

dies, "What did he leave?" but, "What did he take with him? Did he have the respect and love of the good, the tears of widows and orphans befriended? Did he reach his Jerusalem and save his soul while here?"

Which will you have, an aching heart, a tarnished name; or peace with God, a noble life and the hope of joys to come, having finished your course and having kept the faith? Which? Come, be firm. Let's go to our Jerusalem, and we shall receive a diadem above the brightness of the sun when we enter upon the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

SEALED UNTO CHRIST.

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He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.—John iii: 33.

MESSENGERS came to John the Baptist, telling him of the success of Christ's ministry; that "all men come to him." John well knew how little such following might mean, and he answered, "No man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." The crowds might throng about Christ to hear His words or witness His miracles, but did they set to their seal His testimony? That was the test of their sincerity.

I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SEAL.

The seal is one of the old legal forms that still survives, and gives a peculiar character to documents on which it is stamped. Let us note some of its characteristics.

1. *As a Necessity.* In many cases it is necessary that the seal be affixed to an instrument to give it its value. Without the seal it is of none effect. The lawyer may draw up a will with the utmost care. The maker of the will may have settled in his own mind just how he will dispose of his wealth. But until the seal is affixed to the will the lawyer's skill and the legator's resolve count for nothing. So one may hear the Gospel preached, the way of salvation pointed

out; but that is not sufficient. He must set to his seal the testimony of the Gospel—receive it, believe it, live in accordance with it.

2. *As a Personal Distinction.* In the old times few men knew how to write even their own names. They could do no more than make their mark, which was easily counterfeited; therefore each man who had occasion to use it, if possible possessed his own seal. The affixing of it to any document was accepted as proof that he had approved that document, and no other seal could be accepted as a substitute for his particular one. Joseph was placed in charge of the king's seal, and wherever he affixed it, it carried all the king's power and authority with it, because there was no other like it. So the element of personality entered into the old seal. The analogy holds at this point also: religion is an intensely personal matter. Each must settle the great question of salvation for himself. "Every man must give account of himself before God." No other's faith will secure my safety. It will not be enough for me to declare before the great white throne, "Lord, I come from a Christian land; my parents were thy professed followers; I have often listened to those who preached thy word." No one can accept Christ for me. I must set to *my* seal that God is true.

3. *As a Finality.* The ancient seal was often used to denote the conclusion of a matter. Daniel was told to seal up the prophecies, implying that they were finished, complete. When Daniel was cast into the den of lions and the mouth of the den was sealed, it signified that the king's purpose was irrevocably fixed; that his "mind was made up" and would not be changed. Here also the analogy holds. He that accepts Christ, accepts Him for all time. "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." We enter into God's service, not for a few years, nor merely for a lifetime, but for eternity. "There is no discharge in that war." We have set to our seal that God is true, once for all;