we question—is there? Do I value most the treasures of the Kingdom? Our Heavenly Father permits us to enjoy certain things of the earth which all of mankind should enjoy—beauty of flowers and trees, etc. We would be unthankful beings if we could not enjoy the sunrise of a new day or the sunset of the evening with its splendor of color such as the casting of a purple glow over a mountain range, or the ocean with its shimmering reflection at the end of day. Our Heavenly Father designed our planet that its beauty would be renewed day by day, and designed that mankind would enjoy His evident love and give thanks. With proper limitations, we enjoy these gifts of joy and beauty, just as we enjoy the taste of food, designed by God to be pleasant to the eye and enjoyable to the taste.

Another test of our quantity of oil, would be a dimming view of heavenly values, a loss of our first love. In other words, earthly values become greater and heavenly values become of less value. These are the things we should buy in the Lord’s “market place”—the Holy Spirit that produces love, sincerity, zeal, generosity—these are the components of our life in Christ. How do we buy them? In 2 Peter, chapter 1, verse 10, the Apostle tells us to—“give diligence to make our calling and election sure.” What does “diligence” mean? The word diligence is a full comprehensive term. It means fortitude, it means persistency, it means carefulness—it may mean a desire to watch all conditions in order to arrive at a designated point. As the Apostle Peter uses it, the entire employment of our “new minds” in Christ, give diligence in all departments to bring the ship safely to shore, from the captain down to the crew, it takes all the arrangements on this great ship of our Christian life to bring our vessel into the harbor of glory, honor and immortality.

As we review the previous lessons of the Apostle Peter, we know he was speaking to a “sanctified in Christ Jesus” class, Brethren who have already met the conditions of being “called out of darkness into light,” who have responded to the “call” of the Father in coming into covenant relationship—so what could Peter mean by saying, “give all diligence to make your calling sure?” Because we have not actually made our “calling

sure” nor have we made our “election sure” in the complete sense. Supposing Sister A planned to invite us to dinner tomorrow evening. In her planning, she thought of something unusual, she requested that all the Sisters wear green dresses and all the Brothers wear red ties. So she sent out her invitations with request for these specifications in dress. As is customary, we would respond ahead of time, a yes, or no as to whether we would be attending or not. Would that be meeting the conditions of her invitation or calling? No! Not until we knocked on the door of her home and as a Sister dressed in green or a Brother with a red tie, would we meet the condition of the invitation or calling. Is not this what the Apostle Peter meant when he stated, “Brethren, make your calling sure”? Suggesting that the conditions of our calling did not end when we consecrated. It ends by meeting the conditions of our calling, throughout our Christian life. It can be only after our test of complete loyalty, fidelity and with a character like our Master, will all the conditions of our calling be met. Thus we see that we do not rest in the fact that we made our consecration April 1, 1935, or whenever the date, but what is the proof of our faithfulness. In considering Volume 3, on page 195 of the chapter entitled, “The Work of the Harvest” Brother Russell gives this lesson concerning the wise virgins at the oil market and refers to their “test of loyalty,” he writes: “Then, when all the virgins have been tested by this present truth, the door of opportunity will be shut...”—we note that Harvest Truth is considered a basis of examination of the “virgins.” So, today, an evidence of diligence in our calling, is our willingness to abide by all the Bound doctrines of “present truth” found in these treasures, the writings of the Lord’s “appointed servant.”

We all know that our Heavenly Father will design a multitude of experiences to determine how well we are meeting the conditions of our calling. Our path in Christ will not always be smooth, irritations will be permitted to come our way to test the depth of our love and our comprehension of the Truth. We must have trials! Our “election” will follow the fulfilling of all the conditions of our “calling.”

Going on in our lesson in the Lord’s Market Place, let us consider its relationship to earthly markets. Some stores have beautifully designed windows, with new furniture displayed, or dresses, or dishes or other needs for the home. As we look through the glass, we may desire some or one of the items on display, but this desire does not purchase the article, we must first enter the store and be willing to pay the price to acquire the article shown in the window. Our Heavenly Father has placed in His “market place,” many things behind glass display windows, with signs reading:—“I counsel thee to buy of me gold; I counsel thee to buy of me white raiment; and I counsel thee to buy of me eye salve.” We cannot buy these things by merely looking through the window, we must pay the price to acquire these necessities for our life in Christ. Also depending on our purchases will be a need for a proper container for those things purchased. As we enter modern markets today, whether our purchases are small or large, we push about the same size market basket. We do not believe that Our Heavenly Father has designed it

that way for us, because we do not buy to that extent. Let us use this illustration—supposing you had a wealthy friend with a large orchard and in his orchard was a special fruit unknown elsewhere, found only in his orchard. Now this rich friend was a most generous man, so he invited you to his orchard to help yourself to this luscious, unusual fruit. So one morning you come to your wealthy friend’s mansion, you knock on the door and he welcomes you inside. Then he suggests that you go out into his orchard and help yourself to this fruit—“stay as long as needed and take all you wish.” As you enter the orchard would you take out of your pocket a small paper bag? Of course not, this would be an insult to your host. You would come prepared with several large containers. Thus we see that the degree of our faith and consecrated zeal, determines the size or capacity we have to fill with goods purchased from the Lord. How much time do we spend in study? A small paper bag’s worth or a large container full? How much love do we express for our Brethren? These are elements of the Holy Spirit in operation. Working faith would require us to take a large basket to reap all the benefits the Lord has provided for us. If we go with little faith, we receive little from the Lord, if we go with rich faith, confident faith, we receive much from the Lord. We know Brethren, that study, fellowship, tracting, telling the Truth to friends and neighbors requires a price. Our Heavenly Father knows it too and has made it costly and difficult, but this is the way we go “to the wealthy man’s orchard” to take home fruit that He alone can give to those who come in faith to receive. This is a part of our Christian growth acquiring these things specially designed for us, acquired through suffering.

When our Lord spoke to John on the Isle of Patmos in vision, as recorded in Revelation, chapter three, he painted a sad picture of a people living at the time of His return. He called this period of the Church, Laodicea. He pictured this people as “naked, blind, hungry, neither hot nor cold for Him—luke-warm!” An abomination to Him, for they think they are rich because they have stored up much wealth for themselves, standing in need of nothing. The Lord looks at their stored up earthly treasures and knows none of them can endure time, fire or theft, so as to the “wise shopper” He speaks out. “I counsel thee to buy of me gold refined in the fire, that ye may become rich, white robes to hide your nakedness, eye salve to anoint your eyes with, so ye may be able to see.” Let us read the remainder of the account, verses 19 through 22. “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

We believe this is the Lord’s method of telling us that those whom he loves he chastens to encourage their hearts to buy immortality or gold. We buy immortality through the fortitude of faithfulness, sacrifice and self discipline in our lives in Christ, pictured in the fire of experience. Our Lord wants us to be well clothed, He tells us “Indeed, I have

covered you with my robe of righteousness through consecration, but that is not enough, I want you to embroider it, fashion it, prepare it for your marriage. When you are ready and your gown is fully prepared, then you will be presented to my Father in the Kingdom.” And it is thus with the eye salve we buy, to see His words, to see God’s path for us. Eye salve can be seen as the fullness of consecration under spiritual enlightenment to see “present Truth.” It requires a repentant heart condition, the desire to humble ourselves under the hand of God—to employ all the spiritual arrangements for our best interests as new creatures in Christ, to require less of the earth and its arrangements and demand more of the spirit and of fellowship. These are things we buy in the Lord’s Market Place.

In Ephesians, Chapter 5, verse 15 (reading from the Weymouth translation)—the Apostle Paul having pictured the Church in her faithfulness and toil says, “...Buy up your opportunities”—picturing the thoughts we have expressed that Our Heavenly Father has opportunities for sale in His “market place,” asking us to pay the vow of consecration, the energetic zeal of self-discipline and sacrifice, to “buy” the opportunities. One day the “market” will close, our “opportunities” will come to an end. At one time or another each of us have hurried to an earthly store or market only to find a sign on the door—“closed.” We were too late—good intentions will not fill the basket.

So, dear Brethren, with fully consecrated hearts, which is our price to enter the virgin’s “Market Place”; and being emptied of self, let us fill our lives from the offered blessing of God. Now, we may buy all things necessary to furnish our home in the Kingdom. We need “perfect love”—in our new home, we need “loyalty” forever. We need “righteousness” and ability to “hate iniquity.” We need a character patterned after the Master. With these things and the Father’s “well done,” our home on high will be furnished and our shopping in the Lord’s Market Place concluded.