**“The Sabbath-School. 2 Corinthians 7-11:3” The Signs of the Times, 10, 1.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST-JAN. 12.
2 Corinthians 7-113.
THE GRACE OF GIVING.**

The eighth and ninth chapters of Paul’s second letter to the Corinthian church, contain instruction in regard to the necessity and blessedness of contributing to the support of the cause of God, and especially of ministering to the necessity of the saints. The apostle had been requested by the elders at Jerusalem to remember the poor “which,” he says, “I also was forward to do.” Galatians 2:10. In his first epistle he gave the Corinthians the same directions for making a collection for the poor that he had previously given to the churches in Galatia, and now he writes to stir them up to activity in this respect. In the seventh chapter he had admirably paved the way for the introduction of this subject. Having commended them for the readiness with which they had accepted his reproof, he closed with the words, “I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.” Paul never descended to flattery, but he knew that by an honest expression of his confidence he could deepen his influence with the church. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.1}

The subject so near to the heart of the apostle is introduced thus: “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of [*i.e.*, we make known to you] the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.” Paul does not mean that the Macedonians gave large sums for their deep poverty would make that an impossibility. He means that God had enabled them to give according to their means, and even beyond it, as is stated in verse 3. This was the grace which God bestowed upon them. Selfishness is natural to the human heart, and has two opposite effects,-it finds its possessor, and also enlarges his vision. It makes him blind as to his ability to do good, causing him to think that his means are not sufficient to allow of his giving more than a trifle; and it magnifies his little offerings, so that he imagines that he has given far beyond his means, and is exceedingly generous. The work of the Spirit of God is to remove this selfishness by helping us to see things just as they are,-to realize what a priceless gift has been bestowed upon us, and how undeserving we are. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.2}

The ability to give, then, is a special gift of God. Paul says: “Therefore as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and it all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.” We often hear people wish that they had wealth, so that they could give liberally to the poor, or to the cause of God. Now while it is true that prosperity comes from God, and it is he that has power to get wealth, this is not the gift of which the apostle speaks. What the class just referred to ought to earnestly long for, is not means, but the grace to give according to that which they already possess. The Macedonians were exceedingly poor, yet God gave them grace to give. In their case Paul did not have to do any urging; on the contrary, they urged him with much entreaty to accept the gift. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.3}

The fifth first gives the key to their liberality; they had first given *themselves* to the Lord. When a person realizes that he is not his own, and freely acknowledges the fact, giving will be an easy matter. In fact, giving freely will be the natural result of consecrating ourselves wholly to the Lord, so that the readiness with which we give to the cause of God indicates in a great degree the measure of our consecration to him. It may help us to understand this matter if we consider how the apostles regarded themselves. When they speak of themselves as servants of the Lord, they use the Greek word *doulos*, whose primary meaning is, a bondman, a slave. Literally, Philippians 1:1 reads, “Paul and Timotheus, the slaves of Jesus Christ.” Now a slave is not able to hold property in his own right; everything belongs to his master, and he himself cannot acquire a title to anything. It is in just this way that we should consider ourselves related to God. The only difference between earthly servants and masters is, that although we do belong to God, whether we acknowledge it or not, we are not compelled to serve him. All our service must be voluntary. To be sure, in the end there will be a punishment for those to defraud the Master of his just dues; but on the other hand, there will be a glorious reward for those who simply restore that to which they have no right at all. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.4}

“For if there first be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.” No doubt many persons take great comfort from this text, for they repeatedly wish they could give, and therefore imagine that they are very acceptable to God. And as if to atone for their not giving anything, they usually wish to give very large sums. But this verse was written with the understanding that the individual had acquired the grace of giving according to his means. If all had this grace, all would give something, for very few are poorer than the widow who had only two mites for her support. When men give in this way, willingly, the gift is valued by the Lord, according to the proportion which it bears to the means of the giver. The poor widow’s gift was considered as greater than all the gifts of the rich men, because she gave more in proportion to her means. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.5}

This idea is carried out in the following verses. “For I mean not that other men should be eased and ye burden.” He did not design that a few should do all the giving, but that all should share in it. He meant that there should be an equality. This equality would be gained if each gave according to what he had. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.6}

“As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.” This quotation is from Exodus 16:18, and has reference to the gathering of the manna. The Israelites were allowed an omer for each individual. This was all that could possibly be used in one day. If one on account of superior activity gathered more, he was to divide it with one whose circumstances did not allow him to gather a sufficient quantity for his daily support. This begot a feeling of mutual sympathy among them,-such a feeling as should exist among those who are members of the family of Christ. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.7}

The parallel that the apostle draws should be well considered. In their case the tendency to hoard up that which they had gathered more than their actual present need, would be checked by the knowledge that on the morrow another ample supply would be given. So in our cases, the same God who supplied them with manna is our Father, and knows that we have need of food and clothing. See Matthew 6:30-34. We are commanded to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread,” and that command implies the fact that the prayer will be answered. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.8}

Again, those of the Jews who gathered more than they could use, and saved it for future need, had a mortifying check put upon their greed when they found their hoarded provision a mass of corruption. In our case the parallel still holds good, for however much property a man may acquire, he himself can use only a small part. As a certain millionaire said, when envied by a poor man, “You are as well off as I am, for all I get is my board and clothes.” In other words, with all his wealth, he could no more than live. Then, too, riches often vanish in a moment. Nothing can be devised that will ensure a man’s property from going as quickly as did the Israelites’ hoarded manna. And whether this misfortune should come or not, the end will certainly come soon, and then that which is treasured up will, in many cases at least, be worse than nothing. See James 5:1-3. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.9}

That this mutual distribution of means is what Paul designed is shown by verse 14: “But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that there abundance also may be a supply for your want; that there may be equality.” We can readily see that in the case of the Jews, such a course was the best one for them to pursue, since if they did lay up provision it would be to no profit, and by their accommodation to a needy friend, they would secure to themselves a like favor, should they be in similar circumstances. If we cannot as readily see that it is the best thing for Christians to do now, it is because we have not the faith in God that we should have, and are blind as to the future. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.10}

As we have already stated, Paul did not feel at liberty to make any commands in the matter of giving, but to appeal to their sense of obligation, that what they gave might be a “as a matter of bounty,” and not something forced from covetous dispositions. One of his strong points is that he has boasted of the forwardness of the churches in Achaia, and had used their readiness in pledging as an incentive for others. Now, said he, if some persons should come with me from Macedonia, and find that you have done little or nothing, we would both be put to shame. The Macedonians will think that I have deceived them, and they will think slightingly of you. We have here an instance of the remarkable tact which Paul exercised in dealing with the churches. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.11}

“But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap all so sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall read also bountifully.” 2 Corinthians 9:6. From this text nothing more or less can be made than that our present welfare, at least, depends largely upon the cheerfulness with which we give. A study of Luke 16:1-12 will convince us that our liberality is not an unimportant factor in determining our fitness for our future inheritance. Not that we can buy Heaven; but one who has not so vivid a sense of the magnitude of Christ’s sacrifice for him, that it will lead him to feel like following the same example, certainly has not much of the love of Christ in his heart. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.12}

The apostle continues: “And God is able to make all grace abound for you; that he always having all suffering in all things, may abound to every good work.” This is a plain statement that God is able to make that which they sow yield a bountiful harvest. How that will be accomplished is in part stated in verses 12-14: “For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men; and by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.” The idea is, that their service of love would produce abundant thanks to God, on the part of those who were benefited. It would also produce another result. It would move the saints to pray for their benefactors, and this would be of incalculable value to them. James says that the prayer of the righteous man avails much. The amount of money given, if retained for their own use, would be of far less value to them than would the prayers of the saints whose wants they might relieve. Barnes truly says that “he who has secured the pleadings of a child of God, however humble, in his behalf, has made a good use of his money.” {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 6.13}

“Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” This is an appropriate closing to this sermon on giving. The idea in the mind of the apostle was doubtless that expressed in the beginning; that a liberal spirit is due to the grace of God. But the grace of God is manifested in its fullness in giving his Son to die for man; and as Paul was speaking of gifts, his mind would naturally turn to the first and greatest of all of gifts. It is an “unspeakable gift;” no tongue can tell its value; even the angels are unable to comprehend it. And it is the only real gift that was ever made; for whereas our fellow mortals have a claim on our charity, men had no claim on God. “God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8. “Herein is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us.” 1 John 4:10. Compared with God’s gift to man, the most that we can do is nothing; and as the contemplation of a gift tends to reduce gratitude, we should stimulate our liberality by constant meditation on this unspeakable gift, and an earnest desire to have as clear a sense of its value as it is possible for the human mind to possess. E. J. W. {SITI January 3, 1884, p. 7.1}

**“The Sabbath-School. 2 Corinthians, Chaps. 11-13” The Signs of the Times, 10, 2.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST-JAN. 19.
2 Corinthians, Chaps. 11-13
Brief Comments on 2 Corinthians 11.**

“Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly; and indeed bear with me.” 2 Corinthians 11:1. The translators took unwarranted liberty in this case, as in some others, in inserting the word God when there is nothing in the original to indicate it. A literal translation would be, “Would that ye could bear with me;” or, “I wish that ye could bear with me.” This would properly represent the apostle, and not make it appear that he was in the habit of making a strong appeal to God on every slight location. This item should be emphasized, and carefully noted, in order that none may think that they have apostolic example for such appeals. Very many persons who would be shocked at any intimation that they are profane, are really guilty of violating the third commandment. That precept says, “Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.” That is, The name of the Lord must never be spoken unless it is absolutely necessary. Repeating oaths that others have uttered; a light use of the sacred name of the Deity in ordinary conversation; very frequent repetition of this name even in prayer; and an appeal to God in any ordinary occasion,-these are all violations of the third commandment. We may be assured that Paul was never guilty of taking the name of the Lord in vain. {SITI January 10, 1884, p. 21.1}

In this chapter and the following one, the apostle enters into a commendation of himself. He was forced to do this for the sake of the cause, and not for any personal consideration. The second and third verses give this reason for this boasting. It was his intense love for those who have accepted the truth under his labors, and his fear that they would be led astray, that moved him to do it. Someone was trying to overthrow the faith of the Corinthians, by setting forth that Paul was an impostor. If the people should lose their confidence in Paul, all his preaching would go for nothing. But he knew that he had been sent by the Lord, and had preached the truth; and rather than have been seduced from their allegiance, he reluctantly vindicated his claim to be an inspired apostle. On verse 2, Dr. Barnes says: “The allusion here, according to Doddridge, is to the custom among the Greeks ‘of having an officer whose business it was to educate and form young women, especially those of rank and figure, designed for marriage, and then to present them to those who were to be their husbands; and if this officer through negligence permitted them to be corrupted between the espousals and the consummation of the marriage, great blame would fall upon him.’ Such a responsibility Paul felt.” There never was a man who had more of which he might boast, than Paul had, and there are few who do less. His humility is apparent even in the midst of his enforced self-commendation, and shows that it was others, and not self, of whom he was thinking. {SITI January 10, 1884, p. 21.2}

“For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.” Verse 4. Most commentators think that this means that if the one who was seeking to supplant Paul could offer to them a more powerful Saviour, and more exalted spiritual advantages than he had done, they would be excusable for following the new comer. But there is no pronoun expressed in the Greek, and the translators have placed the pronoun “me” in the margin. This, we are inclined to think, should be inserted in the text, so that the last clause would read, “ye might well bear with me.” The next verse seems to make this necessary. Even if another Jesus, and another gospel were preached to them, Paul argues that they ought to still bear with him; “for,” says he, “I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.” This was a good reason why they should be slow to accept the teachings of another in preference to his. {SITI January 10, 1884, p. 21.3}

“But though I be rude in speech, and yet not in knowledge.” Verse 6. Paul’s traducers had evidently sought to weaken his hold on the Corinthians, by sneering at his manner of speaking. Paul does not deny that his speech was rude, *i.e.*, unpolished, but he claims with truth that his manner of speaking did not in the least affect the truth of what he preached. From his childhood Paul had doubtless been familiar with the Greek language, but it could not be expected that he would speak it with all the polish of a native Greek. Corinth occupied somewhat the same position that Paris does in modern times. Its inhabitants prided themselves on the elegance of their language, and could be easily led to ridicule one whose speech showed that he was not a native of the metropolis. “Critics profoundly acquainted with the Greek language remark that while there is great energy of thought and of diction in the writings of Paul; while he chooses or coins most expressive words, yet there is ever a want of Attic elegance of manner, and of the smoothness and beauty which were so grateful to a Grecian ear.”-*Barnes*. This attempt to weaken Paul’s influence by ridiculing his straightforward, terse language, shows clearly the contemptible spirit that actuated his opposers. Such men have their successors at the present day. {SITI January 10, 1884, p. 21.4}

It is not opposers alone who criticize to their own and others’ detriment. Many professors often lose the greater part of a valuable discourse, by letting their minds dwell upon some inaccuracies in the language of the speaker; for they will stop to note some statement that might be construed to mean exactly the opposite of what the speaker intended. And while they are thus engaged, they are oblivious to golden truths which are being uttered. Persons with such a critical turn of mind as that are to be pitied. They feed on husks, and miss the wholesome, nourishing grain. Instead of cultivating such a disposition, they should seek to get rid of it as quickly as possible, and learn to “desire the sincere milk of the word,” that they may grow thereby. {SITI January 10, 1884, p. 21.5}

“Have I committed an offense in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?” Verse 7. This verse contains a most delicate yet pointed reproof, and at the same time a vindication of Paul’s own integrity. He had not accepted anything from the Corinthians, but had been supported by other churches, especially those of Macedonia, and had also contributed to his own support, by manual labor. It seems that the Corinthian church had been negligent of Paul’s wants, and had willingly allowed others to provide for him. But while rebuking the church for this neglect of a plain duty, he declares that he will still keep himself from being burdensome to any; not because he does not love them, but because he is determined that his captious critics shall have no occasion of accusing him of trying to enrich himself at the expense of his converts. {SITI January 10, 1884, p. 21.6}

We cannot get the full force of Paul’s language in verses 7-9 without reading verses 12 and 13 of the next chapter. Continuing the same subject, he says: “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.” From this, as well as from many other passages, we learn that it is a privilege as well as a duty for the churches to contribute to the support of the gospel. Indeed, an absolute necessity, for in this same epistle Paul says that “He which soweth sparingly shall reap all so sparingly.” He here has reference to money, and it naturally follows that he who neglects to sow will surely fail to reap. Paul had not urged the Corinthians to the employment of this privilege in his case, and he humbly says, “forgive me this wrong.” And now we can see how completely he turns the tables upon his accusers in chapter 11:7. He shows them that the only thing in which he can be said to be inferior to the other apostles is the fact that he supported himself; and while the members of the Corinthian church allowed him to do that which in reality exalted him above all others, they were proving themselves to be inferior to other churches. Most churches are very ready to forgive an offense of this kind on the part of their minister; but if the Corinthians were not more active in supporting the cause of God after this, they must have been obtuse and careless in the extreme. Let modern church-members take good heed to the apostle’s delicate reproof, lest they show themselves to be inferior, and thus lose a great blessing. {SITI January 10, 1884, p. 21.7}

In verse 13 Paul declares that those who have been seeking occasions against him are “false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.” And lest any should be inclined to doubt this statement, thinking it impossible that impostors could so successfully personate true apostles, he adds: “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness.” {SITI January 10, 1884, p. 21.8}

Some persons make a great ado when a professor, and especially a minister, is found to be a rascal, and would make the Christian religion responsible for the misdeeds of all who may profess to be its followers. The fact that the fall of a professed Christian, be he minister or layman, is so loudly heralded by unbelievers, is a compliment to the cause which they despise, for it proves that they expect better things of Christian professors. But why should it be thought a strange thing that bad men should be in the church, and even in the ministry? Do men express surprise when they find a wolf in the sheepfold? Do they not expect that the wolf will go, if he can, where he can inflict the most injury on the flock? Would they not be more surprised if he should willingly stay outside? Then why should they marvel that wicked men seek to accomplish their master’s work by the same methods? Satan himself appears as an angel of light, and he is able to help his servants to play the hypocrite to perfection also. Every valuable coin is counterfeited, but the base coin does not make the truth any less valuable. {SITI January 10, 1884, p. 21.9}

While the gospel ministry is the most exalted of any calling, and the true minister of Christ is worthy of esteem and affection, a man should not be received, nor all that he says believed, simply because he ranks as a minister. No one need be deceived, if he will only apply the proper test. John says: “Beloved, believed not every spirit [teacher], but try the spirits whether they are of God; for many false profits are gone out into the world.” 1 John 4:1. And the prophet Isaiah gives the rule by which we are to try them: “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20. Although it is the office of preachers to handle the word of God, and explain it to the people, we are not to throw away reason, and accept everything that they may teach, simply because they speak with authority. We are to sanctify the Lord in our hearts, as much for the purpose of being able to discern between truth and error, as to be able to tell the reason of our hope. {SITI January 10, 1884, p. 21.10}

The minister may be far superior to his flock in intellectual endowments, if God is able to give spiritual discernment so that the humblest may be able to judge correctly as to the truth of what is preached. Many at the present time seek to excuse themselves for observing the first day instead of the seventh day, which God commanded, on the ground that many learned ministers of the gospel teach and practice first-day observance. This excuse is often made as a last resort, when the person is really convinced of the truth. Like the ostrich that hides its head in the sand and thinks itself secure from its pursuers, they seem to imagine that the error of their teachers, whether ignorant or willful, will shield them from the wrath of God. Such ones should remember that Paul’s words are as true of lay members as of ministers, that their “end shall be according to their works.” See also Romans 14:10-12; Revelation 20:12; 22:12. E. J. W. {SITI January 10, 1884, p. 22.1}

**“General Meeting at Healdsburg” The Signs of the Times, 10, 5.**

E. J. Waggoner

This meeting, continuing from the 3rd to the 13th, was in many respects the best meeting ever held in this State. The attendance was even better than was anticipated, as meetings in California in the winter season are not usually very well attended. However, nearly all the churches in the central and northern part of the State were represented at this one. {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 73.1}

Four interesting meetings of the Tract and Missionary Society were held; even this number did not afford an opportunity for transacting all the business that should have been considered. Any one who attends the sessions of our Conference and our Missionary Society year after year, in other States as well as in this, cannot fail to be impressed with the fact that this is a growing work. Every year we are increasing our facilities, and broadening our plans for work, and still we fall far short of the necessities of the case. The progress of the cause within the last year alone, should teach us that God is leading in this work, and that he is only waiting for us to manifest our faith in a practical matter, in order to grant us his blessing in still greater abundance. We must not limit the work of God, for his plans are far in advance of what our feeble faith has been able to grasp. {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 73.2}

The resolutions that were passed recognized the fact that the territories adjoining the Pacific Coast States afford a large field for the carrying on of missionary work by correspondence. These territories are being rapidly settled by a good class of people, and there is as yet no reason for those of our people who cannot go into the harvest-field in person, to think that there is nothing for them to do. {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 73.3}

Besides this, the representatives of the various churches made earnest calls for help, not alone in the churches, but in the adjoining country. A gratifying feature of these calls was that, with few exceptions, those making the call pledged themselves to care for any minister who might be sent to their locality, and also to give their own time to visiting and canvassing. It is a source of regret that the scarcity of laborers makes it impossible for more than one in twenty of the calls for ministerial help to receive immediate attention. We are not sure, however, but that this is in the order of God, that our people may give themselves individually to the work. Each one must pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers, and must realize the obligation resting upon him to do his part toward answering his own prayer. The work must largely be done by corresponding, canvassing, and Bible-reading, and could all the brethren and sisters in the State have been present as the appeals for help came in, we are sure that the number taking the special course at the College would now be doubled. {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 73.4}

A class for practical instruction in the art of canvassing was organized by Eld. W. C. White, which met as often as the frequency of other meetings will allow. Those who attended these exercises came much Bible information as to how to properly present the SIGNS, *Good Health*, etc. Canvassing is getting to be an important factor in the advancement of the Third Angel’s Message, and the canvasser needs a special preparation for the work, as well as does the minister. Nothing that can be used to assist in spreading the light of the truth should be lightly esteemed. {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 73.5}

There were but eight sermons delivered during the whole ten days’ meeting,-one each by Elders Healey and Boyd, two by the Editor of the SIGNS, and four by Mrs. E. G. White. Although these sermons were listened to with great attention by many not of our faith, their object was not especially to unfold doctrine, but to give instruction in vital godliness, and stir up the minds of believers to an appreciation of the importance of the present hour. The fact that we are now living in the antitypical day of atonement, and that Christ, our high priest, will soon cease pleading for sinners, was emphasized, and made a deep impression, which we hope will be lasting. If we could keep this solemn thought constantly in our minds, what carefulness it would produce in our daily life, and what zeal in the Master’s work! As in the typical day of atonement, we should afflict our souls, and humble our souls before God. {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 73.6}

A noted feature of this meeting was the Bible-readings, of which there were thirteen. These were upon the following subjects: Second Advent, Sabbath, Spiritual Gifts, Tithing, and the Sanctuary. The deepest interest was manifested in these readings, and much good was done. Many who had not previously paid tithes, were fully convinced of their duty in this respect, and publicly resolved to pay to the Lord his dues. An aged gentleman from the East was detained in the place during the meetings, and attended regularly. At the close he said that although he was at first much prejudiced against the views of Seventh-day Adventists, the constant appeal “to the law and to the testimony,” had completely disarmed him. The knowledge that the seventh day is the Sabbath, and expressed his intention to walk in the light. There can be no doubt that Bible-readings, judiciously conducted, are destined to become a powerful auxiliary in spreading the knowledge of the truth. When brought face to face with a plain “Thus saith the Lord” on every point, candid persons cannot do otherwise than yield assent. As the gentleman above-mentioned said, “An infidel might raise objections, but a believer in the Bible certainly cannot gainsay such testimony.” {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 73.7}

The prayer and social meetings were, from the first, seasons of special interests. Each morning, except Sabbath, a special meeting was held at six o’clock. The first two were simply for the ministers and missionary workers; after that all were invited. Another one was held each day at nine o’clock A.M. At all of the social meetings Sister White was present, contributing largely to the ultimate success of the meeting. Her plain and pointed testimony was well received, and the Spirit of the Lord moved many to make humble confession of past wrongs. Special labor was put forth for the spiritual advancement of the Healdsburg Church. Some difficulties of long standing were happily adjusted, the brethren and sisters resolving henceforth to love not “in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” All felt that if this had been the only object gained, the meeting would have been a grand success. We hope that the earnest exhortation is to keep the mind fixed upon Christ, that the increase in knowledge of his love may produce corresponding love and humility in the heart, may be acted upon by all. {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 74.1}

On the last Sabbath afternoon, after a sermon by Sister White on Love to God, fifty-five persons came forward, asking the prayers of God’s people. The number included both backsliders and those making their first start in the Christian life, and of all ages, from the little child to the gray-haired man. These repaired to a side room in the building, where every one bore a good testimony. {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 74.2}

The closing social meeting on Sunday morning was one of the best we ever attended. The spirit of thanksgiving to God prevailed, and the meeting was a veritable praise service. “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me,” says the Lord. As Christians we do not praise the Lord enough. The idea seems to prevail that we must overcome all sins before we have any right to praise God. But the truth is, that we cannot overcome the first without the help and blessing of God, and as soon as we feel the least of his blessing, it is our duty to praise him. By praising God for what we have, we keep our hearts warm, and in a condition to receive more of his blessing. Surely “It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord.” {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 74.3}

At the close of the service, several expressed a desire for baptism, and after the next service, the congregation repaired to the water, where eighteen souls were buried with Christ by baptism. Of this number, ten unite with the Healdsburg Church; of the latter number, seven are College students. The series of meetings closed with a sermon by the Editor of the SIGNS, on “The Rest that remains for the people of God.” {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 74.4}

Every part of the meeting was possible, and its influence on the cause in this State can never be fully known until the Judgment. We hope that many other churches in this Conference may have the privilege of a like experience. E. J. W. {SITI January 31, 1884, p. 74.5}