

“THE SCHOOL OF CHRIST”

(Discourse below by A. M. Saphore, 1909 Convention Report, Page 153.)

Text: *“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”* (John 6:45)

Our first important question in connection with our subject is, “Who are eligible to enter the school of Christ?” Let us imagine a child, desiring to enter school, coming to one of the teachers, and saying, “I want to get in school.” Let us think of the teacher saying, “No scholar can enter this school except a responsible person speaks for them. Where is your father? Did your mother come to speak for you?” Let us suppose the child to say, “My case is a sad one; my father sinned a great sin, committed a great crime, and as a result he had to work very hard. Yes, mother had to work hard also, and all our family has to work hard until they die, so no one can speak for me. But I heard that a great superintendent had started a school, put his son through a college course, and made him the professor of the school. I heard, also, that if one wanted to get in the school, and no one could speak for them, that the professor would speak for them. Oh, I loved that professor from the moment, and now, can I see the professor?” Let us think of the teacher saying, “Yes, look to the professor, he will start you in school and he will help you to finish.”

Then think of the child going to the professor and saying, “Dear professor, you will speak for me, won’t you?” And think of the professor saying, “Yes, no child can come to the superintendent but by my speaking for them. I’ll speak for you if you will promise to abide by the rules of the superintendent.” Think of the child then saying, “Oh, that is the reason I want you to speak for me. I want to get in the school.” So the professor represents the child.

This is exactly our position, dear friends, we say to one of the teachers, “I want to get into the school of Christ.” The teacher says, “You must have a responsible person speak for you.” Then we have to say, “Our case is a very sad one; our father (Adam) sinned a great sin, and as a result had to work real hard, not only for a few years, but until death.” “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.” (Rom. 5:12) Yes, mother (Eve) had to work hard too, and all our family has to work very hard. “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” (Rom. 8:22) And we heard that there was a Great Superintendent (God) and that He had put His Son (Jesus) through a course of training and had made Him Professor in the school. “It became him [the superintendent] of whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons [scholars] to glory [graduation], to make the captain [Professor] of their salvation [school] perfect through sufferings [lessons].” (Heb. 2:10.)

And we heard that the Professor (Jesus) would speak for us, and we ask, “Can we see the Professor?” The teacher (Paul) says to us, “Looking unto Jesus [the Professor] the author [starter] and finisher of our faith” (school of faith). (Heb. 12:2.) Then we come to the Professor (Jesus) and He says the teacher is correct for “no man [scholar] cometh unto the Father [superintendent] but by me [the professor].” Yes, I will represent you, but remember that the purpose of My speaking for you is that you give up your will and abide by the Will of My Father (the Superintendent). “Surely,” we say, “that is just what we want to do—we consecrate ourselves entirely to the will of our Superintendent.” Thus are we accepted into the school of Christ.

The heathen are not eligible to enter the school because they are like the child who never heard there was a school. One of the teachers explains their position, saying, “How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?” (Rom. 10:14.) They neither know that there is a superintendent nor that he has established a school.

The world are not eligible because, while they believe there is a God and that His Son is the Professor, they have not faith enough to believe that He (Jesus) will speak for them and “without faith it is impossible to please him [the superintendent]: for he that cometh unto him must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Heb. 11:6.)

After being in the school a while we learn the philosophy of why the world has not faith. Because of Adam’s fall the world as his posterity have fallen. All have not partaken of the fall in the same way; some have fallen in justice—they are very loving but they just let everybody run all over them—they lack justice. Others have fallen in love—they recognize strict justice, but are not inclined to be merciful—they cannot be as merciful as others because mercy is the difference between love and justice, and they lack love. Others have fallen in faith, they may be grand characters—may possess love and justice, etc., but they lack faith—“for all men have not faith.” (2 Thes. 3:2.)

Having entered the school of Christ through a proper faith and consecration to Our Great Superintendent, let us look a moment at our school books. All our books are in one book (the Bible) and it seems they cannot be understood at all until we learn what one of our teachers means when he says, “Study to show thyself approved unto God [the superintendent], a workman [scholar] that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth [school books].” (2 Tim. 2:15.)

Our purpose in entering the school is not to get a certificate that we need none of the Professor’s instructions. Indeed, many seem to be in this attitude; when a colporteur calls at their door to show “The Divine Plan of the Ages,” they say, “Oh, we do not want that, we have our Bibles.” “But,” says the colporteur, “do you understand your Bible (school books)?” and they say, “We do not desire anything, we have our Bible (school books),

good day.” Thus they are like a child who has the school books but refuses instruction as to how to properly use them.

Others are like the child who enters school and then *makes up its* mind that the work for it to do is to get all the children of the city into the school—and so neglects the study of its lessons. But examination comes and the teacher requires it to answer certain questions, but it says, “Oh, I was not present that day.” “Where were you?” asks the teacher. Then the scholar says, “I was trying to get the children of the city to all come to school. I knew you didn’t tell me to, but I knew that would be alright and I have done many mighty works in thy name.” The Teacher declares, “Depart from me, I never recognized you as a faithful scholar.”

So with some who neglect the school books (Bible), and try to convert the world—if they can’t urge them in, they pull them in, or push them in—any way to get them all in the school of Christ. But examination day will come and they will have to say, “We were trying to convert the world, and—” “But did I tell you to,” the Teacher will ask. Then they will say, “Have we not prophesied in thy name, done many wonderful works? and then will I profess to them, I never knew you: Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matt. 7:22, 23.)

Spelling Lesson

The Professor says, “Spell death.” How often, dear friends, we hear it spelled “l-i-f-e.” This reminds us of a gentleman who shared our seat in a railway train. He handed us a tract teaching torment for the wicked, and we read it because we thought he would read one of our tracts in return. The gentleman seemed to expect us to make a comment on it, so we said, “Can you harmonize that teaching with the Bible teaching, ‘God is love?’” “Oh, yes,” he said, “that would be alright for God.” We asked him how he would regard a man who did such things as are put to God’s charge, and he said, “Oh, that would be alright for God.” Dear friends, God does not need us to take His part at all. We argued that Satan, the most wicked personage, was to be DESTROYED and surely those less vile would not suffer more severely than he. He declared that the Bible did not teach the destruction of Satan, so we asked him to read Heb. 2:14, which he did, “That through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is the devil.”

He exclaimed, “That means destroy his power.” We suggested that he read it as though it were his newspaper, and he declared that it was God’s Word he was reading, thus suggesting that you should read into or out of God’s Word things contrary to its declaration.

We pointed out that the verse said, “Him that hath the power of death” (not torment)—that the devil never had power of anything but death. “Oh, that does not mean death,” he

declares, “that means separation from God, and all separated from God are in anguish, and you be careful you don’t get there; you are a wicked man, you are.” So we left the gentleman, arriving at our proper station.

The Master had asked him to spell DEATH, and he said, “S-E-P-A-R-A-T-I-O-N.” Wrong—he missed his spelling lesson.

Dear friends, if death means separation, then listen to one of our teachers (1 Cor. 15): “The last enemy to be destroyed is separation (death).”

NO WHISPERING IN OUR SCHOOL. Whispering in school is one of the hardest things to refrain from. **SO EVIL SPEAKING** is one of the besetting sins of those in the school of Christ. “The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things.” (Jas. 3:5.)

NO COPYING IN OUR SCHOOL. One who copies unfits himself for examination, because one special precaution at examination is to guard against copying. So we should not lean upon the Elders and oppose the presentation of the Covenants or the Vow because the Elders oppose it. On the other hand do not take the Vow or accept presentation of the Covenants just because Bro. Russell or an Elder says so and so. Right here let us suggest that Bro. Russell is continually telling us not to copy from him but to prove all he says. Surely, having received so much Truth through him, we would rather continue proving what he says than to start out to prove what another says to the overlooking of what Bro. Russell presents.

The Professor uses a scholar to write on the blackboard, so the Lord is using a scholar now. Let us heed what is written “I will stand upon my WATCH, and set me upon the TOWER and will watch to see what he [the Professor] will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reprov'd. And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.” (Hab. 2:1, 2.) Those who have read have seen that there is a race set before us, “That he may run that readeth.”

Willfulness in school leads to expulsion of scholars, so in the school of Christ, “if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour [EXPEL] the adversaries [scholars].” (Heb. 10:26, 27.)

THE OBJECT of the school of Christ is to prepare teachers for another school—the Millennial School. Christ and the graduates with high honors will be the ones to teach the world of mankind during the one thousand years, to follow this Gospel Age.

Then the “knowledge of the Lord shall cover the whole earth [school] as the water covers the great deep.” Those who do not obey the teacher (Christ and the Church) then, will be

expelled from school. “Every soul [scholar] which will not obey that prophet [teacher] shall be destroyed [expelled] from among the people [scholars]” (Acts 3:23.)

Graduates of the school of Christ who do not graduate in time for commencement exercises (marriage of the Lamb) need to study more and learn more lessons. “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Rev. 7:14.)

The school of Christ puts scholars through lessons so that graduates will be able to sympathize with scholars of the Millennial School. Hence some of the teachers will have been taken out of every nation, every kindred, and every marked condition of life.

Jesus said, “Other sheep [scholars] have I, which are not of this fold [school of Christ]: Them also I must bring [from their graves], and they shall hear my voice [instructions in the Millennial School]; and there shall be one fold [school], and one shepherd preacher, Christ and the Church.”

At the end of the Millennial School, all who pass examination will graduate and be received into favor with The Great Superintendent. “Then cometh the end [of the Millennial School] when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom [school] to God, even the Father.” (1 Cor. 15:24.)

May God’s blessing be upon us as we speak to learn well our lessons and conform unto the character of our Dear Superintendent and our Dear Professor! AMEN.