

The Greatest of These! 05a

A Discourse by Darrio Taylor on 1 Corinthians 13: 06/ 2015

**“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,
if ye have love one to another.” John 13:35**

I invite you to kneel and pray with me as we open the Scriptures.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for that fountain of blood drawn from Immanuel’s veins; that sinners plunged beneath that flood, can lose all their guilty stains. Thank You for sending your Son Jesus, to seek us as strangers wandering from the fold of God; He to rescue us from danger interposed His precious blood. Therefore we are debtors to Your grace; we can never repay the Price that was given for our redemption. We pray that Your goodness, like a fetter, would bind us close to Thee. We are so prone to wander, so prone to leave the God that we love. So tonight we say, “Here’s our heart, Lord, would You take and seal it? Would You seal it for your courts above?”

Because we have given You our hearts, we ask that You would bring upon us the converting power of the Holy Spirit; that You would feed us with ‘butter and honey’ that we may know how to refuse the evil and choose the good. That You would feed us with the heritage of Jacob our father, as You’ve promised.

We thank You for the sweet Spirit that is in this place bringing us revival and also reformation. Thank You for the work You are doing in our lives and we pray that we will continue to allow You to work in us both to will and to do of Your good pleasure. Thank You for hearing and answering our prayer; we ask these blessings in Jesus’ Name; Amen.

In the presentations that I have had the privilege of sharing in this wonderful camp-meeting, we’ve been seeking to deal with 1 Corinthians 13 verse by verse. Sister White tells us that we are to read this chapter every day that we might get strength and courage; that we may learn the lessons of sanctified, heaven-born love—Christ-like Love—which is manifested in obeying the commandments of God.

Charity, which is self-sacrificing love, that which causes us to renounce our self, our pride, our selfishness and love of the world, that we might be obedient to God, that we might love God and have love for man—the fulfilling of the law.

We will read this chapter together:

1 Corinthians 13:1 “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. 4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” (KJV)

We want to begin with verse 6; verses 4-7 really show us the character of charity; it really manifests and gets into our mind, character and personality. You can tell by reading this chapter whether or not you are exemplifying the crowning virtue of the Fruit of the Spirit. I hope to show from the scriptures that when you have charity, you are ready for the Seal of God; you are ready for the fullness of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. You are ready to give the Loud Cry of the Third Angel; and if you should not die, but go through the Time of Jacob's Trouble, you will be translated from this earth to heaven.

6 "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;"

Do we find ourselves rejoicing more in iniquity, than rejoicing in the truth? Notice the experience of those who are not rejoicing over iniquity, they're not happy; they're not pleased to know and to understand the apostasies and the rebellions; the corruptions; the iniquity that is itself working in the church of the Living God which should be the pillar and ground of truth.

Often we find ourselves rejoicing and getting very excited when we hear evil and negative reports and that is because we compare ourselves among ourselves; we don't like to hear when people are doing well or advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues; but when we find that somebody has fallen away or somebody has committed adultery, or someone is not walking with God anymore, they've laid down the banner of Christ, we always get so excited and we begin to talk about these things and discuss these things. We say that we have to pray for them—but really in our hearts we are very glad to hear these wicked reports that dishonor and reproach our Saviour, and causes Satan to glorify and to exalt in the fall of Christian Saints. This is especially so in those who profess to be keeping the commandments of God and looking for the soon return of Jesus.

If we are having that experience, then obviously, we don't possess charity; we don't! We don't have self-sacrificing love. We look in Ezekiel 9:4 and we get a view of the sealing work in preparation for the plagues which are to be poured out upon this world by those slaughtering angels, those Seven Last Plague angels. Notice what we find as a criterion of those that will have the mark of God and will have the protection and covering of the Almighty; those that will be able to stand without an Intercessor and without a Mediator in the great Time of Jacob's Trouble.

Ezekiel 9:4 "And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." . . .

Verse 8 "And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem? 9 Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness: for they say, The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and the LORD seeth not."

So Ezekiel was not happy, he was not joyful, he was not excited; we realize that the Remnant are going to be sighing and crying for the abominations that are taking place in the church; all the abominations that are in the golden cup of the harlot Babylon. These are all the sins that have found their way into the church; we see spiritualism; we see New Theology; we see spiritual formation; we see the homosexual movement and agenda in the church; we see also the movement for women's liberation. We see the gods of the sun, moon and stars being worshipped and we see that the banner of truth has been forsaken and trampled underfoot and the servants of Satan are triumphing. When we recognize and see all these things, what is our attitude? What is our character to these things—are we sighing and crying for these abominations that are taking place?

We are told very plainly that if we are not grieved over the sins of others and if we don't mourn for our own spiritual declension, we will be left without the Seal of God. Here we see that Ezekiel was crying; he

was weeping; "Ah, Lord God, are you going to destroy all the remnant of Israel in pouring out of Thy fury?"

What is the attitude of God to all of these things? Notice Ezekiel 18:23. Does God have any pleasure in the death of the wicked? Does He get excited; is He looking forward to the day when He is going to have to cast His people into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone? Cast them into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels. Hell-fire was not prepared for mankind; it was for the devil and his angels. It is not something that He looks forward to; in fact the Bible calls it "His strange work; His strange act". It is something that God is loath to do.

Ezekiel 18:23 "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?" . . . 18:30 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. 31 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? 32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye."

This is the very character of those in Ezekiel who are sighing and crying for the abominations; the reason why they are sighing and crying is because they too, do not have any pleasure in the death of the wicked; they want people to turn from their wicked ways. They want them to cast away their abominations and allow God to create in them a clean heart and renew in them a right spirit; they don't want them to die.

It is the same spirit that Moses had after the people had worshipped the golden calf and received the mark of the sun-god and worshipped the beast and had fallen away from the truth.

Exodus 32:1 "And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. 32 Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written."

That is the spirit of self-sacrificing love. He was willing to lose his own eternal salvation, have his name removed from the book of heaven, just so that Israel could be saved. Is this the Spirit we have wherein we are rejoicing in the truth and not in iniquity? Or do we find ourselves rejoicing in iniquity more than rejoicing in the truth because we don't have a love for souls? We don't have a missionary spirit; we don't have the spirit that Christ had. We have to ask God to roll upon us a burden for those that are lost; those that are perishing within the walls of Zion; those that are participating in the abomination and sins of Babylon.

Even our enemies; those that oppose us and attack us, and those that would curse us, and those that would injure us personally, and are seeking our harm and have wicked and corrupt imaginations against us, we have to rejoice not in iniquity, but rejoice in the truth. This is the character of charity; self-sacrificing love. 3 John 1:1-8:

1:1 "The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. 2 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. 3 For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. 5 Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; 6 Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: 7 Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking

nothing of the Gentiles. 8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.”

We should have no greater joy than to hear that people have accepted the truth; that people are walking in the truth; that people are allowing the truth to regulate their behavior and to change them into the image of Christ. This is what we should be rejoicing over; not rejoicing over iniquity, but over the truth. Be willing to trade places with them; be willing to die for them, if it would bring them into a saving knowledge of the truth for this time. This is charity; and the Bible tells us that charity also. .

7 “Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.”

What are some of those things that charity is able to bear that without it we would not be able to bear because the burden would crush us; it would be too much for us? What are we to bear in the power of true self-sacrificing love; true, sanctified, heaven-born love? The Fruit of the Spirit which shows that we have received the former rain and the latter rain in its fullness; in its completeness—because you can't have fruit without rain. It is the absence of the rain which causes us to be dry and to be like a barren fig tree; to be like a valley of dead dry bones.

Galatians 6:1 “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

How is the law of Christ fulfilled? As we bear one another's burdens.

6:3 “For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. 4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. 5 For every man shall bear his own burden.”

So those of us that are spiritually strong, those of us that are connected with God, to the power source, and walk with God, and talk with God, and enjoy the blessings of God, one of the things we are to do as Christians in fulfilling the law of Christ, we are to bear one another's burdens. But how can we bear every one's burdens, everybody's troubles, and everybody's sorrows and problems, when sometimes we can't even bear our own burdens and trials from day to day; and that of our own selves and families, children and household—and what about if you are in ministry? What about the cares of the church? Not just your own church, but you minister in the world field, so you have churches all over the world—people that you minister to. How can we bear all these things?

We can't do it alone; but charity is able to do it. Self-sacrificing love is able to accomplish the bearing of one another's burdens. So when we see people that need to be restored, if we're the more spiritual one, we have to restore them considering our self, lest we be tempted and fall away from our own steadfastness. We are to bear one another's burdens, but sometimes we don't want to bear one another's burdens; that is the absence of charity, Christ-like love, self-sacrificing love. Think about the burdens that Moses had to bear; think about all the burdens that Jesus Christ Himself had to bear. How was He able to bear it? He had charity because charity is able to bear all things.

The Bible also tells us in Amos 7:7:

7:7 “Thus he shewed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand.”

It is interesting, what do we see the Lord doing upon the wall? He is standing there with this plumbline. Often times in the Bible when you see God standing up, that denotes judgement, that probation is going to close; intercession is over. Jesus, when He went back to heaven, He ascended and He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in Heaven. We realize as He sat down He was interceding, He was the high

Priest; but when He stands up, there is no more intercession, no more mediation here. So the fact that He is standing up is indicating judgement is about to ensue.

8 "And the LORD said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more:"

The fact that God is not passing by His people means He is not passing by their transgressions any more: He is not giving pardon, not forgiving them any longer.

7:9 "And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

This is a close of probation, shut door message here.

7:10 "Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words. 11 For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land."

This was also a message of the Seven Times and the scattering, first for Ephraim and then for Jerusalem. They said here that the land is not able to bear all his words. Can you bear it when God delivers a shut-door message to you; a close of probation message to you that God is not going to pass by, He is not going to hear prayers any longer? Sometimes it can be overwhelming for us. Sometimes it can be too much for us to be able to bear, let alone to have to go and bear that message to an apostate people. But at the same time, through charity, we are able to bear those warning messages of God because we know that these messages are given to awaken us and startle us, and convict us of sin, righteousness and judgement and show us our great need of Christ, our Righteousness.

Sometimes we might not be able to bear the fact that probation is soon to close and that the Sunday Law is imminent, and before that time, I have to have settled into truth both intellectually and spiritually so that I cannot be moved when the shaking, testing time comes, and actually be prepared to receive that Sabbath Seal instead of the Mark of the Beast. Am I going to be ready? Where am I going to flee? Where am I going to go; where am I going to live; what about my family? What about my church family? It could be very startling, very troubling; but through charity we are able to bear the messages of the Close of Probation, those messages that might be more bitter than sweet. Charity can bear these things.

Two things we need to bear; we need to bear one another's burdens; we also need to be able to bear the fact that Probation is soon to close and that the wheat and the tares are going to begin to be separated; the wise and the foolish are going to be made manifest. For some people their probation will close on character development, where they are not going to be able to develop a character after the similitude of Christ and their prayers and cries will not be heard. Many are going to be overthrown when the King of the North enters into the Glorious Land of the United States—when Protestantism and the Beast power, along with the powers of spiritualism—the three-fold union comes together and join hands—many are going to be overthrown. We can't bear that message unless we have self-sacrificing love.

Charity beareth all things but charity also believeth all things. What are we to believe? What does charity enable us to believe in these last days when sometimes it can be challenging to our minds to actually accept these things?

Believing in Jesus

1 John 5:4 “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

Do you believe that Jesus Christ was manifested to take away your sins, and that in Him is no sin, and whoever abides in Him does not sin? Do you believe through faith in the righteousness of Christ that you can have victory over the world, the flesh and the devil, even though you may not see yourself experiencing those victories? You may not see yourself overcoming temptation; overcoming anger, pride and jealousy and intemperance and lust, but still, do you have the faith to believe that you can overcome these things through the faith of Jesus Christ? We have to have that faith.

Well, what do we do when we're not able to believe it because we don't see it? This is where charity has to come in, because charity believes all things. What else are we to believe? If you believe that you *can* overcome sin, then obviously you believe we *can* keep the commandments of God. Why would you want to keep the commandments of God and observe the Sabbath, if you don't believe you can overcome sin? Think about it; because what is sin? Sin is the transgression of the law. So here I am keeping the law and pointing people to the Ten Commandments, pointing people to the downtrodden Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment, but yet I don't believe I can overcome sin? That is an utter contradiction; if you don't believe you can overcome sin, you might as well give up the Sabbath and not even keep the Ten Commandments. Think about it!

So through charity, we are able to believe that we can overcome the world, through believing in Jesus Christ as the Son of God; that it was Jesus' mission to come and to take away our sins. He came that He might destroy the works of the devil, and destroy him that had the power of death; that is the devil.

Believe His Prophets

2 Chronicles 20:20 “And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.”

Do you believe in His prophets? Do you believe in the Spirit of Prophecy? Do you believe that we have to follow the directions of the Spirit of Prophecy, when it comes to health; when it comes to diet; when it comes to dress; when it comes to education? When it comes to country living? When it comes to all the truths that the Spirit of Prophecy brings out and all the warnings? You know why many people don't like the Spirit of Prophecy, because it rebukes their iniquities and their sins.

When the Spirit of Prophecy is brought forth they say, “Oh, No, I just want the Bible. I don't want to see that,” because you think that Sister White is going to write something that is not in the Bible. But had you studied your Bible the way you should have, you would not have needed her writings because you would have saw the principles of whatever she writes are in harmony with the Word of God. They are not going to say anything different; to the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, there's no light in them.

Are there some things in the Spirit of Prophecy that are hard for us to swallow; hard for us to believe and hard for us to carry out in our lives, especially in the area of the reforms? Yes; but how can we believe these things that are so hard sometimes to put into practice? Charity gives us the ability to believe these things; even the things that are written in the Spirit of Prophecy for our salvation.

What else are we to believe? There are many things that we need to believe; we are just touching on a few points. Charity enables us to believe that we can have victory over the world, the flesh and the devil through our faith, through the faith of Jesus and what He has done and will do in and through us. We are to overcome as He overcame. Charity enables us to believe those difficult areas in the Spirit of Prophecy that we struggle over, that often-times we stumble over; because it shows us our pride, our selfishness and our sin and love of the world.

Sometimes we want to pick and choose what we will believe in the Spirit of Prophecy, and these things I'll just kick out because they do not pertain to me. No! We have to accept all of it or none. The Testimonies of God's Spirit are either from Christ or from the devil; you can't say some are from Jesus and some from the devil. Either it is all from the devil, or it is all from Christ. We know that Christ and Satan do nothing in partnership with each other. Christ did not sit down and say, "OK Satan, you write this part of the Testimonies and I will write this part of the Testimonies." But that is how sometimes we treat the Spirit of Prophecy.

Believing in God

Daniel 6:19 "Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. 20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? 21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. 22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. 23 Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God."

Why was he protected from the lions? He had no manner of hurt because God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouth. He believed in his God; in other words when the unrighteous degree of the Medes and the Persians, that law that law that does not change, that law which represents the Sunday Law; that was put in place so they could find occasion against Daniel, trying to get him to worship man in the place of God—man's law VS. God's law—this is the very heart and issue of the Sunday Law Crisis; he was still able to believe. Even when he knew that decree was in writing, he still opened his window and prayed three times a day to his God. What enabled him to believe in the law of his God especially in the midst of a crisis? It was charity; self-sacrificing love was what enabled him to believe, and even though everything was against him, he was still able to pull through. This is the belief that we're going to have to have in these last days.

Hope

So charity is able to bear all things; is able to believe all things and also to hope all things. What are the things we are to be hoping in these last days? I am going to share a three-fold hope in the Bible with you; three things that we need to be hoping in. Charity beareth all things, endureth all things and is also able to hope. That is what I am so thankful for because when you have charity, you don't get depressed; you don't get discouraged. You don't fall into despair. When you have charity, you are able to hope all things; hope against hope, as it were.

Titus 3:5 "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

So the first thing that we are able to hope in through charity, is the hope of eternal life. When we accept Christ as our personal Saviour and we are washed and reborn in the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which is shed on us abundantly by Jesus Christ, and justified by His grace, now we have the hope of eternal life. But that is not all we are to hope in; hope of eternal life is just the beginning.

Titus 2:11 "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

We now move from the hope of eternal life to the blessed hope; and what prepares us for that blessed hope? It is the grace that teaches us to deny worldly lusts and live soberly, righteously and godly right now, and then we can look to that blessed hope. Why is the Second Coming of Christ such a blessed hope? Why is it referred to by the prophets and apostles as the blessed hope? What is the hope?

There is a reason why it is the blessed hope that we are looking forward to. For many it is not going to be a blessed hope; many are going to run to the rocks and mountains and say, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sits upon the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb." And yet there is going to be another class that says, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him. This is our Saviour; we have waited for Him and we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

1 John 3:1 "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

What is the blessed hope? That we are now the sons of God; it does not yet appear what we are going to be but we know when He returns we're going to be like Him. We are going to appear with Him in glory. As Jesus is in heaven, so are we on this earth. He is holy, harmless and undefiled, separate from sin, and that's how we're going to be. That's how we must be now; that's why it's a blessed hope, and if you have that hope, having that hope purifies you even as He is pure.

Are you able to hope this? That I could be just like Him in thought, word and action. Charity allows us to have this blessed hope, along with the hope of eternal life; but that is not all. We have the hope of eternal life; we have the blessed hope where we're going to be just like Him. He is meek; He is lowly; He's humble, kind and true; He's sincere, He's righteous; no spot or wrinkle, no blemish, no lying; no stealing; no deceit; no hypocrisy; no iniquity—don't you want to be like that? It's the Blessed Hope.

Colossians 1:27 "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: 28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:"

What is Christ in you, the hope of glory? It is presenting you perfect in Christ; that is the hope of glory. So we have the hope of eternal life; we have that blessed hope; and then we have Christ in us the hope of glory. We need this three-fold hope; otherwise we are going to be lost.

How are we to hope in eternal life; hope in the Blessed Hope of the Second Coming; hope that Christ will be formed within us, the hope of glory? How do we do it? Often times we don't see it, we don't feel it, we're not experiencing it; it's not real to us. It seems like something that is far out of our reach; but

charity is able to hope all things. So I can bear all things; I can believe all things; I can hope all things; I can endure all things.

What are we to endure? One of the questions that Jesus is going to ask when He returns is, “Where is thy flock, thy beautiful flock that I gave thee?” When the Son of man comes to the earth again, will He find faith on the earth? We talk about how many are not going to be able to endure; many are going to just give up, they are going to become weary and faint in their own minds and lay down the banner of Christ and give up. After they put their hand to the plow they’re going to turn back, just like Lot’s wife did. So how do we endure? It is through charity.

How do we endure when we see so many people getting discouraged; so many people giving up; so many people not having any more spiritual strength, moral stamina, or courage to want to be a Christian? They are going back into the world, returning to their own vomit, going right back to the mud-pit from whence they came out.

Enduring Afflictions

What are those things we have to endure?

2 Timothy 4:1 “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come **when they will not endure sound doctrine**; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

That time has fully come now.

2 Timothy 4:5 “But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”

So what do we do? What do we do when the time comes when people are not enduring sound doctrine anymore? They are looking for teachers having itching ears, telling them what they want to hear, preaching smooth things and lies and deceits—peace and safety messages. Turning their ears to fables and away from the truth; how are we to endure? God just gave us the answer—it is so wonderful because it says: “Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”

You see, if we are doing the work of an evangelist, if we are soul-winning, if we are doing missionary work, this is what helps us to endure all things. We need to go and win souls—if you are winning souls you know that you are studying, you are praying, you are connected to God, you have a burden for souls. This is why the devil wants to suspend all evangelistic work! He doesn’t want us to do missionary labors.

Do you know the secret to overcoming? We are told the secret to overcoming is to help others to overcome. You want to overcome? Help somebody else to overcome. You want your children to overcome? Why don’t you try to help somebody else’s children overcome and see if God will not send someone to help your children to overcome? [At the same time encourage your children to work to help others overcome; include them in your efforts for others.]

We have to be able to endure doctrine, endure these afflictions, when people turn away their ears from hearing the truth. What do we do now? Make full proof of your ministry; do the work of an evangelist.

What is the work of an evangelist? Look at the word 'ev-angel-ist' and what do we see? Angel—what do angels do?

Revelation 14:6 "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, 7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

And Babylon is fallen; and the warning about the Mark of the Beast, the worship of the Beast and the Image of the Beast—this is to be our work if we are to endure afflictions, endure sound doctrine, endure all things!

You say, "How am I going to do the work of an evangelist? I don't even like knocking on doors; I don't like selling books to people; I don't like doing medical missionary evangelism; I don't want to do that, I don't even like people! I don't even have a burden for my own soul or for the souls of the church or my family! How can I do that?" Charity: self-sacrificing love; that's what will move you to do the work of an evangelist; to make full proof of your ministry.

Yes, the Lord knows that we are selfish; He knows that we only care about 'me, myself, and I'; that we could care less about people that are perishing around us—it is because we don't have self-sacrificing love. When you have self-sacrificing love, and you will see—when you have that attribute, nothing will stop you; nothing will hold you back; it won't be so hard, it won't be so difficult, because 'love is constraining you'; even that love that moved God to give His ONLY begotten Son, that whosoever would believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Enduring the Chastening of the Lord

What else are we to endure?

Hebrews 12:5 "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 **If ye endure chastening**, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

We have to endure chastening; endure the rebuking and corrections of the Lord and not be faint; not be wearied; not be mad; not be upset; not murmur or complain, because as many as I LOVE I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent. I am trying to benefit you; I am trying to profit you; I don't do this for my pleasure, I do this so you can be partakers of My holiness and so that you can yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness." (ye shall know them by their fruits)

We have to endure chastening. We have to endure that straight testimony. It's not joyous; it doesn't feel nice; nobody likes to be rebuked—but if we endure chastening, then we are God's children, we're God's sons and daughters. We don't want to be bastards—we don't want to be illegitimate, we don't

want to be rejected, No! And if we can give reverence to the fathers of our flesh, why can't we live in subjection to the Father of spirits?

There is a purpose as to why God chastens us and rebukes and corrects us—that's the only way to holiness. There's no other way; that's the only way we can have the fruit of righteousness. How can we do it though? It's not easy; it's very difficult; it's very challenging; we don't want to do it, it doesn't feel right, it doesn't feel nice. Charity can endure the straight testimony, the counsel of the True Witness.

Jesus doesn't want to spew us out of His mouth; He wants to come into our hearts and give us the gold, the white raiment and the eyesalve. He wants us to overcome as He overcame that we might sit on His throne on the right and on the left. We have to endure these things.

So we're to endure sound doctrine; endure afflictions; do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of your ministry; and then we need to endure the chastening of the Lord—don't get weary, don't get faint. God is trying to do a work so that we can become holy, so we can have the fruit of righteousness. Just be zealous therefore and repent; it's for your salvation, holiness and righteousness.

Continue in part B