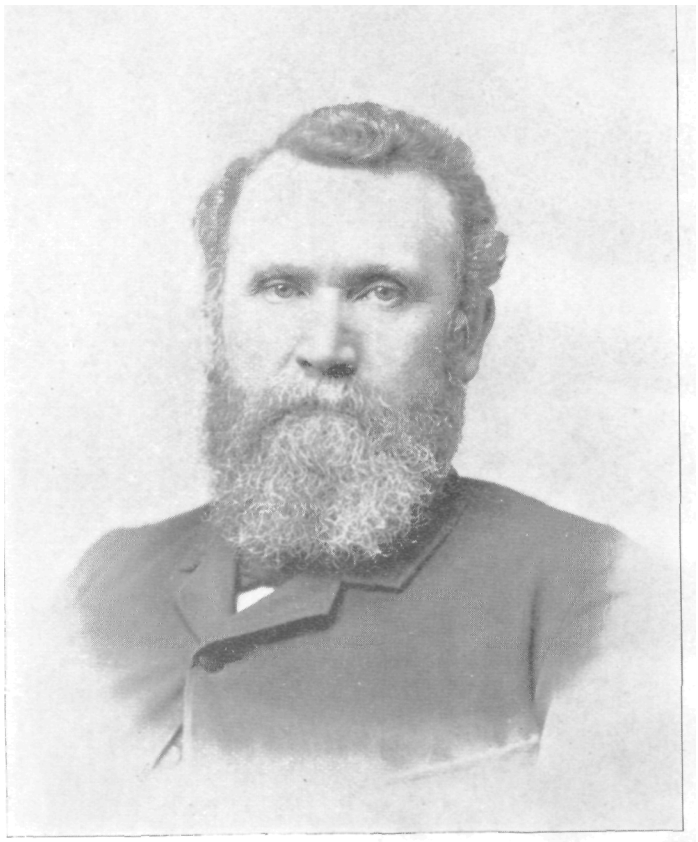

Very Truly,
Robert Moffett

# SEEKING THE OLD PATHS

AND OTHER SERMONS

BY

ROBERT MOFFETT.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

E. V. ZOLLARS, LL. D.

AND A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY

JOHN R. GAFF, A. M.

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TO

MY FAITHFUL AND DEVOTED WIFE, WHO HAS BEEN THE DUTIFUL HOME-KEEPER DURING THE YEARS OF THE AUTHOR'S ALMOST CONSTANT WORK IN THE FIELD, AND WHO DESERVES A CROWN OF HONOR,

THIS VOLUME IS

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

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# INTRODUCTION.

BY E. V. ZOLLARS, LL. D.

THE personality of an author, the period of life when the writings were produced, his historic place in the religious body with which he is identified, and the subjects discussed, determine very largely the practical value of a volume of sermons. The forecast for this volume must, therefore, be peculiarly favorable, since these factors enter into its production at their maximum strength. The consideration of the value of these factors as they influence these sermons must, therefore, both awaken a deep interest in the reader, and create a large expectation which, we venture to say, will be more than met by a careful reading of the following pages.

Robert Moffett is a man of strong and striking personality. He is a commanding figure among the preachers of the Disciples. For many years, as the Secretary of State and National Missionary organizations, he has been prominently before the great people with which he is associated, and he knows them as perhaps few other men now living know them, and is known by them as few men have ever been known. He has, always and everywhere, commanded the respect and admiration of the most intelligent and thoughtful people. That he possesses superior gifts of mind and heart is a fact universally recognized. He has what may be termed a well-poised mind. It cannot be stirred by petty questions, such as occupy attention of small souls, but it is awakened by great

thoughts, and, when aroused, it moves with a powerful momentum. He is logical, clear, incisive, original, and withal exceedingly forceful in Ms presentations of truth. He never skims the surface, but dives deep, grasping the great underlying principles, and tracing them outward into their practical relations and applications. He is especially quick in his perceptions of spiritual verities. His powers of heart are no less striking than his powers of mind. Such, I think, will be the verdict of all who road these sermons.

Historically, the author belongs to the second generation of preachers among the Disciples. The first generation, consisting of Alexander Campbell, and his father, Barton Warren Stone, and Walter Scott, and their co-laborers, were a remarkable body of men; admirably qualified, both by nature and training, for inaugurating the great "Restoration Movement." No other body of men can or ought to usurp their place in the public eye, and in the popular heart; but they, were succeeded by a body of men no loss remarkable for intellectual vigor and spiritual power, who did their work with the same thoroughness and efficiency. They are not only highly respected, and greatly admired for their abilities, but they are profoundly loved for their work's sake. Their names, which have become familiar household words, are synonyms of strength and power.

Prominent among this second generation of preachers, and a typical man of the class, stands Robert Moffett. He possesses, in a marked degree, the qualities that have made both the first and second generations efficient in the Lord's service. The spiritual and organic union of the people of God, which constitutes the dominant thought of the Disciples and serves as their differentiating principle, he accepts without qualification or mental reservation, and he has

been able to develop, logically and with great clearness, the subordinate truths that take root in this great primary idea. To the great underlying principle, and to the no less remarkable practical method by which its accomplishment was sought, namely,—a return in letter and spirit to the Christianity of the Apostolic age,—he has been as true as the needle to the pole. The divine authority and all-sufficiency of the Scriptures, the Lordship of Jesus, the name, creed, and ordinances of the church,—all in fact that necessarily cluster around the great central plea, and serve to make it a practical possibility,—he has most firmly grasped and most tenaciously held. The stimulating power of a great idea is forcibly illustrated in these sermons. They arc clearly the product of a mind whose native fecundity has been greatly increased by the fertilizing and clarifying power of epoch-making truth.

The representative preachers among the Disciples, both of the first and second generations, have been characterized by such strength and vigor in their presentation of the Gospel, such a comprehensive grasp of the Bible, and especially such a lucid view of the plan of salvation, that they constitute a distinct and clearly marked class of ministers. Their sermons possess such clearness, such simplicity, such breadth and accuracy of scriptural knowledge, in short, such elements of excellence and true greatness that, as a class, they stand unexcelled. The sermons of Robert Moffett, published in this volume, are excellent examples of the distinct and striking class to which they belong.

The third thing that tends to give these sermons peculiar value, is the fact that they embody the very cream of a lifetime of thought and reflection. The very best thoughts of a great preacher gradually crys-

talize and become embodied in a few masterly and characteristic sermons. Such sermons have great practical value. They have the penetration and sweep of vision that come from long continued study, and they inevitably exert a broadening and quickening influence upon all who read them. This must be the effect of this volume of sermons.

Between certain minds and certain truths there seems to be a peculiar affinity; and thus it comes to pass that certain men become the exponents of certain characteristic thoughts. He speaks with power who utters the truths to which his own heart responds, and which, in a sense, are native to his own soul. Such a man always brings a message. In such preaching there is nothing mechanical and perfunctory, but the words are as coals of fire taken from off the altar, and they kindle a flame in the hearts wherein they Such a preacher speaks as one having authority. The sermons of this volume are of this type. The thinker is deeply in love with the thoughts he expresses. He sees and feels their greatness and importance, and his sympathy for the truths he utters is contagious. The heart is touched and the soul is kindled.

The importance of the subjects discussed need not be dwelt upon here. This will be best understood by a careful reading of the volume itself. A mere enumeration of the titles of these sermons would give but a meagre conception of the great subjects treated, and the great truths so clearly brought forth. If I mistake not, it will be the verdict of all who read these sermons, that subjects of vast and far-reaching importance, and truths of profound import, are set forth in a masterly way.

# PREFACE.

THIS volume is published in response to repeated requests. Among others, less formal but not less urgent, the Disciples' Ministerial Association of Cleveland, Ohio, passed a resolution urging the author, in strongly complimentary terms, to prepare for publication a typical selection of his sermons.

Being unaccustomed to writing his sermons he now finds it impossible to put them on paper just as he has been in the habit of preaching them. There is lacking the reflex influence, the inspiration, of the attentive and responsive audience. Nor is it possible to preserve in the printed page the personality and power of any genuine preacher. For these reasons, some who have heard him with delight in the great congregations may feel a certain lack as they now read the very sermons that once thrilled them. But the form and substance of the divine doctrine are preserved and, after all, that is the important matter.

Only two of the sermons in this volume have been published. It may be of interest to know that the one entitled "What Hath God Wrought?" was prepared especially for the great Jubilee Missionary Convention held in Cincinnati, October 13-20, 1899, and was delivered in the Central Christian Church on the Sunday of that great gathering.

# BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY JOHN R. GAFF, A. M.

THOSE who personally know the author of these sermons, and who have enjoyed the pleasure of his acquaintance and the blessings of his ministry and work, will attach, perhaps, little value to a brief biographical sketch written by another. The best biography is that written by himself in their hearts, and on the great religious movement of which his work has been a conspicuous and important part.

It matters much less where, geographically, a man comes into the world, than how he comes into its life as a living force, or what ho does and becomes in it. Heredity and environment condition his character and power. Robert Moffett was born in Laporte County, Ind., November 9th, 1835, the youngest of the three sons of Garner and Mary J. B. Moffett, who moved to Indiana in 1831 from Washington Co., Va. In 1836 the family moved to Cherry Grove, Carroll Co., 111., and there, amid a deeply religious and well cultured community, Robert grew into manhood. Garner Moffett was a man of prominence and influence throughout and beyond the limits of his county, and was held in high esteem for his character and usefulness. He was a pioneer among the Disciples of northern Illinois, and, though a farmer, was a preacher of no mean ability, and was influential in laying the foundations and caring for the churches of that region. His wife was a woman of sterling virtues and of devoted religious character—a mother in Israel—

whose influence and example left an abiding impression upon the church and community. From this parentage Robert received the priceless inheritance of a healthy physical organization, a strong and well-balanced mental constitution, and a religious and intellectual training, in which were laid the foundations of his strong character and useful life.

The year 1854 Robert spent in preparatory studies at Hiram, Ohio, and graduated from Bethany College, W. Va., in the class of 1859, having sat four years at the feet of the Sage of Bethany. Soon after graduation he married Miss Lucy A. Green, of Summit County, Ohio,—a daughter of the late venerable Almon B. Green,—who, throughout his entire ministry, has been a helpmate worthy of a crown of honor among women. Of their union nine children were born, six of whom have passed into that rest that awaits the awakening to the endless life.

He began preaching while yet a student at Bethany College and was there ordained to the ministry in 1859. He spent nearly a year evangelizing in northwestern Illinois, and in June, 1860, settled with the church in Wooster, Ohio, as pastor, where he remained nearly five years. In January, 1865, he was called to Mt. Vernon, Ohio, where he filled a successful ministry of five years, when he was appointed Corresponding Secretary of the Ohio Christian Missionary Society. In May, 1870, he went to Bedford, Ohio, where he preached three years in connection with his work as Corresponding Secretary. In 1875 he moved to Cleveland, where he still resides. In October, 1882, he was made Corresponding Secretary of the American Christian Missionary Society, filling the office till 1892, continuing, in 1893, as assistant, spending the fall of '93 and spring of '94 evangelizing, mostly in Canada. From August, '94, to June, '95 he was assistant

Secretary of the Ohio Christian Missionary Society, when he was again chosen Corresponding Secretary, retiring, finally, in July, '99, after a continued service in the Society work of nearly thirty years, having successfully and faithfully tilled every position into which he has been called, and retaining the confidence and the affection of his brethren to the end of his long service. His physical power of endurance, his persevering industry, his evenly balanced mind and temperament,—giving him quick insight into men and things,—his large common sense, and his faithful devotion to duty have made him an invaluable counsellor and worker for the Societies and the churches.

As a preacher, he is strongly affirmative, addressing both the mind and the heart. He has large sympathy, fine imagination, strong and well trained logical powers and a vocabulary of chaste, and vigorous Anglo-Saxon words; and though simple in style, there are times when he carries his audience through grand marches and sublime flights of eloquence. A Baptist minister, who heard him frequently, said to the writer, "In listening to his theme, we forget the man"—a compliment, indeed.

# SEEKING THE OLD PATHS.

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"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."—JEREMIAH vi: 16.

THIS is not the counsel of human wisdom. We have no reason to expect better things in the old than in the new paths. We do not advise the farmer to cut down his wheat the old way. We do not advise the school director to put the old books in the schools. Murray's Grammar and Dibol's Arithmetic are out of date. We do not go back to Sir Isaac Newton for the best lessons in Astronomy. We recognize that man is a progressive creature—that this generation is wiser than the last, and that it is folly to expect better things in the old than in the new paths. Why, then, do we find counsel like this in the oldest and best of books? Simply because the paths God marks out for our feet are perfect paths. The "Old Covenant," which God gave to Israel, when he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt— fifty days after the first passover—was perfect for its purpose, and any departure from it was imperfection and sin. Likewise the "New Covenant," announced by Peter, fifty days after the last passover—the day of Pentecost—is a perfect covenant. No man can im-

prove the Gospel, and no man can add to or subtract from the Word that is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." No man can teach God wisdom. Books have been written, and lectures have been delivered against Christianity, when the books would not have appeared, nor would the lectures have been delivered, if their authors had first stopped to inquire—What is Christianity? Several years ago a company of gold seekers, crossing the plains, came late one afternoon to a stream of water, and, being exceedingly thirsty, rushed to the water, only to be sadly disappointed, because the water was brackish and bitter. While the rest of the company were resting and grieving over the disappointment, one man wandered up the stream and came quite unexpectedly to the fountain whence it sprang, and here he was rejoiced to find the water as sweet and refreshing as the old spring at home. He wondered how a stream so bitter could flow from a fountain so sweet. Passing back over the ground he noticed here and there little streams bringing, from other sources, the bitter waters which had contaminated all the stream below. So Christ and the inspired apostles gave us the pure waters of life; men have been pouring into the the stream human traditions, and religious philosophies and speculative theologies, and infidels have mistaken these for Christianity. If we want to enjoy pure Christianity we will not find it short of Christ and the apostles, as recorded in the New Testament.

There is, however, a human tendency to set up man's wisdom against God's wisdom. Moses lifted up his voice of warning against a departure from the old paths, and not all his tearful pleading could keep the feet of Israel in the Lord's way; and over and over again God raised up prophets to warn them not to depart; and when they had wandered, to call them back into the old paths, wherein alone they could find "rest for their souls." Under the "New Covenant," how faithful the warnings of Paul against any departure from the word of Christ, and against the putting of man's wisdom, and so-called science, and human philosophies in place of the pure Gospel! And the voices of Luther and Wesley and Campbell have been in harmony with the voice of God, calling the spiritual Israel from human paths to the old paths of God; and perhaps the time will never come that God, in his providence, will not need to raise up men to keep our wandering feet in the right way.

God's men have always been radical men and "laid the axe at the root of the tree." They have never been satisfied to "heal the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, 'Peace, peace, when there is no peace.'" They were never troubled with what the world calls policy. Policy is like a bird flying through the forest, over this limb, under that one, dodging this snag, swiftly turning round that one—zigzaging its way through—any way to get through. Such policy is mean enough in politics; it is outrageous in religion. Principle is like the eagle that soars above the tree tops, fastens his eye on the

object, and goes straight to it. God's men have always been men of principle. Of course they were unpopular. Moses was unpopular when he lifted up the voice of warning. Elijah was unpopular and fled from the wrath of Jezebel; Jeremiah was unpopular and got into prison; John the Baptist lost his head; Paul had to cry out, "Have I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" Luther was unpopular; Wesley was unpopular; Campbell was unpopular. They who set out to reform the world meet no welcome from those needing the reform. The world is not beseeching you to come and reform it. Besides, the *onus probandi* rests with those who claim that the world needs reforming. God's men have the martyr's spirit. They put all sacrifices into the cost, and lift up no complaining voice.

No one questions that God, by His providence, raised up Luther, in the 16th century, to call the church back to the old paths. The Roman Catholic church had reversed the Divine order. In the days of the apostles it was, first, the Word of God, second, the church of God, and last, the minister, a servant of God and his church. Rome had put the priests, with the pope at their head, first; the church, second, and the Bible, last. The Bible really was lost to the people, and the priests had put themselves in the place of God. Luther's reformation was a *revolution*, putting the Word of God first, the church second, and the priest last—and of course was very distasteful to the priest.

In the 18th century John Wesley saw the need of greater zeal, enthusiasm and piety, growing out of

a heartfelt religion, that was everywhere lacking. The church was cold, formal, ritualistic, polluted, worldly—and far removed from the character of the church which flourished and conquered in the days of old path light and life. His, also, was a voice of reform for which the whole world should be grateful.

We come now to the main purpose of this address. We believe the religious body, numbering now about a million, and set down as "'Disciples of Christ" in the United States census, and having many institutions of learning and religious journals, and a growing literature—all of which compare favorably with those of other religious bodies—owe their existence to the spirit that moved Luther and Wesley to bring the church back to the old paths.

In the year 1807, Thomas Campbell moved from the north of Ireland to this country, and settled in Washington County, Pa. He was a minister of the Seceeder Presbyterian church, of marked ability, and was cordially received and assigned, by the synod, to the Presbytery of Chartiers in the western part of the state. Here he found himself pleasantly situated in the midst of old friends and neighbors who had preceded him to the new world. They knew his worth and took pleasure in impressing their own high estimate of Ms qualifications and personal character upon their neighbors of other religious parties. Mr. Campbell grew in popularity with his brethren and with the people, and came to be regarded as the most learned and talented preacher in that Presbytery.

In the old world he had labored, with some success, to unite the Burghers and Anti-Burghers of his own denomination, and had come to believe that these divisions among his own people were without sufficient reason. "In his new field he found that many religious people, of differing faiths, were thrown together into thinly settled regions, and were living without the enjoyment of ministerial service, and other means of grace. On a visit to a few scattered members above Pittsburg, his sympathies were strongly aroused in behalf of some who belonged to other branches of the Presbyterian family, and, in his preparation sermon, lamented the existing divisions, and invited his pious hearers, without respect to party differences, to enjoy the communion season then providentially afforded them." This action, and subsequent conversations, and discussions with Mr. Campbell, convinced Mr. Wilson, the minister then in charge, that Thomas Campbell had little respect for "division walls," and that "he was disposed to relax too much the rigidness of ecclesiastic rules, and to cherish for other denominations feelings of fraternity." He felt it to be his duty, therefore, to present his case to the Presbytery, in the usual form of "libel," containing specified charges, chief of which was that Mr. Campbell "had failed to inculcate strict adherence to the church standard and usages, and had even expressed his disapproval of some things in said standard." His reply was conciliating, but set forth that he had said and done "none other things than those which our Divine Lord and his holy apostles have taught and enjoined to be

spoken and done by his ministering servants "—that he "had not taken upon himself to teach anything, as a matter of faith or duty, but what is already expressly taught and enjoined by divine authority. For what error or immorality ought I to be rejected, except it be that I refuse to acknowledge as obligatory upon myself, or to impress upon others, anything of divine obligation, for which I cannot produce a 'Thus saith the Lord?'" *

Here was manifest the spirit of the old path days when Peter and John said, "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." The Presbytery censured him, and the synod set aside the judgment on account of informalities, but stated that they regarded his answer as "evasive and unsatisfactory, and highly equivocal upon great and important articles of revealed religion." He tried to continue in the ministry with these people, but the spirit of sectarianism so completely overruled the spirit of Christ, that he became satisfied that "bigotry, corruption and tyranny were qualities inherent in all clerical organizations," and severed his ministerial connection with the Seceeder Church. This did not, however, close his ministerial labors. "The novelty and force of the plea he had made for Christian liberality and Christian union, upon the basis of the Bible, drew to him large numbers of ardent sympathizers, who continued to attend his ministrations wherever it was in his power to hold meetings."

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* The quotations in this address are chiefly from Richards' Memoirs and frequently abbreviated.

These meetings created a sentiment in favor of more concentrated action. "No separation from the religious parties was contemplated, and no bond of union, up to this time, had been proposed. They were held together by a vague sentiment of Christian union, retaining still their several connections with the denominations. At a general meeting of those devoted to the cause of union, Mr. Campbell spake with unusual force upon the many evils resulting from divisions in religious society—divisions that were as unnecessary as they were injurious—and caused by men substituting for the infallible Word, theories, opinions and speculations of their own. He insisted with great earnestness upon a return to the simple teaching of the Scriptures, and upon the entire abandonment of everything in religion for which there could not be produced a divine warrant, and proceeded to announce, in simple and emphatic terms, the rule upon which he understood they were then acting: 'That rule,' said he, 'is this: *That where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent?*'

This simple rule appeared at once to many of them as a new revelation. At one stroke it put out of sight and out of heart all human traditions, human creeds, religious theories and speculative theologies as bonds of union, and brought them face to face with the Word of God. This was henceforth to be their guide. Having this Word in their possession they must speak it faithfully. "Whatever private opinion might be entertained upon matters not clearly re-

vealed, must be enjoyed in silence, and no effort must be made to impress them upon others as bonds of fellowship." Union was practicable on the clearly revealed things of the Word of God, and still allowed the members the largest liberty of opinion concerning speculative questions.

One of the brethren present saw the difficulty of putting it into practice. "Mr. Campbell," said he, "if we adopt that as a *basis*, then there is an end to infant baptism"—a statement that caused a profound sensation. Mr. Campbell was not at this time convinced that this result would follow, but replied, "If infant baptism be not found in the Scripture, we can have nothing to do with it." This is important as showing that, at this time, the questions touching the subject, action and design of baptism had not received the attention they afterward claimed. Indeed it was not until three or four years after, that the father and son saw clearly that there is no warrant for infant baptism in the Scriptures. There were those who feared to go by a rule that might result in abandoning infant baptism, and ceased their attendance upon the meetings.

In August, 1809, "The Christian Association" was proposed, and organized a month later, "for the sole purpose of promoting simple evangelical Christianity, free from all mixture of human opinions and inventions of men." They expressly stated that "this society, by no means, considers itself a church, nor does it, at all, assume to itself powers peculiar to such a society; nor do the members, as such, consider themselves as standing connected in that relation,

* * but merely as voluntary advocates for church reformation." They also proposed "to encourage the formation of similar associations," and organized a committee to carry forward the objects of the Association.

Then followed the "Declaration" which was, in a sense, the constitution of the Association, and afterward "The Address," which set forth clearly the great aim of the movement "to come fairly and firmly to original ground, and take up things just as

the apostles left them," and in this way "become disentangled from the accruing embarrassments of intervening ages," and "stand upon the same ground on which the church stood at the beginning "—and so he made it evident that this work was to be a *Restoration,* rather than a *Reformation.*

Alexander Campbell, the son of Thomas Campbell, at this time had reached his majority, and at once informed his father that the purposes of the movement had won his heart, and that he would devote his life to the simple preaching of the Word; and that he had resolved to do this without fee or money compensation, a resolution which he adhered to throughout a long and successful ministry. A few years later he became the recognized leader of the movement.

Coming to see that the New Testament gives no sanction to infant baptism, and that immersion is the only baptism ordained by Jesus Christ, the Campbells and others were baptized June 12, 1812—the Baptist minister consenting to dispense with the usual "religious experience." Shortly after this the remaining

membership of the Brush Run Church, which had been organized the year before, followed this good example, and were baptized simply upon profession of faith in Christ; and so this church became a body of immersed believers, numbering about thirty in all. This made at least one bond of union with the Baptists, who repeatedly solicited them to join the Red Stone Association; and this they did, *as a church,* expressly stipulating "that they should be allowed to teach and preach whatever they learned from the Holy Scriptures, regardless of any creed or formula of Christendom;" and they were received, notwithstanding their remonstrance against all human creeds as bonds of union and communion amongst Christian churches.

It will be seen that a man like Alexander Campbell, having made up his mind to investigate every religious question *de novo,* and having always and everywhere the courage of his convictions, would not be apt to travel in Baptist ruts; and that his preaching would always be something different from the average Baptist sermon. And so it turned out that the next ten years of union with this Association were not always pleasant. Jealousy had something to do with the plottings of small men. He finally escaped their pursuit of his heresy by becoming the minister of a new church at Wellsburg, which church preferred affiliation with the Mahoning Association. This association was soon leavened with the new teaching of the Campbells and such able co-adjuters as Scott, Bentley, Henry and Hayden, and ceased, in time, to

be distinctively Baptist. It ceased to exist as a, Baptist Association in the year 1830. Having run hurriedly over this history, let us see what ground these good men had reached:

1. They had put into practice the Protestant principle that the Word of God, and especially the New Testament, is the all-sufficient and alone sufficient rule of faith and practice for Christians.

2. They had rejected all human traditions and human creeds, as bonds of union and communion. They could see but little difference between the Roman Catholic doctrine that the church, through its priesthood, is the only interpreter of Scripture, and the Protestant sectarian position, that the church, through her synods and councils, must interpret the Scriptures by prescribed formulas of faith. They recognized in human creeds the fruitful source of divisions in the church. They saw also that these creeds robbed the pulpit of its manhood, for frequently some of the clergy, in the council, had opposed certain formulas of doctrine as being unscriptural, but, having been outvoted, came home to preach for truth what they had said, in the council, was not true, and to ask the people to accept as truth what they themselves had opposed. Moreover, they recognized the utter absurdity of trying to settle what is truth by a vote. They saw, too, that Calvinists recognized Arminians as Christians, though they rejected Calvinism; and that Arminians recognized Calvinists as Christians, though they did not accept Arminianism. This was an admission that neither Calvinism nor Arminianism was necessary to

constitute a Christian, and so of all other isms that were dividing Christ's disciples. It was also an admission that it takes more to make a Calvinist or an Arminian than to make a Christian, and that that something more is the cause of division.

3. They had accepted the plainest and simplest interpretation as the meaning of the Word. And

4. They had resolved to follow where it might lead, no matter what cherished conviction or cherished practice they might be compelled to surrender.

You may ask why they needed to emphasize the simple fact "that the plainest and simplest interpretation of the Bible is its meaning?" In that day the methods of the clergy had succeeded in nothing so well as obscuring the meaning of God's Word, and creating the impression that it was all a mystery. There was little expository preaching. The minister took a text, many times without any reference to its context, and proceeded to "develop it.". One of the great achievements of the preacher was to choose an obscure text and develop it into something very wonderful—such texts as "Jacob sod pottage," and "They sewed fig leaves together." It was plain that this textuary preaching could never give the people a correct knowledge of the Scriptures. It was like a man trying to understand a mill by looking through a key hole. He sees wheels and bands in motion, and looks through another key hole and sees other wheels and bands in motion, and shakes his head and calls it all a mystery. The miller suggests that there is more mystery in his method than there is in the mill, and,

showing him the water pouring upon the great wheel and setting it in motion, and how this wheel, by a system of bands and wheels, all having mechanical connection, puts into operation every part of the machinery, and how the wheat is carried to the rollers and ground into flour, the mystery gradually disappears. Of course he could not make a mill. There are many problems connected with its operations which he never could solve, but largely the mystery has disappeared because he has studied the mill in the relation which one part sustains to another. I might throw upon this table every part of my watch, and I might deliver one hundred lectures upon the different things going to make up the watch, and yet give you little idea of a watch. Not until I tell you the relation of one wheel to another, and how all are adjusted to make a time-keeper, will you see a watch. Before this you have simply seen gold, and brass, and steel, and jewels, and springs. So the preacher may give a hundred instructive lectures, from as many texts of Scripture, without giving you any clear conception of the Bible. Not until he shows you the facts that combine to develop the great Scheme of Redemption; the Dispensations and Covenants, and the relation one sustains to another, "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear";—not until he shows when this particular Scripture was written, to whom it was written, of whom or what it was written, and why it was written, will you understand the lesson the Spirit meant to communicate.

Along with this textuary preaching there was a good deal of confusion arising from the preacher's preconceived idea of what theology *must* be taught. The Calvinist said, "All truth must harmonize; the Bible is true; Calvinism is true; therefore, Calvinism and the Bible must harmonize." The Arminian and Universalist came to the same therefore by the same process. And when the obvious meaning of a passage seemed to agree with the ism, the obvious meaning was accepted; but when the obvious meaning of the passage contradicted the ism, the speaker exercised his ingenuity to force an agreement.

Everything partakes of the color of the medium through which we look. Seven men may honestly swear to the color of an object—one saying it is red, another it is green, another it is yellow, and so on, and the eighth man may be regarded as very presumptuous in saying they are all wrong, and that they will see the object, as he sees it, if they will only take off their different colored glasses. The difficulty is to get rid of the theological glasses. Some have on Calvin's, some Wesley's, some Luther's; and if not these, their father's or grandfather's. Perhaps no one comes to the Bible entirely free from preconceived ideas as to what must be its meaning. We need to come, not with the question, what *must* it teach? but with the question, what *does* it teach? and with the prayer, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things in Thy law."

Along with this mysticism there was a good deal of "spiritualizing." For a good illustration of this

method, take the parable of the Good Samaritan. This parable was given to answer the question, "Who is my neighbor?" And from it we learn this practical lesson: That to be a neighbor to anyone, we must help him when he needs help, without asking the question whether he be friend or foe. This is a valuable lesson that has much to do with the salvation of souls, as well as the relief of suffering bodies. But one of these semi-inspired preachers developed it into a very marvelous theology: The man that fell among thieves was Adam; the fall was sin; the Levite was the Patriarchal age that had no mercy; the priest was the Jewish age, too selfish to help; the good Samaritan was Christ; pouring in oil and wine and binding up the wounds was the process of regeneration; taking him to the inn was joining the church; taking care of him was pastoral care; the two pennies were the old and new Testaments; and his coming to reward the host was the second coming of Christ to reward the faithful; and the people opened their eyes and ears in amazement that the preacher had found so much, where they had found simply an answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" The Campbells felt it their duty to call in question these methods of Biblical interpretation as being purely fanciful. We would not be allowed such freedom with any other book. Lamar, in substance, gives this good parallel illustration from the battle of Waterloo: "This history has a mystical meaning; Napoleon means the devil; his army, the angels of darkness; Wellington means the Prince of Peace; his army, the angels of light. The

battle was the conflict between the devil and his hosts on the one side, and the Prince of Peace and His hosts on the other. The defeat of Napoleon and his army was the defeat of the devil and his hosts, and the banishment of Napoleon to the isle of St. Helena was the banishment of the devil to the bottomless pit. The literary world would laugh at such a mystical interpretation of history. There are two very serious objections to it: first, it is not true, and this is quite a sufficient objection to most things, and second, it is not authorized by any known law of interpretation."

It is needless to say that the men who set out to be governed wholly by the Word of God, spent a good deal of thought and time upon the right meaning, and the right division of the Bible. Many of the older brethren trace their conversion to the oft-handled text, "Rightly dividing the Word of Truth;" in the light of which the Bible seemed to be a new book. Many skeptics, who, under the old style of spiritualizing texts, had come to regard the Bible as an old fiddle, on which you could play any theological tune you pleased, had their doubts removed by the more reasonable method of interpretation adopted by the "Reformers," and rejoiced in Christ as their Savior. Hundreds of people, who could neither understand nor accept the speculative theologies of the time, came to see the beautiful simplicity of the Gospel, and were among the first to give themselves to Christ, and their hearty support to the new movement.

There were those who felt, that, to set aside human creeds as bonds of fellowship was to "unsettle every-

thing and settle nothing." But these earnest men were not simply destructionists—they were constructionists, as well. Many a reformer's work has ended with pulling down. These men were able to build up. When sincere men inquired for a foundation, it was soon found in the words of Christ, "On this Rock I will build My church;" Matt. xvi, 16-17. And this brought to the front the *distinctive* principle of the reform. Evidently, "Jesus, the Christ the Son of the living God," is the Rock on which the Church of Christ must be built; and how can we build on Christ except by faith in Him? The distinctive principle was this: *The faith that saves is a personal trust in a personal Redeemer*. The negative statement was this: *The faith that saves is not faith in Calvinism, in Arminianism, nor even in true theology, much less in speculative theology*. Mr. Campbell said, "No man can be saved by the belief of any theory, true or false. No man will be damned for the disbelief of any theory. This position I hold worthy to be printed in majestic capitals."

You will see how such a statement would create a stir among those who had long believed that theological isms were necessary to church membership, and necessary to entrance into heaven, as well. Not *what* you believe, but in *whom* do you believe? Christ had said, "You believe in God, believe also in me." The saving faith must center in Christ as a personal Savior. The confession of Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," is the one fundamental article of faith for the Church of Christ.

Hence the apostles preached Christ. Not one of their sermons set forth the dogmas that may be found in human creeds. When Philip preached to the Ethiopian he began at a certain text and "preached unto him Jesus." He doubtless proved that He was the long-looked-for Messiah—the Prophet, the Priest, the King—the one Savior of men, with all authority in Heaven and on Earth; and, when the anxious inquirer believed in Him with all his heart, he was baptized forthwith. There is no record that any of the candidates for baptism in apostolic days were required to narrate an "experience," or to give assent to the truth of dogmatic theology, or to say that they were conscious that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven their sins. Alexander Campbell had given prominence to this fact when he stipulated with the minister that he must be baptized simply upon his profession of faith in Jesus the Christ, the Son of God.

This confession is full of meaning. Jesus is the Christ—the Anointed—the Prophet, the Priest, the King. He is my Teacher, and I will sit at His feet and learn His lessons; my Priest, and I will bring my sins to God through Him for atonement and reconciliation, whether I understand the philosophy of the atonement or not; my King, and I will put my neck under His yoke, and be always submissive to His will; He is the Son of God, and therefore the infallible Teacher, the infallible Priest, the infallible King, and I will give myself to Him as my Savior, without reserve, and worship and adore Him while I serve Him. There is more in this simple truth, having to do with duty and destiny,

than in all the human creeds you can string between here and the planet Jupiter. And while it is great enough for the king, and deep enough for the philosopher, it is also simple enough for the little child. Christ said, "Go preach the Gospel to every creature." Surely, it must have been a simple Gospel. The ignorant as well as the learned, the little child, as well as the adult, can make this simple confession of faith in Jesus. And do you think it is reasonable that Christ intended that a little child should be made to answer questions touching "total hereditary depravity," and "eternal election," and "eternal decrees," before being admitted to baptism?

Moreover, it was the departure from this one foundation—the foundation of which Paul speaks: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus the Christ"—that has created all the divisions in the Christian world. For illustration, suppose Mr. A. comes to the conclusion that faith in Jesus is not sufficient, because he thinks it is very important that the candidate for baptism should also believe that Jesus was born on the 25th day of December. So, after ascertaining that he believes in Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, he asks him whether he believes that Jesus was born on the 25th of December, and upon his affirmative answer, baptizes him. Mr. B. calls this in question. He calls it heterodoxy. He believes the birthday of Christ was on the 6th day of January, and, regarding it as important, he puts the two questions: Do you believe in Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God? and do you believe He was born on the 6th day of

January? These two candidates stand with one foot on common ground, but the other upon the differing suppositions touching the time of Christ's birth. After long and heated discussions, A and B give most of their attention to the differences, until there comes a division. You smile at the absurdity of division on such grounds, and yet this very question was once a bone of contention; and how much less important is this question than many of the questions which are dividing the church today? And these questions were sprung and discussed and added, one by one, to the "one foundation," until we have the hundreds of sects of the present day. We have made it a prominent plea that union is practicable only as we cast away these human additions to the old creed, and build again upon "the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

We are glad to note the fact that churches everywhere are now receiving people to fellowship without accepting their old formulas of faith; but there was not a church in Christendom, in the beginning of this century, that would receive a person to the fellowship of the church, simply upon his faith in Christ, love for Christ, and willingness to serve Christ.

Proceeding farther along the old paths they found that not only did the apostles preach Christ with a view to creating faith in Christ, but they went upon the theory that the sinner could hear and believe the word of God, and be led by it to believe in Christ and trust implicitly the promise of God. Nowhere

was there an indication that the apostles believed that man was so dead in trespasses and sins "that he could not think a good thought nor do a good deed," and that he was powerless to hear, understand or obey, only as the Holy Spirit quickened him to spiritual life, as the power of God quickened Lazarus to natural life. This was the prevailing anthropology in Campbell's day, and. the theology was made to suit it. Hence they preached the Spirit and promised Christ. The Reformers soon learned that the apostles preached Christ, and promised the Spirit to those who would obey him.

The first sermon preached by Peter, under the Commission, was full of Christ—in the prophecies, in the flesh, in a wonderful life, on the cross, in the grave, on the throne. When the people "heard this they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?'"—Acts ii: 37, 38.

This was the result of the convincing and convicting preaching of the apostles, to whom Christ had said, "the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, will I send unto you; and when He is come unto you, He will convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and of judgment because the prince of this world is judged." The Holy Spirit spake by the mouth of Peter; the people heard and "were pricked in their heart." No one was left a moment in doubt as to the conditions of the New Covenant: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of

Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." This was the Divine answer to the question, "What shall we do?" It is no less the Divine answer today. It goes upon the theory *that the anxious inquirer can trust implicitly the written promise of God.* In a single day three thousand trusted Christ, accepted gladly the promise of salvation, and were baptized.

When this simple fact was uncovered it was like a new revelation. Not that it had not been accepted as an abstract truth, but it had been lost sight of. People were taught to look everywhere else, except in the word of God, for evidence of acceptance with God. Some trusted in dreams, others saw lights, others heard voices, all scrutinized the changing impulses and fitful feelings of their own poor trembling hearts; none of them looked into God's word to learn the way of Christ, as revealed in the Gospel. These Reformers cried out in the language of Jeremiah, "Let him that hath a dream, tell a dream; but he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord?" This was a startling thing to say in a time when it was "generally conceived to be the great and chief work of the Holy Spirit to create the soul anew by an overwhelming power, wholly apart from the influence of the word of God, which, like the sinner himself, was supposed to be 'dead,' until specially applied and made effective by the Spirit." Every conversion was attributed to "the direct and irresistible power of the Holy Spirit."

It will not appear strange that Mr. Campbell and his co-laborers were charged with "denying the necessity of being born again by the Spirit of God;" with "confining all grace to the apostolic age," and with being "enemies to heart religion," for the people looked at the Scriptures only through their theological systems, and were convinced, by years of such theological teaching, that these dreams and imaginary lights and voices and feelings were, in every case, the work of the Holy Spirit; nor could they see how it was possible for the simple Gospel to affect the heart of sinful man. This led to a careful study of the Word, touching the work of the Spirit, not to create a concensus of sentiment on the subject, but to be able to correct extravagant notions which prevailed then, but which have since largely disappeared.

The "Disciples" have been content "to speak where the Bible speaks, and to be silent where the Bible is silent" on this subject. No thoughtful man can separate between God and the Spirit of God, any more than he can separate between man and the spirit of man. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Wisdom, and as such has revealed the Truth; He is the Spirit of Power, and as such has confirmed the Truth; He is the Spirit of Holiness, and as such dwells in the hearts of those who believe and obey the Truth. And while no man knows the limit of His influence in conversion, sanctification and providence, of one thing we are sure, *the Spirit will never tell a man that he is a child of God, when the Gospel tells him he is not; for God can never contradict Himself.*

Nor will it appear strange that these men were charged with "baptismal regeneration," when they gave the old path answer to anxious inquirers, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." These Reformers, having set out to "seek the old paths," could not do otherwise than give this answer. Old as it was, it was an innovation in the practice of evangelists. This doctrine was in nearly all the denominational creeds, but it was unregarded and unheeded in its import and utility. A great excitement at once ensued. "The people were filled with the notion that some special spiritual influence was to be exerted upon men's hearts—that some spiritual visitation must occur before any one could be a fit subject for baptism; that this spiritual operation was evidence of acceptance and pardon "—and hence, when sinners were invited to accept the written promise of the word of God in "baptism for the remission of sins," they were filled with amazement, that anyone should set aside the usual process to which "mourners" were subjected. The answer to this charge was easy, but the people were in no mood to calmly consider it. "To the law and testimony," "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder." God had joined together repentance and baptism "for the remission of sins." Jesus Christ had said, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved" or forgiven; He had not said, "He that believeth and is saved, shall be baptized." Moreover, there was involved a greater question than

"Is baptism for remission of sins, viz: 'Is God faithful to fulfill His promises?'"

They sought to restore the "ancient order of things" in doctrine and practice. Jesus Christ had called the church "my church," and his disciples were called "Christians," and so they chose "The Church of Christ" as the true name of the church, and "Christian Church" as a convenient expression of the same thing; and, forthwith, they were charged with exclusiveness and denying that there were Christians in other religious bodies. But when you remember that they set out to walk in the old paths, they could not consistently take any other name. And when you remember that Christ is the Head of the Church, no other name honors the Head. Besides, no other name is acceptable to all religious bodies, and therefore there can be union only in this name. They sought common ground, provided it is Scriptural, because they kept the eye steadily toward Christian unity. Immersion is Scriptural, and universally conceded, and therefore common ground; adult baptism is Scriptural, and everywhere practiced, and therefore common ground; the Bible, as a rule of faith and practice, is everywhere received, and therefore common ground; and so on to the end. The Reformers sought to occupy admitted ground, and therefore a practical ground of unity. They sought to bring everything to the test of "Thus saith the Lord, in precept or approved precedent," and were not surprised that this planted them on common union ground. Opposition grew out of their refusal to go beyond

this common ground, and accept the theories and speculations of men. They looked upon a Christian as one who believes in and loves Christ with all his heart, and obeys Him with all his will, and in such manner that there could be no question about it. They sought to make *Christians only,* but did not claim to be the *only Christians.* They sought to organize the church by the New Testament model, and to conduct the worship, including the Lord's Supper every Lord's Day, according to the "ancient order of things." *In a word, they plead for the union of God's people by the restoration of the primitive church, in doctrine and practice.*

They did not claim infallibility in these earnest efforts to walk in the old paths. They did not claim that they were righteous above others, nor that there were not Christians in other communions; nor that they had learned all the lessons in the blessed Book. They had thrown out the line to the Bible as a vessel might to a tug boat, and were ready and willing to move any time and anywhere the Bible led them. The religious parties of the day had made anchors of their human creeds, and therefore remained steadily in the same waters until the clergy thought it wise to lift these anchors and move into less troubled seas. With the one there was infinite room for freedom and growth; with the other there was little room for freedom of thought and investigation, and consequently little growth in Divine things.

You will remember that Blaine, in his splendid eulogy upon the life and character of the lamented

Garfield, who was, from his youth, a member of the Church of Christ, said "Garfield had outgrown his church." Elaine did not understand the church to which Garfield belonged. Blaine knew little of the church which has but one article of faith. Garfield belonged to a church which admitted him to membership upon the "good confession" that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God." This was the bond of fellowship, and the anchor for his soul. Beyond this, he was free to survey all lengths and breadths of religious thought, to go up into all heights and down into all depths of religious knowledge, and express himself with absolute freedom, when, and how, and where he pleased; and because he did this, so contrary to the practice of those who were bound and handicapped by scholastic theology, as found in sectarian creeds, Elaine thought Garfield had outgrown his church, while this is indeed the very genius of the church to which Garfield had given his heart and his hand.

Such a movement was exposed to certain dangers: 1. Controversy is not conducive to piety. The Campbells were at first opposed to all controversy. It was not until the debates with Walker and McCalla that Alexander Campbell saw, in public discussions, a means of getting before the people the questions which were dear to his heart. And reviewing their discussions from this distance, we can see how great their influence in bringing the minds of the people to the consideration of his plea for the union of Christians. Mr. Campbell was an acknowledged dialectician, and

his successful championship of Protestantism against Roman Catholicism, of Christianity against infidelity, and of primitive Christianity against sectarianism, will be more and more recognized as the years go by. His was a masterly mind, and he conducted his debates with a masterly hand, and in them he never stooped below the plain of Christian manhood. This much can not be said of every other debater. The assault upon the "Campbellites" was fierce and furious all along the line, and all the more so when the simple plea of the Gospel won "proselytes" from the ranks of sectarianism. When the church at Brush Run became a society of immersed believers, nearly all of whom had been members of Paedobaptist churches, it cut itself off at once from all Paedobaptist sympathy; and when, in after years, there grew up a bitter contention in Baptist churches on account of the teaching of the Reformers, they were alienated from Baptist sympathy. Besides, "the power of the clergy was, at this time, almost supreme, and those who questioned it were put under the ban of religious society, being regarded as disorganizes, and even treated as outlaws in the spiritual Kingdom." Misrepresentations of all kinds were circulated, friendships were broken off, and in many cases foes were raised up in a man's own household. The sectarian pulpits thundered against them wherever they sought a foothold, and the clergy, in many instances, were utterly unscrupulous in their sayings and doings, to circumvent success. Every adherent of the new movement went armed with the New Testament and

was ready, always, to give a "reason for the hope that was in Him." Challenges for public discussions were often given and nearly always accepted, and not unfrequently the spirit of controversy drove out the spirit of Christ. On the whole, the necessary ordeal was passed better than could have been expected.

2. Those who dwell often and long upon the deformities of a religious body are apt to shut their eyes to the good that is in them. They come, after while, to see nothing but deformities. In many quarters it came to be taken for granted that there was no good whatever in a sectarian church, and therefore it was unsafe to say or do anything after the manner of the sects. This was not the true spirit of the plea. Thomas Campbell began his work of union because he believed there were Christians in all the churches, and he and his illustrious son recognized good wherever they saw good, and had fellowship with all that was true and honest and just and lovely and pure, wherever found, and I am glad to see our brethren touch elbows with good people of whatever name, in every good word and work.

3. There was danger of crystallizing, notwithstanding the freedom that was gained. Several years ago one of our editors printed portions of Mr. Campbell's writings to show up the "heresy" of some of his brethren touching missionary societies. He forgot that Mr. Campbell put upon the cover of his Journal, these mottoes: "Style no man on earth your father, for He alone is your father which is in Heaven;" "Assume not the title of Rabbi, for ye have

only one Teacher; neither assume the title of Leader, for ye have only one Leader—the Messiah;" "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." The disciples of Christ are learners at the feet of no *man*, living or dead.

4. There was danger of an unwritten creed. As between a written and an unwritten creed, I prefer a written one, for then there is some chance to know what it means. We have had preachers who impressed the people that the acceptance of what is called "our views" is necessary to church membership. What is this that is called "our views," if it is not an unwritten creed? We do not baptize people because they have come to accept our views. We do not baptize people because they have come to see that baptism is "for remission of sins." We teach this because it is Scriptural, and we believe the candidate will be the happier, in obedience, if he comes to baptism knowing its import, but we do not put two questions: "Do ye believe in Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God?" and "Do ye believe baptism is for remission of sins?" No, we baptize the candidate because he believes in Jesus, and on no other ground.

We have preachers who argue so fervently that the Holy Spirit operates *only* through the Word, that people go away believing this doctrine to be a sort of creed. We have others who would, if they dared, disfellowship those who differ from them on mere matters of expediency. To go beyond the one question touching the faith of the candidate in

Jesus, as his Teacher, Priest and King—the Son of the living God, is so far to set up an unwritten creed; and when it embraces questions of expediency, it out-sectarianizes all sectarianism.

5. There is danger that we may neglect to walk in the old paths after we have sought and found them. Christianity is not a theory, but a life. The old path life was a life of love, of prayer, of consecration, of missionary enthusiasm, and missionary service and conquest. The old path life counted no sacrifice to dear to make for Jesus' sake. Not until our ten hundred thousand brethren come forward with larger offerings for missions at home and abroad, and multiply our missionaries a hundred fold, will we feel that we are enthused with the spirit, and marching with the tread of the apostolic days. Not until we are lifted out of selfishness into love, and up into Christlikeness, and filled with the spirit of Christ, will there flow from us rivers of blessing for the world. We rejoice that our labors for Christian union have not been in vain, as seen in the loosing of clerical fetters, the breaking down of sectarian walls, the union of Christian people in Christian endeavor, the preaching of Christ instead of dogmas, and the growing desire to unite all the lovers of Christ in a mighty effort to bring Christ to all the world, and all the world to Christ. Surely the prayer of Jesus will soon be answered: "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they may also be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me." This is the good way wherein God's people may find rest for their souls.

# THE REVEALED MYSTERY.

"Understandest thou what thou readest."—ACTS viii:30.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." —II TIMOTHY, ii:15.

THERE are those who regard the Bible as a great mystery. Paul says, "Great is the mystery of godliness." But what is a mystery? A mystery is a secret, and a secret may be told; and after a secret has been told, we say "the secret is out." There are those in this audience, who have been initiated into the secrets of Free Masonry; and though they know all about these secrets, they still speak of the "secrets of Free Masonry." Paul speaks in the same way when he says, (Rom. xvi: 25, 26) "Now, to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." Notice the past tense, "was kept secret;" but now "revealed," "made manifest," "made known," in the gospel of Christ, "for the obedience of faith." It was the same mystery to which Peter refers when he says (I Peter i: 10, 12), "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and

searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven: which things the angels desire to look into." And, again, Paul says (Eph. iii: 1-9), "For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, for you Gentiles, if you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known to me the mystery (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel, whereof I was made a minister * * that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ: and make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." We see by these scriptures that the prophets did not fully understand the nature of Christ's kingdom; that "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow;" that the broad philan-

thropy of the gospel, taking in the Gentiles to be "fellow heirs," were great mysteries to prophets and angels alike. And wisely was it so, for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. The Christian religion was not born of the Jewish conception of God's love. Christ is himself the "author and the finisher of the faith." "The world by wisdom knew not God." "Christ crucified was a stumbling block unto the Jew, and foolishness unto the Greek." Faith was to stand "not in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."

The inspired Scripture "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It is a revelation. A revelation that needs to be revealed is not a revelation. We do not mean that we can sound all its depths, or ascend unto all its heights; for if we could we would be ready to call it human. The finite mind can not fully comprehend the infinite mind of God. Peter says that in Paul's epistles "are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." But while this is true, the way of salvation is so clear that the wayfaring man though a fool "shall not err therein."

In another discourse* we have shown how the pulpit has made the impression that the Word of God is a mystery. Ministers have treated the Bible as though it were simply a book of proverbs, and have

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*See Seeking the Old Paths.

come to the study of it with the question, what *must* it teach? rather than the question what *does* it teach? Having made up their minds as to what it *must* teach, they have exercised their ingenuity to force an agreement between seemingly conflicting passages. They have read into the text what was not there, and they have "spiritualized" the meaning, and made it mean most fanciful things.

Timothy was exhorted to "study to show himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The Word is susceptible of divisions or portions. It must be handled skillfully, so that every portion shall be applied to its intended use. There is "milk" for babes, and "strong meat" for men; there are portions for children, young men, and fathers; for masters, servants, citizens, husbands, wives, rulers and ministers. There are messages of "times past," and of the "last days;" messages for saints and for sinners. There are dispensations for Patriarchs, for Jews and for Christians. There are covenants, temporal and spiritual—covenants "old" that vanished away, and the new covenant that "yet remaineth." There are fingers of prophecy pointing forward, and fingers of history pointing backward. There are types and shadows of things to come; the hand of God in Providence, heroic history, and songs of triumph and praise.

The Ethiopian nobleman had been to Jerusalem to worship the God of his fathers. He had mingled with the best people. Ho had found the whole city stirred up about one Jesus of Nazareth. Such men

as Joseph and Nicodemus had expressed a conviction that he was a "teacher come from God," for no man could do these miracles "except God be with him." Others had told him of his marvelous career; how he raised the dead, cast out demons, healed the sick, fed the multitudes, and spoke as one having authority and not as the scribes; of the long darkness at the crucifixion—the rent rocks and the rent veil; and of the convictions of thousands that he had risen from the dead. Others had told him of the wisdom of the Sanhedrim as judges; of the verdict that he was guilty of blasphemy and treason, and that he surely was an impostor, whose influence was even then leading thousands astray. What more natural than that he should turn to the holy Scriptures? When Philip found him he was reading one of those wonderful prophecies which had found its fulfillment in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. "Understandest thou what thou readest?" "How can I except some man should guide me. Of whom speaketh the prophet this: of himself or of some other man?" To him the passage would be clear if he could determine "of whom it was written." If Isaiah wrote it of himself, of course it could not apply to Jesus as the friends of Jesus claimed. If he wrote it "of some other man," then there is a wonderful counterpart of it in the history of Jesus. He was anxious to know. He had a teachable mind. "Come up and sit with me," and Philip "began at the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus," and, like his Master, showed him how all things written in the law of Moses, and in the Psalms,

and in the prophets, concerning the Christ, were fulfilled in Jesus.

Now if we would understand any passage of the Scripture we must ask who wrote it? of whom or what was it written? when was it written? and why was it written? and of the Bible as a whole, we must determine what its chief subject is. It is not a treatise on geology, or zoology, or botany. It is not a treatise on law or medicine. And yet, fairly interpreted, it does not contradict the most advanced discoveries of science, or the recognized laws of civil jurisprudence. It is not, in any large sense, a book of history, though it contains the oldest history, and answers, as no other book does, whence am 1? what am I? and whither do I go? It gives quite a full history of Abraham and his descendants, and gives the cue to the history of other peoples, as theirs touches the history of Israel. Were I to study science, law, medicine or history, I would not turn to the Bible. Skeptics might have saved themselves a good deal of shame, if they had remembered this fact.

The Bible has one main thought, one chief subject: *The Redemption of a sinful world through Jesus Christ, our Lord."* It begins with an Eden lost, and closes with better Eden restored. Jesus is the golden thread running through it from lid to lid. He is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Everything else in the Bible touches this central purpose, immediately or remotely; and in the light of this fact the Bible must be understood. Moreover, the pupil must come to it with an

honest heart and a teachable mind, and with the prayer, "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things in thy law."

Turning now to the fall of man, we find that God does not leave him without hope. The great enemy of God and man had prevailed; but to him God said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This is the first promise concerning Christ, and indicates a conflict that would end in the destruction of the devil and his works. Passing now over nearly two thousand years of history, illustrating the awful ruin that sin works, and the certain and fearful judgment of God on account of it,—we come to the double covenant made with Abraham (Gen. xii).

1. *Temporal.*— "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing, and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that cursest thee."

2. *Spiritual.*—"And in thee (in thy seed Ch. xxii:18) shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Having promised deliverance and restoration through the *seed of the woman,* God now makes choice of Abraham as the one through whom this seed should come. Paul says this seed was Christ: "He saith not 'Arid to seeds' as of many, but as of one 'And to thy seed' which is Christ" (Gal. iii:16). This was the gospel in promise preached to Abraham. "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before, the gospel unto Abraham, say-

ing, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed;' so then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." This promise was renewed to Isaac and to Jacob. The descendants of Jacob were called Israel —and Israel in the flesh was a type of spiritual Israel, the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. iii). When Jacob's descendants became a "great nation," God made a national covenant with them at Horeb. This was "the law," which was four hundred and thirty years after the promise made to Abraham. This "law" is called by Paul the "old covenant,"—and by Jeremiah "the covenant which God made with the house of Israel when he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt."

If the promise to Abraham is to be fulfilled in bringing Christ into the world as the "seed" of Israel, then must God take care that the children of Israel be preserved. God put a mark in the flesh, circumcision,—a national badge; he gave Israel a land; he divided it among the tribes,—for he had said, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law giver from between his feet, till Shiloh come,"—and these tribes must not get into confusion; he gave to Israel a government—a theocracy—laws civil and ecclesiastic, moral and positive. Moses calls it "the covenant" which "the Lord our God made with us in Horeb." (Deut. v:2, 3.) God blessed Israel in basket and in store; he punished them for their sin and disobedience by captivities; but took care that the children of Judah were restored to the land, and preserved until the coming of the Messiah. When Israel became a

Kingdom, David was singled out as the one whose seed should be the royal Messiah: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David, my servant, 'Thy seed will I establish forever and build up thy throne to all generations.'" "I will set up thy seed after thee * * and I will establish his kingdom * * and will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." Peter said, on the day of Pentecost, that "David, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne: he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hades, neither his flesh did see corruption." This same David said by the same prophetic vision: "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek;" and Zechariah said "He shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a *priest* upon his throne" (Zech. 1:13).

You can see how the reader of the Old Testament never loses sight of the promise made to our first mother and to Abraham, the father of the faithful. The Redeemer was to be the "seed of the woman," the "seed of Abraham," the "seed of Isaac," and at once the children of Abraham by Hagar and Keturah drop out of sight; the "seed of Jacob," and at once the children of Esau become as the surrounding nations; the "shiloh of Judah," and in time nearly all the other tribes are lost in captivity; the "successor of David," and he becomes the type of Christ, and his throne his type of the throne of which Zechariah

speaks, when he says of the Messiah: "He shall be a priest upon his throne"—a king after the order of David, a priest after the order of Melchizedek,—to whom Abraham paid tithes—King of Salem and Priest of the Most High God.

The Jewish law and nation were only instruments for opening up the way for the coming Redeemer. All through the administration of the "old covenant," there were prophecies and types and symbols pointing to Christ;—prophecies that he would be born of a virgin; that he would be born in Bethlehem; that he would be "called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, The Everlasting Father;"—that "the government shall be on his shoulder"—that of "the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever;" and types of the Sacrifice of Christ, of the Priesthood of Christ, of the Atonement of Christ: types of the world, the church and Heaven: typical men, typical events, typical history; all creating a general expectancy of his coming, and of the triumphs of his reign.

Coming now to the New Testament we find a genealogical table proving that Jesus was the seed of David, Judah, Jacob, Isaac, Abraham;—that he was the "seed of the woman,"in a miraculous sense;—that he was born of a virgin;—that he was born in Bethlehem; that he was declared to be the Son of the Highest,—God with us,—that he met the great enemy of man, and illustrated his power to defeat him; that

his life was in every way Wonderful—in his birth, in his baptism, in his miracles, in his teaching, in his sufferings, in his death, in his burial and resurrection, in his great purpose to set up a kingdom, and bring the whole world to his feet. These things "are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life through his name" (John xx:31).

Proceeding further we find, in the Acts, the proclamation that he is King, and that God had said, "sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool;" and immediately his reign of conquest and peace began. Turning to the Epistles, we learn how the disciples were taught to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded.

We have now passed through two Dispensations and into the third, viz: 1. The Patriarchal, reaching from the fall of man to the giving of the law. 2. The Jewish or Mosaic, reaching from the giving of the law to the death of the Messiah. 3. The Christian, which began at the resurrection and exaltation of the Messiah. The first had to do with the family, the second with the state, the third with the church. The first was domestic, the second national, the third universal. Each Dispensation has its peculiar priesthood,—that of Melchizedek, that of Aaron, and that of Jesus the Messiah,—and under each there is found a different economy of things. "It is a standing maxim in religion that the priesthood being changed, there is, of necessity, a change of the law pertaining to acceptable worship" (Heb. ix). Before we can feel any confidence

in our interpretation of any law, commandment or institution of religion, we must decide as to which dispensation it belonged. We are not under Moses but under Christ. Christ has "all authority in heaven and on earth," and is our Lawgiver, our King, our Judge. Jesus is *the Christ,*—the one anointed Prophet, Priest and King. On the Mount of Transfiguration Peter would have honored Moses and Elijah alike with Jesus—but "a cloud overshadowed them, and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, *hear you him.*"" Christ is King, on David's spiritual throne, ruling over those who are the children of Abraham by faith in Jesus. Christ is Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Christ is Teacher, superseding all other teachers. He fulfilled the law—every jot and title—and "took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross," and "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us" (Col. ii:14) and "abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in the ordinances"—and so "broke down the middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile "for to make of the twain one new man, so making peace," (Eph. ii: 14,15). At the first Pentecost—fifty days after the first Passover—the old covenant was given at Horeb. Christ was himself the anti-type of the Paschal lamb. Fifty days after he had offered himself— the last and the most memorable Pentecost—he caused the new covenant to be announced at Jerusalem. Jeremiah said it would not be like the old covenant. The old covenant was written on "tables

of stone;"—the new on "the fleshy tables of the heart." The children of the old covenant were such because they were born of the flesh of Abraham; the children of the new are "not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i:13). The children of the old covenant were punished without mercy for sin and transgression; to the children of the new, God says, "I will be merciful to your unrighteousness. I will forgive your iniquities." For the children of the old there was no full expiation, for "the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin;" but under the new covenant God says, "I will remember your sins no more." The old covenant served as the "blade and the ear"—but the new is the "full corn in the ear." The old covenant having served its purpose "vanished away." "The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of the better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." No person can understand the Scriptures who does not separate clearly one dispensation from another; nor will he succeed if he looks upon one covenant as a sort of annex to the preceding. When Christ gave his commission, based upon "All authority in heaven and in earth," he cut the world loose from all previous authority and law, and bade us sit at his feet as our only Teacher, submit to him as our only King, and rejoice in him as our only mediator—the ever-living High Priest, "able to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by him."

Now, suppose an intelligent Japanese comes to me. He has never read our sacred literature, and

says he wants to read it. I hand him the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, bound in one volume, and tell him to take these home and read them. He comes back, after several months of careful reading, and says he has read these several books. What do you think he would most likely say of them? He could say, "I find in them what purports to be the oldest history, going back to the very creation, and quite a full history of one family and nation." He could say, "I find, in these histories, some of the best and some of the worst men." He could say that "Moses' law is the foundation of all our jurisprudence." He could say, "I find remarkable prophecies; and history records no less remarkable fulfillment." He could say, "I find poetry that would rival the best passages of your Milton and Shakespeare." But I do not think these would strike him with the greatest force. He would say, "That book is a very disappointing book." "Why so?" I inquire. "Because it kept me in constant expectation of some one who was to come for the betterment of these people and the world. The law seems to be a failure as a means of making people good, and your God's punishments made little improvement in their morals. In the beginning it was the "seed of the woman" that was to destroy the enemy; then it was the "seed of Abraham" that was to bless the world;—later it was the successor of David who would set up a better government; and then he was to be Wonderful, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, and his kingdom was to last forever, and smite all other kingdoms, and fill

the whole earth; and the very last writer speaks of the coming of Elijah before the great and notable day of the Lord;—and I read on with my mind on this wonderful issue, and closed the book sadly disappointed, for he never came."

I say to him, "I have the sequel to all this in this volume," and I hand him the four gospels bound in one. "Take these and you will find what you seek." He takes these home, and after a few weeks comes back and says, "I have found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write—the 'seed of the woman,' who came to destroy the devil and his works; the 'seed of Abraham,' who will bless more than Abraham's children; the successor of David, with all authority in heaven and on earth; the long expected Messiah—the all-wise Teacher of men—the ever-living Priest to make atonement for sin; the gracious King to govern men. I find him to be truly wonderful in his whole career, and the one 'all together lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousands,' and I believe in him as my Savior and Redeemer; but I think there ought to be more." "How so?" "Because Jesus said, 'Go make disciples,' and I would like to know whether the apostles went, and how they made disciples." And I hand him Acts of Apostles, and tell him to read this volume. He reads it and comes back saying, "I now understand what these apostles preached for gospel, how they 'made disciples,' how they organized churches, and that they did all this under the guidance of the Spirit; and believing in Christ as my Savior, what doth hinder me to be baptized? for I

want to be his disciple." I baptize him, and then he says to me, "I think there ought to be more of that Sacred Book." "How so?" I say. "Because these disciples were to be taught to observe all things that the Master commanded, and the Acts do not tell very much of this." I then hand him the Epistles of Paul and Peter, and John, and James, and Jude, and tell him to read these, and that he will find the instruction that is necessary for personal purity, and for every possible relationship of life.

In this way he comes to see that the law was "our school-master or leader to bring us to Christ," that we may be justified by faith, and not by the works of the law; that Christ is our only teacher, and that He governs by grace and truth; and that the great aim is to lift the soul into Christlikeness. If now he will read the Apocalypse he will see that Christ is with His people always, and that He is leading all the forces of the world to contribute to the final triumphs of His kingdom, when "He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power;" when a countless host shall come from all nations, kindreds and peoples, and worship God saying, "Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be unto our God forever and ever."

The Bible completes a circle. Paradise lost by sin; Paradise regained by redemption; man cut off from the tree of life; man restored to it in robes washed in the blood of the Lamb; man kept from the tree of life by flaming angels; man helped back to it by ten thousand times ten thousand angels—his ministering

spirits; man driven away from the river that made glad the garden of God; man restored to the river of life, "clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb"; man cursed of God; man where "there shall be no more curse"; man hiding from God's presence; man in the holy city "where the tabernacle of God is with men." "They shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle; neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign forever and ever."

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THE BIBLE is the oldest and best book in the world. It is translated into more languages and read by more people than any other volume ever written. Its history and its prophecy comprehend the entire history of the world. Man as he was, man as he is, and man as he shall hereafter be, are its three grand themes. It reveals God in the three great works of Creation, Providence and Redemption.

The plan of the Bible, as an instrument or means of salvation, is admirably adapted to the human constitution, and to the circumstances which surround man. The end to be attained is happiness; but that end can not be accomplished without sanctification or personal devotion to God. It is, indeed, as impossible for God to make any man happy, without making him holy, as it is for him to lie. The Bible is all arranged with a supreme reference to this fact. And as piety

or holiness consists in a habit correspondent with the divine will and character, and is not natural to man as he now is, it must be preceded by a change of heart. But this change of the affections being the result of faith in the testimony of God, that testimony for such a change must furnish motives. These motives presuppose gracious acts of kindness on the part of God. Faith receives this testimony concerning these facts. These facts, when believed, produce corresponding feelings or states of mind, sometimes called repentance or a new heart; and this new heart leads to those good actions denominated piety and humanity, or holiness and righteousness. The links in this divine chain of moral and spiritual instrumentality are five—*facts, testimony, faith, feeling, action*— the end of which.is salvation. The whole revelation of God is arranged upon this theory or view of man's constitution. Thus God acts, the Holy Spirit testifies, man believes, feels, then acts according to the divine will. Thus becomes he a new creature. In truth the Bible is a glorious system of grace—an absolutely complete and perfect adaptation of spiritual means to a great and glorious end.—*Alexander Campbell.*

# WHAT THINK YE OF THE CHRIST?

"While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them saying, What think ye of Christ, Whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying the Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?"—MATT. xxii: 41-45.

THIS answer indicates that the Jews believed that the promised Messiah would be simply the offspring of David. This was only a half-truth, and a half-truth is seldom better than a falsehood. Paul declares the whole truth when he says, "He was born of the seed of David, according to the flesh, and was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. i: 3, 4.) McKnight renders this as follows: "He was born of the seed of David, with respect to the flesh, but was declared the Son of God, with respect to the spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead."

On the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do men say that I the Son of Man am? They said, Some say John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." This was a remarkable answer. Clearly the people believed that a resurrection was possible. The life of Jesus must have been a marvelous life to have made such an impression as this; and had Jesus been simply a man, aye, had he been simply a prophet, he would

have been satisfied to be known as John the Baptist, the greatest of all the prophets, in his own estimation. But he was not satisfied with this answer; and knowing the importance of these men, whom he would soon commission to preach his gospel, having a proper conception of his nature and personality, he asked, "But who say ye that I am?" Peter voiced their convictions, when he replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." With this answer Jesus was satisfied: "Blessed art thou Simon Barjonah; * * On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This is a fundamental truth,—the rock on which Jesus builds his church. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (I Cor. iii: 11.)

Jesus believed himself to be more than a man, more than a prophet, more than a John the Baptist. He was conscious of Divinity. He said, "I and my Father are one," "I came down from heaven," "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." The Jews called this blasphemy, because he made himself equal with God. When asked by the Sanhedrim, "Art thou then the Son of God?" he answered, "Ye say that I am,"—and this was the final evidence that sealed his doom.

We have a right to inquire whether his words and works harmonize with this consciousness of Divinity. I am conscious of power to lift this Bible. I take hold of it as if I could lift it. This act is in harmony with my consciousness of power. I would not take hold of the corner of a church building in this

way, because I have no consciousness of power to lift it. Did Jesus talk like a man, or like God? Aye, did he talk like any of the prophets of the olden time? The prophets said, "The word of the Lord came unto me saying, "Hear ye the word of the Lord," "Thus saith the Lord;" but Jesus said, "You have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, * * but *I* say unto you;" "He that heareth these sayings of mine;" and not the least impression made was this, that "he taught as one having authority and not as the scribes." He did not reason like a man. In fact we may say that he never reasoned except to help some one else to reason. *We* lay down premises and proceed to logical conclusions. Sometimes our premises are incomplete, and sometimes our reasoning is illogical. Concerning mysterious things, we sometimes proceed by analogies. We say here is spring, summer, autumn, winter,—and winter wears a shroud,—and spring is a revival, a sort of resurrection, and probably there is something for dying man like this. Or we point to the worm, going into its chrysalis grave, and emerging in the springtime a beautiful butterfly, and we say there may be something for us like this. But Jesus did not reason himself to a conclusion on this and other hidden questions. He simply affirmed. He was dogmatic. He boldly declared, "All that in their graves shall hear my voice and come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life: and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." This is not the reasoning of a Plato or a Socrates. Again he says, "In my Father's house

are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am you may be also." This is not like the lecture of Dr. Cook on the question, "Does death end all?" Jesus speaks out of his fullness of knowledge. He speaks like God, and not like man.

Again, in this chapter, "I am the way, the truth the life," and at another time, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Which one of all the prophets, from Moses to John the Baptist, would have dared to use language like this? And again, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Which of all the prophets could have said this? Not Moses, the great lawgiver, not Elijah, the law restorer, not Isaiah, the evangelical prophet, not John the Baptist, the greatest of all the prophets. This is not the language of a philosopher, nor the language of a great prophet, but the language of the Son of God, who said, "You believe in God, believe also in me."

Then he had a remarkable memory. Several years ago, while holding a meeting in a small town in Ohio, a physician sought an interview with me. He said to me, "You are the only religious people I know, who put the very question, at the door of the church, which I can not answer in the affirmative. I mean this question: Do you believe, with all your heart, in Jesus, as the Christ, the Son of God? If I could say yes to

this question, I would be with you." Then he went on to revamp some old skepticism about the truth of this and that, way back in the days of Moses. I said, "What has all that to do with this main question?" "True," said he, "but I was coming to the main trouble, which is my grave doubt that Jesus could have been born of a virgin, as the Gospels state." "Hold on," said I, "Have you read the Gospels?" "Yes, carefully." "Do you think Jesus was demented?" "No," said he, "it would stultify all common sense to say that so great a teacher, admired for his character and his moral precepts by the most intelligent and thoughtful people of the world, was a lunatic. It is to me one of the great marvels, that the touch of his hand, and the words of his mouth, lay at the foundation of all that is best in human civilization. No, he was not demented." "Do you think he was dishonest?" "No; on the other hand he was the very pink of perfection in this respect. It was his intense honesty that made him a martyr. A little less honesty, and a little more policy, would have saved him from that humiliating death. No, he was not dishonest." "He had, then," said I, "a sound mind, a sound memory, and an honest heart?" "Of course." "Well then, what did he mean when he said, 'And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was?' You have a memory reaching back to your early childhood, in Wilmington, Ohio. You would not thank me to call it in question. You claim to have a sound mind and an honest heart.

You are conscious of remembering things that transpired when you were four years old,—about fifty years ago. But here is one whose memory leaps back over all the ages, and is just as conscious of remembering the glory he had with the Father before the world was, as you are of remembering the things that transpired in the days of your childhood; and I care not whether I can answer, either your difficulties about the things written by Moses, or your problem about the miraculous birth of Christ, here is a stupendous fact that forever settles the existence of Jesus Christ before he chose to be born of the virgin Mary." The Doctor had no more to say.

Again, here is a teacher who never stopped to amend or correct his teaching. When we preach sermons, we review them, and sometimes amend and improve them; and not infrequently the improved sermon is preached to ourselves, while the head is resting on our pillows after the Lord's day's work is all over. When we write books, we wait for the critics to review them, and the second edition is an improvement of the first. When we buy books, we buy the latest edition, that we may have the best thoughts of the author. We know that man is fallible and susceptible of improvement. But the great Teacher made no amendments, no corrections of his utterances, and the light of all the after centuries has been pouring on his teaching, in favorable and unfavorable criticism, and it is as true to-day as it was nearly nineteen hundred years ago, that "Never man spake like this man." The world has, long ago, either out-

grown, or greatly improved every thing the wisest and best men have said or done, but Jesus stands to-day, as he stood then, without a rival. This is confessed perfection, and confessed perfection is confessed Divinity. And so I might stand here many hours to tell you in how many ways, the language and life of Jesus were in perfect harmony with his consciousness that he was the Son of God.

Paul says he was declared to be the Son of God with power. McKnight's free rendering of this verse is, "But was declared the Son of God, with great power of evidence, with respect to his holy spiritual nature, by his resurrection from the dead."

Evidently his miracles are here meant, and specially the miracle of his resurrection. John says, in closing his testimony, "And many other signs truly did Jesus, in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book, but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." Jesus wrought miracles in attestation of his claim to be the Son of God. Nicodemus admitted that he wrought miracles when he said, "No man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him,"—and he gave this as the ground of his belief that Jesus was a teacher come from God. The scribes admitted that he wrought miracles when they said, "He hath Be-elzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils."

But Paul says the resurrection of Jesus is the crowning evidence that he is the Son of God. Chris-

tianity has ever regarded this as its great bulwark. This accepted, all else must be accepted. I am willing to risk the whole controversy, including the authenticity and genuineness of the Bible, upon this one question of fact; for, if Jesus of Nazareth arose from the dead, He is the Christ, the Son of the living God; his apostles were his embassadors to speak and act for Him. There are no mistakes in their testimony concerning Him, and none in their teaching "all things he commanded." Moreover, Christ and his apostles sanctioned the Scriptures of their day, as the Word of God. They quoted from Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other prophets, and so put their stamp of approval upon the authenticity of these writings, and the genuineness of their authorship. They referred to events of history, including the miraculous and marvelous, such as the passage through the Red Sea, and the river Jordan, the feeding of Israel with manna, the lifting up of the brazen serpent, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the flood in the days of Noah, the story of Jonah and Nineveh, and so put upon them the seal of their approval as veritable history.

Did Jesus arise from the dead, as the prophets said he would, and as he said he would, over and over again, during his earthly ministry?

Let us briefly review the evidence. It is admitted, by infidel and Christian alike, that such a person as Jesus came into the world, and spent about thirty years in Palestine. Every time we date a document or a letter, we accept the fact that Jesus Christ gave

the civilized world a new era. If there is any one in this audience who denies that such a person was born in Palestine, about nineteen hundred years ago, and died about the age of thirty, my argument is not for him, for he has not the brains to consider it.

Moreover, I think we may say that it is admitted Jesus was buried, and, that a few days later, his body was not found where it had been buried. The enemies of Jesus reported,—the report was current when Matthew wrote his gospel,—that the friends of Jesus stole away the body while the guard slept, the soldiers themselves giving this testimony. These soldiers confessed to unfaithfulness in this statement; for no true soldier will sleep on guard. Besides, the penalty for sleeping on guard was death. There could be no reasonable excuse for sleeping on guard, because the guard was changed every few hours. There must have been some influence at work here besides a desire to tell the truth. Matthew says it was "large money" given as a bribe. But, putting this aside, it was not likely that the men who deserted Jesus, at the time of his crucifixion, would summon courage to make the attempt to rescue the body from the tomb of Joseph. And then what is such testimony worth? Colonel Ingersol, on the Bench today, would not allow such testimony to go to the jury; for what does a witness know of any event that has transpired when he was asleep,—and so sound asleep that the rolling away of a great stone had not awakened him? This was the best answer infidelity had for at least thirty years after the resurrection of Christ. And

what better have infidels brought forward since? Have they not closed their eyes to all the overwhelming evidence of the truth of Christianity ever since? Infidelity goes through the world with its eyes shut, lifting up its voice against Christ, and holding out its hands for the "large money," with which to stifle the cries of outraged honor.

On the other hand the friends of Jesus testify that he arose from the dead. What constitutes good testimony?

1. The facts must have been cognizable by human senses.

2. The witnesses must be strictly honest.

3. There must be no good reason why the witnesses could have been deceived.

Now the death and burial of Jesus, His reappearance among them, and His repeated visits and conversations, were cognizable facts. They say they saw Him, heard Him, handled Him, walked with Him, talked with Him, and looked steadfastly after Him, as the angels escorted Him to His throne.

These witnesses have put their honesty out of question by their martyrdom. They received no earthly emoluments for their testimony. No "large money" was given to them. They persisted in preaching the resurrection of Christ, and the hope of the Gospel, based on this fact, in the midst of bitterest persecution and severest ordeals, and finally sealed their testimony in martyr's blood.

Could they have been mistaken? Yes, in one of three ways: (1) A short acquaintance with Jesus.

(2) A long absence. (3) Unfavorable circumstances for identifying Him. But there was no short acquaintance. For more than three years they had been with Jesus daily, in the city, in the country, in the quiet home of Mary and Martha, and amidst the crowds that thronged Him everywhere. They saw Him in repose, and in action. They heard His voice in the quiet hours of seclusion, and then again ringing out in clear tones to the utmost limits of his great audiences. Sometimes they were awed by the majesty of His bearing, and again drawn to Him by the sweetness of His notes of love. They loved Him. Love always sees,—sees the minutest things in the person and in the actions of the person loved. They knew the color of His eyes, the color of His hair, and how He was dressed; they knew the face—all its features—and that which is hard to paint, called expression; they knew His walk and the peculiar tones of His voice.

There was no long absence. He was in the tomb of Joseph only a few hours. His disciples had no expectation of seeing Him alive again, and this fact appears in artless story. That there was no conspiracy to fix up a story, is seen in this artlessness, and in seeming discrepancies in the several statements. There He stood before them just as He appeared in life, but it was so unexpected that Thomas could not believe without the further evidence of touching the places where he had seen the ugly gashes in hands and side, and then exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" Mary saw Him, through a mist of tears, in the early

dawn, and took Him for the gardener, but when he said, "Mary," as no one else could say "Mary," she answered "Rabboni," and fell at His feet. There was no long absence; and had He been absent twenty years, there would have been no difficulty in identifying Him.

The circumstances were not unfavorable to this identification. They saw Him, heard Him, and were with Him forty days. Who could have imposed on their credulity? Was there any one like Jesus? I think His countenance and figure must have been stamped with peculiarities all His own. Who could talk like Jesus? If anyone, where could he have learned the wonderful things which were uniformly the subjects of His conversation? Who could tit himself, in words and ways, into those three eventful years? A man comes back to your town after twenty-five years' absence. He was born here, raised here, educated here, and lived here fifty years, and helped to make the history of your town. He is gray, now. He walks with trembling step, and speaks with trembling lips, but who doubts his identity? Many who knew him best are dead. The younger generation never saw him. But who doubts that he is the same man? And who can talk of those fifty years of history as this man can? And who can fit into the relationships and business of those fifty years as a substitute for this man?

These witnesses were honest men, and there is not the slightest reason for believing that they were mistaken; and therefore their testimony must

be received. If you say you cannot receive it, I advise you never to sit on a jury, for you will never hear more reliable testimony than this. If you cannot believe testimony like this, you cannot make up your mind conclusively on any question of fact, and will be compelled to limit your conclusions to what you see and hear for yourself;—and why are your ears and eyes better than others *I*

Leslie, in his "Method with Deists," written nearly two hundred years ago, lays down these rules touching the truth of matters of fact in general:

1. "That the matter of fact be such as that men's outward senses, their eyes and ears, may be judges of it.

2. That it be done publicly, in the face of the world.

3. That not only public monuments be kept in memory of it, but some outward actions be performed.

4. That such monuments, and such actions or observances, be instituted, and do commence from the time the matter of fact was done."

We accept ninety-five per cent, of history, written by honest historians, when the facts bear only the first two of these marks. Not much of this world's history bears all four of these marks, *but nothing can be false that hears them all.* Turning to the Old Testament history, we find that nearly all the important facts have all these marks; the covenant with Abraham, the slaying of the first-born of Egypt, and saving the first-born of Israel, the giving of the Law, the passage through Jordan, the feeding of Israel with

manna, and many more. No after-writer could have convinced Israel that these facts were legends, any more than a man, however learned, could convince Americans that the Declaration of Independence is a myth. Nor could the book of Deuteronomy fit into Jeremiah's time, any more than Patrick Henry's speech could fit into the times of Andrew Jackson.

So also, the important matters of fact in the New Testament, have all these marks. Take the great central facts,—Jesus died, was buried, arose from the dead,—the facts which Paul preached "first of all," when he preached the Gospel. These were such facts as may be recognized by the senses. They were public events—not "done in a corner."

The Lord's Supper is a monument of the death of Christ, and the Lord's Day is a monument of His resurrection. How old are these monuments? The Lord's Supper was instituted the night of the crucifixion, and has been observed through all the succeeding centuries by the disciples of Christ. Jesus arose on the first day of the week, and immediately the followers of Christ kept it sacred as the Lord's Day. Even Jewish Christians gradually abandoned the Sabbath, and observed the Lord's Day,—the standing monument of the resurrection that brought hope to the world.

I think you are ready to agree with me that the 'resurrection of Christ is among the best fortified facts of history.

What follows?

1. Paul says He was declared to be the Son

of God by this fact. Mark you, not *a* Son of God, but *the* Son of God. Yes more, *The Christ*, and therefore the Teacher, the Priest, the King—my Teacher, my Priest, my King, my Lord and my God. I will be His disciple, and the subject of His atoning grace.

2. The apostles are His embassadors to speak for Him, and therefore I will continue steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, in the fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayer.

3. My faith is not vain, nor is my hope vain, for "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." "He hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory." "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."

Ye weary and heavy laden, what think ye of Christ? You do not doubt His power; you do not doubt His love. He says, "Come to Me." The distance between the "Ye" and the "Me" is covered by this sweet word, "Come." You are sinful, He will forgive you; you are lost, He will redeem you; you are ignorant, He will teach you; the burdens of this world are heavy, His burden is light; the yoke of sin and lust is hard, His yoke is easy; you are weary of sin and your soul is troubled, He will give you rest; you are in bondage, He will give you freedom; you

are on the way to ruin and despair, He will lead you to peace and joy. What think ye of His inimitable invitation, "Come to Me?" He is not asking you to solve great questions in philosophy or theology. He simply pleads, "Come to Me." He is the Way, the Truth, the Life—too wise to err, too good to be unkind. Come. You can come. He will not compel you. The step must be your own. His people must be a willing people. He can not save those who will not be saved. Come, take His yoke, learn of Him, and find rest for the weary soul.

# THE WORK AND WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together."—ROM. viii: 16-17.

OVER the work of the Holy Spirit in revelation, conversion, and sanctification, there has been much acrimonious discussion. The Quakers applied to all the friends of Jesus, the promise of Christ to his apostles,—"He shall bring all things to your remembrance,"—and claimed to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance; and the Shakers danced as they were moved by the Spirit. If any one called this in question, they answered, "Thee does not believe in the Holy Spirit." Not long ago, and specially early in this century, the strange agitations, shoutings, falling into unconsciousness, and reviving in the agonies of remorse, or in the ecstasies of joy, witnessed in camp-meetings and other revivals, were attributed to the work of the Spirit. When any one questioned this he was answered, "You do not believe in the Spirit." Now the work of the Holy Spirit is not dependent on your view or mine. His work will go on whether we understand it or not. And therefore a discourse on this subject would be wholly unnecessary, were it not for the fact, that unscriptural views of the work of the Holy Spirit keep many a person from coming to Christ according to the Gospel.

Comprehensively we may classify the work of God's Spirit: 1. As related to material things. 2. As related to the mind. 3. As related to the heart.

At the creation, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." This was God's creative power. John says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." (John i:1.) God created — the Word created—the Spirit created—an inseparable trinity in unity, at the very beginning. We can not separate between a man and his spirit; no more can we between God and His Spirit. No one can question his power to do what he will, by His Spirit. By His Spirit he created the heavens and the earth; he sent the flood; he "caught away Philip;" he used the tongue of a brute to rebuke the madness of Balaam. By His Spirit he will raise the dead; he will cause the heavens to pass away with a great noise, and the elements to melt with a fervent heat. Nor will this work be any less the work of God and his Son Jesus Christ. His work upon mind is seen in inspiration and revelation, and His work in the heart is seen in the fruits of holy living.

We may also classify the work of the Spirit as it stands related to the Truth.

1. *God revealed the Truth by the Spirit.* "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." "Prophecy came not in the old time, by the will of man." (II Peter, i: 21.) Paul says, "All Scrip-

ture is given by inspiration of God." (II Tim. iii: 16.) And again he says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." (II Cor. ii: 9,10.) Notice his use of "we" and "you," in this chapter. "We speak wisdom * * the wisdom of God * * not the wisdom of the world * * wisdom which none of the princes of this world knew." "We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things freely given to us of God; which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man (evidently the *uninspired man*—the man whose wisdom is the result of human thought) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (that is, they are known only as God reveals them by his Spirit).

Every one at all acquainted with the four gospels, has noticed that Christ always spake of that collection of writings called "The Scriptures," as the Word of God; that he regarded the whole in that light; that he treated the Scripture, every part of it, as infallibly true, and clothed with divine authority. Not that every word or every sentence, taken by itself, was the word of God, but that it was a true and faithful record of the facts and precepts; and as Paul says,

"written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world have come," and "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Jesus came to bear witness to the truth. He proved himself to be the Christ, the Son of God, and therefore the Great Teacher. His word is truth, unquestioned and unquestionable. His sanction of the Scripture, which was then read in the synagogues of Israel, is, to every disciple, direct and incontrovertible evidence of the divine origin of the Old Testament Scriptures.

This same Jesus said to his apostles, "Make disciples," and "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." That they might be qualified to make and teach disciples, he promised them divine guidance. "I will send you another Advocate * * even the Spirit of Truth. * * When the Spirit which proceedeth from the Father is come, He will testify of me, and ye shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. * * He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you. * * He will guide you unto all truth * * and He will show you things to come." (John xiv, xv, xvi.) He also said to these same men, "Whatsoever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. xvi: 19.) That is to say, you will speak as I would speak. You will be my embassadors on earth, and will be qualified to declare for me, and in my name,

what is binding on the conscience, and what is not. "I give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven,"— authority to open the door of salvation for a lost world. Evidently these apostles were to be inspired to speak and write, with the same infallibility and authority, as the Lord himself.

To Paul he said, "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." Of himself, Paul says, "I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." We are therefore compelled to accept the testimony and doctrine of these apostles as given by inspiration of God. And these apostles bear witness to the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures.

2. *God confirms the Word by the Spirit.* Paul says to the Church at Corinth, "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (I Cor. ii: 4,5.) This power was the power to work miracles, and miracles constituted "the demonstration of the Spirit." In another place, he says the gospel of salvation "Began, to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." Jesus said to his apostles, "These signs shall follow them that believe;" and Mark says, "They went forth

and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."

Nor were supernatural gifts confined to the apostles. The first churches had no written New Testament, as we have. A few of the Jewish believers had copies of the Old Testament Scriptures, and were familiar with the facts, precepts and prophecies contained therein. But the Gentile world was without this knowledge. The apostles were to teach the doctrine of Christ, and the disciples were to continue steadfastly in this doctrine. There was clearly a necessity for the continuance of spiritual gifts.

Paul said to the Church in Corinth, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; differences of administrations, but the same Lord; * * diversities of operations, but the same God worketh all in all; * * for to one is given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge; to another faith; to another the gifts of healing; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues." (I Cor. xii:4-10.)

Dr. McKnight renders freely as follows: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but they all proceed from the same Spirit, so that, in respect of their origin, the spiritual gifts are equally divine. And there are diversities of ministries, for which the different gifts are bestowed; but the same Lord is served by these ministries; * * and there are diversities of in workings, in the minds of the spiritual men, but it is the

same God who works inwardly all supernatural impression in all. Now to one indeed is given the word of wisdom,—the whole doctrine of the gospel; and to another a complete knowledge of the former revelations recorded in the writings of Moses and the prophets; * * and to another such a divine faith in the divine origin of the gospel, * * as enableth him boldly to preach and confirm it by miracle; and to another the gifts of healing diseases; and to another the inworkings of powers,—that is, an ability to work in others these spiritual gifts and miraculous powers; and to another prophecy, and to another the faculty of speaking divers kinds of foreign languages; and to another the faculty of interpreting what is spoken in foreign languages by inspiration, for the edification, exhortation and comfort of the church." Some of these gifts belonged more particularly to the apostles,— such as the "word of wisdom"—a complete inspiration guiding into all truth,—and the inworkings of powers—the power to impart spiritual gifts to others, as did Peter and John in Samaria. (Acts viii.)

In this same connection (Chapter xiii), Paul said, "Prophecies shall fail, tongues shall cease, knowledge shall vanish away." Referring to these same spiritual gifts, Dr. McKnight's free rendering and commentary is as follows: "But, whether there be teachings by inspiration, they shall be abolished in the church; or foreign languages, they shall cease after the gospel has been preached to all nations; or the inspired knowledge of the ancient revelations, it shall be abolished, when the church has attained its mature

state." Again he says, "Though the apostle hath mentioned none of the spiritual gifts, except prophecy, tongues and knowledge, what he hath said of these is applicable to all the rest. They shall be abolished in the church after it hath attained sufficient inward strength to support and edify itself." Indeed Paul teaches this when he says (Eph. iv: 11-14) that God gave the church "a diversity of ministers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." This language clearly indicates that these spiritual gifts would continue till a certain end was accomplished. Dr. McKnight's commentary is this: "These supernaturally endowed teachers are to continue in the church, until, being fully instructed by their discourses and writings, we all, who compose the church, come through one faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood as a church, even to the measure of the stature, which, when full grown, it ought to have; so that the church, thus instructed and enlarged, is able to direct and defend itself without supernatural aid."

Miracles have never been wrought in any age

directly to convert men, but to confirm a divine message or institution. Therefore, miracle and divine revelation always stand or fall together. These miracles continued a long time in the church to confirm the truth revealed by apostles and prophets. But when revelation was complete, revelation ceased, and the miracles wrought to confirm the word ceased also, as Paul said they would.

But, says one, what of faith cure, and divine healing, and Christian Science? Christian Science is neither Christian nor science, for its teachers deny the divinity of Christ, and pursue methods of cure that are the veriest humbug. "Faith cure"—or "divine healing"—is believed in by many good people who have "a zeal of God without knowledge," and who unwittingly make a large contribution to human skepticism. The cures said to be wrought by "faith cure" and "divine healing," bear no comparison with the miracles of Christ and his apostles; and this fact makes a good many people say, "If the miracles of the Bible are like these, then there is no sure foundation for the claims of the Christian religion."

3. *The Spirit of God dwells in the hearts of those who believe and obey the Truth,* Peter says "the Holy Spirit is given to those who obey the Lord." (Acts v: 32.) Paul says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you." "Quench not the Spirit." "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

meekness, temperance." The best evidence that the Spirit of God dwells in us is this fruit-bearing.

Now, on the day of Pentecost, we find all these departments of the Spirit's work. The apostles spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, revealing the Truth. There were miracles,—the sound as of a rushing mighty wind, the tongues of fire that sat upon each of them, the speaking in other tongues,—confirming the Truth. There was the promise that the Holy Spirit would be given to all who obey the Truth. The people were convinced that the apostles were God's messengers, and that their message was from God. They heard, believed, obeyed and rejoiced in the salvation of Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

I come now to the text. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." This letter is addressed to a church made up of Jewish and Gentile believers, and disturbed by the contentions brought about by Judaizing teachers. Paul's argument, through eleven chapters of this epistle, is, that the gospel, and not the law of Moses, is the power of God unto salvation; that God is not a respecter of persons; that "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made them free from the law of sin and death;" that "Christ was the end of the law for righteousness," and that the Spirit had, by miraculous demonstrations, testified of God's approval of salvation for the Gentiles, as well as for the Jews; and, as the great purpose of Christ, the Son of God, was to make all alike children of God—himself the elder brother, — the filial disposition, — the likeness to

Christ,—was an inward witness that they were the children of God. They were no longer bondmen, but children, for they had not received the "spirit of bondage again to fear," but the "spirit of adoption," whereby all alike could cry Abba, Father.

But we do no violence to this teaching if we give it a wider application. The day of miraculous manifestations is past. The Word of God is the testimony of the Spirit. Jesus said: "I will send you another Advocate, and he shall testify of me, and ye also shall bear witness." Evidently Peter's sermon, on the day of Pentecost, was the testimony of the Spirit. In Nehemiah's record of the prayer of the Levites, are these words, "Thou didst testify against them by thy Spirit in the prophets." (Neh. ix: 30.) "God spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets." (Heb i: 1.) In these last days he speaks by Christ and his apostles. God said to Noah, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." God strove with the antediluvians by his Spirit in Noah. To resist Noah's preaching, was to resist the Spirit that was in Noah. Stephen said, "You do always resist the Spirit, as did your fathers, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" (Acts vii.)

A witness must know whereof he testifies. Paul says, "What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. ii.) Here are two witnesses. The only witness that knows the things of God is the Spirit of God. The only witness that knows the things of a man, is

the spirit of that man. These two must unite in the testimony that we are the children of God. One is good for nothing without the other, so far as my soul's salvation is concerned. The word of God,—the testimony of the Spirit of God,—tells me how to become a child of God, and how to be a faithful child of God; and my own spirit, enlightened by the word of God, is conscious of having accepted God's conditions of salvation, and of the filial disposition and life that distinguishes a child of God. When Peter announced the conditions of salvation on the day of Pentecost, three thousand people "gladly received the word," and became obedient to the King, and "continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, in the fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayers," "and did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." Hero the Spirit himself bore witness with the spirit of these believers, that they were the children of God.

The Spirit says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus"; my spirit replies, "Yea, Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief." The Spirit testifies that "All men every where must repent"; my soul answers, "I have put off the old man with his deeds." The Spirit says, "Be baptized," and my spirit answers, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." "God be thanked that although I was a servant of sin, I have obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine delivered unto me." The Spirit says, "Keep thyself pure," and my spirit responds, "I pray God that my whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ," the only begotten of the Father, and heir of all things. To be joint heir with Jesus Christ is to share with him the wealth, the honor and the glory of the universe. "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be glorified together." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Crucified with him, buried with him, risen with him, walking with him, suffering with him, and glorified with him! "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the children of God!"

A poor boy, ragged and forlorn, knocked one early morning at a widow's door, and begged the privilege of chopping a little wood to earn his breakfast; and then he wanted more work to earn his dinner and supper; and so she kept him, out of pity, a few days. One day a friend dropped in from a distant neighborhood, and warned the woman against harboring the boy. "I know him," said he; "he is a very bad boy, and little wonder, for his father is in prison for misdemeanors, and only recently his mother died. He lies and swears, and they say he steals." The mother was alarmed, and, when the man was gone, she called the boy in, and told him what she had heard, and that he must prepare to move on. The little fellow began to weep, and said, "I thought I would try to be good like your children are. I have no mother to love me and care for me. My father don't love me and can't help me. I thought I would

try, and that you would help me, but it's no use, no use," and turned to go. The good mother's heart was touched. "Come here my child," said she, "you may stay here and call me mother; and you may call my children brother and sister; and I will take off those rags and put on better clothes," and she took him in her arms and kissed away the fast falling tears. The neighbors wondered at this deed of kindness, and some of them said they never could have done that. And yet, my dear sinner, that is what God is willing to do for you. That is what he has done for all of us who are his children by faith in Jesus Christ. We were children of the devil—bearing his very likeness—and yet God said, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "I will forgive your sins and remember them no more." And he washed us in the atoning blood of the Lamb, and made us clean, and gave us "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

Ab-ba—the simple cry of the baby child learning to speak the Father's name! In the Father's arms, folded to the Father's bosom, feeling the beatings of a heart, warmer and truer than a mother's, the trusting child looks up into the Father's face, beaming with love, and, conscious of the filial spirit, cries, Ab-ba— Father! And the Father answers, "Yes, my child. The Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

# PRAYER AND PROVIDENCE.

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"The effectual fervent prater of a righteous man availeth much."—JAMES, v: 16.

THE great Teacher encouraged his disciples to pray, teaching them that "every one that asketh, receiveth." No lesson stands out more prominently in all His teaching than the doctrine of God's providence over all His creatures. He clothes "the grass of the field;" He feeds "the fowls of the air;" not a sparrow "falls to the ground without Him;" and are "ye not much better than they?" "Every one that asketh, receiveth," is a precious promise to His disciples, which has sometimes been used beyond the limits intended. James, calls attention to certain ones who asked and received not, because they asked amiss, that they might consume it upon their lusts. They asked to gratify their selfish and carnal desires. David says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Solomon says, if a man turn away his ear from hearing the law, "even his prayer shall be abomination." Paul says, "that which is without faith is sin;" "whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." John says, "we have this confidence, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us." From all this divine teaching, we learn that we must not regard iniquity in our hearts; we must not turn away from the law; we must recognize the mediatorship of Jesus Christ;

we must ask in faith; we must ask according to God's will. Within these limits, it is true that "everyone that asketh, receiveth." In a sentence, the only barrier between any person and the mercy-seat, is a want of that faith which "works by love" and "purities the heart." Such a faith recognizes Jesus as the only mediator, accepts his atonement, obeys his will, loves what he loves, and hates what he hates. With such a faith, whether we bo formally in the church or not, we may pray for whatever is God's will concerning us. The sinner may plead, like the publican, for mercy; or, like Paul, for light. Some one may ask, If the sinner knows what to do to attain unto forgiveness, why should he pray for it? To this it is perhaps sufficient to reply, If the Christian knows what to do to procure his daily bread, why should he pray for it? We all know that Jesus taught his disciples, as such, to pray for "daily bread." It is in the nature of things, that a penitent sinner should plead for mercy. How can he do otherwise, if he feels the burden of sin? It is not against such prayers for mercy and forgiveness that the objection lies; but rather against the inconsistent disobedience so often associated with the theory and practice of prayer. We pray for daily bread, but not for bread in violation of God's law. We plow, and sow, and reap, and garner, and grind, and bake; and so meet God where he promises to meet us. The man who prays for daily bread, and folds his arms, refusing to plow, and sow, and reap, may *think* he is *trusting* God; but really he is *tempting* God to let him starve. So, also, the sinner who

prays to God to forgive his sins, and refuses to obey the voice of God—refuses to obey the gospel of Christ—may *think* he is *trusting*, when he is only *tempting* God. Paul prayed for mercy and light; but when he learned the way of salvation, he walked in that way—he was "immediately obedient to the heavenly vision." It is a law in nature and grace alike, that God does for man what man can not do for himself; and what man can do, God has determined he shall do, or perish. "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works," is the inspired statement of James, which voices the will of God, as related to man's responsibility and power. Paul says, "work out your own salvation; for it is God that works in you, both to will and to do, of His good pleasure." Man may be able to do but little, in comparison with what God does for him; yet it is in the use of that little, whether it be one pound or ten, that he proves himself worthy to hear the Master say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." In such conditions, two extremes seem to meet: we pray as if all depended on God; we work as if all depended on work. And when these two extremes meet in the faith and life of a disciple, we see the highest type of Christian manhood.

Prayer is not, however, so much a thing of law as a thing of conviction and feeling. Who will pray? is, after all, a more important question than, Who has the right to pray? The man who is sentenced to execution, if he desires to live, and believes that the governor is able and may become willing to commute his

sentence, will pray to that governor; and his prayer will be fervent in the ratio of his sense of dependence, and of his faith in the power and willingness of the governor. So, also, will men pray to God, when they feel their dependence on Him, and believe He is able and willing to grant according to their needs. Jesus evidently intended to teach his disciples the spirit from which prayer springs, when he taught them how to pray. "Our Father," is the expression of a *filial* spirit; "hallowed be thy name," is the expression of a *reverential* spirit; "thy kingdom come," is the expression of a *missionary* spirit; "thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," is the expression of an *obedient* spirit; "give us this day our daily bread," is the expression of a *dependent* spirit; "forgive us," is the expression of a *contrite* spirit; "as we forgive," is the expression of a *forgiving* spirit; "lead us not into temptation," is the expression of a *watchful* spirit; and "thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory," is the expression of an *adoring* spirit. The disciple was thus taught the very character he must possess before he could, in sincerity, pray this brief and comprehensive prayer.

It is important, therefore, that we should cultivate the spirit of prayer. To do this, it is not only necessary that we shall cultivate character, but specially necessary that we shall feel our dependence on God, and believe that He is able and willing to grant our requests. How many of us feel our dependence on God for daily bread? We boast of our lands, our fields of grain, our granaries, our achievements. We are quite

as boastful as the old Egyptians who said: "This river is ours; we made it." We need to hearken to the admonition of Moses to the people of Israel: "When thou hast eaten, and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which He hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, * * lest when thou hast eaten, and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, and thou say in thine heart, My power, and the might of mine hand, hath gotten me this wealth: but thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth." We are so apt to magnify ourselves, that it is easy to forget the source of all our strength. It is necessary that we shall learn how very helpless we are. The soil, the seed, the rain, the dew, the sunshine, the genial spring-time, the ripening influences of summer-time,—all these are the gifts of God. Our strength, our brains, our inventive genius, —these, too, are God's creation. The trees, the ores, the rocks, the rivers,—these belong to the estate which God has given to us. And what have we done to procure our daily bread? We have utilized God's soil; we have planted His seed; we have waited for Him to warm the soil, and to develop life from a germ of His own creation; we have waited for Him to rain on it, and to shine on it; we have depended on His power to

keep the frosts, and floods, and pestilence in abeyance; we have simply mellowed the soil, and destroyed the weeds, and gathered the fruitage; and, too often have we failed to look up to the great Father with thankfulness for these bountiful harvests. Thoughts like these will make us feel more deeply our dependence on God, and will quicken within us a desire to pray. When we turn attention to the Bread of Life, how much more may we be made to feel our dependence on God for that which feeds the soul, and endures unto eternal life!

Along with this sense of dependence, we must believe that God is willing to bless. It may seem an unnecessary task to attempt to prove that God is willing to save us. He gave His only begotten Son, that "whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." God's willingness is seen in the character of his Son, the image of the Father. "Whosoever hath seen me hath seen the Father." Jesus was ever willing to bless. He turned no one empty away. The great throngs of suffering people pressed him day and night. With a great heart of sympathy he met a suffering and sin-burdened world. He healed their diseases, and forgave their sins, and soothed their fears, and breathed peace into their troubled and broken hearts, and sent a thrill of joy and gladness all over the land, from Dan to Beersheba. His whole life was a benison of peace, and his commission to the apostles took the whole world into the arms of his divine philanthropy. His invitation is today inimitably sweet: "Come unto me, all ye that

are laboring and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, Come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." How often we witness scenes in religious meetings, in strange contrast with all these evidences of God's willingness to bless. Prayers are offered by men who would feel insulted if you called them skeptics, which seem to say that a sinner may be more willing to bo saved than God is to save him. What a slander upon God's benign character, and what a travesty upon the life of the Son of God! How often, too, we find Christians who seem to believe that God is not now so willing to. bless as when they enjoyed their first love. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. If we do not enjoy so much His peace, and His presence, it is not because He has changed, but because we have gone away from Him. We follow Jesus at too great a distance. We have gone out of the sunlight of his presence into the darkness of sin. We have neglected the Word, the house of God, the gates of praise, the closet, the communion with Christ and his people. We have failed to bring forth fruit. The oasis of flowers and fruit invites the rains, and the clouds pour down the copious showers; so also the dews of heavenly grace and blessing come down upon the fruitful life. "To him that hath, shall be given more abundantly." God is willing today, as ever, to bless, and though the clouds overhang, and the shadows deepen, and calamities come, God is true, and will "make all things work together for good to

those who love Him, and who are called according to His purpose."

We must also believe that God is able to answer our prayers. It is easy to say that God is omnipotent; and yet how prone we are to set limits to His power,—limits which destroy the fervency of our prayers. Let me invite attention to a careful consideration of this part of my subject.

In all ages of Bible history, miracles are the special evidence of God's presence and power. Indeed, miracles are absolutely necessary to confirm a divine message. Ordinary facts and propositions require only ordinary confirmation. Extraordinary facts and propositions require extraordinary confirmation. When Moses met God at the burning bush, and received a commission to go down to Egypt and deliver His people, it was a very natural answer which he gave, when he said: "Behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice; for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee." Moses knew that he would have no trouble to convince men in Egypt of the truth concerning the ordinary events of his life. But this was an extraordinary event, and how natural for men to call it in question. So, "the Lord said to him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand: That they may believe

that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee." These miracles were to be his credentials. Miracles were not wrought, in any age, directly for the conversion of man, but to call attention to the message as God's message. Moses would convince Egypt and Israel that he was God's messenger, that his message was God's message; and this he could not do without a miracle. When the people were convinced that his message was from God, they believed and obeyed it as such, and were saved. So, also, when Jesus came, he looked like a man, talked like a man, and to the people was simply the son of Joseph. But he claimed to be more, even *the* Son of the Highest. Such a claim would mark him simply as a lunatic, if he brought no other credentials than his word. He said, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true,"—that is, can not be received as true. "The works which the, Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."

The man who denies the possibility of a miracle, denies, in one and the same sentence, the possibility of an almighty God, and the possibility of revelation. For he who says there can be no supernatural act, says there can be no supernatural actor; and he who says there can be no supernatural act, also says there can be no divine confirmation of a revelation to man. All skepticism with reference to miracles, ends in atheism; and to admit that miracles were wrought by the servants of God, is also to admit that their word is God's, and that

Jesus Christ is His Son. To me it is easier to believe a miracle possible than not to believe it. If I believe in the God who made the soil, the grape seed, the moisture, the light, the heat, and the thousands of influences by which that seed might germinate, and grow, and bloom, and bear fruit,—I ought to have no trouble in believing that Jesus spake to the water, and it blushed itself into wine. Moreover, knowing that miracles were wrought by Moses, by Jesus, by the apostles, and by others, for confirmation of the Word, it is easy to mark the period in which they were wrought. It is easy to see why miracles are not wrought now. The word of God once confirmed, is confirmed forever; and not until new revelation is needed, will there be a renewal of miracle-working power.

When we have reached this conclusion, it is easy for some to say that, miracles having past, we now have nothing left us except the natural. The natural is a fixed quantity. Prayers do not change the natural. God may have answered, and doubtless did answer, his servants of old, by working miracles; but now that the age and necessity of miracles is past, God allows nature to take care of itself. The seasons come and go in their ceaseless round of spring, summer, autumn, winter; and the planets make their regular revolutions about the sun, as God ordained from the beginning; and no fervency of prayer can change the one more than the other. Some of these men even claim that history has its spring, summer, autumn, winter, and so is continually repeating itself; and

some modern scientists claim, that, if we could find the circle of man's descent, we could trace the steps around from the protoplasm, from which man originated, to another protoplasm from which another race might spring. Some of these men believe in God, and accept the Bible as His word; but all such men believe that the benefit of prayer is its reflex influence upon the soul. They can not conceive of God as answering prayer. Such a view, however, makes nonsense of those Scriptures which command us to pray for kings, for those in authority, for all men, for each other, for the will of God to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. I can not conceive of God as commanding me to pray, and then as saying: It makes no difference, as to results, whether you pray or not. I might be persuaded to thank God, once for all, for the machine which turns out such certain and splendid blessings, but I could not be persuaded to pray.

Now, between the miraculous, which is past, and the natural, which remains, there evidently is the providential, a belief in which is always antecedent to prayer. When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, their belief in the providence of God is assumed. The whole prayer assumes that God sees and hears; that He is interested in our needs; that He is in sympathy with every good word and work; and that He is not only able, but willing, to grant our requests. But you ask, What is this providential? If you go too far to one side, you are among the miracles; if you go too far to the other side, you are in the midst of the natural. What is your conception of the providen-

tial? To this I answer: Here is a clock which represents the natural. The inventor has utilized certain laws, and made a machine that does his will with certainty. It will run till it runs down, unless the owner re-winds it. If the wheels were removed, the fiat of God might compel it to keep time without them. This would be a miracle. But without such miracle, the proprietor may put his hand on or under the weights, lengthen or shorten the pendulum, wind up one side or both, and, in many ways, without deranging its machinery in the least, bring out results which the clock would not work out itself. Indeed, the clock was constructed to be managed in this way. As this hand of the clock-maker, so is the hand of providence, the hand which God puts upon the weights of nature's time-keeper; the hand which may be felt in the movements of armies, in the halls of diplomacy, in the commercial progress of the ages, in the inventive genius of man; and all this, in answer to the prayers of his people, who, these many years, have prayed, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." It is the hand of God, which may touch any one or all of ten thousand chords, and they will vibrate according to his purpose.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps on the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

It may be the storm of passion, the storm of war, the storm of parliamentary debate, the storm of diplomacy; but God is there to make all things work

together for good, to convert calamities into blessings, defeats into victories, crosses into crowns, shame into glory, humiliation into exaltation. What else can be the meaning of Christ's assuring words, when he said, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world"? or, of the words of the seer, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him"?

But one will ask, Is not this a mere theory? Is there foundation for it in the word of God?

The Bible is full of this doctrine, and abundant in its illustrations. Look at the story of Joseph. There is little in it that touches the miraculous. It was natural for Jacob to love Joseph more than his other children. It was natural for Joseph to tell his dream about the sheaves of wheat, and about the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars. It was just as natural for his brothers to be envious. It was natural to nurse this envy into a conspiracy to take his life. And so, when he visited his brethren in Dothan, they attempted to carry this purpose into execution. Reuben, thinking to save him, proposed to cast him into a pit. This proposition was accepted, and for some reason Reuben stepped out. His flocks may have needed his personal attention. When he returned, his brothers had sold Joseph to a company of Midianitish merchantmen. Somehow, these merchants came at the very nick of time—when Reuben was not present to interfere. Go back in the journey of these merchants, and you can imagine them exercising their freedom,

as to the hour and date of their starting. They may have been delayed a day or an hour; they may have been hindered a few minutes at a broken bridge; but somehow they reached the camp of Joseph's brethren just at the right time. Fifteen minutes earlier or later might have changed the history of Joseph and his people. Follow him down into Egypt, into Potiphar's house, into the prison, out of the prison to a seat beside the king; and from this on to the salvation of his father and brethren from starvation, and to their settlement in Goshen; and from this on to that historic panorama which was for all ages to illustrate the redeemed church. Can you take God's hand out of any of it? Not that God is the author of envy, and treachery, and falsehood, and murder; but that He, seeing the end from the beginning, knew how to overrule the wrath of man to His praise; and He did it by His hand of Providence.

The story of Esther is another illustration of the ways of Providence. It relates how a drunken king made unreasonable requests of Vashti the queen, and how she indignantly refused submission. The king became angry, and divorced her. This opened the way for another wife; and none but the handsomest would satisfy his demand. Some years before this, there had been left to Mordecai's care an orphan girl, a relative, remarkable for nothing so much as her beauty; and when the messengers, who had been sent out to gather together the handsomest women of the empire, saw Esther, she was just blooming into womanhood, and must accompany them to the palace.

One by one these handsome women appeared before the king. Esther was selected for his bride and queen. There is nothing in all this unlike what had transpired many times before, and has transpired many times since. The parties seem to have been left to act with the completest freedom; and yet the hand of God was in all the history of this orphan child. Some months after her installation as queen, she was informed one day that her uncle, Mordecai, was at the palace gate, in sackcloth and ashes. She knew that he was greatly troubled, and sent a messenger to ascertain the cause of his grief. He returned answer, that, at the instance of Haman, the king had decreed the indiscriminate slaughter of all the Jews then in the empire; and that she must go in before the king to intercede for them. She replied, that she could not do so with out jeopardizing her life. Mordecai returned answer: "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether boldest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to (.he Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Esther replied, "Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan; and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also, and my maidens, will fast likewise; and so will I go in before the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish." Accordingly, she dressed herself in her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the

king's house; and when he saw her, he held out the golden sceptre in approval of her presence. Who knoweth how much the prayer and fasting had to do with the melting of that obdurate heart? Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre. "What wilt thou, Queen Esther? and what is thy request? and it shall be even given thee, to the half of the kingdom." She replied, "If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him." She spread before him the richest of feasts; and again he asked her to present her petition. Again he is invited to a feast on the morrow; and then, with a woman's courage, she told him how the wicked Haman had instigated the destruction of her and her people; and she pleaded, "Let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request." Her request was granted in a counter-decree, which gave the Jews "light and gladness, and joy and honor." In all this story there is nothing that touches the marvelous, except the dream of the king, which led to the high honor conferred upon Mordecai. No one can read the story without recognizing the hand of God in it from beginning to end. Not that He is the author of drunkenness and treachery, but He, seeing the end from the beginning, knew how to overrule the wrath of man to His praise; and how to "restrain the remainder of wrath," for the good of His people, and for His own glory.

It would be easy to multiply illustrations from the Bible, and specially in the New Testament. Some

one will say, These are Bible stories, and we expect such things in a book attested by these credentials of God's authorship; but in secular history, we find no such evidences of God's providence. To this we may answer, Who knoweth whether this or that may be a special providence? We may not be able to speak with the same confidence of God's presence in secular, as we do of his presence in sacred history; and yet, if we examine with care, we will find that many wonderful things in secular history have on them the seal of God's providence. How could it be otherwise? God has assured us that the kingdom of Christ shall fill the whole earth; that his word shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the sea; that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church. He speaks of his people as "his portion," "his inheritance,"—and dear to him as the "apple of his eye." His church is in this world. The current of the world has always been opposed to her. "Persecutions, wave after wave, have rolled over her; yet she has stood as an immovable rock, amidst the angry floods. Civil power, philosophy, history, science, poetry, fashion, custom, wit,— have all in their turn been made engines to assail the impregnable fortress of Christianity. Intrigue has spared no wicked device to undermine her foundations; cruelty and unrelenting hate have poured out the vials of their wrath in the horrors of the Inquisition, or let loose the blood-hounds of war, to worry out and exterminate the saints of the Most High. Heresy, infidelity, superstitions, fanaticism, misguided zeal, unhallowed invasions on her doctrines and ordinances,

and all spurious forms of Christianity,—have, in their turn, done what they could to prostrate the fair fabric of religion, or so to undermine confidence in her as to make her appear to the world of little worth. And what has been the result? The church has outridden every storm. She has passed unscathed by the lightnings of human violence. Like the oak that strikes its roots deeper, and clings to the rocky soil the more tenaciously, as the storm beats, and the tempest rages; the church has been strengthened amidst the rigors of persecution, and nourished by the blood of her martyrs." * And is this result simply the fruitage of inherent life and strength? Or shall we find our better answer in the promise of Christ: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world;" and in Paul's assurance, "All things work together for good to them that love God"?

If we go into details, we will find abundant illustration that God's hand has been ever present to lead His people, and to protect His church from destruction. Take, for example, the history of Europe. There was a time when nothing seemed to be in the way of the conquest of Europe by the Moslem power. Had they succeeded, "the interpretation of the Koran had been the scholastic divinity of Oxford and Edinburg; our cathedrals supplanted by gorgeous mosques, and our pulpits employed in demonstrating to a circumcised people the truth of the apostleship and revelations of Mohammed. Such was the destiny that seemed to impend over all Europe, from the Baltic to

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* Read's "God in History."

the Cyclades, when the standard of Islam floated over the walls of Tours." Here the Lord said: Thus far shalt thou come and no farther. "Europe must be saved from this impending danger. Charles Martel was the "hammer" in the hands of omnipotence to break the power of the foe, and save Europe to be a field for the development of God's truth." The Saracen army numbered three hundred and eighty-five thousand strong; but Charles met them near Toulouse, and, "after a bloody battle, the Saracens, in the close of the evening returned to their camp. In the disorder and despair of the night, the various tribes of Yemen and Damascus, of Africa and Spain, were provoked to turn their arms against each other; the remains of their host were suddenly dissolved, and each emir consulted his safety by a hasty and separate flight." How like the sword of the Lord and of Gideon! For nearly eight hundred years the Moors occupied Spain; but when the time came for the light of Bible truth to illumine the spiritual darkness of Europe, the Moors were driven out of Spain, and the Cross took the place of the Crescent. Before this everything seemed to "indicate that the Crescent would monopolize the vast resources of knowledge, of discoveries, inventions, improvements in arts, advancement in sciences, and of all the modern facilities for the propagation and establishment of religion which Christianity now enjoys." I have not time to refer to the providences by which England was saved from Roman Catholicism, and made the Protestant power of the world. The history of Philip of Spain, and of

his "Invincible Armada"—an armament fitted out on purpose to make England bow to the pope; the history of the Bloody Mary; the history of Cromwell;— all these abound in illustrations of England's providential escape from thralldom to the Roman power. England's relation to Asia, England's controlling power in the congress of nations, England's protection of missionaries in India and other countries, England's fostering of civil and religious liberty,—all these indicate that God has been present in her history to raise up a people and a nation to work out his great designs.

This country, too, is a child of providence. Its gates open to receive the whole world into an atmosphere of civil and religious freedom. It has become the school where, more than anywhere else, men think and act for themselves. It has become a great light in a dark world. And that which gives purity to its atmosphere, and brilliance to its light is the word of the living God. The English-speaking world is essentially Protestant, and intensely missionary in all its energy and activity. God has molded English and American character for his own great purposes, as connected with the triumphs of the gospel of Christ.

And who can doubt that God answered the prayers of our forefathers in the struggle with England? and the prayers of four millions of bondmen in our late civil war? God is the God of the right. Through a baptism of fire and of blood, this nation entered upon its noble career; and through a baptism of fire

and blood, it cleansed its garments of every stain of human slavery. God heard the prayers of liberty-loving men and women, and snapped the fetters which bound one man to another in an unnatural and unholy slavery, and bid the slave go free. In this God made the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of wrath did he restrain. History will show that the late war with Spain was a blessing in disguise to Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines. The school house and the Bible will build up a new and better civilization for these priest-ridden people.

You may say, that, in all these illustrations, we have God working out results worthy of Him, and on a magnificent scale; but has He any care over the life of the individual member of the church or society? Jesus says: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" Paul says, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." It is a sublime faith which can look up to God in the darkest hour, and say, Thou doest all things well. Sometimes the starless night comes to the troubled soul; sometimes the clouds are too thick for our poor eyes to penetrate; sometimes the hand of trial and affliction seems too heavy to be borne;—and we wonder whether God knows or cares. In such an hour, it is a sublime faith that can say, "Though thou slay me, yet will I trust thee." A minister once called upon a broken-hearted

widow, to show her the consolation of the divine word. She had been robbed of her husband at a time when he was the most needed for her comfort, and for the protection of her little children. And, as if misfortunes never come singly, she had been robbed of her oldest boy, on whose arm she had hoped to lean. Her heart was crushed with grief; and she almost doubted that God would be the husband of the widow, and the father of her orphan children. The minister labored in vain to comfort her. Seeing some needle-work upon her lap, he suddenly inquired, "What is this, madam, that you are working at?" She replied: "This, sir, is some fancy needle-work that I am doing to busy my thoughts, so that I may not dwell too much upon my grief." "And," said he, "you are making awkward work of it. See how these threads are all crossing each other without symmetry or beauty." "Oh," said she, turning it over instantly, "you are looking on the wrong side. See there now, how beautiful the stitching, how symmetrical the design, how neatly all the stitches fit in their proper places!" "And that," said he, "is just what I have been trying to show you. You are looking at the wrong side of God's providence. Down here the threads seem to cross each other, apparently without reference to design or symmetry; but on the other side the hand of God doeth all things well." You may say this is a great mystery; and so it is, "for now we see through a glass darkly." But there comes a time when we shall know even as we are known.

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

"Effectual fervent" is the rendering of but a single word in the original. A literal rendering would be, "The *inwrought* prayer of the righteous man availeth much." It is the prayer that springs from the heart,—the sincere prayer,—that avails with God. Such prayers are born only of thoughtfulness. We must feel a deep anxiety concerning the things for which we pray. There must be a "travailing of the soul." As Jacob wrestled with the angel till the break of day, and would not let him go without the blessing; so, also, must we come to God, with that earnestness that will command his blessing. Do we want the world converted? Do we want our children saved? Do we want the Lord's blessing upon his church and his truth? If so, we may pray with that earnestness that will avail with God. When Zion travails, children will be born unto her. There is a logical connection between such prayers and our own activity in the direction of our petitions. Do we

desire to live for God? Do we desire to escape every temptation? Do we anxiously seek a higher consecration to our work? If so, we may pray with every assurance that God will "keep us by his power," "make a way of escape for us," and renew us day by day, so that "we may run and not be weary, walk and not faint."

# REDEEMED BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

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"For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." —I PETER, i: 18, 19.

THOSE who have read the New Testament, even carelessly, have not failed to note the several words which are used to set forth the work of Christ. His work is called Salvation, rescuing the world from a perishing condition. Justification—a forensic term, denoting the act of a judge who declares one innocent, who has been accused at his bar. God, the righteous Judge, forgives the sinner for Christ's sake and says, "I will remember your sins no more." Sanctification, —a sacred term, denoting a separation from the world, and a setting apart to a holy service. These words apply alike to all Christians. Some there are who think they describe wholly different manifestations of God's grace, whereas they are simply different points of view. Were I to write three different descriptions of a battle, from three different points of view, there would be much in each of these descriptions, common to them all, and much, in each, not found in the others; but all would be alike descriptions of the battle. So also are these several words the different stand-points from which we may view the work of Christ.

We may also view the work of Christ from the stand-point of redemption. Redeem means to purchase back again that which has been sold or forfeited. We use it in this sense today when we say that a man has redeemed his estate that had been sold for debt; or of the man who had forfeited his standing in the community, but has conducted himself in such a manner as to be restored to public confidence. Under the law of Moses, the land of promise was divided among the tribes, and subdivided among the families. This family estate could not be sold away from the family. They could not make deeds like ours, "warranting and defending forever." However, a Jew might become indebted to another, and lose the use of his estate for a time. But a kinsman had the privilege of redeeming it for him, at any time, or some happy turn in his affairs might enable him to do so; and both failing, it was restored to the owner in the year of Jubilee, by virtue of the statute. Nor was a Jew to rule with rigor over his brother. He might become poor and be compelled to sell himself for debt, yet his kinsmen could redeem him at any time; and, failing to do so, the poor man was restored to liberty by virtue of the statute in the year of Jubilee. (Lev. xxv.) The enactment concerning the year of Jubilee was a national bankruptcy law. It was a year of universal rejoicing, specially with those who had lost possessions or liberty by misfortune—a fitting type of the Jubilee of which we sing:

"The year of Jubilee has come,

Return you ransomed sinner home."

We see also, in this kinsman redeemer, a type of the great Redeemer who became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, that he might purchase redemption for us. Jesus Christ was son of man, as well as Son of God,—mysterious union of humanity and Divinity. He was born of woman, and was nourished and developed into manhood as are the children of men; but the angel said, "He shall be called the Son of the Highest." He ate food to nourish his body, and created food like God. He slept as we sleep,— and sleep was to him "tired nature's sweet restorer" as it is to us,—and yet he awoke from his slumbers and rebuked the winds and waves, and they obeyed the voice of God. He died as the malefactors died by his side; and he came forth from the grave, and was declared the Son of God.

*What was lost that made redemption necessary?*

Man, as God created him, was sinless—innocent— and, because of this innocence, Adam had a sweet and intimate communion with his Divine Father. He walked and talked with God. He had a home—a delightful Eden—with sufficient employment to give him enjoyment. The tree of life put it in the power of our first parents to live forever. They sinned. Sin is the transgression of the Divine law. They listened to the voice of the Tempter and fell. Sin separates the soul from God. Isaiah says, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear." This must be so in the very nature of things. There can be no affinity between sin and holiness, between good

and evil, between God and the devil. Separation from God is death; union with God is life. Man by sin lost life spiritual, and necessarily, life eternal. Sin entered into the world, and death by sin. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Adam lost his innocence, his communion with God, his home and life—temporal, spiritual and eternal. This loss was entailed upon his children. Some there are who think this a manifest injustice. The same thing happens today. If your great grandfather lost his estate, it was lost to your grandfather and to your father; is lost to you and your children, and will be lost to your grandchildren after you. It is the logical sequence of your great grandfather's misfortune. Jesus Christ came to restore to the human family what had been lost by sin—life and all that life means. He who redeems our *life* redeems *us*.

*From whom or from what are we redeemed?*

Not from the devil. We may be *saved* from his leadership, but not *redeemed* from him. To suppose that sinners are redeemed from Satan, is to suppose that God recognizes Satan's right to rule over us. If you have bought my estate at forced sale, and I have a right to tender you redemption money, within a certain time, the very tender of this money is an acknowledgment that you are, for the time being, the rightful owner of this estate. God has never recognized that the devil has any right to us. He is everywhere treated as a usurper, and is without any standing in the Court of Heaven. God has never made any compromises with Satan, and never will.

But death is the rightful penalty for sin. It is death which has taken our life; and Death is that from which we are redeemed. The prophet Hosea said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave. I will redeem them from Death. O, grave, I will be thy destruction." (Hosea xiv: 24.)

There are those who think that "eternal death" is a penalty out of harmony with the character of the all-merciful God. *But* not so. We do not know what a legislature thinks of crimes, except as we read it in the penalties. If the legislature of Ohio should make hanging the penalty for horse stealing, and imprisonment the penalty for murder, the people would say the legislature thinks horse stealing a greater crime than murder. Your boys read you the same way. You tell them it is wrong to go fishing on the Lord's day, and therefore they should not go. But they go and come home with a nice string of fish, and you meet them at the gate with a smile, and relish the meal. The boys say, "Father does not care about the Lord's day," and they are right. Had you cared a little, you would have rebuked a little; had you cared much, the rebuke would have been severe; had you cared more, the boys might have felt the virtue of Solomon's rod. Your conscience will allow you to dictate a punishment somewhat in the ratio of your abhorrence of the crime committed. Now lift your mind up to God, and remember that he is infinitely holy, and must have an infinite abhorrence of sin,— and therefore his conscience will approve an infinite punishment for sin. Nothing else would be like God.

Be careful how you treat God's Word when he says, "The wages of sin is death;" "If you die in your sins, whither I go you can not come." When you strike a blow at this, you strike a blow at the purity and holiness of God, and weaken my reverence for Him as God, and lay the foundation for my disobedience and rebellion. In fact you have the same "never" that God has. If you have a lovely daughter, and some wretched vagabond wants to pay to her his devotions, you write over your door "never;"—and that *"never"* will stay there as long as you have a right mind. That is the "never" that God has. Why is it worse in God than it is in you?

*By what are we redeemed?*

"Not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." The Lord said unto Moses, "I will set , My face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among My people: for the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul. * * Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh, for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof." (Lev. xvii: 10-14.) The blood is the life. "Jesus Christ gave his life a ransom for many." Paul says, "He gave his life a ransom for all, to be testified in due time;" "He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." The price was paid to death in honor and vindication of the Divine law; and the price paid was life—life for life. Life is the only possible ransom for life. All

the bloody sacrifices of the old law were types of this great Sacrifice of the life of the Son of Man, on the cross. And what a price was this!

God sets a high value on human life. "Surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it; and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man." (Gen. ix: 5, 6.) The law of Moses threw every possible safeguard around human life. Satan came near telling the truth when he said, "All that a man hath will he give for his life." Self-preservation is the first law of nature. We set a high value on our poor, sinful lives. Gold, silver, treasures, honor, earthly glory—all these will we give to live only a few hours. "My kingdom for a moment of time," said a dying queen. I remember, when only a lad, the gold fever of 1849. Thousands of people braved the hardships of a long and perilous journey over unwatered plains, and over rugged mountains, to seek for California gold. They "sweat and bled for gold;" many succeeded, and "hugged the treasure at midnight when good men slept." You would have thought gold was their god. They dreamed of the comforts they could bring to wife and children, when their coffers were filled. A company of such men took passage on a ship homeward bound around Cape Horn. One day they heard the alarm of fire,—and, soon after, the captain said, "The vessel is doomed. You strong men must make your way through the surf to that land,"

pointing to an island. "These boats must be reserved for the women, children and helpless men." These strong men had gold in their belts, and great nuggets of gold in their trunks, but what were these when life was at stake? They threw all this wealth away for the bare chance of making a safe landing. Gold was in one scale, and life in the other, and life outweighed it all. And this instinct, that seeks ever to preserve life, is common to men. It is wisely so. God put us into this world to live. We all want to live, sinner and Christian alike. I have no sympathy with those old songs, which represent Christians as standing on Jordan's banks, and casting a wishful eye to the life and glory on the other side. God has for every human being a mission, and he is cowardly who wants to die before God's good time.

But if our poor, sinful lives are so valuable, what estimate must we put upon the life of the Son of Man. When *we* die it will be because sin entered into the world and death by sin. When a little child dies, we try to comfort the parental heart by saying, "It was taken from the evil to come." But why should Jesus Christ die? He knew no sin. Death was not a penalty for his sinning. He went about all his days doing good. For him death was not a fortunate relief from some evil to come. Why should he die? There is no answer for this except the answer of scripture; "It behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations;" "He gave his life a ransom for many;"

"He died for our sins;" "He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Clearly Jesus valued one soul as worth more than all the world besides; and this price—this precious life of Christ, worth ten thousand such worlds as this—he freely gave as a ransom for human souls. If God values a human soul at such an immense price, surely we ought to listen to His pleading, when He cries, "'Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die?"

*How are we redeemed by the blood of Christ?*

The apostle John speaks of Jesus as the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Peter says he was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world. John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;" and when redemption was finished, ten thousand times ten thousand angels sang, "Worthy is the Lamb to receive power and riches, and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing."

The Lord said to Israel, "The life of the flesh is the blood. I have given it you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is blood that maketh atonement for your soul." All the bloody sacrifices from the fall of man to the close of the Mosaic dispensation, were types of the great Sacrifice on Calvary. The shedding of blood, in these sacri-

fices, had regard altogether to sin, and was suited only to a guilty race. Paul pays, "Without shedding of blood is no remission." This is God's thought, not man's. This has always been foolishness to men. "To them that perish the preaching of the cross is foolishness, but unto us who are saved it is the power of God"; and modern foolishness says the bloody sacrifices of the law were of human origin.

The great day of annual atonement embodied in itself the essential elements of the whole Jewish system of expiatory sacrifices, and foreshadowed, in wonderful detail, the true Atonement that was afterward to appear. It was a day of great solemnity, the only day of the year when the High Priest could enter the Most Holy Place. First of all, he made atonement for himself and his house, sprinkling the blood of a bullock upon the mercy-seat seven times. Then he took two goats, and presented them before the Lord, and cast lots upon the two goats, one for the Lord, as a sin-offering, the other to serve as the scape-goat. He offered the one for a sin-offering for the whole people, sprinkling the blood upon and before the mercy-seat, and then laid both hands upon the head of the live goat, and "confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, and all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat," and sent him away into the wilderness. (Lev. xvi.)

Dr. Adam Clark says, "It is allowed, on all hands, that this ceremony, taken in all its parts, pointed out the Lord Jesus dying for our sins, and rising again for our justification, being put to death in the

flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. Two goats are brought, one to be slain as a sacrifice for sin, the other to have the transgressions of the people confessed over his head, and then to be sent away into the wilderness, representing the bearing away of the sins of the people. The *two* goats made only *one* sacrifice; yet only one goat was slain. *One* animal could not point out both the *divine* and *human* nature of Christ; nor show both his *death* and *resurrection* * * The divine and human natures of Christ were essential to the grand expiation; yet the human nature alone suffered; for the divine nature could not suffer. The goat

that was slain, prefigured his human nature and its death; the goat that escaped pointed out his resurrection." Paul says, "We have received the atonement or reconciliation through Jesus Christ," and that, "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." (Rom. v: 10.)

In his letter to the Hebrews, he draws the contrast between the annual atonement of the old covenant and the one atonement of the new. Under the old covenant, the high priest was sinful, and needed to make atonement for his own sins. Under the new covenant, the High Priest, Jesus Christ, is "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." Under the old covenant, the high priest entered the Most Holy place once a year, and every year there was a remembrance of sins, because it was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. These sacrifices were only a shadow of things to come. Moreover, this priesthood

was changeable by reason of death. Under the new covenant, the High Priest appeared, once for all, in the end of the Jewish age, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself—by his own blood—and has entered into heaven itself to appear in the presence of God for us; and having made one sacrifice for sin, forever sits on the right hand of God—an unchangeable priesthood,—"able to save unto the uttermost all who come to God by him," "seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," and "is merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins, and remembers their iniquities no more." (Heb. vii-viii-ix.)

In his letter to the Church at Rome he says, "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by his blood, to show his righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime in the forbearance of God; for the showing, I say, of his righteousness at this present season; that he might himself be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus." In what manner this joyful event has been accomplished by Christ's death, is no where declared in the Scriptures, but the meaning is clear, that the death of Christ has made the exercise of mercy consistent with God's character as the righteous, moral governor of the universe. Again the apostle says, "Sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death passed unto all, for that all sinned." That is, they are involved in the consequences of Adam's sin. "Through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation;

even so, through one act of righteousness, the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. For as through one man's disobedience, the many (all) were made sinners, even so, through the obedience of the one, shall the many be made righteous." McKnight says, "The future tense is used here to signify that all the generations of mankind, from Adam to the end of the world, have been, are, and shall be, in this manner, constituted righteous." That is to say, the condemnation which came to the children of men, on account of Adam's transgression, whatever its nature, was forever canceled by Christ's obedience unto death. It was a universal salvation.

This "sin in Adam," was, by many of the fathers, called "original sin," and constituted every child of Adam a sinner. Affectionate parents were easily persuaded to have their children baptized for the remission of this original sin. This is the origin of infant baptism. These good men overlooked the fact that the death of Christ arrested judgment on account of original sin. Jesus said of little children, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." We are not alienated from God on account of Adam's sin, nor will we be judged on account of Adam's sin. "Every one will receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad." The death of Christ placed the whole world upon the plane of personal responsibility. "The axe is laid unto the root of the tree, and every tree that bringeth not forth fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire." Every man from Adam to the last child born,

will appear before Christ to be judged according to the life he has lived.

*How is the sinner redeemed from death?*

By being redeemed from sin. Paul says, "In whom we have redemption, through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins;" "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." Peter says we are redeemed, "from our vain manner of life." To this end, the blood of Christ is "the blood of the new covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins." The old covenant was sealed with the blood of calves and goats; the new covenant with the blood of Christ. The Israelites became covenantees of the old covenant by pledging themselves to obedience: "All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient." This brought them within the scope of all the covenanted blessings. A covenant is a bargain—a coming together in agreement. The terms of covenants between men may be made by both parties, but in covenants between God and man, God makes all the terms, and hence the word "testament" is an appropriate rendering. The Israelites understood this. They did not ask Moses to read the covenant with a view to modifying any of its conditions. "All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient," indicates that they believed God had a right to command; it was theirs to obey. The old covenant was given fifty days after the slaying of the first Paschal lamb; the new covenant fifty days after the slaying of the great Antitype of the Paschal lamb. Peter announced the conditions of the new covenant in reply

to the question, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Here was the spirit of their fathers, recognizing the "all authority" of Jesus Christ, and their duty to obey. Peter said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Three thousand gladly received his word and were baptized. They became covenantees of the new covenant, and God granted unto them redemption through Christ's blood, even the forgiveness of sins—and "remembered their sins no more." Paul says, "God reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave unto us (Apostles) the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors, therefore, on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us; we beseech you, on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." This was Peter's voice on the day of Pentecost, and three thousand people were reconciled to God, and entered into covenant relation with Him, and "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers." John exhorted the children of God not to sin, but "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

*Finally, what is restored to us by this redemption?*

1. We get back innocence. "I will forgive your sins and remember them no more." 2. Communion with God; for sin no longer separates from God,—and this is spiritual life in this world, and eternal life in the next. "He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation." 3. Home. We are children of God, and if children, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. We have an "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." We look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, and a city whose maker and builder is God." 4. Our bodies from the grave. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

# THE GREATER WORKS.

"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also: and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father."—JNO. xiv: 11, 12.

IN general we may classify the work of the Lord as follows:

1. To provide the way of salvation. This was the chief end of his personal ministry.

2. To convince the world that the way of salvation has been provided.

3. To persuade the people everywhere to accept and walk in the way of salvation.

These last two, the work to which he commissioned his apostles, and for the full accomplishment of which he depends upon his Church.

I. *His personal Ministry.* His personal attention was given very largely to setting forth the proof that he was the Messiah, the Son of the living God, and therefore authorized to provide the way of salvation. You note the large prominence which John gives to this, when he says, "And many other signs truly did Jesus, in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name."

In this 11th verse we have two witnesses in support of this claim—his *Word* and his *Works.* "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." An honest man can always look you in the face and say, Believe me; much more could Jesus Christ. He had a right to be believed. He had lived among men in such a manner as to be entirely worthy of their confidence. He said, "Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true, for I know whence I came and whither I go."

In another sermon I have shown how abundantly the matter and manner of his teaching harmonize with this exalted claim. He believed that he was the Son of God. If he was not, he was either deluded or was deluding others. He was conscious of Divinity. He did not talk like the prophets, though his wonderful life impressed many of the people that he was some great prophet sent back to them from the grave. He spake everywhere as one having authority. The fingers of all the prophets had pointed forward to the Messiah. Jesus boldly said, "I am he that was to come." "Come to me, take my yoke, learn of me." "I am the way, the truth, the life." "You believe in God, believe also in me." That is, believe in me just as you believe in God.

"Or else believe in me for the very works' sake." "The works which the Father hath given me to do, the same works that I do bear witness that the Father hath sent me." These works proved that he was the Christ, the Son of God. He talked like God, and not like man. He wrought like God, and not like man.

"Believe me for the very works' sake." He cast out demons, healed diseases, fed the multitudes, walked upon the sea of Galilee, opened the eyes of the blind, raised the dead, and compelled thoughtful men, like Nicodemus, to admit that he wrought miracles, and therefore was a "Teacher come from God."

But while he was setting forth these proofs that he was the Christ, the Son of God, he also set himself forth as a personal Savior. There were two things concerning himself that he made very prominent in his miracles: *First,* I am able to help you unto the uttermost; *Second,* I am willing to help you unto the uttermost. Jesus wrought no miracles simply for the sake of the miracle, much less for the sake of display. It is always characteristic of imposition to work miracles for the sake of display. Joseph Smith, the Mormon impostor, would have some one pretend to die, so he could come and raise him from the dead, and have something to boast about. Spiritism is fond of making marvelous displays, with the light turned down or turned out. Jesus wrought no miracles in this spirit. His miracles, though wrought to convince men that he was the Son of God, were born of his sympathy for the sad and needy. They were expressive of love, as well as power. When he met the widow of Nain following her only son to the grave, the disciples saw compassion in his tearful eyes, and in his bearing in the presence of this grief-stricken woman; and heard it in the tones of his voice; and the historian put it on record,—"He had compassion" — and, because he had compassion, he said "Weep not,"

and touched the bier, and said, "Young man arise. The young man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus delivered him to his mother." No wonder the people said, "God hath visited His people." Here was the all-pitying heart, and the all-powerful hand.

It is said of the disciples of John, that they took up his body and buried it, and then went and told Jesus. There was no heart that could pity like his—no voice that could speak words of comfort like his. Mary and Martha were surrounded with the best of human comforts; but when they learned that Jesus was come, they left all these behind, and met him near the village, exclaiming, "Lord, if thou hadst been here our brother had not died." "Jesus wept"—wept because his heart was touched. The people said, "Behold, how he loved him." How comforting, in an hour like this, to have friends whose tears tell us that their hearts are full of tenderness and pity. But Jesus could do more than weep. He stood before the grave of Lazarus, and lifted up his eyes, and said, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me; and I know that Thou hearest me always, but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent me." And then with a loud voice he cried, "Lazarus, come forth," and Lazarus came forth in obedience to the voice of God. Here the miracle was clearly the sign-manual of the Almighty Father, certifying that Jesus was His Son; but along with it were manifest the love and sympathy which filled his heart. No wonder his name and fame spread everywhere. The story of his love and power was

borne on the wings of human friendship and sympathy, and everywhere was heard with interest and eagerness.

I have sometimes imagined the leper coming to him. He has been stoned from the gates of the city. He has not been permitted to associate with his own family. He has rags and ashes on his head, symbols of his uncleanness. His skin is white as snow. His joints are full of decay. He feels that he is going slowly, but surely, to the grave. He is not allowed to draw nigh to Jesus. He stands afar off, and cries, "Thou son of David, have mercy on me." "I will. Be thou clean," is the answer to this prayer that came from the inmost heart. Immediately the skin takes on its natural color; and the joints grow nimble as in youth. The old elastic spring is in his step, and the health glow on his cheek. With one burst of gratitude to his benefactor, he turns and hurries homeward, telling of Jesus all the way. His wife looks out of the window at his coming.—He is running.—"Can it be my beloved"? and soon she is in his arms, and he is telling of Jesus, who spake only the word and he was healed. And do you suppose they could keep this from their neighbors who had mourned with them so many years? And did the neighbors keep this wonderful fact to themselves? One ran down the valley to tell a blind friend about it; another further down the valley to tell a palsied man about it; another mounted his horse and rode fifty miles to tell a dying brother about it, and yet another climbed over the rugged mountains that very night to tell a fever-

stricken friend about it; and wheresoever the tidings went, these two things were said of him: He is able to help you. He is willing to help you to the uttermost, for he turns no one away empty.

Now this was gospel—good news. And what have we more prominent in the gospel of Christ than these two things? In Corinth, Paul preached, "first of all", "how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." "He died for our sins." Couple with this Christ's saying, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," and Paul's words, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Our hearts have been touched with the story of David and Jonathan—whose "souls were knit together," and whose love for each other "was wonderful, surpassing the love of women." Who has read the story of Damon and Pythias, each willing to die for the other, without being touched by it? Who has read of the mother, found in railroad wreckage, with her babe pressed close to her pulseless heart, as if to say, My life has been given for my child, without being touched by it? History furnishes many illustrations of devotion, even unto death, of husband for wife, wife for husband, parent for child, child for parent, brother for brother, and friend for friend, but God commendeth Christ's love toward us, in that, while we were his enemies, he died for us. He died for those who put on his brow the cruel crown of thorns; for

those who unjustly condemned him; for those who robed him in mockery; for those who drove the cruel nails through hands and feet; for those who refused him his last dying request; and, at an hour when you might have expected vindictive words from human lips, he cried, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." This dying for our sins, and for such sinners, is the highest possible proof of his *willingness* to save. And when the preacher went on to declare his resurrection from the dead, he gave the highest evidence of his *power* to save. The one fact tells of his overwhelming love, the other of his almighty power, so that in all ages we can confidently sing,

"Come to Jesus! Come to Jesus!

He is able, he is willing, doubt no more."

But there was atonement also in this death. I will not attempt to give a philosophy of atonement, though I believe there is a profound philosophy in it. Paul calls it the *wisdom* of God. It is enough that infinite wisdom has declared it to be a "behooval." "It *behooved* Christ to suffer." Somehow the death of Christ opened up the way of salvation—made repentance available for salvation, and forgiveness possible with God. Christ suffered that "Repentance and remission of sins might be preached among all nations." His was not the death of a martyr. "No man taketh my life from me. I lay it down myself. I lay it down that I might take it again. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." This is not the language of a martyr. "He gave himself a

ransom for many." "He bore our *sins* in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness—by whose stripes we are healed." "God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, to condemn sin in the flesh." "He hath made him who knew no sin to be a sin-offering for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God through him." "Christ hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "He was made a little lower than the angels, that he might taste death for every man." These, and kindred passages, point to Jesus as the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

Darius could not save Daniel, and at the same time maintain the dignity and majesty of his government, because the constitution of his realm made the king's decree unchangeable;—and therefore he consigned him to death and the grave, and "sealed the stone laid upon the mouth of the den of lions with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords, that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel." It was, as far as Darius and his government were concerned, an inexorable necessity. His only hope was that the God of Daniel would deliver him, and in this he was not disappointed. Man's extremity is God's opportunity.

There is no wisdom nor justice in clothing a man, be he king or pope, with power to issue an unchangeable decree. But God is himself the Constitution of the Universe. He is all-wise, all-good and unchangeable. His decree is, in the very nature of things, an

unchangeable decree. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," is an unchangeable decree. From this standpoint redemption seems impossible. But God found a way to exercise mercy, and still be just; a way to pardon iniquity, and still impress the intelligencies of the Universe with the exceeding sinfulness of sin; a way to make the world know that he loved men, and yet hated sin. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up * * for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." "He laid on him the iniquity of us all." The Cross of Christ is a symbol of God's wrath, as well as God's love. It tells both of Justice and of Mercy. It is the voice of justice, awing us in the presence of God's righteous wrath. It is the voice of love, declaring the love of God in sending His Son to rescue us from perishing. It convicts of sin and makes the soul tremble; and at the same time draws, by tender cords, to the all-loving Father.

It is the verdict of infinite wisdom and goodness that sin is exceedingly sinful, and that man, by reason of sin, is guilty and condemned. A man may be sick nigh unto death, and yet feel little discomfort, because the disease has stupefied his sense of feeling. But when he looks into the anxious faces of wife and children, and physician, who scarcely leave his bedside for an hour;—when he knows a council of the best physicians has been called, he sees in all this the verdict of love and skill, that he is a very sick man. So may

sin dull our moral sense. We sin so much, and justify ourselves so frequently, that sin does not seem to be sin at all. Our consciences have been seared. But when we look at the cross, and ask why should the sinless Son of Man suffer and die like that? and learn that infinite wisdom has declared it to be an awful necessity on account of sin, we read in this fact the verdict of God, that sin is exceedingly sinful, and "its wages death," and our souls cry out for mercy.

I do not accept that old theory of atonement which divided the price of our redemption by the number of the redeemed, and made the quotient the price of each redeemed soul. Jesus valued one soul as worth more than all the world. Had you, my friend, been the only sinner on God's footstool, Jesus would have died for you. Were you ever sick and have a kind mother watch over you day by day and night by night, until she grows weary and sick herself, and still keeps up the ceaseless vigil? She has turned away from all the rest of the family, and all her neighbors, and shut herself up to you alone. Not a weary, plodding step but for you; not a long, sleepless night of vigilance but for you; not a pulsation of her mother heart but for you. And did she not look more lovely and more lovable than ever before, as she bent upon you all this maternal tenderness? and did not your heart go out to her as never before? So it is when I see Jesus agonizing in Gethsemane, and suffering on the cross for me,—poor, sinful *me*—that *my* soul may be burnished for the crown of his rejoicing forever— that I know something of his meaning when he says,

"If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me," and catch the key note of Solomon's song, "Thou art altogether lovely—the chiefest among ten thousand." The Captain of our Salvation was made perfect through sufferings. No evangelist can win souls to Christ if he leaves out this "Old, old Story." The cross is the very heart of the gospel of Christ—the power of God unto salvation.

We may never he able to fathom the profound philosophy of the atonement, but we know it was never declared that God could be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus, nor was there a commission to preach the gospel of mercy to all the sinful world, until after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

II. *The work of His Apostles:* We must bear in mind that Jesus was addressing disciples who were being trained, and were soon to be commissioned, as *apostles*, to preach the gospel of salvation to all nations. They could not be efficient apostles, unless they were faithful disciples; and hence, in this long conversation, covering nearly four chapters, there is much that is applicable to disciples generally; but there is much also that is applicable *only* to these apostles. Jesus said he was going to his Father. These apostles were to preach the Word. In his prayer he said: "I have given unto them the words Thou gavest me." In this twelfth verse he assures them that they would be given the power to work miracles. "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also." Dr. Barnes says, "This promise had peculiar

reference to the apostles themselves." Jesus Christ was God's Chief Embassador, and the apostles call themselves "Embassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God." An embassador is clothed with full power to treat for his government. Christ said, What you bind or loose on earth, shall be bound or loosed in heaven. "Whosoever receives you, receives me, and whosoever receives me, receives the Father who sent me." There never had been before, and there never has been since, a ministry clothed with plenary power. It was an extraordinary claim, and could be confirmed only by an extraordinary confirmation. Hence "They went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."

But they did not work greater miracles, nor a greater number of miracles than Christ. John says the full record of Christ's deeds and sayings would make many volumes. None of the miracles of the apostles rose to the distinction of the miracle of Lazarus' resurrection.

What then is meant by "greater works"? Surely not greater miracles. The ministry of Jesus was full of faithful teaching and faithful warning, and full of pathos and power, and yet only one hundred and twenty faithful disciples were present on the day of Pentecost. Paul speaks of five hundred who saw him after his resurrection. However, even five hundred is a feeble fruitage for the grandest ministry of earth. But when Peter preached the first gospel sermon under

the commission, three thousand answered the first invitation; and already does he realize the greater work that had been committed to their hands. Greater because the soul is greater than the body. Greater because it is greater to feed the souls of men with the bread of life, than to feed the multitudes with loaves and fishes. Greater to open the minds of men to see Jesus as their Savior, than to open the eyes of Bartimeus. Greater to raise men from death in trespasses and in sins, than to raise Lazarus from the dead; and greater because this blessed work would go on with increasing success, until a countless number would come from every tribe, and kindred and people, to swell the chorus of redeeming love. This is the "greater work;" and it is also

III. *The work of the Church.* I know these men were apostles, and we are not; they were inspired, and we are not; they had a miracle working faith, and we have not; and there is no necessity now for these. But they were disciples,—the friends of Jesus, and members of his church,—and so are we; and we may have the intense faith and enthusiasm of these disciples. Hear them: "We can not but speak things we have seen and heard." "So we believe, and so we preach." "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel— necessity is laid upon me." "I am debtor both to the Greeks and Barbarians, to the wise and the unwise, so as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel." These men felt the burden of a great responsibility, and so may we. Their souls were on fire with the love of Christ, and the love of man, and this made

them eloquent. You say we need this spirit in the pulpit today. Granted; but does it not occur to you that this must also be the spirit of the pew? When the church comes to realize that winning souls to Christ, and building them up in the faith that giveth final victory, is a greater work than feeding the hungry multitudes, healing diseases, or even raising the dead, it will intensify the faith that makes this "greater work" possible, and unite all hearts and hands in a noble effort to bring Christ to all the world, and all the world to Christ. May the Lord help us to see this lost world as he sees it; to hear the cry of need as he hears it; to value souls as he values them; and to lay ourselves upon the altar of service, even unto death, as did our blessed Master, that we may have fellowship with him here, and rejoice that he has been able to use us as "workers together with God."

# THE GREAT COMMISSION.

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"And Jesus came to them and spake unto them saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."— MATT, xxviii: 18-20.

THIS is the elevation from winch we may view properly all the past, in which "God had spoken to the fathers by the prophets;" and a new Mt. Pisgah from which we may view all the promised land of the new Israel. Every thing before has been leading up to this. It is the beginning of the execution of a great purpose, "which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." No one can understand the Bible who does not draw a distinct lino here, "rightly dividing the word."

*All authority in heaven and in earth!*

This is an exalted claim. All authority—legislative, judicial, executive—is given unto me in heaven and in earth. "Sit thou at My right hand till I make thy foes thy footstool." "And let all the angels of God do him honor." "Thou Lord, in the beginning, has laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him, and without

Him was not any thing made that was made. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." (Jno. i: 14.) "The image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature, for by Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." (Col. i: 15.) All this, and much more, is said of Jesus by apostles and prophets. Men who sway a feeble sceptre over millions on earth are called great. Jesus commands all the legions of angels, and is the rightful ruler over all men.

The men who stood about him were not surprised at this high claim. Yet no 'one in human flesh had ever claimed so much. They had accepted the infallible proofs that he was the long looked - for Messiah—the Christ, the Son of the living God. He had proved himself to be a king among men, and therefore his right to rule over men. He had commanded the winds and waves, and they obeyed his voice. He had driven out diseases and demons. He had said to Satan, "Get thee behind me," and Satan obeyed his voice. He had commanded the grave to yield up the imprisoned clay, and the grave opened. He had himself wrestled with death and the tomb, and had arisen a triumphant Savior. No wonder the apostles were not surprised at this exalted claim. *What does he Propose?* Nothing less than universal conquest. And this was in harmony with all the

prophecies of old. God had said to Abram, "In thee and thy seed shall all the nations be blessed." David put it in a song of praise, "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Isaiah, the evangelical prophet, had glorious visions of the Gospel's universal triumph: "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it, with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of. hosts will perform this." "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." "The wilderness and solitary place shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." And Daniel saw the triumphant kingdom in the stone, "cut out without hands," that "smote the image," and "became a great mountain and filled the whole earth"—the "kingdom which shall never be destroyed." Habakkuk said, "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." The angels proclaimed it when Jesus was born, "Behold, I bring you good tidings

of great joy which shall be to all people;" and a multitude of the heavenly host shouted the refrain, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," and to make this a daily prayer until God's kingdom shall come in all its power, in the lives and surroundings of men.

Jesus established his ordinances with a view to catholicity. He ordained that baptism should be in water, and that the loaf and wine should memorialize his death. Water is a universal element. The vine grows in every zone; the wheat plant grows under every sun, —India rivaling Manitoba in its production for the world's markets. The Gospel was to be preached to all the world, because adapted to the world's needs, and wherever preached the people could hear, and obey in the waters of baptism; and wherever a church was organized, there would it be possible to celebrate the Lord's death with the chosen elements.

In all this, the wisest men of that time would have made many blunders. And, specially would the wisest Jew have made a mistake in the philanthropy of the Gospel. No Jew would have ordained a gospel for all the world. His education had purposely been of a quality that would bind and hold the Jews together till the coming of Christ; and because God had so abundantly blessed them in the flesh, they came to think of themselves as the one favored nation. For this reason this philanthropic scheme of Jesus did not spring from his Jewish education or environment. He

was not a development from the past, or the outgrowth of Jewish institutions. He was the gift of God to the world, sent forth "in the fullness of time."

*The world's Conquest!*

Great men, and specially great warriors, had attempted the world's conquest by mighty armies. On the awful night of the crucifixion Jesus said to Peter, "Put up thy sword. They that use it perish by it." The sword is the symbol of force and violence. Jesus does not propose to conquer in this way. "My people shall be willing in the day of my power." The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit,—"quick and powerful, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation."

Nor did he propose to conquer the world by miracles. His miracles had confirmed his claim to be the Son of God. Miracles would confirm the word of the apostles. Miracles would accomplish their mission and pass away. Besides, a miracle-working ministry or church, would draw the multitudes simply for fleshly blessing. They would come to be healed of bodily maladies, and only one in ten, like the lepers of old, would return to glorify Christ. Jesus said, "Ye shall hear the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Jesus commits his message to men. He could have sounded out the Word to all the world, by one stupendous miracle, but he did not preach the Gospel even to Saul, when he appeared to him on his way to Damascus. He sent an earthen vessel—a man—to tell

him the way of salvation. An angel appeared to Cornelius, but he also told the inquirer to send for Peter, to tell him words whereby he and his house might be saved. Angels have usually alarmed people by their brightness and glory. Nor did the Holy Spirit stand out in lambent flame to speak to the people on the day of Pentecost, but inspired Peter to deliver the first Gospel sermon. God spake to the fathers by his Spirit "in the prophets." Jesus speaks to the world by his Spirit in the apostles.

His chosen men came from the average walks of life. They had passed through the experiences which are the common lot of the average people. They had the education which people of their own class enjoyed. They had the education which comes from contact with their fellows, in domestic and commercial affairs. They were not the men whom worldly enterprise, or political wisdom, would have called to the front. Worldly wisdom would call them weak, not knowing that God chooses "the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty," and that this great cause was to triumph by virtue of its own inherent qualities.

And yet they were educated as no ministry has ever been educated since. I once heard Garfield say, illustrating the personal power of the teacher, "I would choose the old log schoolhouse, with Dr. Hopkins for a teacher, against a well endowed college whose professors labor, in a perfunctory way, without a high appreciation of life, character, and duty; for Dr. Hopkins was a man, through and through, and

put his soul into his work, till you felt his very presence to be a daily benediction."

If this is the right estimate of personal influence, what must have been the molding power of the Great Teacher? The disciples were with him in the city and country, along the highways and byways; in the homes of the rich and the poor; in the quiet seclusion of the humble home of Lazarus, and in the gatherings of the great multitude which thronged him on every hand. He talked as he walked, and walked as he talked. And the lessons of his life and his lips are the great lessons necessary to true discipleship. What an education was this! Add to this their "endowment from on high," and we have a ministry, the like of which the world never saw before, and has never seen since. Moreover, Jesus depended more on the spirit of these men than upon his word of commandment. They were his friends, and, for this reason, would do what he commanded. The love of Christ constrained them.

They did not receive this commission with a view to professional service. There was no question as to salaries and parsonages and perquisites. He told them that bonds and imprisonments awaited them. "They have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." They received this commandment in the spirit of patriotic soldiers on a field of battle. The commander says, "Take that fort and hold it at all odds, or the day is lost, the campaign is lost, the country is lost!" It is not a question of dollars and cents, nor of how many will be slain, nor of how many hearts will ache and break at the home firesides of these brave men.

It is a question of weal or woe to the nation. And, under the inspiration of patriotism, they leap to the charge, and through the leaden hail, and the jaws of death, they mount the ramparts and plant the national standard there; no matter about the loss of blood and treasure. So the apostles received the command of the King. The Gospel is bread for the starving, water for the famishing, hope for the despairing, life for the dying. Go preach it to every creature. Carry it with confidence that it is adapted to man's needs; and that men will receive it, and rejoice in its exceeding great and precious promises.

"Make disciples"—this was the simple work to which they were commissioned. Not disciples of a religious philosophy, but disciples of Christ. If each one of these apostles had preached a speculative theology of his own, which he regarded as orthodoxy, and had labored earnestly to make converts to it, they would have organized twelve sectarian churches, at the beginning of their ministry. It is the preaching of speculative theologies that has made all the sects of our time. The apostles preached Christ and him crucified. They made disciples of Christ by preaching the gospel of Christ. Faith comes by hearing the gospel; and faith in Christ means faith in all that he represents;—and he represents all that is highest and holiest. Facing toward Jesus Christ means, at the same time, turning the back upon the world—the one is faith, the other is repentance. No man can be a disciple of Christ without faith in him, and a desire to belike him. Then is he a proper subject of baptism.

"Baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." This was the command "of the King," and indicates a transition. "Into the name." "Into" is a preposition following verbs of motion. Baptism was the formal and final act, bringing disciples *into* the family of God, where they could call God their Father; Jesus Christ their Elder Brother, and "High Priest of their profession;" the Holy Spirit, their indwelling Guest, and ever present Helper.

They were then to teach these disciples to observe all things which Jesus had commanded. The New Testament is written to answer two questions: 1. How shall I become a disciple of Christ? 2. How shall I become the best disciple? True discipleship includes growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. United with, and drawing spiritual nourishment from Christ, the true vine, the disciple bears fruit. Christ says, herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." The disciple is a bearer of fruit, then more fruit, then much fruit.

Discipleship is service—"Take my yoke." The great question is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love. If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto Him and make our abode with Him."

Discipleship means growth in knowledge. "Learn of me"—learn with a view to becoming like Christ. Paul compares this growth to the making of mirrors from metal plates. The plate was scoured and rubbed and brightened and polished until it became a mirror. "We all, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed from glory to glory." That is, by learning of Christ, and doing his will, by the study of his life and by the fullness of his spirit, we reflect more and more, and yet more, the Christ-life, until the world sees Christ reflected from our ways and words, our sympathies and activities, our thoughts and feelings— a sort of reproduction of Jesus Christ among the children of men. And this is the great aim of Christianity so far as this world is concerned. Heaven must begin in the heart, and show itself in the life, before the soul can enjoy the heaven of heavens where Christ abides forever more.

*"Lo, I am with you alway."*

Jesus was born in a stable and cradled in a manger. His boyhood life was spent in the humble home of Joseph, the carpenter. It had been a proverb that no good thing could come out of Nazareth. He had not the learning of the schools, nor the experiences of that sort of life which would have given him prestige in commercial, civil, of ecclesiastical leadership. As men count greatness, he was not great. He had surrounded himself with men from the ordinary walks of life; and, to these common men he gave a commission which would have its highest success among the common people. These men had not fully

comprehended his great mission up to the very day of this commission. Confounded by his willingness to die on the ignominious cross, they had fled from the wrath of his persecutors, like timid children, and yet Jesus commits to their hands the greatest enterprise of all time. He had told them of the fires that would be kindled to burn them; of the prison doors that would open to receive them; of the martyrdom that would make them glorious. Did their cheeks pale, and their knees tremble? Probably so, till Jesus added these gracious words, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

And then there came back to them the memory of a life full of illustrations of power divine; and how, since his resurrection, he had, over and over again, demonstrated that he could be present when they saw him not. And this belief in the God-man, gave them courage and enthusiasm to work against all odds; for if Christ be for us and with us, who can be successfully against us? How wonderfully this promise was fulfilled, over and over again. They wept over the grave of Stephen, and felt that the great martyr's place could never be filled; and yet the grass had not started green on his grave, before the very man, who had consented to his cruel death, was preaching the gospel more eloquently than Stephen could have preached it, had he lived. They sat down and shed tears over the ashes of the Church in Jerusalem, and doubtless called it a great calamity, but they soon wiped away the falling tears, for the good tidings came back that the scattered disciples were preaching the gospel every-

where they went, and were reaching more people than could have been reached, had they been permitted to remain in Jerusalem.

When John's heart sank within him on Patmos, and he began to wonder whether the Commission would triumph, the curtains were rolled back, and he saw Jesus, panoplied in light, and power, and glory, moving among the churches; and again and again he had visions of glorious triumphs down to the very end, when he saw the redeemed coming out of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues, and peoples, a great multitude which no man could number, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

This is the vision of gospel triumphs, the grand echo of the Great Commission. The ever-present Christ is the assurance of final victory. He who had power over winds and waves, over diseases and demons, over death and the grave, is able to make good his promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church.

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun,
Doth his successive journeys run;
His Kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more."

# THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

"And he said, Go ye unto all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that disbelieveth shall be condemned."

THE gospel of Christ is a very simple message. Paul says, "Though we or an angel from heaven should preach unto you any gospel, other than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." God would not hold His servants to so fearful a responsibility, if the gospel were a profound mystery.

It was to be preached to every creature—to the young and to the old, to the learned and to the unlearned,—with the expectation that all could understand and appreciate it. Its facts were so clearly true, and its commandments so evidently those of one who had a right to rule, that no intelligent person could be excused for rejecting it. "He that disbelieveth shall be condemned."

It has in it the issues of life and death. It is not a speculative theology which few can understand, and which a man may believe or not believe without putting his soul in peril. Spurgeon once said Calvinism is pure gospel; and yet he believed that men could reject Calvinism without affecting the soul's salvation. If so, Calvinism is not the gospel. "He that disbelieveth shall be condemned," was not written of Cal-

vinism, Arminianism, or any other human ism. A great many valuable lessons may be taught which will make us more intelligent, and yet not be the gospel of Christ. In a broad sense, the Word of God is the gospel: "This is the gospel, which, by the Word, is preached unto you," and yet there are many things in the Bible of which we may be ignorant and still be saved. The gospel is:

1. *Good news.* Paul says the promise, "In thy seed shall all nations be blessed," was the gospel to Abraham. It was the good news of the coming Messiah, who would be the seed of Abraham, and who would bless the world. When Jesus was born, the angel said to the shepherds, "Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people: for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ, the Lord. * * And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This was good news to the wondering shepherds, that the long expected Messiah had come, and that he would glorify God in the highest, and bring peace and good will to men everywhere. The gospel of the text is the good news that this babe had passed from the cradle to the cross, and from the cross to the throne; had proved himself to be the Christ, the Son of God; had given his life a ransom for our sins; had risen from the dead, and ever liveth to make intercession for us; and is "able to save unto the uttermost all who come to God by him."

*What constitutes an offered blessing, good news?* (1) It must be true. (2) We must realize our need of the blessing offered. (3) The blessing must be accessible. (4) The way of access to it must be clearly pointed out.

Suppose I am a pauper here in your midst, humiliated by the thought that my family is soon to be put upon the town. I take from the Post Office a letter, which purports to come from a rich uncle in England. He tells me that, having heard of my misfortune and distress, he has set aside £5,000 for our benefit, the income from which will keep us all comfortable. He tells me to draw on him for the expense of the journey, and to come at once. He also gives explicit instructions as to the route to be taken. This is good news. The offer is genuine. I am very needy. The blessing is accessible, and I am told how to come into the enjoyment of it.

Should some one convince me that this letter, or any part of it, is not genuine, or that my uncle is not able to fulfill his promise, it would cease to be good news. Or had it come to me when I had plenty of this world's goods; or had my uncle imposed upon me impossible conditions; or, if living in the midst of people unable to show me the way to my uncle's castle across the sea, he had failed to give me plain directions, it would not have been good news.

The apostles gave very large attention to evidences. They showed how the prophets testified of the central facts of the gospel; how God approved of Christ by miracles, wonders and signs, and how he

"showed himself alive, after his passion, by many infallible proofs." At Corinth, Paul preached, first of all, that Jesus died for our sins, and arose from the dead, according to the Scriptures, and that he was seen by the apostles, and above five hundred brethren, the most of whom were then living. They spake to man as if he could reason. They expected him to think. "What *think* ye of Christ, whose son is he?" was the great question for which they sought an answer from the listening people. No man will receive the gospel message unless he comes to see that it is true. If you would fill, with water, a glass already full of wine, you must first pour the wine out. So if the mind is filled with skepticism, there is no room for Christ and his life-giving truth.

Jesus said to the apostles, "When the Spirit of Truth is come to you He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me, of righteousness because I go to my Father, and of judgment because the prince of this world is judged." This indicates the scope of gospel preaching. The Holy Spirit—the Spirit of Truth—by the mouth of the apostles, would make the evidence so clear that Jesus is the one Savior of Men, that not to believe on him would be sin, the great sin that lies at the foundation of all sinning. To believe in Christ, and to love Christ, is to believe in, and love all that is highest and holiest and best. To reject Christ is to reject all that is holy and true. The apostles convicted men of sin. "When they heard the Word, they were pricked in their heart."

No man will come to Christ unless he is made to feel the need of salvation. This is the evangelist's most difficult task. The sinner is blind, yet boasts of his light. He is starving, yet boasts of feasting sumptuously every day. He is leprous, yet boasts of ruddy health. He is naked, yet boasts of purple and fine linen. That preaching is a mighty power which tears away all this veil of self-deceit, and self-contentment, and makes sinners see themselves as God sees them, and cry out, What shall we do? Such was the first sermon under this Commission, and such was Paul's preaching when he reasoned of righteousness and temperance and judgment to come, till Felix trembled. They convinced men of Christ's righteousness. God is the one righteous Judge. Jesus went to his Father, because the Father approved him. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not, but committed his cause to Him that judgeth righteously. Having been condemned by civil and ecclesiastical courts on earth, he appealed his case to the Court of Heaven, and the Supreme Judge of the Universe reversed the decision of the lower courts. Sinful man saw no beauty in him that they should desire him; God said, he is altogether lovely. Men despised him and rejected him; God received him to His bosom. Men crowned him with thorns; God crowned him with glory and honor. Men crucified him; God raised him from the dead. Men bowed the knee in mockery, saying, Hail, King of the Jews; God said let all the angels worship him; and they sang, "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been

slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." Jesus said, "Now is my soul troubled; what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? but for this came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name"; and the Father answered, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Then Jesus said, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Dr. Barnes well says, "The death of Jesus was the determining cause, the grand crisis, the concentration of all that God had ever done, or ever will do, to break down the kingdom of Satan, and set up His power over men. The death of Jesus Christ was a judgment or condemnation of Satan—the prince of this world." Satan tempted Eve, and filled the world with discord, sin and death. The Lord promised Eve that the seed of the woman—the Son of the virgin Mary—should destroy the devil and his works. When Jesus came, Satan tried to compass his ruin by all the wiles that he had used so successfully with men. Jesus said, "Get thee behind me." He sent his demons to do his wicked bidding. Jesus cast them out. He entered into Judas and used him to betray Jesus unto death; and when his purpose was accomplished, there was revelry in hell. But there was a Jubilee in heaven when Jesus conquered the grave, and was escorted by the angels to the right hand of the Majesty on high. The key note of the gospel is this: *That Jesus "died for our sins, and was raised again for our justification."*

The commission to preach the gospel to every creature was the beginning of the end, "when he shall have put all enemies under his feet." Thus it was that the prince of this world was judged. The condemnation of the fountain is the condemnation of all the outflowing streams.

The apostles did not stop with showing that the gospel is true, and that sinful man stands in great need of its sure mercies. They did not stop with simply telling that there are riches in Christ Jesus, and that the treasures of his grace are abundant for lost humanity. When the anxious sinner cried, "What shall I do?" they did not answer,

"Doing is a deadly thing,
Cast your deadly doing down;"

"The more you do the more you will be damned;" "Stand still and see the salvation of God," as some of you may have heard the preacher say at the revival meeting. They gave an explicit answer. Peter said, on the memorable day of Pentecost, to inquiring believers, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." The people heard, understood, believed, obeyed, and immediately "rejoiced in the hope of the glory of God." "They became servants of God, and had their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

II. *The power of God unto salvation.* Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

*The* power, not *a* power. Certainly this means preeminent power, as when we say, The sun is *the* light of the world. The moon still shines, but its light seems to have been extinguished. The morning light seems to drive away the stars. The gospel is *the* power of God for a purpose—salvation. God's powers are many. Water is God's power to quench thirst; food is God's power to quell hunger—and these he has placed within our reach. What would you think of a man, kneeling on the street, and praying to God to send down power to quench his thirst, and power to quell his hunger? Any school boy could bring him a glass of water, and a loaf of bread, and tell him God's power is in this bread and water. I have seen as strange a phenomenon—a man praying to God to send down power to save his soul;—and even the preacher had not the intelligence to tell him that "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation."

But we may, by improper admixtures, destroy the power of bread and water. A handful of salt will destroy the power of water to quench thirst. An ounce of arsenic will give a loaf of bread power to destroy life. The gospel is bread for the hungry, and water for the famishing world, but it should be given to the world in its purity and simplicity.

We may teach a good many true things about bread, a knowledge of which will make us more intelligent, but the power of bread to quell hunger does not depend upon this knowledge. Here is a hungry man knocking at the door of Charity Home for bread. The doorkeeper plies him with questions: "Do you

know whether wheat belongs to the vegetable or animal kingdom? Can you define yeast, and explain, scientifically, the process of leavening? Can you explain, scientifically, how bread nourishes the human body? Did God, from all eternity, foreordain bread for the nourishing of the body? And did he foreknow and foreordain a definite number of human beings to be nourished, and a definite number to be starved?" The starving man stands abashed in the presence of these hard questions, and wonders whether there is, after all, any charity in this Charity Home. He cries, "Bread! bread! Give me bread or I die! and after I have been fed, and when I have time, I will study botany, zoology, philosophy and God's eternal decrees, and in every way make myself more intelligent." Time was when men were not received into what was supposed to be Christ's Charity Home—the Church,—unless they could answer harder questions than these. The doors open easier now.

But suppose the doorkeeper lets in this starving man without answering these questions, and the attendant puts before him the food necessary to nourish him back to normal life, and he instinctively reaches for nourishing food, and suddenly stops and says, I will not eat a mouthful till you tell me what is in the covered dishes at the other end of the table. You would wonder whether he was sane. And yet many a poor, hungry soul has refused to taste the Bread of Life, which came down from heaven, because he could not see into the covered dishes. There are some who will be lost because they can not find out

where Cain got his wife. There are depths in the Word and work of God which we never can sound; there are heights we never can scale. But God is not asking you to sound these depths, nor scale these heights. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This is the central fact. The faith that saves is a personal trust in a personal Redeemer. Christ is himself the Bread of Life, of which, if you eat, you shall never hunger. Christ is himself the soul of the gospel. The apostles and evangelists preached Christ Jesus; in the prophesies and types, and their fulfillment; in the cradle—on the cross—on the throne; the only Savior of men. They presented facts to be believed, precepts to be obeyed, promises to be enjoyed, and threatenings to be feared.

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation— not to every one, not to all men, but *to every one that believeth,* just as food is the power of God to quell hunger to the man who is hungry and will eat it. Faith is the principle by which we appropriate the blessings of the gospel. We believe the facts. There is power in facts to point out the truth. One fact is worth a thousand theories. There is power in truth. "The truth shall make you free"; power in precepts, which show the way of salvation; they are "pure, enlightening the eyes; right rejoicing the heart." There is power in promises, "exceeding great and precious," by which we are "made partakers of the divine nature;" power in the love out of which these promises spring—love begetting love. "The love of Christ con-

strains us." There is power in warning, restraining us from evil ways.

My alien friend, does all this mean nothing to you? Do you see all this display of God's love, Christ's heroism, and the apostles' faithfulness unto death, and hear the wonderful words of God, simply as you see and hear a drama? Does God mean no more than a display, with which you may be entertained one brief hour? Nay, my friend, God is deeply in earnest. He would not that you should perish. Jesus wept over the sins of Jerusalem. He weeps over your sins. He came to seek and to save the lost. You are lost. He seeks you; will you not seek him? He is coming again. Unto them that look for him, he will appear again without a sin-offering unto eternal salvation. The angels that escorted him home will come with him. He will be "revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all that believe in that day." "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return

unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

"O, what amazing words of grace,
Are in this gospel found,
Suited to every sinner's case,
Who hears the gospel sound.

Come, then, with all your wants and wounds,
Your every burden bring;
Here love, unchanging love, abounds,—
A deep celestial spring.

This spring with living water flows,
And heavenly joy imparts,
Come, thirsty souls, your wants disclose
And drink with thankful hearts.

Millions of sinners vile as you,
Have here found life and peace;
Come, then, and prove its virtues, too,
And drink, adore, and bless."

# THE REMISSION OF SINS.

"Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." —LUKE xxiv: 46-48.

JESUS Christ never lost sight of his mission. He came to seek and to save the lost. Amid the agonies of the cross, he prayed for the lost. Now the angels are coming, for him, and will escort him to the throne. Soon they are to shout aloud, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this Bang of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory." In full view of this grand ovation, he is not forgetful of a sinful world. He had suffered on the cross, and had come forth from the grave, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached, in his name, among all nations; and now he is going to the throne to rule until all the enemies of God and mankind shall be destroyed. David had put it in song: "Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee. Ask of Me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inherit-

ance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

Sin, in its very nature, separates the soul from God. "If ye die in your sins, where I am ye can not come." "The wages of sin is death!" Figuratively, sin is disease; but Mark's gospel interprets "healing" by calling it the "forgiveness of sins." Figuratively, sin is debt. Matthew's version of the Lord's prayer says, "Forgive us our debts." Luke's version says, "Forgive us our sins;" and Jesus interprets by the word "trespasses." Sin is trespass—the transgression of the divine law. "The strength of sin is the law." Sin is rebellion against God. God only can forgive sin.

We can not heal ourselves. We can not forgive our own debts. There are those who think the "Saints" have lived lives so much better than God requires, as to have a surplus on the credit side of the Book of Life, from which less holy people may draw, to even up their sinful accounts. This is the theory that lies at the foundation of Romish indulgences. But Jesus Christ teaches that when we have done all that is commanded, we have done only our duty, and are still "unprofitable servants." No man, however good, has a surplus in the Bank of Heaven.

There are those who think that if they turn over a new leaf, and live pure lives, the debt will be canceled. As well might you expect to pay your debt to a merchant by paying cash for purchases hereafter. The merchant would inquire, "Have you anything in bank?" "Nothing." "Do you expect to make more

than a living?" "Not at all." "How, then, are you going to pay what is booked against you now?" Some one would have to pay it for you, or the merchant would have to forgive it. Not one of us can say we have not sinned. The record of our guilt has already been made, and we are under condemnation. This can not be canceled by turning over a new leaf, and living a new life. This can be canceled only by forgiveness; and this is a sovereign act of God, the Supreme Ruler of the Universe.

This being true, the evidence of pardon should not be doubtful. If there is one thing about which we should be more certain than about another, it is that God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven our sins. Our peace, and joy and strength depend upon it. God has not left us to sing,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
And oft it gives me anxious thought:
Do I love the Lord or no,
Am I His or am I not? "

One says, "I know my sins are forgiven because my conscience does not condemn me." Paul's conscience did not condemn him when he persecuted the disciples of Christ. He says, "Verily I thought I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." And again, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." And yet again, he says, "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." In fact, conscience has no power to determine what is right and what is wrong. Conscience is simply that moral principle

which *prompts* us to do right. A man born without a conscience, is a natural born knave. A man born without a power to reason, is a natural born fool. Reason is of little value without premises, just as the eye is useless without light. So also conscience never prompts when there is no conclusion as to what is right. We reach a conclusion as to right and wrong by moral teaching, and moral reasoning. Whether our conclusion is correct, depends upon the truth of our premises, and the grammar of our logic; but whatever it may be, true or untrue, conscience simply prompts us to do right, as we may have come to see it. Here is a mother who has been made to believe that her god demands the sacrifice of her child. Her conscience says, "Do right, madam," and she goes forward in discharge of her duty." Some one meets her and tells her there is one God and Mohammed is his one prophet, and that she can make peace with God, only by a pilgrimage to the sacred stone at Mecca. Her conscience says, "Do right," and she starts upon the long journey to Mecca. Again she meets a Romish priest, who convinces her that Mohammed was a false prophet, and that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is her Savior, and that she should approach him through the Virgin Mary. Her conscience says, "Do right, madam," and she turns at once toward a Roman Catholic Cathedral. On her way she meets a Protestant minister, who convinces her that Mariolatry is little better than idolatry, and shows her that Jesus Christ is the one Mediator between God and man. Her conscience again prompts

her to do right, and she bows reverently before God, and pleads for mercy for Christ's sake. Really her conscience has not changed, any more than her eyes have changed, but relatively it has changed with her change of faith. A heathen faith, a heathen conscience; a Mohammedan faith, a Mohammedan conscience; a Roman faith, a Roman conscience; a Christian faith, a Christian conscience. Faith controls the conscience, not the conscience faith. If you call conscience a guide, it is of little use, because it is like a finger board on a pivot. A traveler comes to it and reads, "To Akron 10 miles," and pointing south. He sets out over the road indicated, and meets a man who tells him he is on the wrong road. He goes back to examine the finger board. Meanwhile the wind has changed, and the finger points north. He starts northward, to be told again that he is going the wrong way, and comes back again to find the finger pointing east. He would likely be deceived, three times out of four, by such a guide board. If he is a wise man he will ascertain the right road to destination, set the guide board accordingly, and nail it fast, that other travelers may not be deceived. The only way to make the conscience point the right way, is to nail it fast by the word of the living God. God will not condemn us for obeying the promptings of conscience, but He will condemn us for not giving heed to His Word. He will judge us by what we know, and by what we *may* know. Jesus said, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which

were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sack cloth and ashes. It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, at the day of judgment, than for you." This indicates a judgment according to opportunities. If Jesus were to come to America he would say, "Woe unto you. It will be more tolerable, in the day of judgment, for Chorazin and Bethsaida than for you; for if the clear conviction that I am the Christ, the Son of God, had been theirs, as it is yours, they would have repented in sack cloth and ashes long ago!"

Another says, "I go by my feelings." Do you not know that your feeling will be according to your faith? Convince me that I have fallen heir to a million, I will rejoice over it, though it maybe untrue; or convince me that some great misfortune has overtaken my family, I will mourn over it, though it may be a false report. Suppose that here are three convicts and all alike feel happy, and all alike assign the same reason, *i.e.*, that the Governor has pardoned them. I inquire, "How do you know you are pardoned?" One tells that he has had a beautiful dream of home, and freedom; another that the chaplain told him of his good fortune; the third shows a document bearing the Governor's name and seal. The first was deceived by his dream; the second by his priest; but each was as happy as the third, about whose pardon there could be no question. The faith of the first two had no sure foundation. The faith of the third rested on the attested word of the Governor. In our religion the only sure faith comes by the sure word of God.

Another says, I am *conscious* of forgiveness. Consciousness is that inner sense by which we know, without depending on the outward senses; or the state of being aware of one's existence, and of one's mental acts and states. I am conscious of remembering that I was present at the World's Fair. Destroy all the five senses, and I may still be conscious of my own mental acts and state. When a man says he is conscious of forgiveness, he uses very strong language. But can this be true? Forgiveness is not *his* act. Forgiveness does not take place in his heart. Forgiveness is a sovereign act of God; and He alone can be conscious of forgiving. The sinner is conscious of believing that he has been forgiven, and conscious of the joy that fills his heart because he so believes. This brings us back again to the ground of faith. The only sure ground is the Word of God.

Now let us consider the text.

1. "It behooved Christ to suffer." He laid the foundation for a general amnesty proclamation, by his sufferings on the cross; and assured the world of his power to forgive sins, by his resurrection from the dead. He made repentance available for men. "He declared the righteousness of God, for the remission of sins that are past, * * that he might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

2. "Among all nations." "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This proclamation of mercy was not to be limited to one nation, or to one generation.

"The promise is to you, and to your children, and to all who are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call."

3. "In his name"—by his authority. "All authority hath been given to mo in heaven and in earth. Therefore, go ye and make disciples of all nations." There can be no question about His power to forgive sins, and there is comfort in this assurance. Here is a soldier under sentence of death, for sleeping on guard. His fellow soldiers forgive him. His captain, and colonel, and general, all forgive him, hut he is not comforted. The sentence of death still hangs over him. There rides into camp a messenger, bearing a pardon, signed by the President, the Commander and Chief of the army and navy, and from which there can be no appeal. This pardon is an absolute release from condemnation. The soldier shouts for joy. Nor will the rebel against God, under sentence of condemnation on account of sin, be happy, unless his pardon comes from the highest authority. And if the Great King issues a proclamation of amnesty and peace, upon certain conditions, His "all authority" stands back of the conditions.

4. "Beginning at Jerusalem." If a United States marshal has been directed to make a proclamation, all over the State of Ohio, beginning at Columbus; and if we know what that proclamation was in Columbus, we also know what it will be when the marshal shall have reached other places in the State. Repentance and remission of sins were to be preached among all nations, beginning at

Jerusalem. If we can ascertain how the apostles preached repentance and remission of sins in Jerusalem, we will know how they "preached repentance and remission of sins" in Corinth and Rome; and how this message must be preached here in our town or country. Evidently the sermon at Jerusalem was to be a model sermon.

There is much in a right beginning. Few things of value can be secured without it. If your son wants an education, or wants to learn a trade or a profession, or to build up a business, you are anxious that he shall begin at the right place. Here is a man who has fallen heir to a valuable piece of real estate, and wants to know its boundaries. He employs a surveyor who tells him that it matters not where he begins—and that the important thing is to begin somewhere, (as I once heard a minister say to an inquiring sinner). His survey proves a failure. He employs another, who believes that success depends on a right beginning. He spends a day or two seeking for the beginning corner, and, making up his mind that he has found it, he sets down his staff and strikes a rock. He examines it, and finds its exact description in the original field notes. He looks for other witnesses, and finds them in three trees of different kinds and sizes, and at different angles and distances from the corner. Here are eighteen particulars agreeing with the testimony of the original surveyor. There is only the remotest probability that these particulars would be true of any other corner in the world. He proceeds with his survey, and finds, all along the lines, the other par-

ticulars named in the field notes, so that when the survey is finished, the result is unquestioned and unquestionable.

Let us attach the same importance to this Scripture. Jerusalem is the beginning corner for the survey of the Kingdom of Christ. Isaiah and Micah said, "And it shall come to pass, in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Here is a prophetic announcement that the new law should go forth from Mt. Zion, and would be a power for salvation and peace among all nations. The old law went forth from Mt. Sinai, and was specially for one nation. Jesus said, "Begin at Jerusalem, on Mt. Zion;" "Tarry at Jerusalem till ye be endowed with power from on high;" and Peter, speaking of the first fruits of the Gentiles, said, "The Holy Spirit fell on them as on us at the beginning;" and Joel said, "In Mt. Zion and Jerusalem shall be deliverance."

Now let us go up to Jerusalem and learn how the apostles "preached repentance and remission of sins." We find that they tarried ten days, and until the day of Pentecost, the anniversary of the going forth of the old law from Mt. Sinai,—a fitting occasion for the going forth of the new law from Mt. Zion. They waited to be clothed with power from on high,—for the coming of that promised Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who would call to their remembrance the teachings of Christ, and, through them, convince the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment. There was the sound as of a rushing mighty wind, and tongues of flame sat upon each of them, not unlike the voice of the trumpet, exceeding loud, when the Lord descended in fire on Mt. Sinai. "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance," indicating that they were messengers of God, and that they had a message for all nations. Peter then told them that this is that which Joel said should come to pass in the last days, "before that great and notable day of the Lord come." He then appealed to many of his audience, as living witnesses of the miracles, and wonders, and signs which God wrought by Jesus of Nazareth; and told them that they had crucified and slain him by wicked hands; "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." His audience was familiar with the songs of David, and Peter brought him forward as a prophetic witness of this resurrection, when he said, "Thou shalt not leave my soul in hades, nor

suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that, of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hades, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." He then went on to show how David had prophesied of his exaltation, when he said: "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on My right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

When the people heard this they were convinced of sin—the sin of unbelief—because they believed not in Jesus; of his righteousness, because he had been exalted to the right hand of God, and of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged. "They were pricked in their heart, and said unto the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" In Peter's reply we find the preaching of repentance and remission of sins: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." About three thousand gladly received this word and were baptized, and rejoiced in the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Do you ask what evidence they had that their sins were pardoned? The best in the world—the immutable promise of an immutable God. Peter's

answer had in it the promise of God. Paul says, "As God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay, for the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us * * was not yea and nay, but in him was yea; for all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." The voice of Peter was the voice of God. The implicit promise was the promise of God, and there was no question that God had forgiven according to His promise. And why may not a sinner put implicit confidence in the Word of God?

"Repent and be baptized, for the remission of sins." What God has joined together let no man put asunder. If it be objected that this is making too much of baptism, I answer that baptism is not only a beautiful symbol of our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Redeemer, but it is obedience as well, and, in every dispensation, God has made a great deal of obedience. It was disobedience which drove our first parents out of the garden of Eden, and Eden will be restored to those to whom God can say, "Blessed are you, because you have done My commandments, that you may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Besides, a positive commandment is a test of loyalty. "Repent" is a *moral* commandment—that is, right in itself—and commanded because it is right. "Be baptized" is a *positive* commandment—right because God commanded it. We may obey a moral commandment because we see that it is good and just. We obey a positive commandment simply because God commands

it. It means a complete surrender to the will of God; and it is fitting at the threshold of His Kingdom.

The Syrian prince sought counsel of God's prophet for the healing of his leprosy. The prophet did not tell him to do some great thing, lest he should boast of his works; nor did he give him a medical prescription, lest he should boast of the physician and his remedy; nor did he resort to the incantations of witchery, lest he should give the glory to the wizard. He simply said, "Go wash seven times in Jordan, and thou shalt be clean." This was a *positive* commandment. There was no reason for his obedience except the command of the prophet of God. He obeyed and was healed. Not the water, nor, in a strict sense, his obedience, cleansed him, but God healed him because he met God where God had promised to meet him; and he came back glorifying the God of Israel. Likewise the three thousand, who gladly received the Word of God, and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, met God where God had promised to meet them, and God granted unto them "redemption, through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins."

Jesus Christ taught his disciples to pray, "forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors," and teaches us that the Father's forgiveness is conditioned upon our forgiving those who trespass against us. Now, if we are conscious that we have forgiven others, what more do we need than this promise of God, as evidence of His forgiveness? And is not this infinitely better than the dreams, and impulses, and feelings, on which so many have been taught to depend *i*

Not many years ago, a good woman told me that she looked at the minister with great surprise, when, in his exhortation, he said, "Is there a poor lost sinner here who is willing to take God at his word?" She said to herself, "Has the preacher turned joker?" She had been taught that the sinner could not hear, believe and obey the gospel, without a miracle of grace. She looked again, and saw tears running down the good man's cheeks, "Why," said she, *"he* means what he says"; and instantly the thought came to her, "If the minister means what he says, why may not God mean what he He says?" She gladly received the word, and went forward in obedience to the gospel; and Jesus' words came to her, "My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

"O happy day that fixed my choice
On thee, my Savior and my God!
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad.

# THE GREATEST QUESTION.

———

There came one running and kneeled to him and asked him, Good Master, What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?. And Jesus said unto him * * Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and mother. And he answered All these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up thy cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying and went away grieved, for he had great possessions.—MARK x: 17-22.

THE story of this man's coming to Jesus is thrice told in the gospels. Many had come to Jesus for temporal blessing, and many to listen to his discourses. "The common people heard him gladly." Great crowds had come to him because he was able and willing to minister to the comfort of the flesh. The mother of James and John had asked him to grant her sons prominent places in his kingdom. Another had asked him to settle a family dispute about an estate. A few had come to test his orthodoxy, and a few to learn something about his coming kingdom. Six months before this, a certain lawyer came tempting him, and asked, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life 1" Jesus questioned him in turn, saying, "How readest thou? What is written in the law?" The lawyer replied, "Thou shalt love God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all

thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus replied, "Thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live." Love to God and love to man—a full surrender to the will of God, and walking by the Golden Rule—these constitute the *essence* of all right religion. The lawyer practically knew little of either. His religion was a form of godliness without the power. Full of self-righteousness and self-justification, he was unable to take in the meaning of this answer.

The man of our text came running; he was in earnest. He was reverent—kneeling in the presence of a recognized Teacher. He was *personally* concerned;—what shall I do? He may have been, many a time, an attentive listener to the discourses of Jesus. He may have heard him say that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life." He may have heard Peter say that Jesus "had the words of eternal life." He was familiar with the Scriptures, but Moses and the prophets said nothing about eternal life, and little about the resurrection of the dead. Jesus gave attention chiefly to those things which make up true manhood in this world; but all these seemed to point distinctly to the life beyond this world,—the clear view of which was seen only after Jesus brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Jesus said, "I am the Way;" "No man cometh to the Father but by me." "I am the Truth;" "The Truth shall make you free." "I am the Life"—life revealing, life conveying, life sus-

taining, life perfecting. "I came that you might have life—my life—and that ye might have it more abundantly." "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." What wonder that this man should come earnestly and reverently to the new Teacher for an answer to this greatest of all questions: "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

Aside from the great question itself, there was much that made it an important event. He was the first man who came to Jesus deeply concerned about eternal salvation. He was *young.* Jesus was soon to set up a Church which was to have in hand the greatest enterprise of the centuries. The future of any important enterprise, depends much upon the quality of the young blood that may be brought into it. A long life was before this young man, and how valuable his services might become in the coming kingdom!

He was a *ruler*—probably of a synagogue. He had character and talent, and his seniors had promoted him to a prominent place. We may fairly judge of any enterprise by the character and talent of its rulers. The Church needs the rulers of society, of commerce, and of state—men who have reached high places, and wield a wide influence.

He was *rich.* He had great possessions. Jesus was poor. His disciples were poor. No great enterprise can be carried to the highest success without money. Now-a-days the capital of the world is being combined in various ways, and put into the hands of intelligence and experience, looking to the best success. Christ is at the head of the greatest of enter-

prises. His disciples are his partners. They have put into this partnership, mind, and heart, and muscle, and purse. The aggregate makes a great capital. The Church needs, and has a right to ask for, consecrated wealth. The consecrated man will have a consecrated purse.

He was *moral.* Few young men can say truthfully what this young man said: "All the commandments of the Decalogue have I kept from my youth." He was not a heathen. He kept the Sabbath in honor of his Creator. He was virtuous. He did not lie, nor steal, nor covet. He was a good neighbor, and a good citizen, and a good foundation had been laid for true discipleship. Jesus admired him.

Nor did he think eternal life could be earned by *doing,* as one earns money by a day's work. He looked at eternal life as an inheritance. His question means, What shall I do to become a child of God? We inherit because we are children, not because we are servants. We get paid over and over for what we do for Christ, right here in this world. Eternal life is a gift.

Notwithstanding all these excellent traits of character, the young man was conscious of lack. "What lack I yet?" There are scores of people to-day, who boast of their morality, not one of whom can show a record for morality equal to this young man's. Morality is only a part of religion. The Decalogue, the highest code of morals, will not make us religious in the best sense. There are many people who keep this

high code of morals, but they are not Christians. The Jew may keep it, and yet deny Christ.

Jesus teaches the young ruler that eternal life is the inheritance of his disciples, and that supreme love is the test of discipleship. He tests the man's love by a commandment, as if to say: "Would you be my disciple? Go sell all that you have, and give to the poor, and come take up the cross and follow me." This revealed the man to himself. There is nothing tests loyalty like a commandment. It was a test he could not stand. He went away sad at that saying, because he had great possessions. He loved wealth more than Jesus. "'Take up the cross.' Take your life in your hands, and, if need be, lay it down for my sake. 'Follow me.' Turn your back on home and kindred. Love me more than father, mother, brother, sister, houses or lands. This it is to be my disciple, and this is the way to eternal life. If any one believes in me, with this intense faith, he shall live forever. Believe in me, love me, suffer with me, and you shall be a child of God, and joint-heir with me as the only begotten of the Father."

Some one may say, Would you give this answer now? In principle, Yes; in every detail, No; for the selling of his goods, and giving to the poor was a special test, like many others in the Gospels. Jesus tested faith in many ways; "Take up thy bed and walk"; "Go wash in the pool of Siloam"; "Go show yourselves to the priests." It took strong faith in the paralytic, the blind man, and the ten lepers, to obey these commandments.

We must draw a line between Christ's answers to this great question before the cross, and his answers after the cross. The Gospel is compared to a will. Paul says a will is not in force until after the death of the testator. Before his death, Jesus bestowed blessings, and forgave sins, as his right, and upon such terms as he pleased. He forgave the penitent woman, because she loved much, as was manifest in her tears and sacrifices. He answered the cry of the thief on the cross, with a promise of Paradise. There are those who find in these answers, the answer of Christ to any penitent soul to-day. Many times we hear men say they would like to be saved like the thief was saved on the cross. I have never heard of one who wanted to be saved by walking in the path marked out for this young man. But why not?

I have said the Gospel is like a will. A rich man comes to your city. He takes sick, sends for an attorney to make his will, and dies. Immediately, the news is spread abroad, that he was very kind to the poor. One tells how he gave him money to free his farm of mortgage; another of his paying a surgeon's bill for saving the life of a poor man's son; another of his supplying the needs of a poor widow and her children. Then other poor people come forward and plead for help from the same treasury, and urge, truthfully, that, if he were living, he would hear and answer their cries. The administrator tells them that, while he was alive, he distributed his gifts as he saw the need; and did it wisely and well; but now all this wealth must be distributed according to his will; and

that, if he has laid down conditions, the conditions must be met. Now the apostles of Christ are the administrators of his will. "Whatsoever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. Whatsoever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." "Whose soever sins you remit, they are remitted unto them; whose soever sins you retain, they are retained."

We must therefore turn to the Acts of Apostles, to find how they administered this will; or, dropping the figure, how they answered this great question. I hear some one say—There are four answers to this question in the Acts, and they differ as widely as the answers in the Gospels:

1. There is the answer to the Philippian jailor: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts xvi: 31.)

2. The answer on the day of Pentecost: "Repent and be baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." (Acts ii:38.)

3. The answer to Saul of Tarsus: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts xxii: 16.)

4. The answer to Simon Magus: "Repent and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee." (Acts viii:22.)

While these answers seem to differ, they really do not differ. There is but one way into the kingdom of God, and the record of conversions shows that all went that way, and entered upon a life of righteousness. Let me illustrate: A man presents to an attorney a document, and asks what he must do with it.

The lawyer examines it, and replies: "You and your wife must sign this deed, in the presence of witnesses, and acknowledge the signing before a notary, and then deliver it to the man to whom you sold the land, provided he has paid you the consideration. The man goes out, and another man enters with a deed, and asks the same question. The attorney looks at it, and tells him to acknowledge it before a notary, and goes on to the end as before. Immediately another enters with a deed, and, after examining it, the attorney tells him to deliver it to the purchaser. Still another enters with a deed, and he tells him to take it to the Recorder's office. Now, in fact, these several deeds passed through the same stages, but the lawyer, in each case, began his instructions with what he saw was lacking.

The jailor had no faith, and Paul said, first of all, "Believe on the Lord Jesus." Paul says, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" So Paul preached to him, and to all in his house, that they might have faith. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Then the jailor showed signs of penitence in his washing the stripes of Paul and Silas, and, the same hour of the night, he was baptized, and rejoiced, "believing in God with all his house." Evidently the persons making up his household were adults. On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached the gospel, the people believed, and cried out, "Men and brethren, What shall we do?" Peter answered, "Repent and be baptized,

every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus." Three thousand gladly received this word, and were baptized, and praised God, and did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

Paul came to believe in Jesus by the voice of Jesus himself; then repented of his sins, and at the command of the Lord, by Ananias, arose and was baptized, and entered joyfully upon the work to which Christ had called him. Simon Magus was a sorcerer —an ancient spiritualist—in the City of Samaria, who bewitched the people, giving out that "he was some great one." "But when they believed Philip, preaching the things of the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon believed also; and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done." He believed and obeyed, as the others believed and obeyed, but his faith was not very enduring. His old habits of life began to re-assert themselves, and he offered the apostles money, saying, "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit." Peter said, "Thy money perish with thee * * The gift of God may not be purchased with money * * Thy heart is not right in the sight of God." Clearly the man had gone back to the weak and beggarly elements of the world. He was a back-slider,—a stony-ground hearer—who had no root in himself, and endured only for a little while. To him Peter said, "Repent, therefore, of this thy

wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee."

These answers were like the answers of the attorney concerning the deeds; they began with what was lacking. But in every case of true discipleship, there were:

1. Faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God.

2. Repentance unto life.

3. Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.

4. Joy and peace in Jesus Christ.

5. Continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in the fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers. They had also the assurance, that if they sinned and repented, they had an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ, the Righteous, "who is faithful to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Now this is the *present* salvation promised by Christ: "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be *saved."* The Lord added the *"saved"* to the church. Peter says these are the elect, and are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." This is *eternal* salvation—eternal life.

To attain unto this salvation, Peter teaches and exhorts as follows: "Yea, and for this very cause, adding on your part all diligence, in your faith, supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control patience; and in your patience godliness; and in your

godliness love of the brethren, and in your love of the brethren, love. For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he that lacketh these things is blind—seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from the old sins. Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never stumble; for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

We come back to first principles—the lesson taught the young ruler—to find the inspiration for the effort which is to be crowned with glorious success. His great lack was supreme devotion to Christ. And is not this the one thing needful all along the journey? How to abide in his love; how to keep the fire of this love constantly aglow; how to forget the things that are behind, and to reach forth to the things that are before; how to be rooted and grounded in love, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge—these are the anxious questions of the true disciple, which send him often to his knees to ask God for that wisdom "which He giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not." The spirit may be willing, but the flesh is *so weak;* and the temptations may be so strong, that we often stumble and fall. Thank God for the provision he has made by which we may come to him through a Mediator, "who has been tempted like as we are, yet without sin," and can be "touched with

the feeling of our infirmities." "Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need."

This young man went away from Christ, and from riches in Christ, worth more than all the wealth of the world. He went away from the peace which only Christ can give,—the only enduring peace; from the joy of unselfish service; from communion with all that is highest and holiest. He sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. He held onto the world, and lost his soul. He chose to be rich, as men count riches, for a very little while, and to be a pauper through all eternity. What shall it profit to gain the whole world and lose the priceless soul? He went away sad; and to be made sadder, by the loss of the one great opportunity of his life. "It might have been"—the saddest words of tongue or pen.

O, young man, with bright prospects of many years, what are you going to do with these years? What are you putting into life that is worth saving? This life is not worth the living only as you can make it part of life eternal. There is no hope worth the naming, only as it anchors the soul to God. Turn not away from Him who is the Way, the Truth, the Resurrection, and the Life.

# WHAT IS CONVERSION?

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear."—MATT, xiii: 15-16.

THE Savior gives great emphasis to conversion, when he says, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xviii:3.) In the text, he complains of the people because they closed their eyes, and their ears, and hardened their hearts, "lest they should see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I should heal them." There are none so blind as those who will not see, none so deaf as those who will not hear, none so reprobate as those whose hearts are carnal; and none so far from the kingdom, as those who resist all the blessed influences that may bring them to it. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear."

Evidently Jesus expected conversion to follow in a certain order. "Seeing with the eyes,"— beholding his miracles, and recognizing the evidence that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. "Hearing with the ears"—giving attention to the revealed truth. "Understanding with the heart"—such

an understanding as makes us anxious for our safety, and obedient to God's will. There are many who hear, but do not even understand with the mind; there are many who understand with the mind, but do not understand with the heart. To understand with the heart is to enter into the meaning of the lesson to the individual soul, and to desire the blessing which God offers. "Conversion" is turning unto the Lord. "Healing"—God's healing—Mark explains by calling the "forgiveness of sins." (Mark 4-12.) The divine order, therefore, is: 1. Seeing and hearing. 2. Understanding with the heart. 3. Conversion. 4. Forgiveness. Nor must these be confounded. Seeing is not hearing, understanding with the heart is not conversion, conversion is not healing. We are to see, hear, understand, convert, and God will heal.

Now, what does "convert" mean? Your dictionary says "convert" means "to change into another state or form." We may convert corn into bread. We may convert corn into whisky. This book was once rags; the rags were converted into paper, the paper into a book. In the text it means to change from a sinful course to a life of righteousness and peace—a change from a worse to a better condition.

In the original, the word here translated "convert" is *epistrepho*—literally *turn upon.* The sinner is going away from God. He is facing sin-ward, ruin-ward, hell-ward. The Gospel is the voice of Jesus Christ calling him to return. "Turn ye sinners, why will ye die." The sinner hears this warning voice, and, touched by its tenderness and love, "turns upon" his

course;—not at right angles, not half way, but obeying the "face about wheel" of the great Captain of our Salvation, he faces toward God and Heaven. He turns with his mind, his heart, his body, his possessions. Whatever he is, whatever he has, he lays at the feet of Jesus, and says, "Here Lord I give myself to thee." Nor is this word passive in the Greek, as every scholar knows. Perhaps it never would have been translated "be converted," but for the bad theology, and worse anthropology of Calvinism and Arminianism. It was a clear case of the translator putting unscriptural theology into the text. It was a rendering as unhappy as it was unfaithful. It robbed the gospel of its power, made the sinner feel no personal responsibility, and made God alone responsible for his rescue. Calvinism and Arminianism teach that man is dead to all divine appeals;—that he cannot think a good thought, nor do a good deed;—that he is as dead spiritually as Lazarus was dead physically;—and, as the words of Christ could not bring Lazarus back from the grave, without the accompanying miraculous power, so the gospel cannot, of itself, be heard, nor its tender pleadings be felt, without the accompanying miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. This was the theology of the time when the common version was given to the world. The late Revision,—the work of the ripest scholars of Europe and America—renders this Scripture as follows:

"And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith,

'By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand;
And seeing ye shall see, and in no wise perceive:
For this people's heart is waxed gross,
And their ears are dull of hearing,
And their eyes they have closed;
Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes,
And hear with their ears,
And understand with their heart,
And should turn again,
And I should heal them.'"

The Scriptures everywhere represent the sinner as a responsible being. The Gospel is adapted to man as he is. He has ears to hear, and therefore he is expected to hear and live. He has a mind that can be enlightened, and a heart that can feel, and a conscience that may be quickened, and a will that may be moved; and therefore Jesus has put into the Gospel that which will enlighten the mind, warm the heart, quicken the conscience, and move the will. "Blessed are your ears because they hear," your minds because they think, and your hearts because they feel.

We have said that conversion is very comprehensive. The whole man, with all his powers,—mind, heart, will, body, purse—turns unto the Lord. Perhaps some here may say this is orthodox,—but has baptism anything to do with conversion? Not if conversion is a miracle. I do not wonder that good people hold up their hands in holy horror, when we say baptism has something to do with conversion, because these good people have been taught to believe that every conversion is as great a miracle as raising Lazarus from the dead. If so, it would be absurd to say baptism can have anything whatever to do with

conversion. But if conversion is turning unto the Lord, as the Scriptures clearly teach, may not baptism have a part in it? On the day of Pentecost, Peter said to inquirers after the way of Salvation, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." A few days later he said to inquirers, "Repent and turn, that your sins may be blotted out, that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." In these two answers we may look for a correspondence. It is the same kingdom, and entrance into it must be by the same steps. In both answers we have "Repent." "The forgiveness of sins" is the same as the "blotting out of sins"; the "gift of the Holy Spirit" is equivalent to "seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." "Be baptized" must be the same as "turn" in this Scripture—not that baptism is the whole of conversion, but because, thus early in the history of the Christian Church, the convert gave to the world the final sign of his conversion in baptism. Clearly, in the mind of the apostle, baptism hud something to do with conversion. Let me use a familiar illustration. Two persons stand before me, and, after a few expressions of faith and troth, I pronounce them lawfully married. You go home and say to your friends, There was a wedding at church to-day. What had this ceremony to do with the marriage? It did not change their hearts toward each other, for they had loved each other with an intense love for many months. It did not change their purpose, for

they had sworn allegiance, the one to the other, before they came to the altar. But it had so much to do with the marriage, that you call it the "wedding," when you say, "There was a wedding at church to-day." And yet it was simply the final step, and by no means an unimportant step. This ceremony does effect a change. It changes the relation of the parties to each other, to society, and to the state. The woman goes away from the altar wearing a new name,—the name of her husband,—and claiming a right to his protection, and to an interest in his estate. The two have been made one. She goes to the store and makes purchases, and the merchant recognizes her full right to have them charged to her husband. If he should die to-morrow, she can claim a third interest in all his possessions; and if she should die, he can claim a life interest in her separate estate. And all these personal privileges and legal rights, have come to them by way of a little ceremony. The whole state stands back of these acquired rights, and will enforce them. Wesley well says, "We are married to Christ by baptism"; and again, "Grafted into Christ by baptism." We have never claimed for baptism more than this, when considered in its relation to conversion. Ten thousand baptisms can not change the heart. The value of baptism, like the marriage ceremony, is in the authority by which it is done. The marriage ceremony is authorized by the state, and it is done in the name of the state, and this gives it the sanction of the "powers that be," which are ordained of God. Baptism is authorized by Him who has all

authority in heaven and on earth. It is this highest authority which gives it value. Moreover, Christ says "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"—forgiven—and this is the "healing" of my text.

But who can be baptized "in the name of the Lord?" Only those whom he has authorized. We have no record anywhere that he authorized the baptism of any person, young or old, who believed not on Him. He must be capable of faith. "He that *believeth* and is baptized." If he is not capable of faith, he is not responsible. Jesus said of little children, who had been brought to him, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." The object of preaching is, first of all, to produce faith, for "faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." Peter preached the Word of God, and Luke says, "When they heard this they were pricked in their heart"—that is, they believed the preaching, and believed in Jesus, the Christ, and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do"? All this implies intelligence, and a sense of responsibility in the hearers. Peter answered, "*Repent* and be baptized." So we see that the great King has authorized the baptism of penitent believers, and no others. The baptism of any other person is worthless, because it is not authorized.

But what has repentance to do with conversion? Repentance has to do with a change of mind or will, and a consequent change of character. It is not godly sorrow, for Paul says, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret." Repentance is ceasing to do evil, and

learning to do well. Jesus says the people of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah. They "put on sack cloth and ashes," symbols of uncleanness, and "cried mightily unto the Lord",—a confession of sins, and "turned every one from his evil way,"—a reformation of character. Paul had occasion to rebuke the Church at Corinth for their sins. It had a good effect. In his second letter he rejoiced that they "sorrowed to repentance," and described their repentance as follows: "What carefulness it wrought in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what revenge.. In all things you have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." (2 Cor. vii:11.) "Carefulness"—as to words and deeds; "clearing yourselves" — apologizing — making restitution wherein they had injured another; "indignation and revenge" —filled with righteous indignation against wrong, and taking revenge upon their old habits; "vehement desire"—an all-controlling desire to do the will of God; "zeal"—the soul aflame with enthusiasm; "fear"—born of love for God—fearing to offend one so full of goodness and love. "Clear in this matter"—pure, since they had turned away from sinning against God, and against their fellowmen.

Repentance is character-building. There must be the strong purpose to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. John said, "Bring forth fruit meet for repentance."

But while such repentance is a "ceasing to do evil, and a learning to do well," is it practicable without a

deeper change? Can a man live a righteous life by mere force of will? Nay, verily; for "out of the heart are the issues of life." "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." We speak and act "out of the abundance of the heart." Therefore there must be a change of heart.

Paul says, "Faith works by love," and Peter says, "Faith purifies the heart." This faith comes by hearing the Word. The apostles preached Christ,— all his loveliness and power,—and showed the world's great need of his saving grace, in order that men might believe on him, with all the heart, and be saved. A change of heart is the radical change which makes a change of life possible. Neither repentance, nor obedience to the Lord's commandment to be baptized, can follow, Scripturally, without it.

But what does "heart" mean? The Savior says, "Where your treasure is, your heart will be." Here it means the affections. Solomon says, "The heart of the wise man is in the house of mourning, but the heart of the fool is in the house of mirth." Here the word is used for the affections—the sympathies. "Absalom stole the hearts of the children of Israel." He stood at the king's gate, greeted the people with kisses and apparent kindness; told them that their matters were good and right, but that there was no one deputed of the king to hear them. "O, that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or case might come to me, and I would do him justice." And so Absalom stole their affec-

tions. They came to believe in him more than in David, his father, and rallied to his standard; and it cost twenty thousand lives to subdue that rebellion. So, also, Jesus steals our hearts, not by false pretenses, but by real worth, and holy love, and faithful promises. We come to believe in him, as we believe in God, and rally to his standard, and rejoice with him in the victories of the cross.

On the day of Pentecost they that "gladly received the Word" obeyed the gospel. "Gladly" is a heart word. The gospel touched the heart, and quickened the conscience, and faith worked by love and purified the heart.

There is no mystery in this. "The Word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. iv:12.) The Word of God is living and life-giving. Jesus Christ said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." The Word of God is called the Sword of the Spirit—because it was dictated by the Spirit of God. It can penetrate where no other sword can penetrate,—into the inmost recesses of the heart. The Word of God is the only voice which the human conscience will respect.

Some of you have been taught that the Word of God is a dead letter, that man can not hear with profit; that he cannot be made to feel, only as God works in him "to will and to do of his good pleasure." True, man can not, by his own wisdom, find out God.

The natural man—the uninspired man—can not know the things of God, except as they are revealed. His word is His revealed will, and it is by this word that He works in us to will and to do of His pleasure. Why does God speak to us if He knows we can not hear? Why does He exhort us, if He knows we can not be moved to obedience? Why does He give us the gospel, if He knows we can not be influenced by it? What need is there of this gospel, if every conversion is a miracle of God's grace, and power? There is no other doctrine in all the Scriptures so clearly taught as this doctrine of personal responsibility, arising from the fact that we can hear, can understand, can love, can will, can obey. God works in us to will and to do of his pleasure by the gospel, "the power of God unto Salvation"; and what God works in, we must work out. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling." "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." God can not save a man who will not be saved. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

But can the Word of God change the heart? Why not? We can change the heart of one man toward another by human words. Has God's word less power? Let me illustrate: Here is a man who says he hates his neighbor. He will not have anything to do with him. He avoids meeting him on the street. I lecture him for this manifestation of unkindness. I tell him it is unmanly and unwise, and ask him to go into deep penitence. This has little effect. I pray with him, and for him, but still he is unchanged. I turn to him and say: "Do you remem-

ber when you were very sick last summer, that your physician said your wife must have a respite, for she had nearly worn out her life for you, and that you must have a stronger nurse or you would die?" "Yes, that was a sad hour in our home." "And do you remember that a man came every night, for two long weeks, and nursed you back to life?" "How can I forget all that. And though he was a stranger, he refused any compensation?" "Well, my dear sir, this very man that you hate procured this trained nurse and paid him out of his own pocket. And do you remember how your larder grew empty, and how your wife found, at your door, a rich supply for your need?" "Yes; my wife said the angels brought it." "Well, this very man you hate was the angel who brought it. And do you remember how your crop was neglected, so you had no money to meet the last note of the indebtedness on your home; and how that old money lender threatened foreclosure; and how happy you were when the mail brought you the note and mortgage canceled? Well, this very man you hate did that, too." The relentless heart is touched by this story of love, and he exclaims: "O, how I have hated him without a cause," and now he is ready to fall at his feet in tearful recognition of his kindness and love. Have I not changed his heart toward his neighbor, by the use of facts, clothed in human words? And is there nothing in the story of God's love,— nothing in the gift of His Son,—nothing in the agonies of Gethsemane and the cross,—nothing in all these manifestations of God's overwhelming grace, to

touch the hearts of those who are hating Jesus without a cause? Believe it who can! Such a thing is the absurdest absurdity. That so many good people should have accepted it as God's truth, is a great mystery, and can be accounted for only by the fact that sectarianism, as well as Romanism, has taken the key of knowledge away from the common people.

Coming to know and to love Jesus is not more difficult than coming to know and love a friend, except that to know Jesus means self-denial and cross-bearing for his sake;—sacrifices which the stubborn heart is often unwilling to make. Several years ago, Wm. Hayden noticed, in his audience, a woman weeping every time the gospel invitation was extended. One evening he walked down the aisle and said to her, "My dear friend, why do you hesitate when Jesus invites?" "O," said she, "I have been waiting twenty years for a change of heart. I have been praying twenty years for this change, and when that time comes, nothing will give me so much joy as to publicly confess His name." "Do you love God?" asked the minister. "Do you love Jesus? Do you love the word of God? Do you love God's people?" "If I know my heart, I do. Nothing gives me more joy than to believe that God is love, that Jesus is my Savior, and altogether lovely; and meeting with God's people is a foretaste of heaven itself." "Why, then, do you pray for a change of heart? Do you net know that if your heart were changed you would hate God; hate Jesus Christ; hate God's word and God's people; it seems to me that you have now just such a heart as

God approves." Presented in this simple way, she saw the truth, and went forward in obedience to the gospel. Here was a woman who had been taught to look for some mysterious change of heart, and had been kept waiting twenty years at the door of the kingdom.

When we come to love what Jesus loves, and as he loves, the heart has not only changed, but it lias come unto the perfection of love. Out of such a heart flows every holy virtue. Repentance flows from the heart that has been purified by faith. Self-denial flows from such a heart; and when we come to love what Christ loves, and to hate what Christ hates, his yoke becomes easy, and his burden light. When Washington was a lad, he had a great desire to spend his life upon the sea. After long pleading, his mother finally gave her consent. The day of his departure— a proud day for the ambitious boy—came all too soon for the anxious mother. His baggage was stowed away in the waiting ship. He went round to bid the household good-bye. They all wept. Then he embraced his mother. She wept as if her heart would break, and could only sob out her good-bye. Washington stood a moment, brushed away the fast-falling tears, then said to a servant: "Go, bring back my trunk, and set it down in my room, for I can't do a thing that will break my mother's heart." Going to sea was to him a precious ambition. It had been in his thoughts by day, and dreams by night, for a long time; but dear as it all was, he gave it up for his mother's sake. So when the love of Christ constrains

us, we will surrender self, and all that may be dear to us, even life itself, for Jesus' sake. Faith works by love and changes the heart, repentance changes the character, and baptism changes our visible relations to God and the world, and this is conversion—turning to the Lord—and God heals—forgives all our sins— and remembers them no more.

# WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!

"What hath God wrought! "—NUM. 23:23.

"He hath not dealt so with any nation."—Ps. 147:19.

"On this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—MATT. xvi: 18.

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." — MATT, xxviii: 20.

GOD uses men and nations for the purposes of His grace. He chose Abraham, and after him, Isaac and Jacob, for a great purpose: "In thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Paul says that seed was Jesus Christ. He also says that "To Israel pertaineth the adoption, and the glory and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever." All God's dealings with Israel must be interpreted in the light of this great mission. He gave to the children of Israel a land, and blessed them in basket and in store. He made of them a great nation; and, by His law, separated them from all other nations, and even forbade intercourse with other nations, that they might be and remain a distinct people. He gave them His word for their guidance, and rebuked and punished them for disobedience. He gave them a temple and a city, and met them at His altars with divine blessings. But, for their idolatry, He suffered their enemies to destroy their city and their temple, lay waste their country and lead them into captivity,—and made them appear to Ezekiel as a

valley of dry bones, without hope of revival: yet He restored them to their land, and preserved them to the fulfillment of His great promise. In this respect He dealt with this people, as with no other people. There runs all through the history of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all through the history of the children of Israel, the manifest Providence of the covenant-keeping God; and that Providence leading on to the coming of the Messiah. This element must not be lost sight of in any just review of this history. Granted that God made this promise, and we must also grant the Providence that watched over Israel as over no other people. Israel in the flesh was God's elect for a purpose. They were not an *end,* but a *means*. That purpose accomplished, the Jews became as other nations before God, for God is not a respecter of persons. Israel in the spirit—the Church of Jesus Christ—are now God's elect. They are also a means, and not an end. Peter says, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; which, in times past, were not a people, but now are the people of God."

Jesus Christ was the end of the law for righteousness. All the Old Testament lines of Providence converge toward the *Incarnation*. All the fingers of type and promise point to the coming of the Messiah. There were four thousand years of preparation for this great event, and then, in the fullness of time, God sent his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth

in him should not perish, but have eternal life. The world needed a Savior. The history of Israel had emphasized the fact that law can not regenerate men. The history of Greece had emphasized the fact that men may be highly cultivated in art and science, in poetry and philosophy, and yet be deeply depraved. The history of Rome had emphasized the fact that might can never make right. At this time a mere nod from the Roman throne made the whole world tremble. The dominions of Rome reached from the Atlantic to the Euphrates, and from the Baltic to and across the Mediterranean. The Jews were subject to Rome, and had hope only in a Messiah that would disenthrall them, and establish a kingdom like David's. Every where else there was a confident expectation that the "Desire of all nations" would come to lift men to a higher plane, and make the world better and happier.

And so Jesus came in the fullness of time. His great mission was first of all to win men to himself, and make them like himself, as he is like God; to bring man into fellowship with himself, and with his Father, by faith in him, by obedience to his authority, and by that culture which develops Christlikeness. He came to set up his dominion in the soul. He came that we might have life—the true life—his life—and that we might have it more abundantly. He came that men might see with his eyes, hear with his ears, and love with the great loving heart. There is no hope in any scheme for the world's uplift that leaves Christ out. Christ in the minds and hearts of men, is the

great need. Christ in the hearts of men will drive the demon out of society, out of commerce, out of politics. He will settle all the questions which disturb the family, the community, and the State.

All the lines of Old Testament Providence lead up to *Immanuel*—God-with-us;—and all the work of the Church, and the Providence of God, since the great Commission, lead on to the end, when *man will be with God.*

To accomplish this great purpose, Jesus Christ organized His Church. He was himself the Founder, and the Foundation. Its creed, "Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God." Its membership is made up of all those who believe in the one living God, and in Jesus as His only begotten Son; and who heartily accept Him as their all-sufficient Teacher, Priest and King. This meant, Christ the one Head of the church, the one perfect and unchangeable Mediator; His word all-sufficient to instruct and to govern; His life the perfect model; His truth an uplifting and a regenerating power. Here, too, was religious liberty. His apostles brooked no interference from ecclesiastical or civil rulers. "Whether it be right, in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." It was one church with one Head, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

This church is the spiritual Israel—the "holy nation" of which Peter speaks. Jesus said, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," and "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

He taught His Church to pray "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as in heaven." To his apostles he said, "Go make disciples among all the nations." To this church Jesus committed the greatest enterprise of the centimes. He assured it of final victory, when He promised to be its ever present Helper. He taught his disciples to pray for that which His Father will grant. Therefore Providence watches, with a sleepless eye, and guides with a persevering hand. Some one has said that "all veritable history is but the exponent of Providence." "Providence is the light of history, and the soul of the world. God is in history, and all history has a unity, because God is in it." Another has said, "The work of Redemption is the sum of all God's providences." Every thing in the Old Testament history contributed directly or remotely to the coming of the Messiah and his work. All modern history has contributed, and will contribute to the final triumphs of redeeming love. God makes sure the promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church. The currents of the world have always been against it. It has stood as founded on a rock. The armies of hell have been hurled against it, and it has not fallen. Satan has used fire and fagot, satire and wit, fashion and philosophy, science and civil power, intrigue and unrelenting hate, heresy and infidelity, fanaticism and misguided zeal—all in vain. Paul said, "If God be for us, who can be against us." The wise Gamaliel said, "If this counsel, or this work, be of men, it will come to naught. But if it be of God, ye can not

overthrow it, lest haply ye be found to fight against God." "All things work together for good to them that love God."

The apostles began their work in this faith—faith in man, faith in the Word, faith in God, faith in work, and hope in final victory. The results verified the promise of Christ. They convinced men of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to come. Three thousand were converted in a day. Five thousand were counted soon after. Then came persecution, the martyred Stephen, and the scattered flock. But the scattered ones went everywhere preaching the Word; and Saul of Tarsus, who consented to the death of Stephen, became the Lord's chosen vessel to bear His name before the Gentiles and Kings and the children of Israel. Then came the larger triumphs of the gospel in Judea, Samaria, Asia Minor, Greece and Rome. Rome was then the world. From this highest summit of earthly power the light of the gospel shone to the remotest parts of the Roman Empire. Then came the destruction of Jerusalem, and the scattering of the Jews; and, wherever dispersed, they were living witnesses to the truth of prophecy, and to the judgments of God, who heard their cry on the night of the crucifixion, "His blood be on us and on our children." Then came the ten bloody persecutions. Nothing in all the heroic struggles of the first centuries of Church history, tells more eloquently that Christianity was a disturbing force, than this fact that it was bitterly persecuted. "These that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also," was the cry at Thessal-

onica, and this was the cry everywhere in the Roman Empire. Mosheim says, "A principal reason of the severity with which the Romans persecuted the Christians, seems to have been the abhorrence and contempt felt by the Christians for the religion of the Empire, which was so intimately connected with the form, and, indeed, with the very essence of its political constitution." "Christians dared to ridicule the absurdities of pagan superstition, and were ardent in their efforts to gain proselytes to the truth." Then their religion was without the pomp and parade of paganism. They had no sacrifices, temples, images, oracles or sacerdotal robes, without which the ignorant supposed there could be no religion; and hence, to the Roman mind, Christians were atheists. Some of these persecutions extended throughout the empire, and had the effect to call general attention to the religion of Christ, and to emphasize its power to sustain men under severest trials. God made the wrath of man to praise Him.

Then came the gradual growth of the Man of Sin, the captivity of the Church in "Babylon the Great," and a thousand years of spiritual and intellectual darkness,—the mid-day of Roman Catholic power, and the midnight of the world's civilization. In the days of Nero and Diocletian, the state trampled the Church under foot. In the palmiest days of the Pope, the state was enslaved to the Church. The Pope took off the king's crown and put it on when he pleased. He marked out the metes and boundaries of kingdoms. Kings kissed his slipper, and held his stirrup

when he mounted his horse; kings counseled him with reference to laws, and wars and marriage. The Pope had put himself in place of God, the Virgin Mary in place of Jesus Christ, the traditions and commandments of men in place of the Word of God. Roman Catholicism was a mixture of Judaism, paganism, secularism, ecclesiasticism, and Diotrephianism. "Despotism, religious and civil, crushed the energies of immortal mind, and iniquity, like a flood, deep and broad, submerged all Europe." Gross ignorance prevailed. In a Church council held in 992, in Rome, it is said there was scarcely a person who knew the first element of letters. Corruption disgraced the Church, and the Church disgraced the world.

The crusades stirred these stagnant waters of ignorance and sin and struck the death blow to mental despotism. Blind and superstitious faith swept like a terrific storm over Europe and the East for nearly two hundred years. Anything is better than stagnation. Dr. Read says, "Though visionary in the extreme, and prodigal of life and treasure, and unsuccessful in their professed object, from all this confusion, came order; from all this darkness, light; and from the most miserable combination of evil, was educed a lasting good. The fountains of the great deep were now broken up, the stagnations of ignorance and corruption, which had, for centuries, choked and poisoned all that attempted to live and breathe and move in them, began to heave and give signs of such coming commotion as must, ere long, purify their putrid waters."

How true, of this period, the words of the poet:

"Right forever on the scaffold; wrong forever on the throne.
Yet that scaffold sways the future; and behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God amid the shadows, keeping watch above his own."

The crusaders saw the advanced condition of Greece and the Orient. In the land of their infidel enemies, they found schools, academies, libraries, learning; masters, instructors, commentators, orators, poets, philosophers; grammar, science, architecture, mathematics; and saw what a mighty advantage all these gave to the Moslem power. Then was started in Europe a spirit of bold inquiry, and specially a bold demand for *truth,* oat of which came the revival of learning. People were no longer satisfied with fiction, romance, and the legends of saints. The same spirit was found in halls of legislation and judicature. There was also a bold spirit of adventure and restless ambition. Discovery was the mania of the day. The same leaven was found in the political lump, and the result was the end of feudalism, and the opening of the way for the successful struggle of Liberty. In England, King John was compelled to sign the Magna Charta—"the keystone of English liberty, the bulwark of constitutional law." The study of astronomy reveals unknown facts; the magnet comes to be better understood, and navigation becomes a science; a way to the East Indies is found around the Cape of Good Hope, and America is discovered. Providence is getting ready for enlargement. Then came the art of paper making and printing. God is getting ready to multiply his voice a thousand fold. He is getting

ready to lead his people back from Babylon to Jerusalem,—out of darkness into light, out of bondage into liberty, out of idleness into service, out of shame into glory. He is getting ready for Wickliffe and Huss and Luther.

Luther's Reformation was, first of all, a protest against spiritual wickedness in high places, and then against the prevailing ignorance of the Word of God, which had been taken away from the people, and specially against the Pope usurping the place of Christ, as the head of the Church, and substituting the doctrines and commandments of men for the Word of God. It was a protest against ecclesiastical despotism, and a plea for religious liberty. Luther was an Ezra, restoring to the spiritual Israel the Word of God, and pleading for repentance. Necessarily this meant a study of the Bible, in an atmosphere permeated with the Jewish idea that civil government must necessarily embrace religion, as in the theocracy of Moses; with the idea that kings rule by divine anointing, as did David, and that the Pope was the great prophet of God, whose duty it was to rebuke kings, as Samuel did Saul, and as Nathan did David. From such conditions, and in such an environment, the step to the fullest religious liberty was not easy.

d'Aubigne says, "What the Augsburg Confession stigmatizes with the greatest energy, is the intrusion of the Church into the affairs of the State. What the confessors of Augsburg demand, is their independence; I do not say their separation, for separation of Church and State was quite unknown to the reformers."

However this may have been, the principles of the Lutheran Reformation laid the foundation for both civil and religious liberty. It is only in Protestant countries that men enjoy the fullest religious liberty; and only in Protestant countries that God's truth has made free men. At the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Luther's birth, the whole world of learning, benevolence, and politics, Protestant and Catholic alike, paid tribute to his memory, and recognized the mighty power of his work and life in favor of all that is best in the world's civilization.

Coming back to this question of Church and State, we find that in England, the king was made head of the Church, and that the English Parliament made laws for her government. The pope had enslaved the State to the Church. Henry the VIII enslaved the Church to the State. The Independents lifted up an earnest protest against this. They contended that the Church of Christ is made up of believers in Christ, who, in religious matters, owe allegiance only to Christ, and boldly declared that, in secular matters only, would they be subject to the powers that be. Civil and religious liberty was having a struggle to free itself from the persecuting hierarchy of the half-reformed religion of England in the 17th century.

This was another mile-stone on the way from Babylon to Jerusalem, and a remarkable advance, both for civil government and the Church. Persecuted in England, the Puritans found refuge, at first, in Holland, and afterward began a settlement on the rocky

coast of New England, to establish a State without a king, and a Church without a bishop. The discovery of America falls into the unfolding plan for the salvation of the world. The Christian religion thrives and expands and bears its best fruit, only in a land consecrated to civil and religious liberty. The spirit of adventure had moved upon the stagnant waters of the old world, and it found no rest till it touched the shores of the new world. God was preparing a larger place for the triumphs of His gospel. At first America was subject to Roman Catholic governments, but, piece by piece, this great land has fallen from the grasp of the Pope, and been given into the hands of Protestants. The pilgrims came in the fullness of time. "Had New England," says the historian of those times, "been colonized immediately on the discovery of the American continent, the old English institutions would have been planted, under the powerful influence of the Roman Catholic religion. Had the settlement been made under Elizabeth, it would have been before the activity of the popular mind in religion had conducted to a corresponding activity of mind in politics. The Pilgrims were Englishmen, Protestants, exiles for religion, men disciplined for misfortune, cultivated by opportunities of extensive observation, equal in rank, as in rights, and bound by no code but that which was imposed by religion, or might be created by the public will. America opened as a field of adventure, just at the time when mind began to assume its independence, and religion its vitality." Wickliffe was the father of the Puritans.

Though dead and his bones burned, his spirit still lived. And the principles which gave strength and power to the Lutheran Reformation bore fruit in the settlement of New England and the formation of this great Republic. The Pilgrims were God's missionaries to lay foundations on which to build a magnificent superstructure,—a Nation born of the thought that "All men are created free and equal," and founded on the truth that "the just powers of government are derived from the consent of the governed,"—a Nation which, while protecting its subjects in every civil and religious right, offers the freest and widest field for the display of the Christian religion.

Passing on to the eighteenth century we come to another mile-stone,—the Wesleyan reformation,—a protest against the form of godliness without the power —a protest against having a name to live, and yet being dead. Wesley and his coadjutors plead for a pure evangelical religion. They sought to quicken into life the dormant energies of the church. The effects of their preaching were astonishing. "At a time of the most melancholy spiritual lethargy, both in the Established Church and among Dissenters; when learned prelates, preaching to almost empty seats, were producing but little impression on fashionable audiences, and with difficulty keeping their communicants within the bounds of decent morality, Wesley and Whitfield were preaching with the most astonishing effect, among the abandoned crowds in Moorfields, to the lawless, brutal and irreligious colliers of Kingswood, and the scarcely less abandoned multitudes that

gathered about them on Kensington Common and Blackheath;" and later these preachers produced the same awakening all over this country, from Philadelphia to Charleston, and finally in New England. Out of all this came, at last, what we call Methodism. No one can question the spiritual power of this great movement, and it came in the fullness of time. That such earnest preaching and exhortation developed a religious body, distinguished for numbers, and zeal and missionary enthusiasm, has become well-known history. That it was a power to quicken life and zeal in all other religious bodies, is equally evident. It was in this new spiritual atmosphere that Robert Raikes started the Sunday School, which has grown to such magnificent proportions. In this atmosphere was organized the Bible Society, which has scattered the word of God in all the nations; and the Missionary Society, which has sought, with ever increasing success, to preach the gospel to every creature. The Wesleyan movement emphasized the fact that success depends largely upon Christian character, Christian enthusiasm, and thorough organization.

Another century and we come to the fourth milestone;—the Campbellian Reformation. This was a protest against Sectarianism;—against those divisions in the church which Paul denounced as carnal;—and necessarily against human traditions, and human creeds, the fruitful source of all these divisions. Campbell and his co-laborers could see no great difference between the Roman Catholic doctrine, that the church, through her priesthood, is the only

interpreter of Scripture, and the prevailing Protestant position,—that the church, through her synods and councils, must interpret the Scriptures, by prescribed formulas of faith. They saw also that it was the preaching of speculative theologies that made and maintained these divisions. It was clear to them, that if each of the twelve apostles "had preached a theology peculiar to himself, and had sought to win converts to it, instead of preaching Christ, and seeking to win people to Christ, they would have made twelve sects, instead of one church. They found that the church of Christ had this one article of faith: that "Jesus is the Christ the Son of the Living God;" and that Jesus said "On this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it;"—and that Paul said, "Other foundation can no man lay." It was evident to these good men that, if all Christians would accept this one article of faith, and allow to each other the largest liberty of opinion about matters not vital, the union for which Jesus prayed could be realized. They emphasized the fact that the vital faith is a personal trust in a personal Redeemer.

The Campbells plead for union because sectarianism is sin, because loyalty to Christ demands it, and because the prayer of Jesus, before his crucifixion, indicates that the world's conversion depends upon it. When the Church of Christ was a vital, visible unit, with one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and one hope, she was strong, and victory perched upon her banners. When the church began to substitute philosophical creeds for the personal Christ, and began to

bind the conscience to the dogmas of speculative theology, the disciples lost that union with Christ which is vital to fruit bearing. The Church of Christ, of apostolic days, was united by love. The Church of Rome was united by force. It was hardly practicable for Luther to escape the formulation of a doctrine that would stand over against the doctrine of Rome. He must let Rome know what he and his following stood for. And when the Bible began to be studied, as it had not been studied for a thousand years, it was not easy to avoid the contentions which arose over this and that doctrine, and hence sects began to multiply. The steps of reformation were not long ones. One prepared for the next. Luther said the army of the Lord must have the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. The Puritan said the sword of the Spirit does not need, and must not have the help of the sword of Caesar. Wesley said the sword of the Spirit must be used by soldiers who are full of the Holy Spirit and faith. Campbell said the army of the Lord must use this sword as one man. Luther said the Church must not control the State. The Puritan said the State must not control the Church. Wesley said the Church must not be controlled by the flesh. Campbell said the Church must not be controlled by *men*, however good, but by the one head, Jesus Christ our Lord. Each emphasized God-given truth.

That the reformation begun by the Campbells has had a mighty influence for good, goes in this audience, without the saying. This Jubilee Con-

vention represents a million disciples, the fruitage of this simple plea for Christian union, by a return to the Church of the Apostles. Its indirect influence has been great. Early in this century there was not a religious body of which any one could become a member simply upon a profession of faith in Jesus, as the Christ, the Son of God. Nearly all the doors open to such a seeker now. Early in this century there were no Union Sunday Schools; nor were the schools studying simply the Bible as now; there were no Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, and no inter-denominational Christian Endeavor Societies. In fact there was no touching elbows, nor joining of hands, along any common lines of Christian work. There was no Evangelical Alliance; and such a thing as a Congress of Churches would have been impracticable. Since then the fetters of dogmatic theology have been broken, and the pulpits are ringing with truths that help toward true manhood, and the glory of God; and everywhere there is heard the earnest prayer for the salvation of the world. No one is caring who casts out demons so only they are cast out; and everywhere, it is now conceded that what the world, and especially the heathen world, needs, is not *dogmas, but Christ*—Christ to touch and heal the leprous soul, Christ to touch the blind eyes, and deaf ears, and palsied tongues, and feverish hands, that men may see and hear and serve and praise God. This touch is uniting Christendom.

It is a noteworthy fact that all these reformations had their birth among German and Anglo-Saxon

people. These seem to be the fittest people for God's great purposes. You will search in vain for reformations springing up among other races, white, or black or brown. God has watched over Europe with jealous care. There was a time when the Moslem power reached from Japan to the walls of Vienna, and spread from North Africa to Spain. Will the Crescent or the Cross rule Europe? Charles Martel was the "hammer" of God to drive the Moors out of Spain, in the eighth century. God used Mohammed to check the power and progress of idolatry, and to scourge an apostate church. He was no greater impostor than was the Man of Sin. God made Mohammedanism the depository of learning, and a better civilization, during the dark ages, and used this learning to revive civilization and enterprise in Europe, and to make it possible for Christianity, as found in Protestantism, to give learning, and along with this learning, to give Christian civilization to the world. God has watched over England with special care. All the power of Rome has been employed to bring England under the dominion of the Pope, but in vain. God is working out the spiritual regeneration of the world through the Anglo-Saxon race. England and America give laws to the world. Where will you fix the limits of Anglo-Saxon power? Five hundred years ago the Anglo-Saxon was one of the weakest of European peoples. To-day they rule nearly one-third of the world's territory, and one-third of the world's people. It is estimated that a hundred years from now, the Anglo-Saxon will control

a population equal to the world's population of to-day. Why has North America, and Australia, and India, and many of the isles of the sea been placed under the control of the Anglo-Saxon race? What is the meaning of the wars and diplomacies which have uniformly given the Anglo-Saxon a mighty, if not a controlling, influence in every continent? Whatever may be said of English greed, or of *the justness* of many of her conquests, Christian missions never suffer under her flag. Wherever the British flag waves, the messenger of divine peace and pardon may pursue his work unmolested. This is as true of the American flag. Wherever Anglo-Saxon power controls, one may traverse the whole land without fear; erect school houses, build churches, translate the Bible, prepare books, and use all lawful means to bring the knowledge of salvation to men. Already the missionary and the Bible have followed our flag into Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines, where Rome has kept them out for centuries. England rules the wave—naval and commercial. The English language, and its treasures of religious knowledge, is belting the earth. It has been characterized as "the language of the arts and sciences, of trade and commerce, of civilization and religious liberty." Add to this fact that other fact, that the two nations speaking this language, hold in their hands nearly all the maritime commerce and naval power of the world, and sit as "arbiters among the nations."

England was compelled to be a manufacturing nation. Her manufactured products must find

a market. Her ships must traverse the sea. Her commerce must be protected. When steam became the new element of advancement, by which this age is distinguished from all that have preceded it, England had her coal deposits for making the steam to run her shops, and move her ships. It is a remarkable coincidence, that coal is not found in any considerable quantities, except where the Anglo-Saxon has control. Protestant coal makes the Protestant steam for the Protestant press. Steam shortens distances. Jesus Christ said, "Go into all the world," and Providence has shortened the distance, that we may go the quicker; and commerce and self-interest have made the whole world ready to welcome the messenger of peace.

The Church is nearing the twentieth century, and has already passed another mile-stone, and is rising to the higher plane of service and joy. We have come to a New Era—the Era of Evangelism. It has been called the Era of applied Christianity. Christians have been brought face to face with God, and face to face with men, as never before. God is shaping the affairs of the world for the Church's final triumph. Already there is a commercial brotherhood. Education has lifted men from serfdom to citizenship, and kings are compelled to recognize human rights. Paganism is in its dotage; Romanism is making desperate efforts, in vain, to regain her lost power. The Sick Man of the East controls about all that is left of the once great Moslem power, and his dominions are waiting the opportune time to pass into other hands.

The conference at The Hague, this year, largely through the influence of the American Legation, was made to consider how to speedily bring the time when "nations shall learn war no more." The whole civilized world has reached such a high degree of divine altruism, as to applaud a war to drive insufferable tyranny out of Cuba, and to feel the bitter shock of injustice done to one man—and that man a Jew. "An injury to one is an injury to all." The Golden Rule has been leavening the whole lump of humanity. The Church is the light of the world, the salt of the earth, the pillar and support of the truth. Again, she is a mighty structure founded on the Rock, against which the gates of hell—the powers of Pluto's dominions—can not prevail. But she is more. She is the army of the Lord, assaulting the gates of hell, and pulling down the strongholds of Satan. This is the missionary army. There are now in Christendom 242 Foreign Missionary Societies, which receive annually more than sixteen million dollars, and sustain 11,839 missionaries, and 67,751 native helpers in nearly twenty thousand places in heathen lands, and more than two million redeemed heathens are walking in the light and love of the Truth. This is not a large army, but it is full of promise. America, the land of great experiments, great enterprises, and great successes, thoroughly aroused, could easily multiply this force by two. One great home missionary work is to unite the ten million members of the American Church, and fill them with divine enthusiasm. Our plea for the union of God's people has not yet fulfilled its mis-

sion. The prayer of Jesus, "That they all may be one as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee; that they may be one in us," will be answered, and then will be realized the power of the re-united Church for the salvation of the world. "John 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." Does not this prefigure the progress of modern missions? An angel, high in the air, moving swiftly on, his course unhindered by rivers, or mountains, or seas, or deserts, proclaiming in trumpet tones, peace on earth and good will to men. The ignorance of ages gives way, the fires of persecution are extinguished, swords are beaten into plow shares, and spears into pruning hooks, and nations learn war no more; and ere long the anthem shall break forth, rising to the heavens, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, resounding, "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever."

# A MODEL CONVERSION.

"Philip began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water, and the eunuch said, See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believeth with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."—ACTS viii: 35-37 See verses 26-40.

THE Ethiopian officer was a Jew, either by birth or proselytism, more likely the former. Judea had been under the dominion of Rome for many years. The Jew has always been restless under a yoke. His instinct of freedom is strong. During the Roman dominion, for one cause and another, many Jews found homes in other countries, and their children were reared there. Luke tells of the representatives of fifteen different countries—Jews and proselytes— who were present on the day of Pentecost. This man, or his father before him, had settled in Ethiopia, the dominions of Queen Candace. If, as Josephus says, this was the country of the "Queen of Sheba," the Jew was a welcome visitor. Like Daniel, he was distinguished for wisdom, and for devotion to the religion of his fathers. His religion was not of that chameleon type which takes on the color of its environment. All this man's material interests and political preferment depended, in some degree, upon Ms falling in with the religion of the royal court. Be that as it may, the queen recognized his honesty, intelligence and ability

and made him Secretary of the Treasury—"a man of great authority."

He was a zealous Jew. To make so long a journey to Jerusalem was not an easy task. It required time, money and endurance.

Moreover, he was acquainted with the Scriptures, and could read them in Greek or Hebrew. When preaching to Jews, the apostles always took it for granted that they were familiar with the Scriptures. The Scriptures were read systematically and consecutively in the synagogues on the Sabbath, so that a Jew had the opportunity to hear all the Scriptures read many times before reaching old age. The preacher found this man reading the Scriptures, and seeking to know the meaning. It is not hard to impart the truth to one who is seeking it. One of the great hindrances to the success of the gospel, even in this country of many preachers and many Sunday School teachers, is the prevailing ignorance of the Word of God.

We may presume that the high chamberlain of Queen Candace was received, by the governor, in a manner befitting his station. He put up at the best hostelry of the city, and associated with the best people. Let me suppose that ten years had elapsed since he last came to Jerusalem to worship. During that time John the Baptist had appeared as the harbinger of the Lord, and had preached repentance with such power that thousands came to his baptism. Many supposed he was the Messiah, but he said, "I am not he, but one cometh after me, mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear." Then the mightier one had

come and baptized more than John, and commanded general attention by his miracles and by his teaching. This was Jesus of Nazareth. He had aroused the animosity of the chief priests, and won the admiration of the common people. He had been condemned by the Sanhedrim as a blasphemer, and by the Roman governor as a traitor, and had been crucified by Roman soldiers. A short time after, the city had been astonished by the news that the crucified one had come back from the grave; and a few days later his disciples had proclaimed his resurrection, ascension and coronation, and in a single day three thousand had given their allegiance to the new King. Then had come the efforts of the priests to suppress this new religion, and the consequent persecution which resulted in Stephen's martyrdom, and the scattering of the disciples abroad "throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles."

There was but one absorbing question in Jerusalem now: "Was Jesus the promised Messiah, or shall we still look for another?" Thousands had already accepted his reign, and thousands more had arrayed themselves against him. The discussions were hot, and the spirit of persecution very bitter. Of course this ardent Jew became interested. In common with other Jews, he was looking for the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham two thousand years before.

He may have talked with Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrim, who told him that there was no question about Jesus' working miracles; that he believed he was a teacher come from God; and that

he regretted that he had not defended him more vigorously before the Council. He may have talked with Joseph, the Aramathean, another member of the Sanhedrim, who told him that, like Nicodemus, he was a secret believer in Jesus, and that he also regretted his lack of courage to defend him before the Council; but that, after his death, he went boldly to Pilate and begged the body; and that he and Nicodemus had embalmed it, and buried the sacred remains in his own tomb, and that his disciples were now saying that this was in fulfillment of Isaiah's words, "He made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death." He told him of the pall of darkness that hung over the land for three long hours, and of the rent rocks and the rent veil, and how he himself had seen the place where Jesus had been laid, and that he believed that his apostles affirmed the truth, when they said he had risen from the dead.

He may have talked with Lazarus, who told him how he had been the devoted friend of Jesus, how he had sickened, died, and had been buried, and how Jesus had brought him back to life—a miracle so convincing that it aroused the ire of the chief priests and the Pharisees, who took council and said, "What do we, for this man doeth many signs? If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him;" and then took council to put Jesus to death; and later, took council that they might put him to death also, because so many people came to see him and went away believers in Jesus.

He may have talked with Caiaphas, the high priest, who told him that he prophesied "that Jesus should die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but that he might also gather together, into one, the children of God that are scattered abroad;"—and that John, one of the disciples whom he knew, was saying that God had put these words in Ms mouth; and that he had unwittingly announced the vicarious atonement of Christ, which was foretold by Isaiah: "He hath borne our griefs, * * carried our sorrows, * * was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. * * Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. * * He bore the sin of many;" and then he went on to say that this whole chapter was being quoted by the friends of Jesus as a prophetic vision of the Messiah, and that all the details of description find their fulfillment in the life, character, and specially the sufferings of Jesus of Nazareth; and that the words "He shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands," mean the resurrection and coronation of the Messiah. But he added that, to meet the force of this, they had tried to convince the people that Isaiah said all this of himself; but the more they argued, the more the people believed in Jesus, until it was necessary to use force and drive them out of the city. Just then some one may have come in to say that these scattered disciples were preaching Christ everywhere they went, and that Saul of Tarsus wanted authority to bring the disciples in Damascus in chains to Jerusalem, to be punished.

He may have talked to Pilate, who told him how he was compelled, by the clamor of the Jews, to consent to the death of an innocent man; and justified himself in it as a political necessity; and added that Jesus really made no defense, but "went like a lamb to the slaughter;" and that no one came forward to plead his cause; and that the centurion, who was present through all the hours of agony and darkness, and heard all that Jesus said, had declared him to be the Son of God.

The Jew from Ethiopia must have been deeply impressed by all this, and must have been greatly disappointed that he could not settle this question before leaving Jerusalem. He could not reconcile all this history with his conception of the Messiah's character and reign. Jesus of Nazareth was not on David's throne, and conquering as David conquered, nor were the people rallying to his support. Moreover, he must have been surprised that his followers were, at that very time, making an effort to win over the despised Samaritans.

About this time Philip had closed a very successful meeting in Samaria. "The angel of the Lord said unto Philip." (There are those who think the appearance of an angel is necessary to a model conversion. Note the fact that the angel spake to the preacher.) "Arise and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." We find here a good illustration of Providence. The preacher is left free to regulate his *own* steps. There is no record that an angel told the nobleman

when to order his chariot, and how fast to drive; but when the preacher reached a certain point in the road, the chariot also was there. This was not an accident. God was in the steps of the preacher, in the steps of the horses, and in the movements of the driver, to bring the Word of God to a seeker after the Truth and the way of Salvation. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. "Then the Spirit said unto Philip." "Yes," says one, "I am glad you find the Spirit's work in the history of a model conversion; for I do not believe the sinful nature of man can be changed without a miracle of grace." Please note that the Spirit spake to the preacher, and said, "Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." He found the man intently reading and studying the very passage of prophecy which, more than any other, is a vision of the life, character, sufferings and triumphs of the Messiah. The preacher interrupted the reading, and surprised the reader with the question, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" I can see his look of despair, when he replies, "How can I, except some man should guide me. Come up and sit with me, and unfold the meaning of this: 'He was led, as a sheep, to the slaughter, and like a lamb, dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation, for his life is taken from the earth.' I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? Of himself, or of some other man?"

Here were a text, a preacher, an audience and an opportunity. Philip began at the same scripture and

preached unto him Jesus. What was the great question which was troubling the reader? Evidently this: Is Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah of the prophets? and to this question the preacher must have given attention. He doubtless affirmed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and proceeded to the proof. This very scripture was full of it. It could in no sense apply to Isaiah, for he was himself the seer of this vision. The prophet saw one who would astonish and startle the nations, and before whom kings would be dumb,—"for that which had not been told them, shall they hear; and that which they had not heard, shall they consider"—the report concerning whom would be discredited; one growing up to manhood, as a very tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; in whom was no form nor comeliness, and no beauty that they should desire him, and therefore despised and rejected of men. He saw a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, a friend of man, all his kindnesses unappreciated and his character unesteemed—"bearing our griefs, and carrying our sorrows," a friend of the sinners, wounded for their transgressions, bruised for their iniquities, and healed by his stripes; and yet looked upon as smitten of God and afflicted. He saw one who did no violence, and in whose mouth there was no deceit, oppressed, insulted, reviled, and unjustly condemned, and yet not opening his mouth in defense of himself. He saw one, like a lamb, led to the altar of sacrifice, pouring out his soul unto death, and cut off out of the land of the living. He saw an innocent man dying as a criminal, and with

criminals, and yet making his grave with the rich. He saw that Jehovah was willing that all this suffering should be endured, and that his life should be made an offering for sin. And again he saw his days prolonged, and the pleasure of the Lord prospering in his hands. He saw him exalted to a place of dominion and power, and ever living to make intercession for transgressors.

What a text was all this! How impressively the preacher must have gone over the counterpart of it in the history of Jesus of Nazareth, and told him how Jesus was begotten by the Holy Spirit, and born of Mary; how the angel assured the mother that he should be called the "Son of the highest;" how he was born in a stable, and cradled in a manger, and how the angels sang "Glory to God in the highest;" how, through the tender years of childhood, he had to be protected from the murderous purpose of Herod; how, at his baptism, John called him the Lamb of God, and the Father owned him as his only begotten Son; how he came to his own people, and they received him not; how he healed all their sick, and cast out evil spirits, and went about all his days doing good; and yet was despised and rejected, because they saw no beauty in him; how he came to the garden of Gethsemane—the garden of sorrows—and prayed that the bitter cup might pass, and God did not answer; how he was crowned with thorns, and robed in mockery; how he was reviled and reviled not again; how he was brought to trial and made no defense, and no one came forward to speak a word in his

behalf; how he was led as a sheep to the sacrifice, and poured out his soul unto death as an offering for sin, and was laid in the tomb of the rich Aramathean; but arose from the dead—prolonged his days—and gave his friends infallible proofs of his identity; how he had commanded his apostles to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that disbelieveth shall be condemned;" and how the angels came for him to escort him to a throne at the right hand of the Majesty on high—a priest upon his throne, ever living to make intercession for transgressors. He may then have gone on to show how God had sanctioned his reign by the miraculous signs of the next Pentecost, and was, even then, giving his sanction to the work of his apostles, by signs and miracles and wonders.

He preached Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God: "The Christ" means the "Anointed." In Old Testament times prophets, priests and kings, were anointed. It was the symbol of divine appointment. They were God's anointed. Jesus is *the* Anointed—*the* Prophet, *the* Priest, *the* King. To preach Jesus is to preach his gospel, and to exalt him as Prophet, Priest and King. To preach Moses is to preach Moses' law. (Acts xv: 18.) To preach Jesus is to preach the "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus." Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and therefore the infallible Teacher, the infallible Priest, the infallible King—able and willing to save unto the uttermost. Philip preached Jesus Christ as King,

with "all authority in heaven and on earth," and therefore must have given to this seeker the King's commandment, as Peter gave it on the day of Pentecost.

Coming to a certain water the earnest man said, "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Dr. Adam Clark comments on this as follows: "By this we may see that Philip had explained the whole of the Christian faith to him, and the way by which believers are brought into the church."

Now, whether the 37th verse be an interpolation or not, it is evident that the eunuch was baptized upon his faith in Jesus, as the Christ the Son of God. This was the great object of the preaching. Jesus said, "On this Rock I will build my church," and Paul said, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ." If I accept Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, with all my heart, he becomes my Teacher, and I sit as a disciple at his feet; my Priest, and I accept the atonement he makes for my sins; my King, and I yield submissively to his scepter; my God, and I worship and adore him while I serve him. There is in this all that is necessary to build up the character that God will approve. It is profound enough for the philosopher, and simple enough for the child. Moreover, departure from this "one foundation" has made all the divisions in the Church of God.

There was no delay in this baptism. The preacher does not tell the candidate that he must wait to know the meaning of thirty-nine articles of faith; nor that

he must go back to Jerusalem, and tell his experience to the church, and get the consent of the brethren; nor that he must agonize in prayer until God, by His Spirit, shall have spoken peace to his soul; nor that he must wait until a more convenient season. He commanded the chariot to stand still, and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. This was the King's commandment, and he obeyed the King.

"He baptized him"—that is, Philip did just what the word means. If the word means sprinkle, he sprinkled him. If it means immerse, he immersed him. But it must be conceded that they did what was not necessary, if baptism means sprinkling, and what was necessary, if it means immersion. All scholars are agreed that the primary and literal meaning of *baptizo* is to dip, plunge, immerse. It is a rule of translation that a word must always be rendered by a word expressing its customary meaning, unless the sense forbids it. The violation of this rule will play havoc with the meaning of any translated writing. Dr. Conant published a volume in which are six hundred quotations from classic authors, in which this word is found, and in not one of the places does the translation of the word, by the word "immerse," do violence to the sense, and in not a single place can "sprinkle" be used with propriety. Moreover, there is not a Greek-English Lexicono now used in any of our colleges as authority, that gives sprinkle and pour as meanings of "baptizo." I say this fearless of successful contradiction. Dr. Chas. Anthon, the

author of all the classic text books in use when I Attended college, says, "The primary meaning of the word is to dip or immerse, and its secondary meanings, *if it ever have any,* all refer, in some way or other, to the same leading idea. Sprinkling and pouring are entirely out of the question." The Greek was a very fertile language. It had words uniformly used for sprinkle, pour, wash, stain, bathe, immerse, and even for washing hands and feet. A law maker always tries to make his meaning clear. Certainly the Divine law maker is able to use a word expressive of his meaning. He would not command obedience in ambiguous terms. His positive law is always explicit. If baptize may mean any one of a half-dozen different things, we can not know when we have obeyed Him.

Now there is no word so explicit as this Greek word. If a lawyer were to attach unusual meanings to words used in the laws of the state, the court would rebuke him; and if he persisted in it, he would lay the ground for proceedings in disbarment. But preachers may juggle with "baptize," in the face of its explicit meaning, as admitted by all scholars, in the face of all the figurative allusions to it, such as "Buried with him in baptism;" "Planted in the likeness of His death;" "Born of water"—language that can have no allusion whatever to sprinkling; and in the face of New Testament facts, such as baptizing in the river Jordan, and "in Enon, because there was much water there;" and in the face of history for more than fifteen hundred years, and yet seem to maintain self-respect, and the respect of

intelligent people! Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan. Paul took the jailor out of his house to baptize him. In this text, preacher and candidate both went down into the water, and both came up out of the water, after the baptism. When you see what the preacher calls a baptism, write a description of it, and see how it corresponds with this.

Now suppose a penitent believer comes to me, and demands a baptism according to the Book. I refer to it, and begin by taking up a few drops of water. He says, "the Book says 'they came to a certain water." We go to a river, and I reach down to get a few drops of water. He says, "the Book says 'they both went down into the water." We both go down into the water, and I again take up the few drops. He says, "the Book says 'buried with Christ in baptism." I say, "If I bury you, you will have to remain under water." "No, for the Book says buried with him in baptism, wherein ye are also risen with him. Baptism is a figure of a burial and a resurrection." I bury him with his Lord in baptism, in the likeness of his death, and I raise him in the likeness of his resurrection, and we both come up out of the water according to the Book, and he goes on his way rejoicing. And will anyone that knows anything about the New Testament, call this baptism in question?

Baptism is not only obedience to the command of the King, but it is also symbolic of our faith. It symbolizes our faith in the Christ who died for our sins, was buried in the dark tomb, and having con-

quered the grave, rose again for our justification. It has a rich significance. It is also a symbol of the condition and purpose of the believer. Crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, risen with Christ. The old life is buried, and the new life begun. It was so expressive of one's going out of the old life into the new, that, early in the history of the Church, it was called "conversion," and even "regeneration," just as one speaks of the marriage ceremony as the marriage. It was the public expression of the fact that the candidate had become a new creature by faith in Jesus, and repentance unto life—that old things had passed away, and all things had become new— that he had died to sin and had risen with Christ— that his life was hid with Christ in God—and that, for this reason, he was to set his affections on, and seek the things which are above. What a pity that the Church council in 1311 gave its approval to substituting something else for this divine symbolism!

Some one will ask, "What of the thousands of Christian people who have accepted this substitute for baptism?" I may answer this question by asking another: What of all the thousands of Roman Catholics who have not, and can not have, any intelligent faith in Jesus Christ? I am glad I am not the judge. The Judge of all the earth will do right. The Scriptures teach that men will be judged according to what they know, and according to what they may have an opportunity to know. "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Were I to say to my little child, "Go bring me a book,"

and he should return with a leaf, and give every evidence that he believed he was obeying me, I could not find it in my heart to rebuke him. But when I make him to understand what a book is, I certainly will expect him to take back the leaf, and bring me a book. You may make your own application.

"He went on his way rejoicing." Every New Testament conversion began with attention to the Word of God, and ended with rejoicing. The Ethiopian found Him of whom Moses and the prophets did write. He believed on Him with all his heart, and bowed in humble submission to His authority. He was full of thanksgiving, because the Father "had made him meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, and had delivered him from the power of darkness, and translated him into the kingdom of God's dear Son." The great purpose of this kingdom is to make men happy by bringing the soul into harmony with God. it offers what no other kingdom can offer—the forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the hope of eternal life, the peace which the world can neither give nor take away. It has happiness for the poor in spirit, for them that mourn, for the meek and merciful, for the poor in heart, for the peacemakers, and even for those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. The subjects of his kingdom can "rejoice always." Paul and Silas, in the inner prison, their feet fast in the stocks, and their bodies suffering from cruel scourgings, lifted up notes of joyful praise that penetrated all the prison walls, at the midnight hour! The Christian may find

more true joy in a dungeon, than a monarch on his throne. He has the secret spring of happiness within himself, and external circumstances can not destroy his peace and joy. He has a good conscience. He is at peace with himself and with his God. "His religion fits for all scenes, supports in all trials, upholds by day and by night, and puts into his lips the songs of praise and thanksgiving." He lives and walks on a high plane. The atmosphere is clear and the vision bright.

The world's pleasures sink out of sight in comparison with this joy. Burns sang—and no one understood it better—

"Pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river;
A moment white then melts forever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flits ere you can mark their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form,
Evanishing amid the storm."

But the Christian sings,

'"Tis religion that can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live;
'Tis religion must supply
Solid comfort when we die;
After death its joys will be
Lasting as eternity;
Be the living God my friend,
Then my bliss shall never end."

Take away his treasures; he still has riches in Christ Jesus. Take away his home; there yet remains a rest for the people of God. Take away his friends;

he yet has friends in God, and Christ, and the angels who will receive him into everlasting habitations. Take away his life; he yet has the life that is hid with Christ in God. Take away his hope in all earthly things; he yet has the hope, both sure and steadfast, that anchors the soul to that within the veil.

# SAUL OF TARSUS.

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ACTS ix: 1-22; xxii:1-16; xxvi.

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SAUL of Tarsus—afterward called Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, was "of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin,—a Hebrew of the Hebrews, —as touching the law a Pharisee," and as "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." His father was a strict Jew, and also a Pharisee. "The Pharisees were, in general, a powerful religious party—the predominant influence in the Jewish State. They aspired to the control of the civil and religious institutions; and were the recognized teachers and guides of the national mind. They were proud of their orthodoxy, pluming themselves on their superior sanctity, practicing austerities outwardly, but inwardly indulging their passions, and descending to unworthy and shameful acts; and withal of narrow spirit, contracted views, seeking rather their own aggrandizement than the public good, of which they used the name merely as a pretext and a cover." *[Heard.]* They interpreted the law by the traditions, and Jesus said they "made the word of God of none effect by tradition." They had a "form of Godliness without the power." Jesus denounced them as hypocrites. However, there were some in this party, such as Nicodemus and Gamaliel, who were quite free from its

prevailing vices, many of whom accepted Christ. Certainly Paul was honest. He said to the Jewish Council, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day;" and to Agrippa, "I verily thought I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." He had the courage of his convictions, and "persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons, both men and women."

He was a free born Roman citizen, liaised in Tarsus, the chief city of Cilicia, and enjoying the privileges of citizenship in the Roman Empire, he was fitted, by early training, and by association with the Gentiles, to serve the more acceptably in the field to which Christ afterward called him.

He received his higher education in Jerusalem, in the school of the great Gamaliel; and this indicates that his father was a man of some wealth.

I am to speak of the conversion of a member of the Jewish Church;—a member of the most orthodox sect of the Jews;—a man of learning acquired in the best schools of his day;—an honest man, having, at all times, the courage of his convictions;—a man exceedingly zealous in the religion of the fathers, and a man standing high in the esteem of the best people. It has been said that an honest man is the noblest work of God. There are those who think that it matters little what a man's religion is, so long as he is conscientious. But Paul was a sinner, notwithstanding his sincerity and zeal; for he says, "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am

chief." There are sins of omission as well as sins of commission. Paul might have known all that he afterward learned, but he did not avail himself of the opportunity. He may have passed, many a day, within a stone's throw of the Great Teacher, without taking the time to hear him. He must have heard, over and over again, of the miracles which had convinced Nicodemus that he was a "Teacher come from God," and made no investigation of their merits. The power of his sect was all directed against Jesus, and his work. The elements of power, supplied by religion, politics, and high life, were combined, most thoroughly, to oppose and destroy the doctrine and the lofty aims of the Galilean. Wilful ignorance alienates the soul from God. (Eph. iv: 18.) Paul needed conversion.

His first appearance in the New Testament history, was at the stoning of the first martyr. He consented to Stephen's death. Later he "breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples" in Jerusalem; and "being exceedingly mad against them, he persecuted them even unto strange cities." In all this he was sustained by letters of authority from the chief priests and the elders. Hear his own story: "As I went to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief priests, at mid-day, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying, in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecut-

est thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness, both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me. Wherefore, O, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." (Acts xxvi: 12-20.)

Why did Jesus Christ appear unto Saul? To convert him? The appearance of Jesus Christ was not necessary to the conversion of the thousands who had turned to the Lord before this. Why should it be necessary in the case of Saul? Jesus Christ says he appeared unto him "to appoint him a minister"— an apostle specially to the Gentiles—"and a witness." It is common to use this word "witness" in the sense of conscious enjoyment of religion, as when it is said, so many "witnessed for Christ." This is not the meaning of the word here. I may be a witness that the coat I wear is comfortable, but not a witness as to who made it. Paul was to be a witness, like the other apostles, of what he had seen and heard. In another place Paul says, "And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the

Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldst know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of His mouth; for thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." (Acts xxii: 12-15.) He could not be a witness of the facts of the gospel unless he had *seen* Jesus and *heard* his voice. To the Church at Corinth, he wrote, "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen the Lord?" "He was seen of James, then of all the apostles, and last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time; for I am the least of the apostles, that am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God." Jesus personally called all the other apostles, and trained them for their work. Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, must not be an exception.

The choice was a wise one. The twelve apostles were from the common walks of life. They were not educated men, nor were they men of wide influence among the Jews. Saul was educated, and moved in the highest circles, and exerted a wide influence among the ruling classes. Moreover, he was an honest man, having always and everywhere the courage of his convictions, and full of determination. Such a heart, and hand, and will, may always become a power for good, when consecrated to God and the right. His testimony for Christ has ever been an impregnable bulwark of defense for the Faith. The

people knew that he was able to weigh evidence, and draw logical conclusions; that he was strictly honest; and that his prejudices against Christ were strong, and his enmity bitter. All his temporal interests lay on the side against Christ. When they learned that he had turned to the Lord, and was preaching the faith he had tried to destroy, and this without honor or reward, so far as this world is concerned, they could account for it only in two ways; either he had received what was, to him, infallible proof that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, or else he had gone mad. Festus listened to his fervent eloquence, when he was pleading before the king, and said, with an excited voice, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." To which Paul replied, "I am not mad, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." And those who read His epistles, find everywhere the words of truth and of a sound mind. Then the conversion of Saul lifted a rod that was falling heavily upon the disciples, and filling them with dismay. Jesus is the Head of the Church. The head is the seat of sensation, and feels the suffering of the members of the body, and immediately seeks a remedy. So Jesus feels the hurt of His people. You cannot injure the least of his disciples without injuring Jesus. You cannot mock one of those little ones without mocking Christ. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *me?*" Little did he think be was persecuting any one on high. When Saul turned to the Lord, the leader of all the bitter opposition had become the friend of the disciples, and their

able defender everywhere. "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied."

The language of the modern revival meeting not only perverts the scriptural use of the word "witness," but also makes an unwarranted use of the "light" and the "voice," as found in Saul's experience. Many a convert refers to the time when he saw a light or heard a voice, as the particular time when the Lord "spake peace to his soul." I remember a man who claimed that, while he was praying, he saw Jesus as plainly as Paul saw Him. When asked whether he prayed with his eyes open or closed, he was convinced that he must have been dreaming. Bear in mind that the appearance of such a light was not necessary to the first conversions. There was no light except the light of the gospel, and no voice except the voice of the inspired preacher. The light that shone round about Saul, shone also round about those who journeyed with him. It outshone the sun at mid-day. The voice that Saul heard was also heard by his companions, though understood only by Saul; and this voice sent him somewhere else to learn the way of salvation. In these modern revivals we hear of no lights which outshine the sun—none that others see as well as the convert—and no voice that others hear, and none that sends the sinner to the gospel to learn the way of salvation. Clearly, this light was a miracle attesting the fact that Jesus was present and speaking

to Saul, and, if so, he was the risen Lord. Familiar with the scriptures, Saul knew how God appeared to Moses at the burning bush; how Israel was guided in the wilderness by the cloud, that thinly veiled the glory of the Lord; how the Lord descended on Mt. Sinai in fire; how the face of Moses shone with a divine effulgence when he came from the glory of Jehovah's presence; and how the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle and the temple. Perhaps the words of Stephen's great sermon came back to him, and he may have caught a vision of his beautiful face, when, looking steadfastly into Heaven, he saw the glory of God, and said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."

Saul was convinced that Jesus of Nazareth, whose disciples he was pursuing and persecuting, was the Christ, the Son of the living God, and his Lord and Savior, and said, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Jesus answered, "Arise, and go into the city, and it will be told thee what thou must do." Mark the form of expression—*"must* do." He would be told what was commanded by Him who had all authority in heaven and on earth. Jesus had committed this duty, first to his apostles and then to evangelists. After his resurrection, we have no record that this great question was answered by himself or by angels. The angel that appeared to Cornelius directed him to send for Peter, "who will tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved."

Having accepted Jesus as his Lord, Saul immediately obeyed. When he arose it was ascertained that the light had affected his eyes, as it had not the eyes of his companions. "He could not see for the glory of that light." When Jesus said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," he must have gazed steadily for a while into the full blaze of the light that came from above, and have seen Jesus, as Peter, James and John saw him on the Mount of Transfiguration. This was the cause of his temporary blindness. His companions led him into the city, where, for three days, he was in darkness, and "neither did eat nor drink," and prayed most earnestly to know the way of salvation.

How easy to deceive a man, agonizing in almost hopeless despair! But God "showed Saul in a vision a man named Ananias coining in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight." This was a letter of introduction, so that Paul might recognize the man whom the Lord would send to tell him "all things appointed for him to do." Then the Lord appeared to Ananias, and commissioned him to bear to the anxious seeker the message of salvation. But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem, and how he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name." Surely the church in Damascus would hardly have consented to the baptism of such a man. The Lord said, "Behold, he prayeth." "Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and children of Israel; for I will

show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." "And Ananias went his way and entered into the house, and, putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee on the way as thou earnest, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately he looked up and saw the very man the Lord had shown him in the vision. This miracle confirmed the fact that he was the Lord's messenger, and Saul was ready to hear and obey the gospel.

The preacher did not ask him to narrate his experience, with a view to know whether he was accepted of God; nor did he tell him to continue in prayer until he received some token of God's grace; nor did he ask him to wait until he was more fully instructed in the things of the kingdom. The Lord had sent him to tell this anxious inquirer what he "must do." He did not tell him to believe on the Lord Jesus, because he already believed on Him; nor to repent, for already he had resolved to turn his back upon his old life. Listen to the answer to Saul's question, Lord, what shall I do? "Now, why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Immediately he was obedient unto the heavenly vision; and, having received the gift of the Holy Spirit, began, at once, the work to which the Lord had called him.

We find in the conversion of Saul the usual steps. All that is extraordinary in this narrative pertains to his call to be an apostle. Jesus was himself the

preacher. Upon His testimony, added doubtless to the testimony of Stephen, he came to believe in Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, with all his heart. Godly sorrow, on account of his sins, led him to turn his back upon the old, and to enter upon the new life. Relying upon all that Jesus Christ had done to open up the way of salvation, by his death, and calling upon His name—the only name by which men may be saved—he was, by His authority, baptized into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He became a covenanter of the new and better covenant, sanctified by the blood of Jesus, and the Father granted unto him redemption, through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. His sins are washed away, because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.

He himself tells us how he was baptized: "Know ye not that so many of us were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death. Therefore, we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Rom. iii: 3-4.)

The after life determines the genuineness of every conversion. Paul consulted not with flesh and blood. He did not take counsel of those who had so highly honored him, and so fully trusted him. He paused not when Jesus showed him how great things he must suffer for His name's sake. To be right in the sight of God, was now an all controlling purpose. He was a magnificent illustration of the power of an all con-

suming love. He said "the love of Christ constraineth us." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us; for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come; nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

He knew no sacrifice too dear to make for Jesus' sake; nor was he boastful of his sacrifices or of his sufferings. When the church in Corinth seemed to make more account of false apostles than of himself, he was forced to commend himself; "Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. * * Are they Hebrews? So am I. * * Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. * * Are they ministers of Christ? I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by my own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weari-

ness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides these things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches"; and, in another place he says, "None of these things move me." Clothe, if you can, this mere skeleton of suffering! How many pages of a modern daily paper would be covered by the details of even one of the events here enumerated? What great head-lines! Five times forty stripes save one! A night and a day in the deep! Hunger and thirst! Cold and nakedness! Reporters would have found Paul too busy to be interviewed, and withal too little concerned about these light afflictions to go much into detail. The full details of his experience, in all the perils of a single verse, would have filled many columns. He called himself foolish for speaking of them at all. In another place in the same letter he says, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal; for we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

True religion looks Godward, manward, selfward. Paul loved God with all his heart and mind and soul. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be

loved of my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." In his darkest hours Jesus stood by Paul and said, "Be of good cheer." "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace." Once he was caught away to the third heaven, and he heard unspeakable words.

He was a true philanthropist. "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise." "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." "I could wish that myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh." How like Christ who took on himself the iniquity of us all! How like Christ who drank the bitter cup of separation from his Father? "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Forsaken! that guilty man might be redeemed. Paul was a servant of God and a servant of man. His was an unselfish love. He was self forgetful even "in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings." Trials hard enough to break the stoutest heart, and yet, amid them all, his words are notes of joy. "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say Rejoice." "Bless them which persecute you, bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep." "Rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." "And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by

the Holy Spirit which is given unto us." Nor was he forgetful of personal religion. "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse that I may win Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. * * I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. iii.) "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away." (I Cor. ix: 26-27.) And this cost him a struggle: "I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not; for the good that I would, I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do." This is the experience of every disciple. Paul's inspiration qualified him to speak and write with authority; but his struggles against the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, were the struggles common to men.

How grandly he succeeded in all this the sequel shows. His last words illustrate the man, and tell of his triumphant hope. Nero had signed his death war-

rant. Paul was in prison awaiting execution. He said to Timothy, his son in the gospel, "I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds, but the word of God is not bound; therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." "The things which thou hast heard of me, by many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." "I charge thee, therefore, before God and and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom, preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine." How like his Savior, who, on the cross, prayed for the lost; and, just before his entrance into glory, commissioned his apostles to carry the news of salvation to all the nations. There is but one feeble hint of personal need in this, his last writing. "Bring with thee the cloak that I left at Troas. Do thy diligence to come before winter." Is he in a cold, damp cell? At his first trial no one stood with him—all men forsook him. Is there no one at Rome with courage to minister to his comfort? Has he given up all for Christ? Besides, he seems to cry for the fellowship of brave spirits, for the time of his departure is at hand. Only a departure. He had said to his brethren in Philippi: "To live is Christ, to die is gain. * * I am in a strait betwixt two, having a

desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Now he realizes that his mission is ended. Death to him was but the gateway to life—the grave, the vestibule where he would put on robes of immortality. Reviewing his life, he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith"; and, looking forward in hope, he said, "Hence forth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that day"; and, unselfish to the end, he added, "and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Where Paul was last tried, and why he was condemned, is not known. It was enough, so far as Nero was concerned, that he was a Christian. At length Nero set the day for his execution. He was led, by a small troop of soldiers, through the city gate, and out upon the road to Ostia, the port of Rome. Little did they know that they were marching in a procession more triumphal than any that had ever followed in the train of kings or conquerors. The prisoner of this procession was the battle scarred hero of the greatest battles of history; and now he was going to his crown. To the soldiers he was marching on to death. Paul knew that he was marching to eternal life in the city of God.

It was midsummer, under an Italian sky. All nature was in her best attire. The smiling flowers, the singing birds, the whispering zephyrs—all told of the goodness of their Maker. The busy throng of mer-

chants, traders, sailors, travelers, slaves, and peasants gave only passing notice to the executioner, the martyr, and a few weeping friends. Only another victim of Nero's cruelty! Only another Christian who could not surrender hope in Christ! The place of execution was not far distant. There Paul prayed fervently; not for himself, I trow, but for the churches which had been the care and burden of his heart for so many years. For himself, he thanked the Good Father that he was permitted to die for him who "gave his life a ransom for sin." Then,

> "Like one who draws the drapery of his couch
> About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams,"

he gave his neck to the headsman's sword. One stroke—the heart that loved as Christ loved, was pulseless; the hand that wrote Living Oracles, was still; the tongue that preached the gospel with mighty power, was silent; the feeble body that was the home of a mighty soul, was cold in death. The soul was "absent from the body and present with the Lord."

And when the Lord shall come again to quicken the dead, and transform the living, Paul may strike the key-note of the grand anthem: "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." And when Jesus comes to put the crown upon his brow, he will say, "Not for me only, but for all those who have loved thine appearing."

# UNDER THE JUNIPER TREE.

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Preached at Elyria, O., August 13, 1899.

(STENOGRAPIIICALLY REPORTED).

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"Elijah himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a juniper tree, and requested for himself that he might die. * * *

"And he came thither unto a cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and He said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? "—I KINGS, xix: 1-9.

THE Old Testament history is full of human character. Indeed, it may be called an encyclopedia of human character; very much of it good, and held up in the New Testament as worthy of our imitation; very much of it bad, and finds its record here to illustrate the deep depravity of sin, and the nature of God's dealings with it. Many of these ancient worthies were distinguished for some special virtue: Abraham for his faith, Moses for his meekness, Job for his patience, Daniel for his courage, David for his devotion. And yet not one of these was perfect in the thing for which he was most distinguished. It was for lack of that meekness for which Moses was distinguished, that he lost admission into the land of Canaan. Abraham's faith was not always unwavering, and we know what a fearful fall David had. In fact, there is but one perfect character in ail this Book,—the character of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; distinguished for no one virtue more than for

another, and perfect in all, so that they who have followed him most intimately can say no more than Paul said, "Follow me, as I follow Christ."

I think you will agree with me that Elijah was no exception to this rule. Distinguished as he was for courage, here his courage has weakened. That we may understand this better, let us go back a little in this history.

It is said of Ahab, that he was the wickedest of all the kings of Israel; that he did more to provoke the Lord God to anger than all the kings before him. Much of this might be chargeable to Jezebel, his heathen queen, who brought all her heathen corruptions into the royal court. It was in the presence of this wicked king and queen, that Elijah makes his first appearance in history. He stands unabashed in this royal presence, a messenger from God, and says, "As the Lord God liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." It was the announcement of the judgment of the Lord. There was no time for discussion. There will be no time for discussion when the last great judgment comes. Elijah went out from the presence of the king.

He was a man of faith. The Lord told him to go dwell by the brook Cherith. "I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there," and sure enough, the ravens supplied his needs. And when the brook went dry, the Lord said, "Go up to Zarephath: behold I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." Not many would have cared to look to a

widow woman for support in an emergency like this; specially if they found her cooking her last meal, as Elijah did, when he got there. But sure enough, the 'barrel of meal and the cruse of oil gave not out during all those fearful years.

After three years he appeared again, quite as suddenly as before, to find Ahab no better. He charged all these calamities to Elijah, the prophet of the Lord. I question very much whether chastisements like this make wicked people better. It may serve to burn the dross out of the silver of good people's lives; but Ahab was hardened against God, charging all these calamities to His prophets. Then Elijah made them this proposition: "You have four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and four hundred prophets of the groves. I alone remain of the prophets of God. Gather Israel and the prophets of Baal to Carmel. Let them build an altar to Baal, and put on wood and sacrifice and no fire under; and I will build an altar to my God, and put on wood and sacrifice and no fire under. Let them pray unto their gods, and I will pray unto Jehovah, and the god that answers by fire, let him be God." And all the people said, "It is well spoken." They assembled. The prophets of Baal builded their altar, and put on the wood and sacrifice, and began praying early in the morning, and on and on until noon, when Elijah mocked them: "Cry aloud. He is a god. Perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened. Perhaps he is talking or pursuing a journey, and needs to have his attention arrested. Cry aloud." And they cried

aloud, and afflicted themselves with knives, and prayed and agonized until the time of the evening sacrifice; but there was no answer from Baal.

Then Elijah said to the people, "Come near unto me." He was not afraid of scrutinizing eyes. I heard a man once say that the greatest difficulty Spiritists have to contend with is the gaze of human eyes—eyes that will look; therefore they do all the marvelous things with the lights turned down or turned out. Elijah was not afraid of scrutinizing eyes. They saw him build the altar, and put on the wood and sacrifice. They saw him dig a trench about it. They saw twelve barrels of water poured upon the altar and the wood, and filling the trench round about. Then, with a prayer that was not loud nor long, but the prayer of faith, he prays: "Lord God of Abraham,. Isaac, and Israel, let it be known that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again." And, in answer to this brief prayer, the fire fell, and consumed the sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench, and made such an impression that the people fell upon their faces, exclaiming, "The Lord, he is God! The Lord, he is God!"

Elijah was encouraged to believe that the people were turning back to the Covenant; and, backed by a public sentiment like this, he executed the law of Moses against these impostors, by taking oil their

heads; and then went on the mountain top to pray for rain. When he saw the rain coming, he girded himself, and danced with delight, in the lead of Ahab's chariot, all the way to the palace gate—the happiest day of his life, next to that when the chariots of God came to take him home.

But unfortunately Jezebel had not been at that meeting; and when Ahab told her how Elijah had put to death her pet prophets, she swore by all her gods that he should suffer the same fate by about the same time the next day. And then Elijah's courage oozed out. "What is the use? The power behind the throne is yet unconquered. The people are enslaved to the king, and the king to a heathen queen. I might as well flee for my life." And he fled for his life and came and sat down under a juniper tree, and prayed God that he might die. "Take away my life, O Lord, for I am not better than my fathers."

An angel gave him food that strengthened him for that long journey to Horeb. Perhaps he thought he might get nearer to God here where Moses met God, and talked with Him face to face. He came to a cave, and lodged there, and the Lord came to him with a rebuking question: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" His answer shows how completely he was discouraged. "I have been very jealous of the Lord God of hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away." The Lord said, "Go, stand out on the verge of the mountain."

He proposed to teach him a few lessons by symbolism. Then there came a great and strong wind, that rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks, then an earthquake that shook the mountain to the very heart, and then an all-consuming fire. But the Lord was not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire. And then came the still, small voice with which Elijah, as the prophet of God, was familiar; and he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave, to hear the question repeated, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" and he answered as before.

God has very little use for a discouraged man. He says to him, "Go back. I have a little more work that you may do. You may anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. I have some use for Hazael. You think Ahab is a very bad man, and *so* he is, but you may anoint Jehu to be king in his stead. I can use Jehu for my purposes. You think you alone remain of the prophets of God, but you will have a successor. You may anoint Elisha to be prophet in thy room." And, to encourage the man, as this seems to have been his last work, ho said to him, "There are yet seven thousand in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal, and whose lips have not kissed him." A little while afterward the chariots of God came for him, to bear him away to his final rest.

There are some practical lessons in this history.

*First*—May it not be that Elijah emphasized too largely the power of miracle to reform people? There arc those to-day who think the church has lost

its power, because it is no longer a miracle-working church. And there are those who say it is not a miracle-working church, because it has lost the miracle-working faith; and that it will never have the one without the other. That puts the church in the predicament of the man who went down to the river, and his friend told him that he could not cross without the boat, and he could not get the boat unless he crossed over.

It seems to me there is somewhere a mistake in this view of the mission of miracles. Elijah gives the best description of the purpose of a miracle in this prayer: "Lord God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word." There is no revelation without the accompanying miracle. Revelation and miracle must stand or fall together. And that is the reason why infidelity has always tried to get rid of miracles. Moses wrought miracles to convince the people of Egypt that he was God's messenger, and that his message was God's message. Christ wrought miracles in confirmation of the extraordinary claim that he was the Son of God, and then left the divine truth to make men free. The apostles wrought miracles in confirmation of the extraordinary claim that they were Christ's embassadors. They spake for Christ, God confirmed the word with miracles, but men were to hear the gospel, believe the gospel, and obey the gospel, in order to salvation. This is the place the miracle fills in the divine economy; and

when it has accomplished its purpose, in the very nature of things, it ceases to be. Miracles have been wrought to convince the mind, but never directly to change the moral nature of men.

Suppose a missionary should go down into the heart of Africa, and have power, like Elijah, to call fire down from heaven; and that all the people should fall on their knees, and recognize the God of the missionary as the true God. And suppose the missionary makes up his mind that these people are regenerated, and that he will return with a report of what God hath wrought, and ask for a commission to another field. What do you suppose the Missionary Board would say to him? They would say "Go back there, my friend. Your work is only begun. These people have learned one thing only, and that not fully, *i. e.* that your God is the true God. Go back with the Word of God,—'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished into all good works.' These people are yet debased. They are just as licentious, and would steal the buttons off your coat as quick as when you first visited them. Take this Word which is 'quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow,' and give them line upon line, and precept upon precept, until they know and feel its regenerating and uplifting power and enter upon the work God wants them to do." Dream of miracles as you please; they have had their place; and, when the

occasion arises, God may empower messengers to work miracles again,—but you will not get rid of the blessed privilege of making the offerings that will sustain the missionaries of the cross while they give the Word of Life to a perishing world.

*Second*—May it not be that Elijah emphasized too much the power of violence to reform men? They had passed through a terrible ordeal three and a half years. God's hand had been heavy upon them, and Elijah had taken away from their leadership four hundred wicked prophets. Possibly he thought that the way was then clear for reform. How often have we felt that, if in some way we could destroy wicked leaders, or overthrow by violence, if need be, the bad businesses of the world, and their bad promoters, the conversion of the world would be easier. Until Peter was fully converted, he seemed to think he could help his leader by using the sword; but Jesus said unto him, "Put up the sword. Those who use the sword perish by it." Jesus Christ taught the Church, by the parable of the tares, not to use violence in the overthrow of evil men. The world is to be conquered by love, and not by hate. The church that undertakes to overthrow the enemies of the cross by persecution, does that which destroys the religion of Christ. Not by the winds that break the great rocks, not by the earthquake that shakes mountains to the centre, not by the all-consuming fire of war and persecution, but by the still small voice of God's love and God's truth must this world be made better.

I think it was Detocqueville who was sent here

from France many years ago to inquire and report as to the genius of American prosperity. If you will get an old report, you will find in substance words like these: "You sent me to America. I went. I visited their halls of legislation, and was delighted with the wisdom with which they enacted law. I visited their halls of judicature, and was pleased with the justice with which they enforced law. I went into their marts of trade, and was surprised at the magnitude of their enterprises. I went into the domestic circle, and was pleased with the joy that seemed everywhere to prevail. But I never learned the secret of American prosperity until I went into their churches, and there, where I saw the people, without respect of caste, or class, or condition in life, listening to the word of God; there, where I saw the children gathered under faithful teachers, teaching this word of God, the light to their feet and a lamp to their path, then said I, 'This is the secret spring of American prosperity. This tells, more than anything else, why America is free, and why France is a slave.'"

These words are worth pondering. A man or woman who teaches a Sunday-school class is a mightier factor for the world's civilization than the man who leads regiments of soldiers. The money you put into church-building is a mightier factor in the hand of God than the money you put into your court-houses, and your stately capitol buildings. That which this world is crying for is the Word of Life; the word of power; the word of love, that enlightens the mind, quickens the conscience, moves the will, and sets the soul on

fire for God and for humanity. Nothing can take its place. God, by His providence, may use armies, and may over-rule the wrath of man to his own praise; He may use the wonderful enterprises of commerce, and the fruits of inventive genius, to pave the way for the all-conquering King. But the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit; the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation.

*Third*—Elijah is also an illustration of the discouraged man. I do not think any of us would have done better; but I think we ought to fortify ourselves against discouragement. There is a three-fold faith that will do this. We must believe in possibilities— that something can be done; we must believe in the power of God's truth; we must believe in God, who is over all. We sometimes say the Acts of the Apostles was written to illustrate the way into the Kingdom of God; that it is the apostolic commentary upon the Commission, which is very true. But the Acts of the Apostles illustrates another thing very faithfully: The power of God's Word to teach and develop possibilities in human life. Three thousand people reached in a day! Five thousand shortly afterwards! Triumphing in Samaria! Triumphing in Rome! Triumphing in Corinth! Coming on down three hundred years after this New Testament history, we find the Christian religion has supplanted the hoary religions of all the years past. This shows the power of the Gospel on the one side, and the possibilities wrapped up in human nature on the other.

If you do not care to study the Acts of the Apostles

from that standpoint, study the history of the Fiji Islands. Not much more than sixty years ago, the Fiji Islanders were barbarians, cannibals at that. The captain of the vessel that bore the missionaries was afraid to land. These men found their way into the hearts of these savages. They learned the language of the people. They put the story of the cross into that language, and into the minds and hearts of these barbarians. One after another of the missionaries came home, or died, and others took their places, and a little more than sixty years have rolled around, and they tell us that in these islands there is the largest percentage of church membership in the world; that there are more family altars than among a similar number of people even in America, and that they contribute more for the support of foreign missions than very many people who profess to be christianized in this country. Possibly missionaries will yet have to come to America from the Fiji Islands to teach us how to do a royal thing for God. And this in the lifetime of living men.

Perhaps you do not care to study such history as this. Study then your own history. You do not need to go back so very far, as God counts time. Your great-great-grandfather (put about forty greats to it) was a heathen,—poor, miserable heathen. I know this is not very complimentary; but it is better than Darwin has it after all. Your ancestor was a heathen. Somebody brought him the Gospel, and made him better. Then his children were made better, and his grandchildren still better, and on and on down through

fifteen hundred years, here we are to-day, supposed to be the highest type of civilization in the world; and not half civilized yet, if you take into consideration all that Jesus Christ wants us to be. But all that is grand and glorious and beautiful in us is the fruitage of Gospel ministries; and if for no other reason than from a sense of gratitude, we Americans ought to be, as I believe we are, the best missionary people in the world.

The power of the Gospel and the possibilities wrapped up in the human heart are illustrated in this history. And then we need to believe in Christ, who says, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world,"—the ever-present Christ,—to make "all things work together for good" for His people, and all things work together for good for His cause, and to hasten the time when the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea. Faith in man, and the possibilities wrapped up in man; faith in the Gospel to reach and develop these possibilities; faith in the all-controlling presence and power of God and Jesus Christ his Son—this is the faith that giveth courage and victory.

*Fourth.*—Then I think Elijah represents a class of people who think the world, and specially the Church, is worse than it is. There were seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal. Elijah said, "I alone remain of the prophets of Jehovah." I have sometimes wondered where those seven thousand were. Possibly, where a good many members of the Church are to-day, when we take a missionary collection. They are not present, not showing their colors, not

training with the army of the Lord. Elijah might not have fled to Horeb had these seven thousand rallied, as they ought to have done, to the standard of Jehovah.

There are those who think the world is worse than it was when they were boys. They forget we live in the time of telegraphs, telephones and daily papers. I can remember when it took us from two to three weeks to know what transpired in neighboring townships. I can remember hearing my father read a description of one of the battles of the Mexican war. We lived a hundred and twenty miles west of Chicago. I can see him now, in that summer time, reading that paper, and I can hear him say, "That came quick, didn't it?" and it was four weeks! Just think, my brother, to-day, of our calling tidings quick that came to us a month after the event! Why, we can read news from Manilla, half around the world, in next daily paper. Sometimes, when we look at the date, we might almost make up our minds that we had found out the fact before it transpired, because electricity had beaten the sun around the world. To-day these wires run everywhere, bearing the tidings from all the wide world, and the printers are putting them up with the linotype, throwing the papers at our doors before we are quite awake in the morning, and we are picking them up to read all the important events of the day before. And because we know so much more of the bad that is in the world than our grandfathers knew, they are apt to say the world is worse than it was when they were boys.

Not so, my friends. Nor is the church worse

than it was. The church statistics show a constant increase in the percentage of church membership. During the last century this percentage has more than doubled. Of the population of the earth, about two-thirds are under the rule of Christian nations, and two-thirds of these are Protestant. But some say the martyr-spirit has long ago passed away, and that the men and women who would seal their faith and devotion to Christ by their blood, are not living to-day. That is because we are not tested as they were tested. I have sometimes tried to imagine a Nero on the throne, with power to issue his verdict that the Christian world must surrender faith in Christ, or surrender life. And I see—"Oh, yes," says one, "you see gray-haired fathers and mothers, and people who have been longing to cross over, making this the occasion for the final triumph." Yes, I see these, but I see also men and women in the prime of life, engaged in all the business enterprises of the world; I see the three or four million young men and young women of the Christian Endeavor Societies, who sing all the way from Boston to San Francisco, and all the way back, a splendid object lesson, illustrating the power of Christ over young hearts; I see the thousands of little children in our Sunday Schools,—all singing with delight as they pass into the flames, and all with one voice saying, "You may take from us every precious thing of earth, yea, life itself, but we will not surrender our faith and hope in Jesus Christ."

We are not called to die as Stephen died. We

are called to live every day for Christ; and may it not bo that this is the more difficult task of the two? To live soberly, righteously, and godly, every day, amid the temptations of this present world; to love our neighbors as ourselves; to be what Christ wants us to be, so that He can use us for His work and for His glory; to keep zeal aglow with enthusiasm—this may be a richer and grander service than martyrdom. All the signs indicate a growing enthusiasm for missions. The annual offerings are increasing, the missionaries multiplying, and the Truth is leavening the nations. God's hosts are marching on, and marching on to victory.

*Fifth*—Then I think Elijah represents a class of people who get away from their post. "What dost thou *here,* Elijah?" He was not where he could serve his God best. It is common for God's servants to get away from the post at which they can serve him best. Rich men are constantly putting their money where they can't draw on it for God or humanity. Farmers buy the next farm to them, and go in debt for it, though they do not need it, and raise this as an excuse for not giving for missions. Young people are being educated in our Sunday-schools, in our High-schools, and colleges, and have become qualified for the best service as teachers in our Sunday-schools, yet God must meet them, every once in a while, with the question, "What doest thou *here?"*—because they shut themselves away from where God can use them.

*Sixth*—This lesson of personal responsibility, too, is a valuable one. If Elijah's story was true, that

he alone remained of the prophets of God, that was the best reason why he should not attempt to hide himself in the cave at Horeb. If you are the only man who does the praying and paying, that is the best reason why you should not get out of the church. God needs you right there. Once in a while, you find people discouraged, and ready to lay down their labors, because they have had so much to do. Do you remember, after the crucifixion and resurrection, how Christ met Peter with a searching question, made more searching by repetition? "Simon, lovest thou me?" He answered, "Yea, Lord." "Lovest thou me more than these?" "Yea, Lord." It takes about three times putting a question to touch the heart. "Simon, son of Jonah, lovest thou me?" The tears started to his eyes, as he answered, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." I wish we could all say that. And Jesus answered, "Feed my lambs; feed my sheep. Verily, verily, say I unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not," signifying his martyrdom.

But Jesus said,"Follow me,"—that is what you must do. And I have sometimes imagined a literal following, as Jesus walked away, and Peter went after, and looked over his shoulder and saw John. And Peter said, "What shall this man do?" What burdens will you lay on John? What ordeals will John pass? How

we measure ourselves by others, and how we sometimes excuse ourselves from bearing burdens, because somebody else may have lighter burdens to bear! But Christ said, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" If he never has a burden like yours, if he never suffers for me like you will suffer for me; what is that to thee? You must answer for yourself to God. "Follow thou me."

And that is a precious lesson for us to-day. The Lord help us to realize our individual responsibility, and be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor shall not be in vain. The Lord help each one of us to stand firmly at the post of duty, and never place ourselves where He may rebuke us with the question, "What doest thou here?"

And has not God, over and over again, come to the sinner with the same question? You, my friend of the world, are not where you can serve yourself, your neighbor and your God. God is calling you to the only post where he can best use you. "He that is not with me is against me." The Lord help you to find the place where all your talents may be consecrated to that service which will uplift men, and glorify God.

# THE WOMAN AT THE WELL.

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JOHN, iv: 1-42.

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TO be a Christian is to be like Christ; and the more like Christ, the more a Christian. If we are not more like Christ than when we began to serve him, we have not been living up to our privileges.

The Gospels are an abundant record of this model life. We ought to study these carefully and prayerfully, and with a holy ambition to be more and more like Christ, as the years go by.

I invite attention to practical lessons in this chapter from the life of Christ.

1. Jesus did not allow the weakness of the flesh, nor the poverty of his earthly surroundings, to interfere with his work.

He was hungry. His disciples had gone to the city to buy bread. He was thirsty. He asked this woman for a drink. He was weary. He sat upon the well to rest. The hot rays of a noon-day sun poured upon his head. He might have excused himself, saying, "I am too weary, too thirsty, too hungry, to do a work now. Wait till I am rested." How often we excuse ourselves, when the flesh is weak! Nor is the spirit always willing. But Jesus puts into his life what Paul put into a very beautiful exhortation, "Let us not be weary in well doing; for, in due

season, we shall reap, if we faint not." And to all human appearance, his interest in the woman's salvation, made him forgetful of thirst, and hunger, and weariness, for when his disciples came back, with a supply of food, he said, "I have meat to eat of which you know not," and they wondered how his wants had been supplied; and he said, "My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish His work." So, also, when we set out in the line of Christian duty, we forget the things of the flesh, and find meat and drink in the will of God. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

The night after the Crucifixion was the saddest night the disciples ever spent; for they had buried their dearest friend, and buried their hearts with him. They met to console each other, and make preparation to visit the tomb, and finish the embalming. I have often wondered whether any one arose in that meeting to say to the devoted sisters, "Do you not know that you undertake an impracticable thing? There is a great stone over the mouth of the sepulchre, and you can not roll it away; and it is sealed with the governor's seal, which you dare not break with impunity; and it is under guard of vigilant soldiers, who will not permit you to come nigh unto it. It is just like you to let your enthusiasm run away with your wit." I have often heard speeches like this in the church and missionary meetings. Some one rises to tell how many stones are in the way, how

many human seals to break, how many truculent soldiers to fight, how many insuperable barriers to overcome. But I presume no such speech was made. They waited for the coming dawn, and hastened away while it was yet dark, not thinking of stone, or soldier, or seal, or anything else, until they were almost there; and some one said, "Who will roll away the stone for us?" and they "looked, and behold, the stone was rolled away." The angel had been there and rolled away the stone for them, and made their access to the sacred sepulchre easier than they could have dreamed. So now, when we set out to do a royal service for God, the angels go before us to roll away the stones for us, and there comes to us a faith that cuts down the mountains, and casts them into the sea.

2. Jesus did not permit the prejudices of this woman to interfere with his mission.

This woman was a Samaritan and Jesus was a Jew. Between the Samaritan and the Jew there were no dealings. It was an enmity of long standing. The Samaritan was at best only of mongrel blood. When the Jews returned from captivity, the Samaritans asked for the privilege of sharing in the building of the temple walls; and were refused. This refusal made them very indignant, and they wrote to the King of Persia to search the records and learn that this city was once a "rebellious city and hurtful to kings," and would be dangerous to the welfare of his kingdom if suffered to be rebuilt; and so they succeeded in having an injunction served. After a while the injunction

was lifted and the temple finished. Years afterward, when they assayed to rebuild the wall, these same enemies said, "Even that which they build, if a fox run up against it, he shall even break down these stone walls." Opposition to God's truth and God's people is never consistent, sometimes saying one thing and sometimes another; not caring how the statements may conflict, as these did. First they reported that they might become a mighty people, now they say they are weak and contemptible. But the walls went up,—the Jews fighting with one hand, and building with the other; and the Samaritans were compelled to be and remain a separate and distinct people. Finding in the Law,—for they had adopted the religion of the country,—that where God recorded His name, there would He come and bless them; and that that name must be on an altar, that altar in front of a temple, and that temple on a sacred mountain, they selected Mount Gerizim as the sacred mountain on which to build their temple. It was hard by Sychar. Doubtless the woman lifted her finger to it, when she said, "Our fathers worshiped on *this* mountain; and ye say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

This made a religious difference. There was a race difference, and there had grown up a commercial difference, and a social difference,—about as wide a gap as can be made between peoples. Jesus might have said, "What is the use of talking with this woman? She is a Samaritan, and I am a Jew, and she will receive no lessons from my lips." But here, again, Jesus puts into his life what he afterward put into the Commis-

sion, when he said, "Go preach the Gospel to every creature." His message was for man as man. His missionary spirit was a philanthropy. God so loved the world—the whole world—that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever—*whosoever*, black or white, bond or free, rich or poor, young or old, Jew or Gentile,—believeth in him, should not perish but have eternal life. If your missionary spirit has not the *whosoever* in it, it is not the missionary spirit of Christ.

3. Nor did he allow the character of the woman to interfere with his mission.

She was not the best woman in Sychar, if I interpret correctly one of the verses of this story. Jesus might have said, "I can do little in this town, beginning with such a nucleus. If I can get some of the better classes, some of the elite, the lawyers and doctors and rich merchants, to join with me, I may hope to accomplish something; but what can I hope from such a beginning as this!" How we try to steady God's ark in this way! How often I have started meetings, and after touching the heart of some poor outcast, who wants to come to Christ, some brother or sister comes to me and says, "We want a good meeting, but I hope that woman won't come first." Just as if Jesus had not come to save sinners. Just as if he had not cast seven devils out of one woman. Just as if he never prayed for those who crowned him with thorns, and robed him in mockery, and nailed him to the tree. Just as if he had not forgotten his own agonies on the cross, and taught the dying thief the way of salvation.

and drew from him the prayer, "Remember me, Lord, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom," and answered his prayer with words of hope; "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." Yes, a thief—a thief that you and I would not walk with in the streets of this town! That is the spirit of Jesus, and it must be the spirit of his Church, if it ever succeeds in the work of the Lord.

You may have read the Autobiography of John B. Gough. He was once a miserable drunkard; about as near to hell as one can get this side, for he said he loved no one, and no one loved him. Indeed, he meditated suicide. He suffered from delirium tremors. He was a harness maker, and the leather clippings curled under his feet like snakes. The awl driven in one side, came out on the other a snake's head, with glittering eyes and forked tongue. No one thought he could be reformed. One night, passing up the streets of Worcester, a gentleman overtook him, laid his hand on his shoulder, and said, "Is that you, Mr. Gough?" He was greatly surprised, for nobody called him "Mister" then; and turning about he looked into the face of a comparative stranger, and saw an outstretched hand. He was surprised again, for few people were in the habit of shaking his hand. The hand took hold with a gentle grip, and he was surprised again, for the few people who shook his hand, let go coldly and suddenly. Then the stranger began to picture the sunnier days of his life, and said, "Would you not like to live them all over again, Mr. Gough?" The tears started to his eyes, and he answered "Yes sir, yes sir,

but I can't do it now, sir. These fetters are too strong, sir." But the hand held on, and the voice went on pleading, till the poor man was almost forced to promise to attend a temperance revival the next night, and sign the pledge. He went away from that interview and took another drink, so completely was he under the dominion of rum. But next morning he was quite sober, and said to himself, "I have been untrue to myself, to my wife and child, prematurely in the grave, to my good mother in far-away England, and to my God. For aught I know, no one cares for my soul now, except the man that plead with me last night. Shall I be untrue to him?" And so he kept sober that day, and went to the meeting; and with a hand that some of you may have seen hold a glass of water as steady as a pillar, when he delivered an eloquent apostrophe to it—that hand all trembling then—he signed the pledge, and stood up in his rags, and made his first temperance address, himself the best illustration of the awful ruin that rum will work. Loving arms had to be thrown around him for weary weeks, to keep him steady. But the touch of that friendly hand, and the pleading voice of one who cared for his soul, was salvation to John B. Gough, and salvation to thousands of drunkards all over the world. I mention this to encourage you not to despair of efforts to save the lost. No matter how feeble the spark of manhood, you may fan it to a flame; no matter how low the plane on which men may move, you may lift them up higher, and still higher, and yet higher, into very peership with the angels in light.

And this must be the spirit of the Church, because it is the spirit of Christ, who came to seek and to save the lost; and the more lost the more do they need his saving grace. I know some people are more valuable to the Church and the Lord's service than others; and, therefore, we should conduct our Church affairs, and preach so as to reach the so called better classes, but do not forget the poor outcast for whom Jesus died. Wherever there is a man, there is a subject of His grace; and wherever there is a soul, that soul may be burnished for the crown of his rejoicing forever.

4. Jesus did not turn away from this woman because she did not at first appreciate his teaching. He asks her for a drink, and is at once met with her Samaritan prejudices, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman?" Jesus replied, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and *who* it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of *him,* and he would have given *thee* living water." The woman said, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father, Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?" Jesus answered, "Whosoever drinketh of *this* water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that *I* shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." How that sentiment sparkles all over with divinity for us! We have found in Jesus just such a well of

blessing, for time and for eternity, and have tasted of that godliness which "hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come"; but the brightest idea this woman got from all this was, that it would be a very convenient water to have. Hence she said, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." Some of us would have turned away without hope of teaching spiritual lessons to one who moved only on a materialistic plane. But she made her mistake where we might have made ours. The value of our religion is suspended on one question, Who is Jesus? and the important word in that question is "*Who."* "If thou hadst known the gift of God, and *who* it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him," and so she would, and she would have listened differently, and interpreted differently, and would have been at his feet in a different attitude. Who is Jesus of Nazareth? is the fundamental question of the New Testament. If this woman had settled this question, and settled it right, she would have sat humbly at his feet, to learn of him, and bear his yoke. If Jesus is the *Christ,* He is the one Teacher, and Priest, and King. If he is the Son of God, He is the infallible Teacher, the unchangeable Priest, and the all-powerful King. He is God-with-us, and worthy to be honored and worshiped. No one can be a Christian who does not begin here. No one is fit to preach, who can not accept this fundamental truth.

Jesus seems to change the subject, "Go call thy husband and come hither." "I have no husband."

"Thou hast well said, I have no husband; for thou has had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband, in that saidst thou truly," and she felt herself to be standing in the presence of one who knew all her life; and she started back with astonishment, saying, "I perceive, sir, that thou art a prophet." How skillfully Jesus had brought her one step toward knowing who he was; and how quickly her mind turned toward him as a divine teacher. A prophet is one who speaks the word of God by inspiration. She wanted a disturbing question settled by a "Thus saith the Lord." Opinions never satisfy. The word of God is the end of all controversy. We are never satisfied with a conclusion drawn from a probable premise, for we can never have more in the conclusion than we have in the premise. The contention between Jew and Samaritan was whether the temple on Mount Gerizim, or the one on Mount Zion, was the place where men ought to worship. "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but you say Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship"—as if to say will you please settle this question by a "Thus saith the Lord?" Note how Jesus answered. He did not begin by saying "Woman, you must be very ignorant," or "Woman, you must be very dishonest." There are many who think all those who differ from them in religion or politics, must be either very ignorant, or very dishonest. Men may be very intelligent and very honest, and yet be mistaken. Jesus said, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father.

The true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a spirit; and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." See how He answers, and yet covers the answer all over with the glory of the better hour, so near at hand, when men would not need to go to this temple or to that to worship, but could worship God anywhere, if only they will approach Him in spirit and in truth. It would be good always to preach the Gospel in such a manner as will make men forget their narrow and bigoted prejudices. Jesus answers this woman in these words, "Ye worship, ye know not what; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews;" but her question and his answer drop out of sight, in his picture of the new and better times, so near at hand.

Religious prejudices yield slowly. Here is a woman who has accepted Jesus as a prophet, and yet, when he answers her question, she is not fully satisfied, because the answer uproots some of her cherished convictions. This is not uncommon. None of us yield, without a struggle, convictions which have been dear to vis, and have controlled our lives. I am not surprised when a man, finding one authority against him, immediately seeks another, hoping to find it on his side of the question. Indeed, these are the men who usually "prove all things," and then "hold fast to that which is good."

Without calling in question the answer of the new prophet, the woman simply replies, "I know that

Messias cometh, which is called Christ; when He is come He will tell us all things." As if to say: "I will not reject your answer, but I will wait for its confirmation by the Teacher of teachers, who is coming soon." That was the Saviour's opportunity, and he immediately replied, "I that speak unto thee am He." She believed him. There stood before her the long expected Messiah—"the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Prince of Peace, the mighty God, the everlasting Father"—the one who had been in her cradle song, and in her mother's cradle song—and in the songs of Israel. The Samaritans claimed Abraham as their father, and were governed by the law of Moses. They were familiar with that prophecy of Moses, "A prophet like unto me shall the Lord your God raise up; him shall ye hear in all things," and, like the Jews, were waiting and expecting his advent. And now here is one who says to this woman, at Jacob's well, "I am he." No wonder she is excited and enthusiastic. She forgets what she came after. She leaves her water-pot at the well, and hurries back to the village; and, forgetting all the cares of household duty, she goes to the men, and says "Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?" And she stirred up the whole town. A good way to reach the masses is to reach one soul, and fill it with enthusiasm. The citizens gathered at once to hear a message from the Christ.

Note how Jesus meets this woman, full of Samaritan prejudices, and concerned chiefly with temporal and material interests, and not at all appreciative of

spiritual truths, and leads her along, patiently and perseveringly, till she comes to accept some appreciation of the great central truth of Christ's religion; and how her soul is set on fire to bring others to the Christ who had revealed himself to her. Take courage, and be hopeful, even when your efforts to save men are not at first appreciated.

5. Jesus set a value on the small opportunity.

He had but one for an audience. Preachers are often discouraged by small audiences. Many refuse to speak, except in the crowded assembly. The orator is wonderfully helped by the reflex influence of an attentive audience; but the man who can not preach to the one, as to the thousands, has not reached Christ's high plane of preaching. Some of the most beautiful and forceful lessons of all Christ's preaching are found in this conversation with the woman at the well. Here was just one person, but that person had a soul to be saved. Besides, his apostles needed to get a vision of the philanthropy of the gospel they were afterward to preach. That Jesus should talk to this Samaritan of the things of the coming kingdom, was a valuable object lesson. Before the incident closed, Jew and Samaritan were alike soul-centered in Christ—a beautiful picture of the human brotherhood Jesus came to establish by his life and his gospel.

Jesus seemed to say, "This opportunity is here; it may never come again; it must be improved now; and, small as men may count it, I can make it glorify my Father." If there is any one thing that hinders

the work of God's people, more than another, it is this dream-life of ours, as to what we would do if we only had a large opportunity. We read of Spurgeon, and his great work, and sit down to dream of what we would do if we were only a Spurgeon; or of Peabody, giving away his millions for the public weal, and dream of what wo would do if we were only a Peabody. But we will never be either of these benefactors. The personal influence of most of us does not extend far beyond our door-yard. If we ever do any good in the world, wo must begin with the opportunities nearest at hand; and, if we complain that no great opportunities have ever come to us, it may be that the Lord has seen that we were not competent for great opportunities. In the parable of the talents, Jesus says the man gave to each of his servants "according to his several ability." God is sending us just such work as He knows we can do; and if, like the servant who buried the one talent, we neglect our opportunities, we may have even these taken from us, and given to those who have proved their ability and willingness to handle them. In fact, it is the handling of the small opportunity that fits us to handle the larger one. I have heard of a man who, when a lad, supported himself and his widowed mother selling pop-corn balls; but this fitted him to go into business on a larger, and again and again a larger scale, until he became a rich man. He would never have deserved to be a rich man if he had despised the day of popcorn balls. So if we would become rich in good works we must not despise the day of small things.

We must put the foot on the first round of the ladder of character and efficiency, and go up round by round.

"One Niagara is enough for a continent"; we need thousands of little streams to meander through our fields and meadows, to make them fruitful. So a few Luthers, and Wesleys, and Campbells, and Gladstones, is all the world needs. We need thousands of smaller minds and hands for the great work of the Lord. We need the personal worker in our churches, who can talk with the woman at the well, the woman in the parlor, the woman in the kitchen; with the man in the field, in the work-shop, in the store, in the office, and bring home to the one person, the great need of salvation. Hand picked fruit is always best, and keeps the longest. A church made up of such workers sows the seed for the harvest which the preacher gathers. Churches are always anxious to secure the drawing preacher. He must be logical, like Paul, eloquent, like Apollos, gentle, like John, and be able to draw, and instruct, and entertain. Such a preacher as most of our churches seek, is a rare combination of good talent; but, after all, the drawing pew is better than the drawing pulpit. What a church needs is workers—men and women who will seize every opportunity the Lord puts within their reach. Such a church will not say, "Four months, then cometh the harvest." The harvest will be ripening all the time,—one sowing and another reaping— the sower and the reaper rejoicing together. Such a church will not postpone the reaping till the coming

of the noted evangelist. At every meeting there will be the gathering of fruit unto life eternal.

Macaulay tells the story of a man who had the contract for putting in the stained windows for a great cathedral. He was much annoyed by the persistent request of his apprentice for the privilege of designing and arranging the glass, for just one window. He did not wish to discourage the young man's ambition, nor did he wish an experiment to be made with costly material. So he said to him, "If you will furnish your own material, you may try your hand on that window," pointing to one not very prominent. But what was his surprise to find him gathering up the little bits of glass that he himself had cut off and thrown away. He set to work with these, and succeeded in working out a design of rare symmetry and beauty. When the doors were thrown open, and the people came in to view the work, they stood in great groups before that window, admiring its charming excellence, until the master artist became exceedingly jealous of the rising reputation of his apprentice. So may we gather up the little bits of time, and influence, and money, and opportunity, which we generally throw away, and weave them into a life so pure and beautiful, that the angels will stand before it in admiration and praise.

# "SO."

JNO. iii: 16. ACTS xiv: i. MATT, v: 16.

I INVITE attention to three passages of Scripture in which I find this word "So."

I. "GOD SO LOVED." This is more than to say God loved. We look for some measure of love when we read, "God so loved;" and we find it in: "That He gave." Love always gives. Love is unselfishness. The great mission of Christ is to lift the world out of selfishness into love. Love *gives*—gives time, influence, money—and realizes that, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The exorcise of any passion has its reaction. If you hate any one it is worse for you than the one you hate; if you lie about any one, it is worse for you than the one you lie about. Anything that goes out from you to curse another, comes back with double cursings for yourself. So also any thing that goes out from you to bless another, comes back with double blessings for yourself. Love finds its highest joy in service; and service is but another word for giving. If we do not give we

are not like God. We may settle our standing before God, by settling whether we are givers.

But we find a still larger measure of God's love: "He so loved that He gave His only begotten Son." This was more than money. The purest love gives the dearest things. During the civil war the unselfish heart was appealed to, over and over again, for money and other offerings for the comfort and relief of the suffering soldier; but the most precious gift to the nation was the man himself who laid down his life to save the Union. Patriotic mothers gave their boys, and sent them away with a hearty God-be-with-you; but we may well raise the question whether all these mothers would have made the sacrifice, if they had known all they so sadly learned afterward. They cherished the fond hope that the dear boy would come home unharmed to the old fireside, and perhaps be received by a popular ovation. But, Alas! how many of them fell in the face of the foe or suffered a living death in cruel prisons. Not long ago, I saw a letter written by the great-hearted Lincoln, to a widow in New England, who had five boys sleeping between Washington and Richmond. It was a tender letter of condolence; and also of congratulation that she was able to make so great a sacrifice for our country. Would she have given those boys so freely if she had known all this the day they enlisted? Perhaps so. But God sent his Son into this world, knowing that he must suffer and die. Nor was all his suffering on the cross. The Man of Sorrows was in a world that could not appreciate his loving kindness. He came to his

own, and they received him not. He wept over sinful Jerusalem. His heart was full of pity, and good will toward those who despised him. How that heart must have suffered! He died of a broken heart.

We measure service by the motive back of it. There is much giving that is mere parade. Kings put thousands into banquets to gratify royal pride. Politicians spend thousands to be elected to places of honor, to gratify ambition. Look out on the lake. There is a' man swimming. He is an expert. He moves gracefully and wins applause. To the witnesses he is on parade. But look again, he is making every effort to rescue a fellow man who is clinging to a wreck. Now he has risen to a higher plane—humanity. Look again, the perishing man is his own brother—the younger brother—the baby of the old home. Now he has risen to the plane of brotherly affection, and you have forgotten all about his expertness as a swimmer. But again, you are mistaken. That is not his brother. That is his enemy. His father is also a bitter enemy, and yet he does not relax his effort to save him. He has risen now to the plane of magnanimity. Not many would do this. But this is God's love. He sent His Son to save His enemies. Jesus prayed for those who despised and rejected Him. He sought their rescue: "That whosoever believeth on Him might not perish." The world is perishing. The prophet said, "Where no vision is the people perish." Where no revelation is, men perish, physically, mentally, morally, eternally. Jesus said, "My words, they are Spirit and they are life."

In this one verse we have the soul of the gospel —God's love for man because he is man. He sets a high value on man—worth more than all the world. There is in it the picture of disinterested benevolence, the purest unselfishness, the willingness to make the greatest sacrifices for man's rescue, and man's uplift. It is a pattern for all who would rise to the highest plane of service and joy. Jesus, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, and despised the shame, and through this humiliation came to His exaltation. He suffered that we might have joy; He died that we might live; He wore a crown of thorns that we might have a crown of life. This is the old, old story that has power to save the world. It is said that the Moravian missionaries in Greenland were, for a long time, "in the habit of directing the attention of the Greenlanders to the existence and attributes of God, the fall of man, and the demands of the Divine law, hoping thus, by degrees, to prepare the minds of their hearers for the more mysterious and sublime truths of the gospel. As this plan had been tried for five years with no success, they now resolved, simply, and in the first instance, to preach Christ crucified to the benighted Greenlanders, and not only were their own souls set at peculiar liberty in speaking, but the Word went home to the hearts and consciences of the hearers, so that they trembled at their danger, and rejoiced, with joy unspeakable, in the appointment and exhibition of Christ as a Savior from the wrath to come." Paul says, "Unto them that are called, Christ, crucified, is the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

II.—SO SPAKE.

"And it came to pass in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed."—Acts xiv: 1.

It is one thing to speak and quite another to speak with convincing power; and yet another to so speak that great multitudes will believe. Paul and Barnabas were great evangelists. What was the secret of their power?

1. —They were good men. It was said of Barnabas that he was a "good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and much people was added unto the Lord."

There is a logical connection between the character of Barnabas and his great success. He was a good man. This more than being a just man. The just man says: "What is mine is mine, and what is yours is yours. You shall have yours, no less and no more, and I will have mine, no less and no more." The good man says: "You shall have yours and mine also if it be necessary to your peace and comfort." Paul says one would "scarcely die for a just man, but for a good man some would dare to die." The good man is willing to spend and be spent for the good of others. Barnabas was such a man. He sold his possessions and brought the money into the common treasury. He was full of faith—faith in man, faith in God, and faith in the power of the Gospel. The successful evangelist believes there is that in man which will respond to moral truth. We say to the pupil that

two and two are four, and confidently expect him to respond affirmatively. We come to men with moral truth in the same confidence. As we carry the cup of cold water to the thirsty man, in the fullest faith that he will thankfully receive it, so we carry the water of salvation to a thirsting world, in the fullest confidence that men everywhere will drink and live. The successful preacher has all the confidence that the word of God is as water to the famishing, and as bread to the starving. He believes the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and that it will always and everywhere make the man of God perfect in every good word and work. The thirsty man may not know whether water is made up of two parts oxygen and one part hydrogen, or two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen, nor do we deem it necessary to enlighten him. We know he needs water and we proceed to give it to him. Likewise the successful preacher "preaches the Word." He does not stop to prove that it is the Word of God, nor to discuss the nature of inspiration, nor tell what so-called critics may think of Moses and the Pentateuch. He goes on the supposition that the moral nature of man will know and recognize God's truth and joyfully respond to it. He believes in man; he believes in the power of God's word to regenerate, and uplift man; he believes in God; in the ever-present Christ who said, "I will be with you alway."

"Full of the Holy Spirit," Jesus said, "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This spake he

of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified. This gift of the Spirit was inspiration to the preachers of the cross, and a source of that confidence and earnestness which made their words all but irresistible. This Holy Spirit also helped their infirmities, and gave them a personal fruitfulness of character which added power to all their utterances. Out of these holy men flowed rivers of blessing for the people.

2.—We may reach a few learned men by a very learned sermon, and such a sermon has its value. But the learned sermon does not reach the multitudes and certainly not the "great multitudes." We therefore conclude that Paul and Barnabas set forth the truth with great simplicity. They used words which a "great multitude" could understand. In these multitudes of people there were the young and the old, the learned and the unlearned, the quick to see and the slow to see the connection between premise and conclusion. The great preacher is great because he has a great message, but greater if he makes all the people understand and appreciate his message. It is said of a celebrated preacher in London that he carried his sermons to his great audience after he had read them to his comparatively illiterate house servant, and ascertained that she understood every word and thought of his message. Paul and Barnabas must have used a similar simplicity of speech in Iconium.

3.—Their preaching was convincing. A great multitude of the Jews, and also of the Greeks believed. What is convincing preaching? I cannot think they resorted to the methods of the camp-meeting, nor to the less esteemed methods of the Salvation Army. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost convinced three thousand. The one simple proposition of that sermon was this: Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This sustained, their faith was not in vain, nor was their hope vain. The one crowning fact by which he sought to sustain this proposition was the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. And this fact he sustained by the testimony of their royal prophet David, and by the testimony of eye witnesses—the men who stood with him on that great day. He quotes David's words as unquestionable testimony, because he was a prophet of God. He quotes David in the fullest faith that the people present could not reject his testimony. The apostles stood there as living witnesses of what they saw and heard. Paul always laid great emphasis on this one central fact, as if this was the sure anchor of faith. Indeed, ever since that day the preacher who would convince men that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and the Savior of men, must set forth this fact in the clearest and most convincing language. This fact true, Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and the Apostles were His chosen embassadors. This true, the New Testament record is true. This true, the quotations from the Old Testament are from the books named, and the Old Testament facts have the

sanction of the Holy Spirit, no matter what the so-called higher critics may say or think about it. One fact is worth more than a thousand theories.

It seems to me that Paul and Barnabas used irresistible logic in their preaching. They must have aimed at fixedness of conviction, so that their converts would not be blown about by every wind of doctrine. And why should not the preacher of to-day, so preach that men will be rooted and grounded in the faith? How often men are brought to Christ by shallow methods, which leave the convert to the mercy of the plausible sophistries of infidels, or the refined skepticism of the semi-christian!

4.—Paul and Barnabas were deeply in earnest. "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel, for necessity is laid upon me," said the great apostle to the Gentiles. "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard," was the answer of Peter and John to those who commanded them to speak no more in the name of the Lord Jesus. They seem to have been controlled by an all-constraining love for, and loyalty to Christ. They felt a personal responsibility for the deliverance of Christ's Gospel to the world. Like the old prophets, they felt the "burden of the Lord." "Necessity is laid upon us." "We believe and therefore we speak." It is out of this that eloquence is born. Eloquence is from the Latin, and literally means talking out that which is within. The man whose message is the "burden of the Lord" cannot but speak, and his words will burn with earnestness

and enthusiasm, and the people will call him eloquent, even though he may murder the Queen's English.

III.—LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE. This is more than to say, "Let your light shine." Christians generally let their light shine, hut how many of us have anxiety about the "so shine that others may see our good works and glorify God." This means living for the good of others. Most people in the church are concerned chiefly with their own salvation. Lord, have mercy on me, keep me, save me. We will never rise to the right conception of discipleship until we reach the plane of unselfishness, where we lay ourselves, our wealth and our character under contribution for the salvation of others. Jesus Christ teaches in this that he expects his disciples to be "living epistles, read and known of all men." He was himself the Word of God that "became flesh and dwelt among men, full of grace and truth, and they beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." The word of God in a human life is a living gospel. Truth incarnate has power over our children, our friends, our neighbors. Character preaches. Every Christian is preaching some sort of sermon every day to those with whom he comes in contact.

You remember the song, "Let the lower lights be burning," suggested by the wreck of a vessel on Lake Erie one stormy night, because she could not make the harbor. The pilot could see the light of the light-house but no lights along the shore. These had been blown out. "What place is this?" said the captain. "This, I think, is Cleveland, sir," said the

pilot, "there is the light-house." "But what of the lights at the mouth of the river?" "Gone out, sir." "Can you make the harbor?" "We must, or perish in these angry waters." He made the attempt and the vessel went down.

There is one light that never goes out—the light of the sun of righteousness; but these lights along the shore, how many shine but dimly, and how many go out entirely! The world needs the light of the church. "Let your lights so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

The gospel, the preached gospel, the lived Gospel —these constitute the trinity of power for the world's salvation. This gospel became incarnate in Jesus Christ. The faithful preacher is an embodiment of this gospel. He has first of all put it into his own life, so that his words and works may win souls to Christ. His converts are all disciples of Christ, taking lessons from His lips and His life, and filled with a holy ambition to embody more and more, in their lives, the life of the Son of God; not more for their own sakes than for the sake of others who may, by the light of holy living, be led from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Out of such a church will flow rivers of blessing. "In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." "The wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing."

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## Matthias or Paul—Which?

T. D. WILLIS

Some time ago we had a heated argument in our Bible class over the question as to whether Matthias or Paul took the place of Judas Iscariot. Some argue that the selection of Matthias to take the place of Judas was a human arrangement and did not meet with divine approval I am not surprised to hear some men take any kind of position and argue for it, but I do not understand why a preacher of recognized ability will take a position like that. In the Acts of Apostles, chapter 1, we **have** these eleven original apostles, with their newly selected brother, Matthias, who, to my understanding, was divinely elected to take the place of Judas, who had gone to his own place as a result of betraying the Lord.

I offer the following reasons from which I reach the above conclusion:

1. He was numbered with the eleven. "And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." (Acts 1:26.)

2. He was baptized with the Holy Spirit. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they [the twelve] were all with one accord in one place. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:1-4.)

3. Peter stood up with the eleven. "But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words." (Acts 2:14.)

4. There were twelve before Paul was converted. "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables." (Acts 6:2.) "But Barnabas took him [Paul], and brought him to the apostles [the twelve], and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus." (Acts 9:27.)

5. Peter says this fulfills prophecy. "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus." (Acts 1:16.) "Let his days be few; and let another take his office." (Ps. 109:8.)

6. Matthias had the qualifications to take the place of Judas. "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." (Acts 1:21, 22.)

7. His choice was in answer to prayer. "And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen." (Acts 1:24.)

8. In casting lots. the Lord did the whole disposing. "And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering." (Lev. 16:8, 9.) "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Prov. 16:33.)

9. This fulfills a prophecy of Jesus. "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall I sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. 19:28.) (a) There were twelve thrones; (b) the regeneration began on Pentecost; (c) Christ was then on his throne (Acts 2:22-36); (d) one had to be selected before Pentecost (Acts 1:16). Therefore, Matthias was divinely elected, or the election was a form which the Spirit never corrected when he came to guide to all truth.

10. There is no evidence that Paul ever saw Christ in the flesh. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life." (1 John 1:1.)

11. The twelve apostles were twelve pillars in the foundation. "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." (Eph. 2:20.) Therefore, if Paul was one of the twelve pillars in the foundation, he was put in after the building was erected.

12. Paul never included himself with the twelve. "But the Lord said unto him [Ananias], Go thy way: for he [Paul] is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." (Acts 9:15.) "Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not); a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." (1 Tim. 2:7.) Paul was a special apostle to the Gentiles. The twelve were to judge the Jews, and in that sense were specials to the Jews. Paul could not have been one of the twelve he mentions in

1 Cor. 15:5, for he was not with them then; but Matthias was, though he had not been selected; he was, according to divine arrangement, being prepared to take the place when it became vacant. Paul surely had the qualifications for an apostle, but he did not have the qualifications to take the place of one of the twelve, for he had not been among the disciples from the "beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that he was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us of his resurrection." (Acts 1:21, 22.)

Luke, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, wrote the book of Acts years after both Matthias and Paul had been doing their work with the approval of God and Christ and the Spirit, and he never for one time even hinted at any idea other than that the selecting of Matthias made him one of the twelve, inasmuch as Luke mentions the twelve (Acts 6:2), and that before Saul's conversion.