

troubled by every shade of discord among the intelligences of heaven, earth or hell? Do we think of Him as being a creature of circumstances? Do we think of Him, as planning and working to-day, and to-morrow, because of contingencies arising, *unforeseen*, all His plans and all His work proves a failure?

Do we sometimes forget that God is all-wise, all-mighty, that He saw the end from the beginning, and that there are no accidents in His government?

Do we sometimes forget that all God's attributes are co-eternal with Himself? That no quality of His being, wisdom, power or purpose was an after-occurring acquirement?

God's purposes and plans are co-existent with Himself. As He saw from the beginning, so will it be in the end. Therefore, when we think that God is troubled, even by our sins, *i. e.*, that our sins make Him unhappy, we make a mistake. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. The I Am, the Uncreated, the Maker and Upholder of ALL cannot be made unhappy by the sins of mortal man, therefore you do not, my brother, pay God a compliment by returning to Him, you do not add to His happiness by becoming a Christian.

When God beseeches you to be reconciled, it is not for His own benefit, it is not to add to His wealth or glory. Your return to Him does not enrich Him, nor is He impoverished by your staying away.

You may sin, so as to destroy your own mind, your own body, your own soul, but, your sins touch not the stability of God's throne; the stability of His throne has not been affected by the sins of any beings in the universe. I know there are some who imagine that God was in danger of almost losing the sceptre of the universe. I once heard a heated preacher exclaim that "The devil raised the black standard of revolt against the very throne of God." Well, I thought the language a little strong, and further thought that it was likely to make the impression on the average mind that God was quite a clever general to save His throne, and, at least, a part of His dominions, from the vile traitor and usurper of power. But, I think the number who to-day will utter such language is becoming beautifully less.

No, the sins of the created do not touch the stability of the throne of the Creator nor do they diminish His happiness.

Holiness and happiness are inseparable; therefore, God is always happy, because He is always holy. "I am the Lord, I change not."

But man is affected by sin. It brings to him unhappiness. It brings to him disquietude of mind. It brings to him remorse of conscience. It brings anguish of soul. It brings to him an abiding misery and a continual sense of condemnation. Therefore, man, for his own benefit, needs to be freed from sin, to have its condemnation removed, so that anguish of soul, remorse of conscience, disquietude of mind and unhappiness might no longer burden the life; but, being reconciled to God, through the Lord Jesus Christ; being changed in mind and heart and life; being made like God; partaking of His spirit, partaking of His holiness in order to his being made partaker of His happiness. Holiness of life brings peace of mind and joy of heart. Holiness of life brings happiness. Holiness and happiness are inseparable. Perfect holiness brings perfect happiness. Therefore a condition of holiness and happiness is heaven.

You ask, Where? I will answer: Here, there, everywhere. Wherever holiness and happiness, perfect, are found, there is heaven. Like eternal life which was said by Jesus to be, "Knowing Thee, the true Lord and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." See John xvii. 3 So heaven is a condition rather than a location, and, he who is perfectly holy and consequently perfectly happy, has found heaven, and while location may be

changed, it will still be heaven, here, there, EVERYWHERE. Sinking in the abyss would not take away the heaven of the reconciled child of God.

But, on the other hand, there is no happiness to or for an unholy soul. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Therefore, for the unreconciled to God, there is no heaven.

This is why the heavens were opened. This is why God was made manifest in the flesh. This is why Jesus of Nazareth died on the cross. This is why the message of love and mercy was sent. This is why Paul labored and suffered day by day that men might be reconciled, that they might be holy, so that being holy they might be happy. Be ye reconciled to God. O. B. E.

Montague, Dec. 16, 1890.

### OUR NEEDS.

In looking over the history of the Church of God we can see wonderful and gratifying success in many particulars. Hundreds and thousands are coming into the church. Sectarian prejudice and bigotry is fast dying out. The creeds and dogmas are decaying. Faith in the Divine Saviour is taking the place of opinions; and the word of Christ is coming to be the only standard of authority. But with all this success, and much more that could be mentioned, we are not what we would like to be, or what is imperatively demanded we should be. In the midst of our success we are still in danger. Our danger, however, is not that which comes from outward foes. It is not external but internal danger. Our danger is not in our plea for the Christianity of the Bible as taught by Christ and his Apostles, or in our plea for the unity of God's people, for which Christ so earnestly prayed, based upon the one faith, one Lord, one name and one baptism. But our danger is in not practically demonstrating this union of hearts by our strict adherence to divine authority and waiving all our differences in opinions. Here may be seen our greatest need. A little closer attention to the rules and principles that we urge upon others. The most successful way to advance the cause and work of union is by the practice of it. Let us be true to the truth we would teach. If we want others to go in the right way we must be sure and go that way ourselves. It will not do to preach union and practice division.

We read in one of our papers about a church that would not have any praying in the Sunday evening meetings on the ground that there is no "Thus saith the Lord" for praying for sinners. Of course, the church divided. Evidently they were stout advocates for "Christian (!) union." It is the result of the principle or position that shows its value or power. If the doctrine of Christ, as we present it, does not make us better men, more united, and devoted, and consecrated than others, what is the good of it? Why urge it? We must judge the tree by its fruits. We see the great need, therefore, of an earnest, united, loving Christian life to give for a united church. We need a life of prayer. There are too many who talk to men but not to God; who forget that prayer is the Christian's life. We lately heard of a church that never had a prayer meeting that were very anxious to have a debate on baptism. We need a higher and better type of spiritual life, a better knowledge of God's word concerning us.

The following from the *Apostolic Guide* is worth repeating: "The weakness of Christianity to-day is not in its doctrines, for they can be manifested successfully against all opposition, not in the character of its founder, for he stands unimpeached through the centuries, but the imperfect lives of his followers have cast a discredit upon his claims, and the faulty lives of professed Christians have caused men to doubt the genuineness of the religion of Christ."

When a deeper, truer spirit shall pervade the

membership of the churches, when men who profess to have been with Jesus and are born of God shall "walk worthy of their high calling," when the carrying, critical world which now, like Pilate of old, is sitting in judgment on Christian men and women, can say of them as Pilate said of Jesus, "I find no fault" in them. Then shall the Church march forward in her great conquests; and then will the kingdoms of the world become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. May that good day soon dawn, and may each one of us, dear reader, hasten its coming by higher living, nobler purposes and greater consecration to the faultless Saviour.

H. MURRAY.

### ETERNAL LIFE.

The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. vi:23. What is eternal life? The Saviour, in his wonderful prayer recorded in John xvii, answers this important question. He says: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent. But on reading this answer at once arises in our mind this question, What is it to know God and Jesus Christ. It is to acknowledge God and his Son as divine. To believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the Living God. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. John iii:36. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God. I. John v:1. In the conversation which our Saviour held with Nicodemus he illustrated our entrance into his Church or Kingdom by a birth. James says in speaking of the Father. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth. Jesus says. I am the way, the truth and the life. John says. In him was life and the life was the light of men. Jesus says, John v:26. As the Father hath life in himself so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself. Life comes from union with a life giving object—union with an object that has life in itself. We take a living tree, a tree that has life in itself, and we set a scion in this tree, and the life of the tree enters the scion, and the life manifests itself in the scion. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. I. John v:11. Here we are told that the eternal life which God gives to us is in his Son. Here we are told where God has deposited this gift for man. And man is invited to come and enjoy it. God in his word has pointed out the way by which we enter into Christ. Paul, in writing to the Galatians, says: For you are all the children of God in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Gal. iii:26, 27. These Galatians were in the enjoyment of eternal life. They were engrafted into him, and were branches of the true vine. Of persons in this position Paul says: There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. God looks upon such in the face of his Anointed. He sees them as part of his Son. It is only in this way that man can have eternal life. Eternal is without beginning or end. There is a time when man begins to have this life; that is, when he is begotten by the Father. The truth of God which the Spirit has placed in his word, testifying of God's love in the gift of his Son, when it is believed, enlightens the understanding, changes the affections, and draws out his love to both the Father and the Son. The rebellious and stubbornness of the heart gives way, his own will is given up, and with deep anxiety he asks the Lord, What wilt thou have me to do? God's will is now supreme. The life which springs from this reception of the words of truth manifests itself in the good confession and a submission to Jesus in the ordinance of baptism. This, I understand to be, is what Paul means when he says: With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made