

ADDRESSES AND MISCELLANEOUS
PAPERS ON BIBLE THEMES

BY ROBERT MCLAUGHLIN

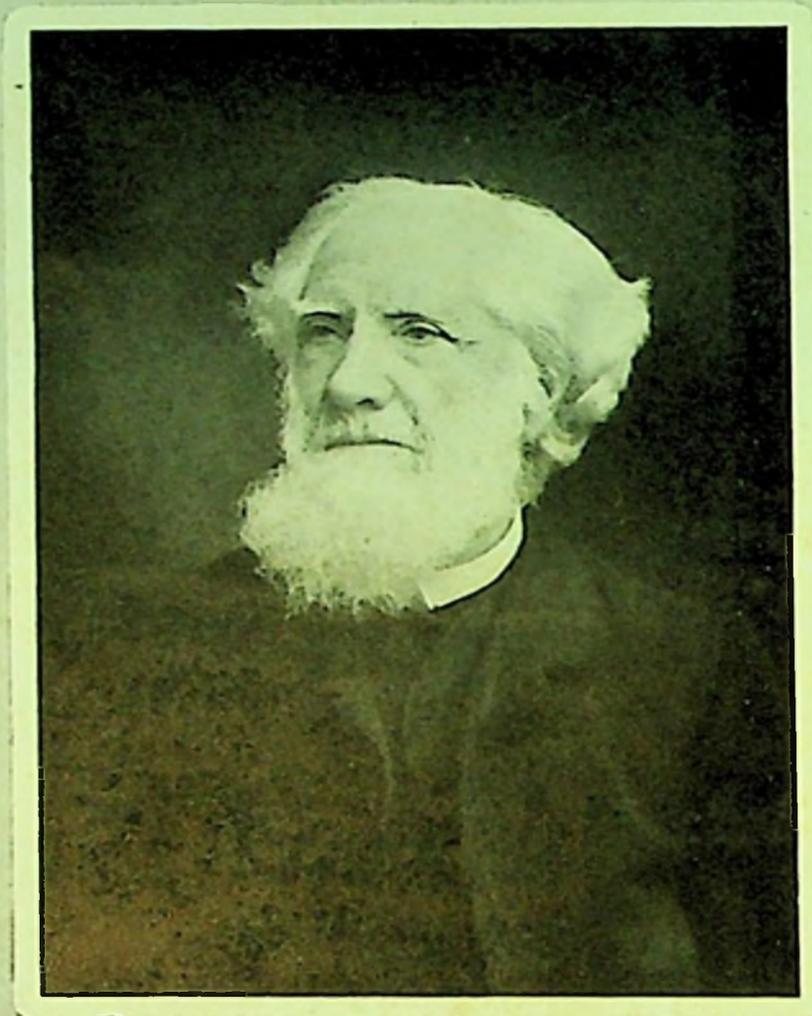
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ADDRESSES

AND

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS

ON

BIBLE THEMES.

By ROBERT M^CLAUHLAN.

CLEVELAND, OHIO.

1903.

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DEDICATION.

To the memory of those worthy men whose noble lives have witnessed for the truth amidst much opposition, in this and past ages, and to all who are earnestly seeking to know the truth, by which men are made free, purified and saved, the following pages are affectionately dedicated.

Cleveland, Ohio.

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PREFACE.

The papers comprised in this book, when first written, were not intended for publication; and the time given to their production was snatched at short intervals from a busy life, filled with many cares, and this may account in a large measure for some repetitions, and the absence of that smoothness of composition, which is characteristic of more classic productions which is very pleasing to the reader; but what is lacked in that particular, I hope is made up in the earnestness of thought and expression, as the mind of the writer was controlled by nothing so much as the desire to benefit his fellowmen, by leading them into the paths of righteousness and truth, which point to the Christ of God who came to redeem men from death and destruction, and to bestow upon them the Life Everlasting, without which our present existence is a vain show, ending in disappointment and sorrow.

If, therefore, these pages contain nothing novel in thought, arrangement or expression; I hope they may nevertheless be blessed of God in reclaiming those who have wandered far from God by giving them better principles, and more noble aims, and thus purify and elevate their minds by a knowledge of the truth, and thus lead them to their Father's house, where there is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

I trust the reader will take the pains to turn to the passages of Scripture given in these pages, which is the only authority to which we appeal; and those who will do so will be well rewarded by becoming more familiar and better acquainted with the Word of God, which is a priceless treasure in revealing to us God's nature and attributes, and His purposes of Infinite goodness toward those of our race who will seek to know Him, and become acquainted with and accept the many great and precious promises He has condescended to make in His blessed Word.

May the people of God who believe these promises, and are trusting in them, have their faith increased and strengthened, and comforted by a perusal of these pages, is the humble and earnest prayer of the Author.

R. McLAUCHLAN.

Cleveland, Ohio.

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ADDRESSES AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS ON BIBLE THEMES.

CHAPTER I.

CHURCH CONSECRATED TO THE SERVICE OF GOD.

BRETHREN, Sisters and Friends: With devout and humble gratitude to our Heavenly Father, through whose kind providence we now occupy this building, which has been set apart for His service, we may well congratulate one another on the improvement made as contrasted with our former occupation, while we *earnestly* and *ardently* hope and pray that our improved facilities for usefulness may be blessed of God for the spread of His truth, and for the inbringing and upbuilding of many, and for the glory of His holy name.

We have no wish on so joyous an occasion as the present to cloud your minds by introducing *sad* and *mournful* recollections, but while to many of you, and especially to the young members, this day is bright and joyous, it has its sad and mournful side to some of us, who cannot refrain from reminiscences of the early history of this church, and of the loved ones who participated with us, and encouraged us in our efforts to establish the one Faith and Hope of the Gospel in this city, whom we *sadly* miss, and *mourn* to-day. We can but the more fervently pray, "Come, Lord Jesus, and come quickly." Raise Thy sleeping saints, take away sin, roll back the curse, vanquish death, and triumph over every foe, and make all things new. Oh, what a prospect! May we all strive with the Apostle, so that if by *any means*, we may attain to the resurrection out from among the dead ones.

It is indeed cause for congratulation to know that this house was not built to "perpetuate spiritual *bondage*." Our mission

is not to *enslave* but to *emancipate*, and we shall not for the sake of gaining numbers, or popularity, form any alliance with human creeds, begotten of ignorance and misconception, which *for ages* have dishonored God, and fettered the human mind.

Here we propose to hold *aloft* the light of God's prophetic Word, the *brightness* of which can dispel the mists and darkness of error and delusion, as no other means can. Scripture teaching can alone give more just conceptions of the Almighty, and of His beneficent plans and purposes toward men and *nations*, than that which now prevails; without a knowledge of which we cannot render to Him the *loving* and intelligent homage of sons and daughters, who shall reflect His image, and this is the homage which He desires.

In matters of religious faith we submit to *no* human authority, no matter with what pomp and solemnity it may be surrounded; but we *reverently* bow to the divine authority of God's Word in which we have an *impregnable* bulwark which for ages has withstood the *assaults* of infidelity, and which *never can* be successfully assailed.

This is our mission, and let me ask, what more *noble* and *grand* mission can any man or any body of men, be engaged in? A little fruit will not do: "In this is my Father glorified that ye bear *much* (*a great deal* of) fruit, so shall ye be my disciples;" and now as we are to-day dedicating this house to God's service, let us *all*, INDIVIDUALLY, dedicate ourselves anew to the accomplishment of this work, remembering what our Lord has said, "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear *much* fruit, so shall ye be my disciples," feeling encouraged by the result of past efforts, let us redouble our exertions, and let us all *co-operate* and work *earnestly* and *perseveringly* to this end, knowing that the time for *any* of us to labor is short; *individually* we know not *how* short! and realizing that no great undertaking has ever been accomplished by spasmodic efforts, may we apply ourselves to the work before us in the true spirit of Christian consecration, feeling assured of the correctness of the position we occupy: The *soundness*, the *grandeur*, and *stability* of our Faith and Hope, and firmly believing that if the principles we have espoused and teach were known, and *appreciated*, as they ought to be, instead of this plain building and moderate capacity, we would require

accommodation for 10,000, and the "flag of victory would wave *triumphantly* from our turrets; but as it is, we prefer to go with the *twelve*, rather than follow the crowd, whose shout of *hosanna*, or cry of "*crucify*," is swayed by the fluctuating sentiment of popular opinion.

PREPARATION NECESSARY FOR CONSECRATION.

"Prepare to meet thy God."—Amos iv. 12.

All truths are not palatable, especially if we are out of line with the divine requirements. The history of the prophets of Israel is a sad commentary in this respect. Their words were often too incisive, the messengers were berated, and their messages disregarded, and the result was a picture of woe and desolation which remains to this day. The burning of the roll by King Jehoiakim, of the words of the Lord by the prophet Jeremiah, and the casting of the prophet into a miry dungeon, did not prevent the subsequent accomplishment of Jehovah's purposes.

The heathen may rage, and the people imagine a vain thing, yet says God, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isaiah xlv. 10. The Lord Most High is terrible. "Terrible in His doing toward the children of men." Psa. lxvi. 5. Truth and justice may be subverted for a time, but they will in the end prevail, just as certain as that Justice and Judgment are the habitation of God's throne.

The Lord is the avenger of His people. 1 Thess. iv. 6. Men are slow to learn this lesson, and hence intentionally or not set Him at defiance, but nevertheless the day of retribution is sure to come, the world is full of this; we expect to find it there, but if permitted to make inroads into the Church, what havoc it will assuredly bring! As you are hearing from week to week, we are nearing the time of the end, when declensions are to be expected, and it becomes each one of us to be on the alert lest we be caught unprepared.

There is a passage of fearful import in the Word which I am afraid has been very much overlooked, and it demands our prayerful consideration. It is calculated to make the thoughtless tremble. It is this, "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness

and not light. * * * shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?" Amos v. 18, 20. What does this mean? What can it mean? One thing, and one only. Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord, and are not prepared to meet Him. To all such it will be a day of intense darkness, a day of mourning and bitter lamentation, a day of reproach for lost opportunities, allowed to pass unimproved. Gone, irrevocably gone, never to return. What heart-searchings should such considerations cause us! Have we wounded the feelings of any humble child of God? causing pain? If we have, let us make haste to make all the amends in our power, right all wrongs, correct all errors in our life and conduct, asking forgiveness for all offences, and freely from the heart forgiving others their trespasses. When we do this and are walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless, speaking the truth every man to his neighbor, doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly before God, then we can consistently desire the coming of the day of the Lord, and it will be a day of joy and gladness, a day of sunshine without clouds to all accepted in the Beloved.

To-day is the day of preparation. When Christ left His sorrowing disciples He said, "I go to prepare a place for you." How often have we criticised the orthodox for their blindness in imagining that place to be heaven? but, alas! how seldom have we reflected that if Christ is preparing a place for us we must do our part in making ourselves ready to meet Him, for that is the idea of preparation. When Christ's disciples asked of Him, "Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?" He said, "Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples," and the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. We see from this that to prepare is to *make ready*. Christ chooses the place, but leaves it with His disciples to make ready. He is coming again, that is certain; and when He comes He will drink the wine anew with His disciples in His Father's kingdom. The important question for us to consider is, Shall we be guests on that august occasion? momentous question; everything else pales before it.

Spotless purity, and the wedding garment are indispensable to an entrance there. The unclean shall not enter there. There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. Rev. xxi. 27. We frequently desire the land where there is no sickness, pain or death; but we must ever remember that implies incorruption, and incorruption implies purity, for without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

Brethren, I wish I could impress those truths on the minds of all of you. It is important for us ever to remember that the religion of Christ is a practical religion. If we have come under its power, it will control our thoughts and actions in a way that will be manifest. Do we ask ourselves each night what has been the record of my life this day? Have I been seeking the honor and the glory of Him who laid down His life for me? Have I been seeking opportunities of doing good to all men, especially they of the household of faith?

It will not do to take an active part in the Lord's house on Sunday, and during the week give the lie to our profession; thus bringing reproach on the faith we profess, and causing the scorner exultingly to say, "Did not I see thee in the garden with him?"

Do you think if the Lord comes suddenly, as He says He will come, He will accept unworthy representatives of His? It is the meek and humble spirit that He will bless; those who are trying to lift up the fallen. O, for a realizing sense of our deep responsibility, as those who have named the name of Christ! that we may put iniquity away from us, cherish His compassionate spirit and reflect His image. The consciousness that the coming of the Lord draws nigh ought to lead us to greater circumspection of life and conduct; a closer walk with God; greater humility, more diligent study of His Word, and more reliance on His promises; more devout and earnest prayer that the spirit of Christ may become the controlling power of our life. The waywardness of some is presumptive evidence that the great duty and privilege of prayer is sadly neglected; no one can maintain a vital union with Christ, and honor His cause who neglects daily prayer to God for his guidance, and assistance, and blessing, as well as heartfelt thanks for favors bestowed. Prayer is the

breathing forth of our desires, the pouring out of our hearts, the lifting up of our souls to God, with a trust begotten of faith in His Word; and confidence in His never-failing assistance vouchsafed to His people who come humbly to Him through the one Mediator between God and man. Let us pray earnestly to God to discover unto us wherein we have gone astray in anything, to open the eyes of our understanding that we may see where we stand under His All-Seeing eye, that if we are in error or in wrong doing, He may disclose it unto us before it be too late; and that He may lead us in the paths of righteousness and truth, and in the way of His precepts. No one who has followed a life of prayer but can attest that it is not a vain thing to wait upon the Lord. The cloud of witnesses in all ages attest the same thing. I pray God that none of us may disregard their testimony.

INCREASED SPIRITUALITY NECESSARY FOR A CONSECRATED LIFE.

The Lord said unto Samuel: "The Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."—1 Sam xvi. 7.

In the journey of life we meet with many unexpected occurrences, many discouraging events which, were a person not fortified in the truth, might result, as it often does, *disastrously*, and hence the wreckage we frequently meet strewed along the voyage of life, while here and there a sunken barge is all that is left to tell the tale.

To a God-fearing man, who carries in his breast a conscience void of offence, it is very comforting to know that "God seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

This knowledge sustains him amid many of life's trials and perplexities, bears him up under adverse circumstances, and enables him to live above his surroundings, while at the same time it teaches him a lesson of humility, and shows him the folly of leaning on an arm of flesh.

At this critical juncture the question arises, What is to be done? and the answer comes back, *Spirituality*, more *spirituality!* It is conceded that spirituality is needed, nay more, that it is *indispensable* to the life of the Church, not a semblance of spir-

ituality which is only superficial, but one that goes deep down into the heart and conscience, a spirituality that will shew itself in actions that will mould and regulate the conduct, that will shew its superiority to the carnal instincts of our nature by governing and controlling the same, remembering the words of the Apostle to the Gentiles, "To be carnally-minded is death, but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace." Rom. viii. 6. However pleasing it may be to gratify the desires of the flesh now, the end of those things is death. On the contrary the incentive to spirituality is that it insures life and peace. The peace that flows from a sense of the divine favor, and life evermore in the kingdom of God to the overcomer.

As a means to promote spirituality I shall at this time consider four things, Self-Inspection, A Consciousness of Being ever under the All-Seeing Eye of Jehovah, Humility and Prayer.

It is to be feared that some have a wrong impression about the self-examination which Paul enjoins on those about to partake of the symbols of Christ's broken body and shed blood, imagining that it refers only as to whether we be in the faith. That is a great mistake, which is liable to produce very serious consequences. *That* self-inspection has to be far more searching than that, if the spirituality of the household is to be maintained, else why this alarming announcement, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Rom. i. 18.

"God is of purer eyes than to behold evil and canst not look on iniquity." Hab. i. 13. And it is never more hateful to Him than when found lurking in the heart of an erring child.

The table of the Lord is not spread for the world, and the world's table is not spread for the children of God. We cannot feast with them at their banquetings, nor shout at their festivities. If we are called-out ones, the *idea* and the *principle* of separation ought to be maintained.

When the prophet Nehemiah kept aloof from the evil ways of others, he gave his reason thus, "So did not I because of the fear of God." This was true spirituality, it was *operative*. Would that we had among us many like-minded who would show the fear of God by a greater separation from the world, and the

world's ways. The servant of God must be conscientious as to his duties and his responsibilities in all things.

This self-inspection must be done in the fear of God. Let us be severe with ourselves, but charitable towards others. This is the opposite of what is usually practiced; we can be very requiring of others, and make all manner of excuses for our own shortcomings. It well becomes those who have much to say about others to scrutinize well their own hearts, lest they be found doing the same things in an aggravated form. "With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again." Matt. vii. 2. "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy" (James ii. 13), is Heaven's published law, and it ought to make us tremble.

Are we ready to have it put into execution?

No amount of truth believed will save us if we continue in the infraction of the law of holiness. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." "Why call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Luke vi. 46. A true Christian man loves *truth* and *justice*; he must be upright before himself and before God. The Scripture rule being, "*Do justly, and to love mercy, and walk humbly.*" Micah vi. 8. False representations and false promises are an abomination in the sight of God, and if unrepented of, will exclude from the kingdom of heaven.

History is ever repeating itself, and what is the use of history if we do not learn a lesson from it.

The Jews never made a greater mistake than when they went around seeking to entrap Jesus, watching His actions, and asking Him questions, if peradventure they could find aught against Him. How much better it would have been for them to have listened to His heavenly teaching, and turned their eye inward for self-inspection.

Fanaticism is one of the greatest hindrances to spirituality; its extravagant notions brings sublime things into ridicule, and sows seeds of doubt and distrust; and is too often used as a stepping-stone to earthly ambition; a fervid zeal will never take the place of "living soberly, righteously and godly in this world." Titus ii. 12. In the service of God we ought ever to be conscientious, not formal and superficial, like the Scribes and Pharisees, and the ritualist. It matters not whether we stand, sit or kneel

when we pray or sing, if only the heart is right with God. "God seeth not as man seeth, man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

We will now consider the strengthening, purifying influence of living under the conscious conviction that the All-Seeing eye of Jehovah is ever upon us.

This thought enters into the Christian experience of all ages. The prophets of Israel and the apostles of the Lord are alike stirred by the sublime consideration of an ever-present Jehovah.

"Behold he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand." Psalm cxxi. 4.

The knowledge of God's presence and the continual conviction that His All-Seeing eye is ever upon us, is our strength against temptation, our refuge against the fear of man, our help against every adversary, it strengthens us in the hour of trial, it comforts and consoles us in affliction and sorrow.

"There is not a word in my tongue but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there, if I make my bed in sheol. behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day, the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." Psalm cxxxix. 4, 7-12.

What an aid to spirituality is the consideration of this deep and sublime subject. Let us ever remember that the Omniscient eye is ever upon us, before whose searching glance all things are naked and open and manifest." Heb. iv. 13. "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." Jere. xxiii. 24.

Young men, let these thoughts be a safeguard to your morality, raising you above fleshly impulses to the high grade of the spirituality of a Christian life. Let it ring in your ears, "If ye live after the flesh (gratifying its desires and passions), *ye shall*

die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

Young woman, meditate on these things, it will increase your purity, and make you invulnerable against the wiles of the adversary. "The fear of the Lord is clean." Psalm xix. 9. An expression denoting its power to keep every one clean who lives under its influence. The fear of God will keep evil thoughts out of your mind, and an abiding sense of God's presence, and an All-Seeing eye will make temptation less severe, and trials lighter to bear. Let me ask, Are we thoroughly conscientious in all that we do? doing all with an eye single to God's glory? If we are we will never misrepresent in word or deed, but will have an earnest desire for God's approbation in everything we do, and every word we speak, and what a regulator it would become. All envy, and malice, and evil-speaking would forever cease.

And now we come to consider *humility* as a means toward spirituality. Where pride and arrogance exist spirituality cannot come.

Christ ever taught His disciples to be humble-minded, and frequently chided them when they showed a desire to rule or to usurp authority over on another, and He gave them the brightest example of what He taught in His own life and character. Of His doctrine He said, "I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and and what I should speak." John xii. 49.

When a certain man asked Him to speak to his brother to divide the inheritance with him, He replied, "Man who made me a judge or a decider over you." Luke xiii. 14. On the night of His betrayal, He set them an example of humility by washing His disciples' feet, but some of His fanatical followers instead of catching the spirit of the lesson, made a ceremony out of it. Dull pupils indeed. A desire to be lordly is an unmistakable evidence of a very undeveloped condition of Christian attainment.

If ever there was a time for heart searching, that time is now. Have we *clean* hands and *pure* hearts under the searching light of the All-Seeing eye? If not, none other will ascend into the hill of the Lord. Psalm xxiv. 4.

When Ahab and Hezekiah were brought to see their true condition before God, it is recorded of them that they walked

softly. 1 Kings xxi. 27; Isa. xxxviii. 15, and when humility takes the place of arrogance we will walk softly before God, and before each other. If moral blindness has taken hold of us may our eyes be opened, and our consciences quickened into new life.

Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." John vi. 63. What were those words? Words of great tenderness. When He saw the multitudes He had compassion on them." Matt. ix. 36, and He taught His disciples, by parable, that they also ought to have compassion on their "*fellow-servant,*" and signified His displeasure of the exacting creditor, and told the fate decreed him, and finished by saying, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Matt. xviii. 33-35.

Solemn lesson this, brethren; shall we lay it to heart?

I have not yet spoken of prayer as a means to greater spirituality, but as I have so often spoken to you on the subject of prayer—it is not necessary that I take up your time now. I will only say that a prayerless church is a dead church. God will not honor it to do His work.

May the few remarks that I have made awaken a spirit of serious reflection, is my earnest prayer. Afflicted and oppressed souls in the congregation, amid your trials be consoled with the thought, The Lord knows it all. The present may appear dark and dreary, but trust in God and He will sustain you. "He seeth not as man seeth, man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." The Judge of all the earth will soon be here. "Be patient. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

JOHN THE BAPTIST A SAMPLE OF A CONSECRATED LIFE.

The public life of John the Baptist was very short, but it is intensely interesting and profitable as a study. There are many aspects in which we can look at John, but from whatever standpoint we view him, his life challenges attention, and commands our admiration.

In Matthew's Gospel he is abruptly introduced to us as a stern reformer, bold in his proclamation, and uncompromising in his demands. His proclamation is short, but pointed and direct.

Repent ye, not somebody else, remote and indefinite, repent; but repent *ye*, you whom I am now addressing, *you*, the *Jewish nation*, and then he assigns the reason; the *grounds* on which he demands their repentance. "For the kingdom of heaven is at hand." That kingdom of old foretold. The theme of all God's prophets to Israel, that kingdom is at hand, and your lives and conduct ill comport with Heaven's requirements of those who would seek to enter in. His manner and mode of life were in keeping with the stern work He had to accomplish. The record tells us, "The same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leather girdle about his loins, and his meat was locusts and wild honey." Frugal fare, but then, "simplicity becomes the great," and John was great. If we want proof of his greatness let us listen to Jesus' words, "I say unto you among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist." Luke vii. 28. It is true, he would not meet the requirements of modern times. There was no policy about him. He would have been an utter failure in finesse, but as a servant of God to do a certain work, he stands along side of Elijah the prophet. Viewing him from a human stand-point, his language to the Pharisees and Sadducees, when he saw them coming to his baptism, might seem unnecessarily severe, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" The worldly-wise would immediately suggest imprudence. They were coming to his baptism, and what more should he want? Why, nothing more if he wanted to make a favorable mention of numbers in his report of conversions, but John knew from the past character of those men that they needed great plainness of speech, and that an outward show of repentance would not avail them anything, and he was determined to do his whole duty; he would not connive with any sham work, or pretense on the part of those coming to him for baptism, and so he plainly demands of them, "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance." Mere outward professions will not do. "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father, for I say unto you God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham; and now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees, therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire."

I have no doubt this speech of John's produced a halt in their march to him for baptism, for we read elsewhere that, "The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." Luke vii. 30. This was too plain speech for them, they could not stand it. Oh, no, that was sufficient to make them turn back, and more than likely on the part of some, John would get the blame of it. The sanguine, the superficial, and the unduly sensitive would naturally say, "I wish John were less abrupt, but for his imprudent speech on that occasion we might have had Rabbi So and so with us, but that just made him turn back." Poor human nature is ever ready to misinterpret God's servants, and advise worldly policy.

John, however, saw with keen prophetic vision what afterwards actually transpired, for the Jews subsequently used these very words to Jesus, "We be Abraham's seed and were never in bondage to any man." John viii. 33. That was the saddest feature in the condition of that misguided people. While in a state of blindness they said, "We see," and while in religious and political vassalage they stoutly affirmed they were never in bondage to any man. Christ came to bestow eternal life, but like the men of our day, they did not feel their need of it. He came to bestow the true riches, but they said, "We are rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing."

There is another characteristic of John which impresses us very strongly, and it may be profitable to view him in that aspect for a little and that is his humility. There was a time in his life when he swayed the multitude, this is shown by the vast concourse that came to his baptism. "There went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Matt. iii. 5. Even the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders realized the high esteem the people had of John, for when asked by Christ about the baptism of John, "Was it from heaven or of men?" they reasoned with themselves, saying, "If we shall say of men, all the people will stone us, for they be persuaded that John was a prophet." Luke xx. 6. The extent of his popularity may be best illustrated by referring to the message sent to him, inquiring whether he were the Christ. So great an influence had he over the minds of the people they were evidently impressed with the

idea that he *must* be the Messiah. "Who else can he be?" seems to have been the public sentiment. No prophet in Israel from the days of Moses had awakened such a wide-spread enthusiasm. Now imagine how a worldly-minded man might have taken advantage of this state of feeling in the public mind to advance his own aggrandizement and reasoned with himself, Now is my opportunity, a kind of high tide in the affairs of men, which I must not let go; but no such base feelings appear to have entered John's mind. He faltered not in his fidelity to Christ; his testimony was pointed and emphatic, "I am not the Christ." He had too clear an insight into the glories of the heavenly kingdom to be captivated by earthly honors, "and as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ or not, John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water, but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose, He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." Luke iii. 15, 16. "Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him."... "He must increase, but I must decrease." I have not deceived you in this matter. Now is the zenith of my mortal life, I want to hide myself behind the lustre of Him whose majesty I came to announce; look not at me, but at the One coming after me, His glory must increase, mine must decrease.

What a reproof to the presumptuous, self-seeking men of all ages! "He that cometh from above is above all." John iii. 31. There is something grand and ennobling in the record of John, whether we consider the simplicity of his habits, his humility, and pronounced abnegation, or his stern and uncompromising reproof of iniquity in every form, from Herod the king on his throne, to the humble soldier, or the Publican at the receipt of custom, each one is plainly told his duty. Like his Master, of whom he was the forerunner, he spake as one having authority. In dealing with evil, to use his own apt illustration, "The axe was laid to the root of the tree," no lopping off of branches, or half-way measures, or pandering to the prejudices of any, and at the same time wholly unconscious of himself, he seemed oblivious to his own personality. He estimated himself as only a voice, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness." I think Paul must

have been deeply impressed by John's character, and copied after him, when he said, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." 2 Cor. iv. 5. What a renouncing of self is here! But let us turn to John's record once more. "And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who art thou?' and he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, 'I am not the Christ.' And they asked him, What then? art thou Elijah? and he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, 'Who art thou?' that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. . . . And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then if thou be not that Christ, nor Elijah, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, 'I baptize with water, but there standeth One among you whom ye know not. He it is who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.' " John i. 19--27. Ah, there was where John got his inspiration and his power: *He knew Jesus*. If we would instruct our fellowmen, we must draw our inspiration, and our power, from the same source. We must *know* Jesus, and understand His doctrine. This the Jews did not. "There standeth One among you whom ye know not," said John. How very like Christ's own words, "The kingdom of heaven is among you," is in your midst. Here was the locality, here the people, and here the King, but they said, "We will not have this man to reign over us."

The Orthodox Church could not more plainly show that they are in the same condition of not recognizing Jesus than when they claim that the kingdom of heaven is in their hearts. Poor things; they know not what they say. "There standeth One among you whom ye know not." And so with the men of the present generation. They know not the power of His Word. Through the traditions of men which they have received, it has lost, on them, its quickening, enlightening power. Made void through the traditions of men. They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him. They do not believe His promises. They lack faith in the Gospel message. They despise

the adopting ordinance, and understand not the law of pardon, and the solemn question arises, What is our duty toward them? Clearly not to deceive them. Shall we hide, or diminish the truth lest we should, for the time being, destroy their comfort, by making them apprehensive? To awaken in them an apprehension of danger would be the very acme of charity (love) even as Peter and his fellow-believers on the day of Pentecost *aroused* their Jewish audience till in the extremity of their mental agony they exclaimed, "Men and brethren what *shall* we do?" or like the Jailer at Philippi, "What *must* I do to be saved?" I would rather be the means of awakening one soul by earnest pointed presentation of the truth, and showing him the light of life, than have the commendation of ten thousand worldlings as being a man of suavity. If death ends all, then John had a poor return for his labors, he had better have been less abrupt to the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and said nothing to Herod about Philip's wife; in that way he might have escaped the dreary dungeon, and the block of the executioner; but death does not end all, and John nobly fulfilled his mission, and his life is worthy of our closest study. Shall we follow John's example in requiring fruit meet for repentance, or shall we incur the displeasure of the God who through the Prophet Jeremiah reproved the Priests and the Prophets with dealing falsely, having healed *slightly* the hurt of the daughter of my people, saying peace, peace, when there is no peace?" Jer. vi. 14. The question is a solemn one, and must not be answered by our feelings or predilections, but by an honest and impartial study of the Word of God, given for our guidance and direction, at all times and under all circumstances.

I have thus attempted, although very imperfectly, to glance at the life of John the Immerser, in the belief that it is calculated to inspire us with a desire to be plain and pointed in our presentation of the Truth to our fellow-men, while at the same time, we imitate John in his spirit of humility, forgetting ourselves, renouncing all considerations of self, and actuated alone by an intense desire to exhibit Christ to their view, His teachings, His doctrines, and His requirements, that have been so long hidden under a cloud of mysticism, while the majority of our fellow-men are disheartened, and discouraged from investi-

gating, under the false impression that the Bible can be made to teach anything, and so it can when distorted by human ingenuity, and taken in a disconnected, disjointed manner, but this handling of the Word of God deceitfully will bring on those who practice it the just judgment of a righteous God.

If God has graciously condescended to stoop down to us with a revelation of His mind and will, with what holy reverence should we study His communications, spoken unto us by Prophets of old, among whom there has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist. His striking resemblance to Elijah the Prophet, in his life, his character, his work, and personal appearance (2 Kings i. 8), evidently led to the inquiry, "Art thou Elijah?" Think of Elijah standing before Ahab, king of Israel and replying, "I have not troubled Israel but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim" (1 Kings xviii. 18), and you see the same *strong, resolute, dauntless* spirit, that characterized John, and in all probability it was on that account that Jesus said in answer to the inquiry of His disciples, "Elijah truly shall first come and restore all things, but I say unto you that Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed, likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them." Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist. Matt xvii. 11-13. John the Baptist, we all know, was not the veritable Elijah, for he was the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth, but the angel Gabriel who foretold his birth, said, "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God, and he shall go before him in the *Spirit* and *power* of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke i. 16. 17.

This analogy between John and Elijah, is important, not only on its own account, but on account of the light it throws on other portions of Scripture, to which we cannot refer at present.

One more item and I have done; some have imagined that because John, after he was cast into prison, sent his disciples to inquire of Christ, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" that therefore he had begun to waver in

his confidence, but such a supposition does John great injustice: The circumstances of the case preclude such a possibility. In the first place, it is at utter variance with John's character, and wholly irreconcilable with what Christ said of John, on that occasion, and shows very plainly that John's object in sending his disciples was to confirm THEIR faith, and not his own. Quite likely they were becoming discouraged because their master was shut up in prison. John himself was not of the wavering kind. The man who had reprov'd a nation, including its highest ecclesiastical dignitaries, and defied the indignation of the king, was not a reed to be shaken with the wind. He could not be affected by the frowns or the plaudits of his fellow-men. But John's work was done, and nobly he had performed it; he had no worldly ambition to gratify, and in the lone hours of his confinement within prison walls, he is more to be envied than Herod on his throne. He could remember with satisfaction that in the days of his popularity he was unaffected by the acclaims of his fellow-men, but in his loyalty to Christ publicly testified: "He must increase, but I must decrease."

If the biographies of great men are worth anything in forming character, the biography of John, is beyond all price, and I commend it to all of you for its strengthening influence. Oh, how much need we all have to pray to be delivered from the fear of man, which bringeth a snare; and call to remembrance Christ's own words: "Whosoever shall confess me before men him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven, but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a sword, for I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Matt. x. 32-39.

These are the words of Him who spake as never man spake.

May they sink into every heart, and may we all strive more and more to attain everlasting life, at any sacrifice, knowing that the things that are seen are temporal but the things that are unseen are eternal. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own life or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?

CHAPTER II.

CHRISTMAS FROM THE BELIEVER'S STANDPOINT.

THE echoes of Christmas anthems and sweet Christmas greetings are sounding in our ears, we have concluded to speak to you on God's great gift to the world in the person of His Son Christ Jesus. We shall consider the object of His mission, which has been so grievously misunderstood by the world.

The object, as stated by Christ Himself in His memorable conversation with Nicodemus, was, "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." John iii. 16. Now consider how great this gift is, that through Him everlasting life was made available to the children of a mortal race. This gift overshadows and far surpasses all other gifts, because without everlasting life the best of Heaven's gifts could only be enjoyed for a limited season.

In order to understand the conditions on which eternal life is to be conferred on man, you must study the divine record, and to aid men in this study is the object of our labors here from week to week.

It is briefly expressed in "Believing in the Lord Jesus Christ," but believing in Him involves a belief in the record which God gave of His Son, and a loving acceptance of Christ's doctrine, and abiding therein. "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in His Son" (1 John v. 11) and whosoever sets this testimony aside, destroys the teaching of the Old and New Testaments which plainly assert that, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 23.

This invests the birth of Christ with a new and deeper interest to us, and to all mankind if they could only be brought to see it.

It was the vast importance of His mission, including His righteous reign on earth, which will bring the "coming era of good government, universal righteousness, and perpetual peace."

It was this which made the angel's message, "Good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people," and it was this that swelled the angelic anthem, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

But we now come to the narrative.

Matt. ii. 1. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, of Judea, in the days of Herod, the king, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him."

The historic facts of the Bible, which infidels are ever trying to disparage, are so many bulwarks around the citadel of truth, and any attempt to discredit them ought to be resented. Think of the innumerable prophecies verified in the birth of Christ. Truly "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev. xix. 10. "To Him gave all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." Acts x. 43.

A bright morning dawned upon the world when the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem and made the glad announcement, "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." Luke ii. 10.

No wonder that on the occurrence of an event of such world-wide importance, affecting not only time but eternity, there should suddenly be 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." Neither was it any wonder that old Simeon, that just and devout man, who was waiting for the consolation of Israel, to whom the Holy Spirit had revealed that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. I say it was no wonder he took the child up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the

face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel." Nor was it any wonder that Anna the prophetess likewise gave thanks unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. Luke ii. 38. How many that was we are not told, but doubtless it was then as it is at the present time, there may have been a vague impression on the public mind but evidently their lives were not much affected by it, judging from the testimony of John, the baptizer, whose language to them was that of sharp rebuke.

However, whether many or few, it was a time of rejoicing to the waiting ones, to think that so many of the predictions of Israel's prophets were about to be realized, but even this happiness appears to have been mixed with some sad forebodings, judging from Simeon's words to Mary: "Behold this child is set for the fall and the rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against. Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Luke ii. 34. This probably was very indistinctly understood by either speaker or hearers, but it was enough to cause a shadow of gloom to fall on the mother's fond hopes, which may have been more or less transient. Joseph and Mary marveled at the glorious things spoken of by Simeon, and Mary pondered in her heart the recital by the shepherds of the words of the angel, and the glad anthem sung by the multitude of the heavenly host. In this we may see the wise arrangement of the Divine Father, the human mind instinctively turns to the bright and joyous, and tries at least to throw the gloom behind.

Turning from the circumstances attending this marvelous event which marked a grand epoch in the world's history, we come down to our own time, to consider the conditions under which Christmas is now observed. To a superficial observer, everything is beautiful and joyous, and in some other countries the event is marked with more pomp, and circumstance than it is here. In the older countries of Europe, especially where the religion of Rome prevails, the display is very great, which is heightened by the performance of mass, one at midnight, one at daybreak, and one in the morning. These together with

Christmas carols, the music of monastery bells, and the chimes of bells of magnificent cathedrals, are very imposing.

The observance of the 25th of December, is ascribed to Julius, Bishop of Rome, A. D. 337-352.

In our own country, as you are aware, it is chiefly observed as a social festival, and for giving and receiving presents.

I shall not here discuss its claim, or lack of claim on us for its observance, but I want to draw your attention to one feature of it by which I am very deeply impressed, which lessens its enjoyment to me as a social holiday, and that is the sad thought, that very few of those who take part in the observance of the day, have even a faint idea of the object and design of the Almighty in the gift of His Son. This is sad! sad!! sad!!! but nevertheless a truth which cannot be successfully controverted.

The question that was asked by the wise men, nearly nineteen hundred years ago, needs to be asked to-day, and asked so pointedly that it will arouse a slumbering world, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" Where is He? and where is His kingdom? What have you done with Him, and it? We demand an answer, and wait for a reply,—and we need not be surprised if the reply should be somewhat incoherent, seeing that the adherents of the various systems of manufactured religion, are in a state of intoxication, "drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink." Isaiah xxix. 9.

What can we expect of them in such a maudlin condition? But we must give them a respectful hearing for they have great men among them; men distinguished for their learning. We must remember also that the lies by which they are bewitched were inherited; but this must not prevent us from urging the question, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" The shepherds came with haste to find Him, and we are in haste to get an answer to our question. We are not inquiring out of vain curiosity, but with anxiety, to find the person here designated, "King of the Jews." An introduction to some other person will not answer the purpose. It is the "King of the Jews" we are in search of. He of whom Moses and all the prophets wrote, and of whom the angel Gabriel said, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God

shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Luke i. 32, 33.

Does this apply to the child born in Bethlehem, of Judea, nearly nineteen hundred years ago? If so, when did He sit on David's throne, and reign over the house of Jacob? When did His reign begin? When was He inaugurated? Was it when He was dragged a prisoner before Pilate, when they clothed Him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews?"

Are you prepared for the answer? Here it is from an organ of the Presbyterian Church, and a highly esteemed clergyman of the same denomination. "Christ is now seated on David's throne in heaven." "He will never return to reign on earth. It is all folly to expect it."

Did I slander them when I spoke of their maudlin condition? "Drunken indeed they are, but not with wine." They err in vision, they stumble in judgment."

Again, "The first disciples, it is said, may have been fascinated by a shadowy promise of the overthrow of their heathen conquerors, and the establishment of a Jewish kingdom, under a national sovereign, but we may reasonably suppose that the language was typical and capable only of a metaphorical fulfillment."

Was God's oath and promise to Abraham, and his seed, shadowy? Was His oath and promise to David typical? Typical of what? Was the annunciation by the angel Gabriel to Mary shadowy? It was not a shadowy son that was born; His life of toil and sorrow, His anguish in Gethsemane, His cruel sufferings, and ignominious death were not shadowy. Why then deny Him the promised throne and kingdom? Shall He never "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied?" Isaiah liii. 11.

If any of those gentlemen were left a large estate by the will of a nobleman, in which he took the pains to describe the property by metes and bounds, do you think he would be satisfied by a metaphoric fulfillment of the will, and allow the estate actually bequeathed, to go unclaimed? What think ye? The estate bequeathed or deeded to Abraham, and his seed is so specifically described; no shadow about it, no room for metaphor.

Of the King whom God has anointed it is written, Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psalm ii. 6-9.

"Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" If "the kingdom of heaven," is a mere figure of speech, and the thing prefigured can exist in men's hearts, and if Christ is to be forever seated at His Father's right hand, and shall never return to claim the throne and kingdom promised, then all the grand Messianic prophecies relating to His second coming, His glory, and His reign have forever failed, and God is no longer a covenant keeping God. Did I err in pronouncing all this sad? I feel that words cannot express the intensity of all pervading gloom such a condition would involve. I repeat that the festivities of our Christmas holiday are darkened by the conscious conviction that the spirit and power of the occasion are wanting.

The truth about the object and design of the mission, and work of Christ is enshrouded in darkness thicker than the swaddling bands which enveloped the new born infant, as He lay in the manger in Bethlehem.

I have already referred to the nature and locality of the throne and kingdom promised to David's greater Son, with which you are all so familiar that I need not further advert to that, but I cannot refrain from calling your attention to a few of the many prophecies which will utterly fail of accomplishment if Christ should not return, and take the kingdom promised Him.

"Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called. The Lord our righteousness. Therefore behold the days come saith the Lord that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, but the Lord

liveth which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land." Jeremiah xxiii. 5-8.

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked, and righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isaiah xi. 1-9.

These are only a few of many glowing predictions of the state of things that will prevail, when the child born in Bethlehem and cradled in a manger, despised and rejected of men in the day of His humiliation, shall return in power and great glory, and rule the world in righteousness; and during His peaceful reign, sin, death, and the curse, will be forever abolished, and the world restored to more than Edenic beauty; and then, as we have read, there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isaiah lxv. 25.

All this forms part of the divine plan of "Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Eph. i. 11.

The advent of Christ was not something thought of by God, as a man would, on the spur of the moment, not a thing of sudden impulse. This is, I think, very beautifully brought out, in the prediction of Micah the prophet. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler

in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Micah v. 2, evidently referring to the mind and purpose of Jehovah who had from the beginning determined to raise up a deliverer; not as one who rushes to the rescue, when all is desperate. All Scripture testimony conspire to bear this out. No sooner had man transgressed than the announcement was made that, "The seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head," and about two thousand years later Abraham was called as the one through whom the promised seed should come, and nearly two thousand years later the heavenly host sang the natal anthem on the plains of Bethlehem. Did not the prophet Isaiah, knowing God's unalterable purpose speak of it as an accomplished fact, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 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." Isaiah ix. 6, 7.

O, that we could get the faithless ones to ponder this, who tell us it is all folly to expect it, and that David's throne is in heaven, and Christ is now sitting on it. Will they kindly tell us *when*, and *how* David's throne came to be in heaven, seeing David himself had not ascended there, on the authority of Peter, on the Day of Pentecost. Acts ii. 34.

"All folly to expect it." Let them read God's unalterable decree, as given to us in the second Psalm: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

That is, notwithstanding that "the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing, the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed." That makes no difference, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision." "Then shall He speak to them in His wrath, and

vex them in His sore displeasure." What a dreadful warning! and how it is disregarded. Those worms of earth seem to forget that He who speaks is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, of whom the prophet David saith, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth, and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." Psalm xc. 2-4.

If Christ is to reign in heaven, why did the Spirit in David say, "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Why not say heaven, which would have been just as easy to say as Mount Zion, and less liable to be misunderstood? You who are enlightened as to God's oath and promise, who are familiar with the innumerable predictions of Israel's prophets, and the teaching of Christ, and His apostles can tell why. Yes! the children in our Sunday-school can tell why. It is because God has not so decreed. It is the kingdom *under* the whole heaven that the saints are to possess, as revealed unto Daniel, chap. vii. verse 27.

The song of the redeemed also, which John heard in advance, tells where they will reign. "And they sung a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." Rev. v. 9. 10.

Why are men so blind as not to see that under God's plan every great epoch in the world's history is preceded by what appears to human vision to be a long time of preparation. We have seen this in the past as I have already called your attention to the time from the promise in Eden to the call of Abraham, and from the time of the promise made to him till the advent of the Son of God, and then from His rejection as the "Man of sorrows" till His second coming with the glory attending it. If this had not been so, where would the opportunity have been of taking out from among the Gentiles a people for His name? Acts xv. 14.

If His first advent was heralded by a multitude of heavenly

host, what a more glorious retinue will attend Him, "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him; *then* shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." Matt. xxv. 31.

In this somewhat circuitous way, I have tried to answer the question, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?"

We have traced Him from His manger-cradle in Bethlehem, a helpless infant, we have spoken of the hopes that clustered around Him as the long promised Messiah, we have seen how minutely the predictions of the prophets were fulfilled in Him, till He ascended up on high. Before His ascension to His Father's right hand He gave to His disciples this commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned." Mark xvi. 15, 16.

We have seen God's plans are not altered; and that the predictions of the prophets will in due time be fulfilled. Not one good word will fail of all that God has spoken. It was of Himself Christ spoke in the parable of the nobleman going into a far country to receive for Himself a kingdom and to return." Luke xix. 12. Before leaving He told His disciples, "As I said unto the Jews, whither I go ye can not come, so now I say to you." John xiii. 33. And again, "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 unto my self that where I am, there ye may be also." John xiv. 3. And His last message from His Father's right hand is, "Surely I come quickly."

If the time seems long, remember what Peter says in his second Epistle, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter iii. 9. If He had come two years ago several of you would have been left out. Had He come one year ago some of you could not have shared the transcendent glory of His kingdom. Should He come now? *Are we all ready?* O! what a momentous question. Everything else pales before it.

Are our loins girt about with truth? Have we on the breastplate of righteousness? Are our feet shod with the prep-

aration of the Gospel of peace? Eph. vi. 14. Are our lamps burning bright and clear, and we ourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord?

On the eve of our Christmas holiday may no lurking evil mar the enjoyment of the glad day, but may our hearts arise in fervent gratitude to God for the gift of His Son, the humble patient Lamb of God, who was sacrificed for us, and as our minds have been illuminated by truth divine, may we realize that our responsibility is proportionately increased thereby and then with tender compassion let us strive to spread the light around us, and save some soul from death. If there are any here to-day who have not yet felt the transforming power of the Gospel, we plead with you to repent, and accept the gracious offer of life, eternal life, through Christ Jesus.

Remember He and He alone is the Bread of Life, which He gave for the life of the world. "If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever." John vi. 51.

And 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." Rev. xii. 17.

When Christ, whose lowly birth we have been considering, shall appear, clothed in royal majesty, *then* shall be inaugurated "the coming era of good government, universal righteousness, and perpetual peace."

NEW YEAR ADDRESS.

"For I am the Lord, I change not."—Malachi iii. 6.

Isaiah xl. 6. "The voice said cry, and he said, what shall I cry?—All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word of our God shall stand forever."

We live in a changing world. We ourselves, and everything around us are the subjects of change. There is no perpetuity here.

The seasons change in quick succession. It seems only a few weeks since the commencement of the year just closed, but Spring time with its beautiful flowers, and singing birds, has

come and gone; Summer with its rich fruit, has come and gone; Autumn with its fields of yellow grain has come and gone. Harvest-home has been sung once more, and Winter with its chilling winds, and biting blasts is here once more.

These reflections come uncalled into our minds; they are suggestive, and ought to lead to profitable contemplation.

Somehow or other this season of the year makes one pensive, and perhaps it is well that it is so. We naturally look around us, and we miss many familiar faces, some very dear to us, with whom a year ago we came in frequent contact, socially and religiously; they too are gone, and such is human life.

"So gliding on,
It glimmers like a meteor, and is gone."

We a little longer wait, but how little none can know. And then we think of the words of the poet:

"Leaves have a time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath
But thou, thou hast all seasons for
Thine own, O death."

We, too, are passing away, time is making its impression on all of us, and we have need to make David's prayer our own. "Lord, teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Psalm xc. 12.

These are some of the reflections befitting the season, but there others that may be alike profitable. As we stand on the threshold of a new year, it is a fitting time to take a retrospective view of the year just closed.

The record of the past, what does it disclose? Has the past year been wisely spent? Have we devoted our time, our means and our energies to the work of the Lord? Have *we individually* been striving to live in accordance with the divine will, that we may be able to say with Paul, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. ii. 20.

. During the past year have we been quick to respond with thanksgiving and praise for benefits conferred on us? Have our hearts welled up in gratitude to the Giver of all good, for favors received? Have we ever been ready to watch and mark

His guiding hand, and follow implicitly the light as it comes to us from His Holy Word? In short, have we been fruit-bearing branches in Christ, the Living Vine? Or are we only hanging on as a dead unsightly thing, held on by external influence, liable to be severed at any moment? These are momentous questions that claim our serious consideration.

May we all be able to say with Paul, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. iii. 14. Are we pressing on with diligence and zeal, not loitering by the way, but running with patience the race set before us? Heb. xii. 1. If we are not *pressing* on it is a sure sign that we have a very slight appreciation of the prize of the high calling wherewith we have been called, otherwise we would run with *activity*, with *eagerness*, with *ardor*, earnestly desiring that we may attain.

In business affairs men make great efforts to accomplish certain purposes which they regard as important, and their importance is estimated according to the amount involved in the enterprise. If we should so reckon the vastness of what is involved in our high calling, what sacrifices would we not be willing to make?

Truly "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Let us reflect a little more on the prize the Christian has in view, everything else sinks into insignificance before it; wealth, and popularity, which the men of the world value so highly, and for which they will sacrifice so much, are empty baubles which elude the grasp of so many, and when obtained can at best be held by a mortal hand, that must soon let go its hold. But the prize of the high calling of God, what does it offer? A divine nature of unending existence in exchange for this fleeting shadow! Immortal bliss, heavenly honor, and matchless glory, for a life, in its best estate, is mingled with pain, sorrow and disappointment. Well might the Savior say, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field." The value of this treasure is beyond computation; men may spend months and years computing the distance of the heavenly planets, and in describing their orbits, but no array of figures,

however extended, can give any conception of the immensity of this treasure.

How insane then not to seek *first*, as of supreme importance, above everything else, the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof.

This is a fitting time to review the work of the past year, and see what progress we are making.

Reviews are profitable, they are strongly recommended in Scriptures; they are safe, both for individuals and for churches.

The Church at Ephesus was counseled to review. They had many things for which they were commended, but there was one sad declension; they had left their first love, and were commanded to *remember* from whence they had fallen, and repent, and do the first works. Rev. ii. 5. The Churches of Galatia were also advised to review. Paul wrote to them in the most earnest and impressive manner, "O, foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you. I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel, which is not another, but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the Gospel of Christ." Gal. i. 6. Just as if he had said, Review your past life, think of your early experience in the Christian race, "Ye did run well, who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? There was a time when you were sound in the faith before you were led away by human speculation, and fleshly impulses, and got entangled in their snares. You were devoted to the Master's work, earnest and sincere in your profession, regular in your attendance on the means of grace. The services of the sanctuary were a pleasure to you. Where is the blessedness ye spake of, what has become of it, have you bartered it away for something of less value?"

I tell you brethren, there is no standing still in this procession. We are either advancing or retrograding. If our faith is not stronger to-day than ever before, our love for Christ and His cause, more ardent, our trust greater, and our knowledge in divine things more extended, there is something wrong, sadly wrong, which needs righting, and there is no more fitting time than the present to take reckoning of our bearings, and see where

we are drifting to. Put on the searchlight, and if it reveals reefs ahead, let them be avoided.

But to return to my starting point. I began by remarking on this changing world, and the brevity and uncertainty of human life. This would be a gloomy foreboding without the light beyond, but thank God for the blessed announcement which we have read from the prophet Malachi, "I am the Lord, I change not." That is a gem of unsurpassed luster. A star that shines in the darkest night. Add to this the words quoted from Isaiah. "The word of our God shall stand forever." Here is *perpetuity*, not comparative, but absolute. An unchangeable God, His enduring word, and unalterable purpose. What would all the declarations of God's love and compassion avail, without this grand announcement? You might tell me of the goodness of God, and expatiate by the hour on the many instances recorded of His love, and yet without this assurance of His changeless nature, and His unalterable word of promise, it would afford me small comfort.

Here again we see the goodness and condescension of God in not only making known unto us His purposes, but likewise revealing unto us His own nature, character and attributes, thereby giving us strong consolation, as we read in the epistle to the Hebrews, "Wherein God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec."

Here then, while our adamic lives are frail and uncertain we have the assurance of God's love, the blessed assurance of His unchangeable nature, and His enduring word, and unalterable purpose. Here may our frail barks ever anchor, and should the storms of adversity, the day of sickness, or night of sorrow overtake us, may we with unshaken confidence trust in His gracious promises, and look for deliverance when Jesus comes. "In the coming Lord there is not only protection from

danger and deliverance from all the ills of life, but "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled and that fadeth not away."

May the hope of the realization of these great and precious promises nerve us to overcome the wiles of the adversary, and to do battle for the truth, ever remembering the Lord's command, "Occupy till I come." There is work to be done in His vineyard. May we do it faithfully and well, so that when the Nobleman returns from the far country, we may receive His commendation. And should He tarry, may we pass the time of our sojourning here in fear, and in love one toward another, not judging one another uncharitably, but in the spirit of humility, feeling our own weakness and insufficiency, to do anything as of ourselves, and should any impulse contrary to this arise in our minds may we promptly check it and call to mind Paul's words to the Church at Corinth, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God's." 1 Cor. vi. 19.

Standing on the threshold of this new year, may we realize this more than we have ever done before, and may this conviction be impressed on all our minds, and may it remain with us during the year on which we have just entered, and produce a deeper sense of the need of being *wholly* consecrated unto God. And if we all do this, the fruit will and *must* become apparent.

As we look back over the work of the past year may our hearts arise in gratitude to God for the very dear brothers and sisters who have been added to our number. I say *very dear* advisedly, for I am sure, *that* is the language of all your hearts; and in humble recognition of the divine blessing, without which all our efforts would be in vain, may we like Samuel of old, this morning erect our Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." 1 Sam. vii. 12.

Like David we would thus "recount the loving kindness of the Lord," and like him also pray, "O, continue thy loving kindness unto them that *know* thee, and thy righteousness to the upright in heart." Psalm xxxvi. 10.

We profess to know God, having been enlightened by His holy Word, and to be the called according to His purpose; God forbid that any of us should by wicked works deny Him. Let the new year be a time of heart-searching, and if any root of

bitterness be found springing up anywhere, let it be rooted out at once and forever, remembering Christ's words, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." It is much easier to root up wrong things before they take a deep hold in the mind, than afterwards.

Love, joy, and peace, are the heavenly plants we ought to be cultivating, and the more care, and attention we give to their cultivation, the better it will be for us, as individuals, and as a Church.

We have spoken of the loved ones taken from us in the past year, and while we mourn their loss, let us remember that it is by the tender mercy of our God that so many of us are here today. May our lives, which He hath spared, be consecrated anew to Him, and be spent more devotedly in His service. Let us also remember, that we owe Him allegiance as our Creator, for He made us, and not we ourselves. We owe Him allegiance as our Redeemer, for while man was in a helpless condition, "and none of them could by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Psa. xlix. 7), *then* God spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all. Rom. viii. 32.

Furthermore, we owe Him allegiance, because of our own voluntary consecration to His service, when we believed and obeyed the truth.

May the year on which we have just entered be marked by loyal service to the blessed and only Potentate whom we have sworn to serve, and this service to be acceptable must come from consecrated hearts, and be a willing service, such as Paul rendered when he said, "God is my witness whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his Son." Rom. i. 9. And those who *so* serve Him *now* amidst the trials and temptations of this life, and keep themselves unspotted from the world, shall be honored to serve Him day and night in His temple. And He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them, they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. vii. 15.

Say, loved ones, do we need any greater inducement to make us *alive*, and *active* in our service now?

Should any in looking back over the past year be filled with sorrow and self-reproach, at errors committed or opportunities to do good allowed to pass unimproved. The message to-day is, "Repent and do thy first works." If the divine exhortation to five out of the seven churches in Asia was to "repent," need we wonder if some among us need the same warning. For such the door of mercy still stands open, but how long it will stand open no mortal can tell. "To-day if you will hear his voice harden not your hearts." Heb. iii. 15.

In conclusion, brethren, let us keep the coming and kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ever prominently before us, and may this blessed hope cheer and comfort our minds. May it be more dear to all of us during the year on which we have just entered than it has ever been before. May we hold it with a firmer grasp, cling to it with greater tenacity, strive with greater earnestness to live in accordance with the will, and by all the means in our power work for the spread of the truth among those around us, and above all in our church work endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Eph. iv. 3.

"Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ, that ye stand fast in one Spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel." Phil. i. 27. Let us daily invoke God's blessing on our feeble efforts to do His will.

May this be the desire and purpose of all of us. Amen. .

CHAPTER III.

INFIDELITY.—INGERSOLL REBUKED.

“Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself, but I will reprove thee.”—Psalm l. 21.

AND Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible.” Mark x. 27.

Thus spake He who was divinely commissioned to reveal the Father unto us, and His words were always with power.

The folly of finite man with his limited knowledge, and circumscribed capacity setting bounds to the Almighty, and pronouncing this and that impossible, ought to be apparent to all.

How can puny man with his ten feet measuring rod fathom the boundless depths of the Infinite?

That is the question for us to settle here to-night, and the problem should not be difficult, nor the issue uncertain.

INGERSOLL REBUKED.

We have lately had a shameful exhibition of infidelity in this city. Robert Ingersoll's lecture on the Bible, advertised for two weeks, was given in the Gray's Armory to about 2,000 persons. The audience was said to be fashionable and cultured, and among those present were many well known members of the orthodox churches of the city. The lecture, it is said, occupied about two hours, and was frequently applauded.

The lecturer said: “Thousands of years after Moses died the Pentateuch was written and attributed to him.” But he failed to give his authority for this important announcement.

“The lecture was a general denunciation of the truths of Christianity, and an anathema of the Bible.” “The Gospels,” he said, “are filled with accounts of miracles, but were they ever performed?” “If we wish to defend the character of Christ, we must say that He did not perform these miracles, but that the accounts were written by ignorant people.” “After the fable

of the resurrection," he said, "the ascension became necessary in order to dispose of the body."

Very wisely he made no reference to the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles, in which are recorded the great sufferings the apostles endured in bearing testimony to the resurrection and ascension of Christ, and the doctrines He gave them to promulgate. In the history of the world it has never been known that men would endure persecution, cold, hunger, nakedness, stripes, bonds, imprisonments, banishment, and death itself, to bear testimony to what they themselves knew to be a lie. To believe that, would require a larger amount of credulity than is necessary to the acceptance of miracles which throw all infidels into spasms.

It is a dreadful thing that a man should deliberately set himself to the work of destroying the historical verity of divine revelation, a revelation that has done so much toward humanizing and civilizing the world, apart from its still greater power in making eternal life available to all those who believe and practice its divine teaching.

Although agnostics have no faith in miracles themselves, the position they take that miracles are impossible, is an unwarranted assumption, and ought to be resented by all who profess the religion of Christ, which in His own personality was a miracle, and His teachings were attested by miracles which God did by Him, not in secret, but before all the people, even His most bitter opponents.

All who are well acquainted with the world's history ought to know that there are three things which have been so fully *proved* and *firmly established* that they cannot be overthrown by all the infidels in the world, namely:

1. That there is a God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe.
2. That Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
3. That the Bible is the Word of God.

If the agnostic will open his eyes, he will see abundant proof all around him to sustain these three propositions.

In the lecturer's tirade against the prophets of Israel, he very wisely avoided making any allusion to the predictions of the ruin of Nineveh, Babylon, and Tyre, ages before their overthrow. So long as Nineveh and Babylon are in ruins, and so

long as ancient Tyre is submerged by the waves of the sea, so long as Idumea is a desolation, and Jerusalem lies waste, and her children scattered in every nation under heaven, just so long have we enduring monuments to the authenticity and divine inspiration of the Scriptures.

In speaking of the Prophets, Ingersoll asks, "What are these inspired books to man?" "Is any one of them as entertaining as Robinson Crusoe, or the Travels of Gulliver?" We answer, that may depend on the intellectuality of the man, how childish he is. It is true they are of no use to a man who reads to scoff and scorn, but in them the God of heaven, whom he despises, has stooped down to man with a revelation of His will, and has graciously made known His plans and purposes a long way in the future, and has described the unbeliever, and the bold blasphemer *correctly*, and given the presence of such men as characteristic of the age in which we live, and warned all right minded persons against them, and for such counsel they are invaluable.

It was very unbecoming for the lecturer to speak of Elijah and Elisha as a couple of prophets who were working for profit. We never read of them traveling over the country giving lectures, and charging their audience fifty cents a head. On the contrary we find the prophets at that time reduced to great straits, and instead of stopping at first-class hotels, and enjoying many luxuries, they had to take shelter in dens and caves of the earth, and were fed on bread and water; and reduced to this extremity by their opposition to a wicked king, and his more wicked idolatrous wife. Do you think bad men would have so incurred the king's displeasure? Bread and water was frugal fare to be sure, and caves have often been the homes of God's people, but they endured as seeing Him who is now invisible but who ere long will be made manifest, and then God's prophets who are now reproached, will receive an abundant reward, a crown of life that fadeth not away.

Ingersoll said, "I am aware that there are many Christian people who are better than I am, who disagree with me. There are millions of people who regard the Bible as a revelation from the breast and heart of God to man. There are millions who consider it as their guide. They remember this and forget the dark abyss, and the dungeon of eternal pain. This forgetful-

ness hardens and corrupts the heart. This forgetfulness poisons the soul, and makes enemies of liberty. Without liberty there is no religion. An infinite God would not be satisfied with the worship of slaves." Who says He would? The Bible nowhere teaches so.

Ingersoll professes to be very brave, but why did he not meet Allen B. Magruder in open debate, who accepted Ingersoll's challenge years ago, and twice sent him an acceptance, once by registered letter. It was his own challenge, and when accepted, he would not appear. Had he met Brother Magruder, he would have encountered a foeman more than worthy of his steel, and he might then have learned, as he undoubtedly did afterwards from Mr. Magruder's published reply, that the Bible is not responsible for the eternal pain dogma taught in its name. Allen B. Magruder was a public barrister in Baltimore, a man of culture and of wide reputation as an author. Eternal torment is good capital for Ingersoll to trade on, he can gain people's sympathy thereby, and it is greatly to be lamented that the religion of Jesus Christ should be charged with such a stigma that does not belong to it, and is utterly opposed to the letter and spirit of its teaching.

But while we speak in this way we do not want you to go away with the impression that we are universalists, on the contrary we believe in the plain, positive teaching of the Bible supported both by Old and New Testament Scripture testimony that "All the wicked will God destroy." Psalm cxlv. 20. "Their end is destruction." Phil. iii. 19. "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction." 2 Thess. i. 9. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Ez. xviii. 4. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 23. "They that forsake the Lord shall be consumed." Isaiah i. 28. "They shall become extinct." Isa. xliii. 17. "They shall be as though they had not been." Obadiah 16.

And this is in perfect harmony with the character of a righteous and just God. He offers pardon to the penitent, who seek the ways of God, but evil doers shall not dwell with Him, nor sinners stand in His sight.

If those who profess the religion of Christ were better enlightened as to what the Bible teaches regarding the nature and destiny of man, they would learn that immortality is no attribute of his nature. That the phrases immortal soul or deathless spirit or anything equivalent to them is not once mentioned in connection with his present existence, in the whole Book of God. It is of pagan not Christian origin. Socrates, and Plato taught it to their followers. Christ never. He everywhere, and, on all occasions, speaks of man as mortal—perishing. Tells them His mission was to save them from perishing, and to give them life—eternal life—endless existence, and tells them to seek for it—lay hold on eternal life. It is not inherent in man, but is the gift of God, and in His Word He has made known the conditions on which it will be bestowed. The conditions are faith and obedience. Faith in the promises God has made relative to eternal life, and this is the chief reason why God stooped down to man with a revelation of His mind and will. Man by disobedience had forfeited his life, and come under sentence of death. Generation after generation has been going back to dust, but God in His infinite goodness has offered unending life, in the kingdom of His dear Son to all who will accept of it on the conditions proposed, and Christ has promised all such that He “Will raise them up at the last day.” He tells us, “This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” John vi. 40.

This is very different from a continued existence such as Grecian philosophers taught, but it is in strict accord with Paul’s teaching in 1 Cor. xv. speaking of a resurrection to incorruption, and also in his first letter to the Thessalonians iv. 13-18. From this comparison it is not difficult to see to what school those belong who deny miracles, and claim there is no such thing as death, that what appears to be so, is only a deflection in the stream of life. Plato, and not Christ, is their teacher.

Even those who believe and obey the Gospel Christ sent His disciples to proclaim, are not possessors of eternal life *now*, they are only “heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus iii. 7. Peter describes it thus, “Heirs together of the grace of life.” 1 Peter iii. 7. And John says, “This is the promise

that he has promised us even eternal life." 1 John ii. 25. A thing of promise cannot be a present possession. To one intelligent in the Scriptures, this view of man's nature and destiny relieves him of the many fallacies, absurdities and contradictions that incumber popular theology. He can then understand what Paul meant when he said he was striving if by any means he might attain unto a resurrection of the dead (Phil. iii. 11), and also what Christ meant when addressing the Sadducees in Luke xx. 35, He said, "They who are accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead."

The words "accounted worthy," are suggestive, they imply that some will not be accounted worthy. That ought to set men a thinking, and cause them to search what is the mind of the spirit on this all-important subject.

It is the knowledge which this Book of books imparts, that shows man his true relation to God, to nature, and to his fellow-men. It sheds a heavenly light where otherwise there would be thick darkness. It produces the sweetest harmony where otherwise there would be nothing but discordant sounds. Ingersoli cannot be regarded as anything but a superficial declaimer. There is no depth to him. His capital is bold denunciation and reckless assumption, he uses no subtle argument which requires philosophic reasoning, or metaphysical disquisition to overcome, and hence he is less likely to gain converts and do harm than the man who coming under a friendly garb would say the "first disciples may have been fascinated by a shadowy promise of the overthrow of their heathen conquerors, and the establishment of a Jewish kingdom under a national sovereign, but we may reasonably suppose that the language was typical and capable only of a metaphorical fulfillment."

These are the men who are most to be dreaded, who, while professing religion, make the Bible of none effect by putting a metaphorical meaning upon language of the plainest import, and who have the daring presumption to speak of God's oath and promise of future glory as shadowy promises, by which the first disciples may have been fascinated.

What stronger proof can we have of the divine origin of the Bible than its survival amidst the cruel torturing to which for ages it has been subjected to by the boldest of enemies, and the

erroneous conceptions of its professed friends and misguided defenders.

Notwithstanding that miracles are attacked alike by the professed friends and avowed enemies of Christianity, the truth still remains the same that the Bible and miracles must stand or fall together.

Those knowing ones claim that supernatural events are impossible, and as miracles are supernatural, therefore they say, miracles are impossible.

Think of the cool effrontery of those men, and the credulity of their followers!

“Supernatural events are impossible.” What presumption! How do they know? It ill becomes the children of a day who know comparatively nothing to talk so arrogantly. All nature attests the existence of an allwise God, the designer of the universe, who created and upholds all things; and if such a God exists, He is a supernatural being, that is, He is above and beyond nature, which is the product of His will. That being the case it is just as reasonable to expect Him to do supernatural things, as it is for us His creatures to do natural things.

If nothing supernatural exists, then God does not exist, and no revelation of His will can exist. This saps the foundation of all revealed religion, leaves man in hopeless orphanage without the moral or spiritual instruction of his Father—God.

The history of the children of Israel is a history of miraculous intervention on the part of Jehovah in their behalf. Their signal deliverance from Egypt was an epoch in their history never to be forgotten, and the observance of the Passover from that time down to the present by the Hebrew nation ought to silence forever all doubt on that subject.

The dividing of the Red Sea to allow a people, liberated from slavery to pass over dryshod is not a *fiction*, or an *allegory*, but a narrative of fact recorded in the nation's annals.

A people just escaped from a bondage the most oppressive are brought to the extremity of desperation, hemmed in on every side, the Red Sea before them, and Pharaoh and his hosts in pursuit in the rear; no wonder that they exclaim to Moses, “Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness, wherefore has thou thus dealt with us?”

And then in bold and striking contrast to this unbelief, listen to the profound and abiding faith of Moses, when he replied: "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show you to-day, for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me, speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward; but lift thou thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea and divide it, and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea." And we read: "The waters were a wall unto them, on their right hand and on their left."

The law of gravitation was at that moment suspended, and why not? Is it not reasonable to believe that the God who made the laws of nature can suspend them at His will? No wonder that the royal bard of Israel in lofty strains, again and again made this deliverance the theme of his sublime and reverent song. "The wonderous works which God did in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea."

The encompassing of the walled city of Jericho, and blowing with ram's horns as they made the daily circuit of the city, may provoke a derisive smile on the part of the unbeliever, but with all the boasted achievements of the 19th century, and the power of dynamite no military strategem was ever so effective as this.

The secret of success lay in the Ark of the Lord and in obedience to His commands.

Then again after many years residence in the land, when Sennacherib, king of Assyria reproached the living God, and brought dismay to the heart of king Hezekiah, God again manifested His power for the defense of His people, and in one night, without one uplifted sword, 185,000 of the Assyrian army are destroyed.

You see God was defending His witnesses, and the Hebrew nation to-day, notwithstanding its backsliding and declension, is a witness to the truth of divine revelation, and the unity of the God of Abraham. The predictions of the prophets as to the destruction of Jerusalem, and their dispersion among all nations

under heaven, has been literally fulfilled, and by the same authority their restoration will in due time be accomplished.

We now come to New Testament times, and here we find that the Christian religion was approved and confirmed by miracles.

God manifested in flesh in the person of His Son Christ Jesus was a miracle. He was not begotten by the ordinary law of generation, but was the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Peter on the day of Pentecost, being full of the Holy Spirit, testified saying, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God by miracles, and wonders, and signs which God did by Him, in the midst of you as ye yourselves also know." Acts ii. 22.

Here Peter appeals to the peoples' own knowledge of these facts. Those miracles were not done in secret, not in private seance among His friends and followers, but publicly, on the highways, in the presence of multitudes, many of them His most bitter enemies, who did not attempt to deny the miracles, but accused Him of being in league with Beelzebub, the prince of devils.

The miracles done by Jesus began almost simultaneously with His public ministry, and continued all the way down through.

We cannot enumerate but let us for a moment look at His entrance into Nain. On His way hither He was followed by His disciples and much people, and when He came nigh to the gate of the city a scene presented itself which touched the sympathetic heart of Jesus. It was a funeral procession, always sad, always solemn. On that occasion it was a young man who was carried out; the only son of his mother and she was a widow. O, how desolate the widow's heart; how broken the bereaved mother's spirit.

We read that much people of the city was with her. It was a sorrowing crowd. How much consolation could an infidel or a sceptical scientist have given this widowed mother do you think? Would her bowed form, and broken heart been much cheered by a cold dissertation about evolution, protoplasm, molecules, and survival of the fittest? I trow not, but far different were the words of the Son of God. The simple nar-

rative informs us, "When the Lord saw her He had compassion on her, and said unto her, 'weep not,' and He came and touched the bier, and they that bare him stood still, and He said, 'Young man, I say unto you, arise,' and he that was dead sat up and began to speak, and He delivered him to his mother." Thrice joyous mother!

Need we wonder at what follows? And there came a fear on all, and they glorified God saying, "That a great prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited His people." Luke vii. 11.

Did you observe in the printed report of Ingersoll's lecture, he only used the word "widow" once, and then it was to raise a laugh at her expense, and this is the man who poses as a devoted husband, and a loving father. Alas! he does not know how soon his own wife may swell the desolate list, and weep the bitter tears of widowhood.

When Jesus saw the widow of Nain, He said unto her, "Weep not." The infidel has got nothing to dry the mourner's tears, or relieve our heart's oppressing sorrows. Jesus, addressing the dead man said, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise." The infidel says, miracles are impossible. The resurrection of dead men to life is a miracle, hence the resurrection is impossible, and the claims of Christ to raise dead men puts Him in the category of an impostor and a fraud, and Ingersoll says, "If we wish to defend the character of Christ, we must say that He did not perform these miracles."

Friends, we are all dying mortals; every one of us. Our friends and acquaintances are falling around us on every hand, and we know not how soon we must follow them.

What dying men need is a light that will penetrate the dark caverns of the tomb, and give an assurance of a power pledged to overcome and destroy the enemy of man, who now blights and destroys our fairest homes, and robs us of our precious jewels. An enemy which no monarch of earth can bid defiance, and nothing short of this will meet our wants; and here we are just in the right position to test and judge of the relative worth of human science and divine revelation, and arrive at the correct standard of value. It is this post mortem view of the case which strips the pretender of whatever name, of his lofty

assumptions, and leaves his votaries in the gloom of despair. It is from this dark, blank, cheerless realm we want to escape, and after we have exhausted the fields of science in our vain search for deliverance, and find that nature has made no provision for restoring the dead to life, we turn our faces heavenward, and see a light divinely bright, and a star high above the natural horizon, in the realm of the supernatural, and as our eyes follow it in ecstatic gaze, we hear a voice coming to us from the courts above, by way of Patmos Isle, and the words uttered by that heavenly voice are of the most profound and thrilling interest. Hark! listen to the divine and gladsome message: "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore, amen, and have the keys of the grave, and of death." Rev. i. 18. O, blessed assurance! thank God for this sublime and timely message. Hasten quick, and tell all doubting souls, who have come under the chilling withering influence of infidelity. Tell them, hope has dawned for man; Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the Savior of the world, holds the keys of the grave, and He alone can redeem men from death and give them incorruptibility.

I would here impress upon you that a candid investigation of the claims of the Bible to be divinely inspired, is certain to result in the overthrow of infidelity.

It is said of John Randolph, of Roanoke, that when he was a young man, infidelity was very common, and he felt inclined to go that way; but thinking it only just to read the Bible before condemning it as a fraud, for like many others he was very little acquainted with it. He began the task, but had not gone far when he became convinced that uninspired men, as he expressed it, could no more have written the Bible than a mule could write Newton's "Principia of Nature."

In like manner it is related of George Lyttleton, an English Baron, and Gilbert West, L.L. D., both sceptics, they agreed between themselves to write against Christianity. Lyttleton was to expose the conversion of St. Paul, and West was to expose the resurrection of Christ. Each one applied himself to the task before him, but as they advanced the evidence of the truth of both narratives became so convincing that each, unknown to the other, had to relinquish his task. Lyttleton hastened to inform West of his conversion to the truth of Christianity, and judge

of his amazement when West exclaimed, "And I have found a risen Savior!" The result was, in 1747, Lyttleton published his able treatise on the conversion and apostleship of Paul. And in the same year, West published his work entitled: "Observations on the History and Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ." Both of which are considered masterly treatises on the evidences of Christianity.

Notwithstanding that Ingersoll calls the resurrection of Christ a fable, it is the best attested fact in the history of the world.

No evidence could be more abundant, clear, and convincing to an impartial mind. To the honest sceptic let me say, Study the Bible impartially, and you will find it the purest and brightest light ever shed on the mind of man. Many a weary wanderer it has guided in the paths of virtue, and the way of life. H. L. Hastings has well said, "The Bible comes not from the brains of impostors and deceivers, but springs from the depths of divine wisdom, love, and grace. It is the unfolding of the divine purpose, the revelation of the divine will. Whosoever will study it aright will find it full of sanctifying power to soften the stony heart, cleanse the moral leper, give strength to the weak, healing balm to the wounded heart, comfort to the broken spirit." God grant that you may find it so, and then you will own that "Prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." 2 Peter i. 21.

PRACTICAL INFIDELITY.

The subject I have chosen for my present address is Practical Infidelity. Two circumstances contributed to lead my mind in this direction: one was a letter I received sometime ago from a friend in Texas, which says, "In this portion of the country we have a great deal of what is called religion; then the greater portion of those outside the churches are gathered on the broad platform of scepticism, with no God, no Christ, no Bible; though some will admit there is a God that overrules all things, but not, they say, the unreasonable God of the Bible, and I might say with much truth, many of those whose names are enrolled on the Church books, are among those sceptics." This is

a sad but truthful picture, which, I am sorry to say, prevails in more places than Texas.

The other circumstance I referred to is a claim made by some persons that Samuel was present with Saul and the "witch of Endor," for the Bible says so. I have read that narrative over a good many times, and I want to say explicitly, the Bible says nothing of the kind, but it says quite the contrary. I am astonished that persons, intelligent in other matters, should thus regard a narrative of a dialogue between Saul and the woman who made a trade of divination. The narrative has frequently been pointed out, shows the status of the woman in question, was one denounced of God, a criminal worthy of death. Who are willing to stake their belief on the testimony of such a deceiver? The system must be rotten indeed that seeks such support.

The woman's conduct throughout shows the fraternity she belonged to. Shrewd and discriminating, observing Saul's excited condition, for we read, "When he saw the host of the Philistines he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled," and doubtless she well knew, as all around there must have done, the great strength of the Philistines; and the record very clearly shows that her divining of Saul's death on the morrow was nothing but guess work, as the crisis did not come as soon as she expected.

The circumstances as narrated in chapters 29, 30 and 31, plainly indicate that Saul's death did not occur for several days thereafter. We read that it was during the night that Saul went to Endor; after that and perhaps on the following day the lords of the Philistines had a dispute with Achish, king of Gath, about David and some 600 men who were with him, Achish and David being friendly, the result of which was, David and his men left early on the morning after the dispute, and in three days thereafter they came to Ziklag, which in the meantime had been invaded by the Amalekites, and burned with fire, and many taken captive: David pursued with 400 men, the other 200 having been worn out by the long march, and David overtook them at their camp, where they were carousing, and smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day. After this the death of Saul takes place on the mountains of Gilboa,

so that according to the narrative the death of Saul by his own hands, did not take place for at least five days after his visit to Endor, but that was a close enough guess for a necromancer to make, and I will say this on her behalf, that better generals than she was are frequently disappointed on the outcome of war.

The Son of God, while He dwelt on earth, had the power to raise dead men, but is it not passing strange that any one would believe that God would delegate that power to an infamous woman belonging to a class whom He had condemned? But pardon me, it is not claimed that Samuel's body was raised, only his spirit was there. Well, where did it come from? On the authority of the woman, who is their own witness in the case, not from the spheres above, it came up out of the ground, and was in a very drowsy condition, and somewhat cross at being disturbed, and it was clothed with a mantle, consequently it had materialized pretty well. If any can take comfort from such a doctrine they are easily comforted.

That is the way practical infidelity is spread and supported. Many will quote from the Bible without ever stopping to inquire who the speaker is. It would seem to make little difference with them whether it is a prophet of the Most High, Satan, or the Witch of Endor. Sometimes you will hear it said, "The Bible says 'skin for skin, all that a man hath will he give for his life,' " but they do not reflect that is Satan's version of the matter, and he was a liar from the beginning. The blood of martyrs condemns the expression. *They* did not count their own lives dear to them. There are many things more to be dreaded than death. Evil, besetting sin is *worse* than death, and *far* more to be dreaded. Men have been found who were ready to perish at the stake, meet torch and fagot, sooner than surrender their faith, but Satan has little acquaintance with men of that character.

We say it is practical infidelity to set one portion of Scripture against another; and how utterly inconsistent it is to do this by those who profess to believe that the Bible is divinely inspired. If holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, the utterances must be Holy Spirit teaching, consistent and in harmony with itself, and if it is not it loses all claim to our reverence. It matters not who the amanuensis was,

whether John or James, or whether written in Old Testament or New Testament times, the source is the same, and must be in harmony with itself. Surely this is a self-evident proposition.

It is astonishing with what tenacity some will cling to a wrong interpretation of Christ's promise to the thief on the cross; and the whole question is suspended on the proper placing of a comma, in order to make the verse in harmony or out of harmony with other parts of Scripture. Not a word nor letter need be changed, only putting the comma after *to-day*, instead of before it. Some object to this, saying it does not sound well. To this we reply, it sounds like some other portions of Scripture, of which I will give you a sample. But even if it did not sound as well to our Anglo-Saxon ears, is truth to be sacrificed to sound, as if it were only a poetic fancy? But to come to the illustrations. I refer you to Deut. xv. 15, Deut. xxx. 15, Zech. ix. 12.

In Deut. xxx. 15 we read, "See I have set before you *this day* life and good, and death and evil: In that I command thee *this day* to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments, and His statutes, and His judgments. . . But if thine heart turn away so that thou will not hear, but shalt be drawn away and worship other gods, and serve them: I denounce unto you *this day* that ye shall surely perish." Here in this short quotation the words "this day" are used three times, and who will question but they add force to what Moses said and made it more impressive.

In Deut. xv. 15, we read, "And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee. therefore I command thee this thing *to-day*." What he commanded them had no reference to the day on which it was spoken; it had reference to the year of release. Yet he says, I command you this thing *to-day*.

Again in Zech. ix. 12, we read, "Turn ye to your stronghold, ye prisoners of hope, even *to-day* do I declare I will render double unto thee." Was He to render double unto them *that day*? No; only the declaration was made *that day*, and the thing promised was deferred, as the following verse shows, until He had bent Judah and filled the bow with Ephraim.

So, in like manner, the thief's prayer was, "Lord, remem-

ber me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom." See Revised Version. Has He come in His kingdom? Has He? Matt. xxv. 31, says, "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, *then* shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations," etc., and then the thief will be remembered. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee to-day, shalt thou, or thou shalt, be with Me in paradise,—or as the literal rendering of the Greek text is, "with Me thou shalt be in the paradise."

It is well known to those who have given this subject attention that the Greek MSS. have no punctuation, consequently the placing of those marks is of human, not divine, origin, and was first introduced by a learned Italian typographer named Manutius, who had a printing establishment in Venice in the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries. He also introduced for the first time the use of italic letters, now so generally used.

There are many other places in Scripture where the sense is greatly obscured, if not destroyed, besides that of the Lord's answer to the dying thief. 2 Peter i. 19, reads, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy: whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: There is put a colon and there ends the verse, which is a good deal like the kingdom of God in men's hearts. The correct reading would be, "until the day dawn and the day star arise."

That is the proper place to stop, and then should follow, "In your hearts knowing this," or knowing this in your hearts, that "no Scripture is of any private interpretation," etc., has no occult or hidden meaning.

I have three old Bibles, one published in 1808, one in 1814, and the other 1839, in all of which Heb. x. 12, reads, "But this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God, as though he was to remain there forever, in direct opposition to Acts iii. 21, where His stay there is limited until the times of restitution, but you will find that corrected in the Bibles you are using now.

I have only time to refer to one or two more instances, which you will find in Eph. ii. 4, 5, "But God who is rich in

mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," etc. It ought to read, He loved us even when we were dead in sins. Eph. i. 4, reads, "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love," and there ends the 4th verse, making the 5th verse begin, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children," etc. Instead of that the last two words of the 4th verse ought to begin the 5th, thus, "In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will to the praise of the glory of His grace," etc.

I remember of reading in a theological work when I was a young lad that there is only one step between a believer and an infidel, but I tell you a solemn fact, which some would do well to ponder, there is only a very small step between the man who tells you there is no such thing as a divine revelation and the man who tells you that any doctrine can be proved from the Bible, and that it is like an old violin on which any tune can be played! I don't know which is most to be dreaded. The subject is a serious one, and deserves our most careful consideration. We are told sometimes that we take *too* narrow a view of things, but for once we shall take a very broad view, and I invite you to stand with me on the confines of creation and see a new world spring into existence. The great I Am, gives the authoritative word and order comes out of chaos, darkness is dispelled by the creation of light. The waters are divided, and bounds set to their surging billows. The sun is given to rule the day, and moon and stars to rule the night, the ocean is filled with teeming life, from the smallest existence to the great Leviathan; earth is clothed with the richest verdure and presently the meadows have their occupants, you hear the lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep upon a thousand hills; beautiful groves spring into existence, and these also have their inhabitants, feathered fowl in abundance of the most gorgeous and varied plumage, and birds of sweetest song, whose warbling notes produce a constant melody. The air is full of the richest perfume from exotic plants; and flowers, in all the beauty of creation's morn, abound everywhere. But where is man? In yonder bower, amidst the

innocence of Eden, are the god-like pair, only a little lower than the angels made; and now the work of creation is complete, and the Creator, and the sons of God who shouted for joy as they saw a new world spring into existence, take their departure, and leave man alone, a fatherless child, a helpless foundling, to look out for himself; and this is infidelity; not atheism, for that does not even admit of a Creator, but modern scepticism that professes to believe in a God, but rejects all divine revelation. What do you think of it? Many of you have seen the engraving entitled "The Mitherless Bairn," a sorrowful sight it is, one that will never be forgotten by a sympathetic mind. How neglected and dejected the poor boy looks, with hanging head and tearful eyes, an object of the deepest commiseration, a wanderer, destitute of a parent's care, instruction or advice. He may roam at will, and at times fancy himself blest by the absence of restraint, but whither can he go for advice, where seek comfort in the hour of disappointment and sorrow?

The beauties of the outward world fade under such contemplation, and presently man sickens and dies. Not much different from this is that other condition of things, namely, the admission of a revelation that reveals nothing, a book of riddles. Life itself an unsolved enigma. The nature of man a mystery, a conjecture, and the future called the great unknown into which men take a leap in the dark. The Book is professedly consulted, but according to their system of exegesis, it might as well not be consulted for the one part contradicts the other, so that it is a choice between two difficulties, uncertain which to believe. The evidence, they think, is about evenly divided, so that it is useless to contend about it; while some in disgust, and others in despair throw the whole thing overboard, and say, "If that is revelation give me infidelity." "I will sooner shut the Book, and shut it forever, and go to the wide field of nature for my religion." and thus infidelity is propagated from day to day, and from year to year.

I am afraid now that those who aforesaid accused us of taking *too* narrow a view of things are beginning to think we are taking altogether *too* broad a view, but we will now return and retrace our steps to Creation's dawn, and this time we will

look at matters and things in the light of revelation, fact instead of fiction.

Again we view man in a state of innocence, with all the felicity of their primeval home and its surroundings; but alas! the beautiful picture soon changes; man has transgressed, and transgressed against such a Creator! One who had provided for him in rich abundance, and beautified and adorned his home, such as no potentate of earth has since enjoyed. But did God desert him? Abandon him as an outcast? consigned to hopeless ruin? No, verily. He follows him with the most tender compassion, and lights the lamps of faith and hope by the cheering announcement that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. Thank God, that light has shown through many dark ages, and still shines, cheering many a lone pilgrim, waiting for the woman's seed, The Christ of God.

In much mercy the guilty pair are excluded from the garden, and the reason assigned was, "Lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever." Oh! merciful God, how gracious, how considerate! But although shut out of the garden, they are not excluded from divine favor; celestial visitors still come to them, and become their teachers and counselors. In view of the promised seed, Divine intercourse is kept up, and Enoch, the seventh from Adam, walked with God, had sweet communion with Him, and he was not; for God took him. And not only celestial visitants were sent with messages of love, but divinely inspired prophets were from time to time granted to instruct the ignorant, warn and admonish the thoughtless; and so God watched over them, as we read in Jere. xxxi. 9, "I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born."

There comes the beauty of a revelation; manifesting God as the compassionate Father of His children, caring for them, watching over them with a parent's solicitude for their welfare. You have seen a fond mother wipe the tears from her child's face, kiss it tenderly, and quiet its sobbing heart: that is parental love. Oh! then think, "A Father of the fatherless, is God." Psalm lxxviii. 5. and thank Him for a divine revelation. He has not only given us a revelation of His will, He has far transcended that; He has revealed to us His own character and

attributes, and condescended to make known to us His purposes; I fear few of us think enough of this. We cannot think enough of it. It is *wonderful* condescension in the infinite to make His plans and purposes known to finite minds, even down to the ages to come, and beings so unworthy at that.

Yes, thank God! He has given us a revelation, and such a revelation, so completely in harmony all the way through. The opening chapters of Genesis, and the closing chapters of Revelation are in complete accord. O, that men could see how utterly worthless a revelation would be that contradicts itself, how unreliable, never to be depended on; a witness who would contradict himself in court would be impeached and his testimony thrown out. It is only the base or the ignorant who contradict themselves, men of no reputation, and it is utter folly to think that the Old Testament and the New are out of harmony; we have only a fuller light in the New, but as much in harmony with the Old as the blaze of the noonday sun is in harmony with the first tints of the morning light that gild the eastern horizon. The morning light shines more and more unto the perfect day.

In considering the question of the nature and destiny of man, one would suppose that it would be no difficult matter to show an intelligent person that the proper way to begin is to find out what is said about man at his creation, and then with that as a settled basis to work from, the whole matter becomes much more easily comprehended and harmonious. Surely every one can see that if the account we have of the creation, and early history of man as given in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd chapters of Genesis shows that he had no immortality at that time, and it certainly does, for what would have been the use of excluding an immortal man from the tree of life, "lest he put forth his hand and take of it and eat and live forever"? I say, if man had no immortality at that time, what extreme folly to try to prove him immortal by such an unreliable witness as the Witch of Endor, or the misplacing of a comma by uninspired men in Christ's answer to the thief's petition to be remembered by Him when He comes in His kingdom, which, if admitted, would be at utter variance with His life's teaching. "This," said He, "is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the

Son and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." John vi. 40. Showing conclusively that everlasting life is *conditional*, and is to be conferred at the resurrection; in view of which none need marvel at Paul's fervid utterance, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth me if the dead rise not. Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die." 1 Cor. xv. 32. Could any man who expected to go to glory at death say that? Could he? Now be candid with yourselves, and O, be candid with the Word of God, for the same will judge you in the last day.

But, says an objector, why do we not find things now as you describe them to have been at the beginning? What has become of celestial visitants that they do not appear now-a-days? And what has become of prophets, does the world not need them now as much as ever? To this we would simply reply, that God does nothing in vain. When the children of Israel got over their wandering in the wilderness, and settled in the land of Canaan, the supply of manna, which had been abundant up to that time ceased. It was no longer needed, and if continued, might have been more of a curse than a blessing; very likely it would have begot indolence, and all its attendant evils. Prophets were continued up till the time of Reformation, when God sent His own Son, His only begotten, His well beloved, which was the culmination; and now we have the Book of Prophecy complete, the writings of the Apostles, and the heavenly life, and teaching of the Son of God, and if men will not hear these, neither will they believe though one should arise from the dead.

In conclusion let me urge on you, one and all, to study carefully and prayerfully the Word of God, the divine revelation. Job said, "I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." Job xxiii. 12, and David said, "How sweet are thy words to my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." Psalm cix. 103. Let us study that Word that we may be filled with its sanctifying power. It softens the stony heart, cleanses the moral leper; gives strength to the weak, comfort to the afflicted, consolation to the mourner, healing balm to the wounded spirit. It is the unfolding of the Divine purpose, the revelation of the Divine will. Amen.

REPROACHES.

“If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.”—1 Peter iv. 14.

In Paul’s day he tells us he and his fellow-believers were “slanderosly reported.” Rom. iii. 8. “They were defamed, they were made as the filth of the world, and treated as the off-scouring of all things.” 1 Cor. iv. 13. Christ Himself was subjected to the same cruel treatment, hence we need not wonder that misrepresentation should be our lot. We have long been treated as a narrow-minded, illiberal people, who look at things only from *one stand-point*, who see only *one side* of the question, and who harp upon one string.

We have borne these unjust reproaches, we trust, in an humble, patient spirit, believing it to be a part of our patrimony, seeing Christ forewarned His followers, saying, “In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” John xvi. 33.

These misrepresentations weigh nothing in the minds of those who have long labored in the cause of truth. Even amidst the severe afflictions and persecutions to which Paul was subjected, and you know they were neither few nor small, he could say, “We glory in tribulations 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.” Rom. v. 3-5. But to the young convert it is very trying to be thus falsified, or slanderously reported, and it is principally to such that I now address myself, in order that I may fortify them, and exhort them to “endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.” 2 Tim. ii. 3. You know the Christian life is a battle, and the armor that has been provided for every one who enlists in this warfare, shows that he is not expected to spend all his time behind bulwarks. In other words, he is not to be all the time on the defensive, there is aggressive work to do, in which his trusty sword will find employment. Eph. vi. 14-17. And to-day we trust that from facts, and from sound reasoning and just argument deduced therefrom, we will be able to show that it is our accusers who are narrow-minded, one-sided in their

representations, and do not take a broad and comprehensive view of things.

It is an incontrovertible fact that the most of earth's inhabitants believe in the immortality of man; now the question very properly arises, On what authority do they believe this? Is it because of their deep research into Divine revelation or on account of their profound study of the nature and constitution of man. or from the accumulated experience of the ages? Nay, for all these testify against them; they exclude the light of reason, and Divine revelation, and hence they have "become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts are darkened" (Rom. i. 21), and all this by shutting themselves up to one testimony, and that wholly unreliable, such as would be excluded from any court in the land, the testimony of a convicted condemned liar and murderer. Christ says, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him; when he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it." John viii. 44. Here is the author of the generally received doctrine of man's inherent immortality, let those who boast themselves of the doctrine take a good look at him: he it was who said, "Ye shall not surely die." "Ye shall be as gods." Gen. iii. 4, 5. This falsehood has been reiterated down through the ages till people have become intoxicated with it. Poets have sung it, ministers have preached it, and a thousand voices are ready to swear to its verity; they say:

"The soul secure in her existence smiles at the drawn dagger, and defies its point. The stars shall fade away, the sun herself grow dim with age, and nature sink in years; but thou shalt flourish in immortal youth, unhurt amidst the war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds!" (*Addison's Cato.*)

"The soul of origin divine,
 God's glorious image, freed from clay,
 In heaven's eternal sphere shall shine,
 A star of day.
 The sun is but a spark of fire,
 A transient meteor in the sky,
 The soul immortal as its sire,
 Shall never die."

(*Montgomery.*)

And thus sinful men have exalted themselves; extolled the dignity of their nature, and magnified their own importance. Their immortal soul is a part of the Divine essence, as enduring as the Eternal.

“Ye shall not surely die,” “Ye shall be as gods,” is the teaching of their Oracle, and an Apostate Church, and a bewitched world have taken up the refrain, and shout aloud, “There is no such thing as death.” If there is no such thing as death, then Christ had no need to die that He might abolish it. That which has no existence, does not require to be abolished; then also the Prophet Hosea must have been greatly mistaken when he wrote, “I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death. O, Death, I will be thy plagues; O, Grave, I will be thy destruction.” Hosea xiii. 14.

The Jewish nation was one-sided and narrow-minded, they gave heed to the traditions of uninspired men, and neglected the testimony of God’s prophets, and consequently rejected the Messiah when He came; their eyes were closed to His stupendous miracles, and their ears were dull of hearing as to His sublime teaching; as far as they were concerned there might as well never have been any prophets, never have been a Messiah.

The Church of Rome, with its worldly display, its priestly power, its image-worshiping votaries, although it lays claim to be the Mother Church, is narrow-minded and bigoted, rejecting as it does, justification by faith, and substituting a servile ritual and works of penance, and a corrupting, degrading confessional unworthy of the confidence of any intelligent mind.

And what shall we say of Protestantism with its boasted enlightenment and liberality, its broad views and Christian charity? What a conglomeration of conflicting and contradictory testimony and tenets it presents!

We have only time at present to glance at two of its most widely apart elements, Calvinism and Universalism. Calvinism on the one hand, with its doctrines of election and reprobation, fore-ordination and eternal torment, which involved in its cruel grasp infants of a span long, whose unmitigated suffering shall know no end; going on in unceasing severity everlastingly. What a sickening, appalling religion that is no one can know only those who have experienced its blighting influence. I hon-

estly believe that system has been productive of more infidelity and insanity than all others put together.

On the other hand is Universalism, with its deceptive sophistry, alluring the uninformed and the unguarded into its bewitching snare. Now who cannot discern the narrowness of both of those systems; they both alike believe the first branch of the serpent's lie, "Ye shall not surely die." The Universalist believes the second branch, "Ye shall be as gods," but the Calvinist, with his forbidding religion, would consign the largest portion of the human race to the society of devils. They are ever talking about the sovereignty of God, but they seem to forget to discriminate between a sovereign God and a sovereign monster.

Neither of these religions do justice to the character of God, and both alike show their ignorance of His plans and purposes. The Calvinist ignores the *loving kindness*, and the *tender mercy* of Jehovah, which he tells us are over all His works, and the Universalist rules out His justice, His hatred of sin, and His revealed purpose that all the wicked will He destroy. They will be consumed, root and branch, as chaff, as tow, as "the fat of lambs shall they consume; into smoke shall they consume away." Psalm xxxvii. 20.

The Calvinist and the Universalist are both alike narrow in their vision, they lack a comprehensive knowledge of God's plans and purposes.

We now come to the difficult part of our subject, and why difficult? Is it because it is not illuminated by Divine revelation or that it is difficult of comprehension? No, it is neither of these. Divine revelation makes the subject clear as a sunbeam, and it is so simple that a child may comprehend it. Wherein then is the difficulty? Simply in this, that when we speak of the unity of Divine teaching and the beautiful harmony in God's Word, we are immediately charged with being conceited, wanting in humility, vain of our own knowledge, self-righteous and presumptuous. May God help us to steer clear of these dreadful charges, and at the same time not shut our mouths in extolling the goodness of our God in giving such a revelation of His mind and will as is comprehensible, and which represents the perfect harmony of His attributes, nothing clashing, nothing

discordant, and that His past and present dealings with His creature man vindicate His character as so revealed; and His purposes yet future, but graciously made known, are in perfect consonance therewith; no jarring note, or discordant sound can mar the universal symphony.

In His dealings with us "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Psalm lxxxv. 10. And when the final consummation comes, those who have gotten the victory will make the arches of heaven ring with the song of rejoicing, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways thou King of saints." Rev. xv. 3.

Now, for the sake of consistency and truth will you tell me who are the narrow-minded ones? Those who distort God's truth with their own wild fancy starting on a wrong basis, and landing in a labyrinth of confusion; to whose perverted judgment everything is involved in deep mystery, and to whom death is a leap in the dark, if they even admit there is such a thing as death. I say whether are those the narrow-minded ones, or the child of God who takes God's Word as his authority in all things, his chart and compass on the voyage of life, who believes in the Bible account of the creation of man, and rejects the immortal soul dogma as an invention of Satan, and who believes that the expulsion of man from Paradise was an act of kindness on the part of God, and for the purpose stated. "Lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever." Gen. iii. 22. Who believes that the declaration that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head is the rudiment of the Gospel; that the call of Abraham and his separation from his kindred and his country was a further unfolding of the same purpose; that the Law added later, because of transgression, was given for a limited time, and for a specific purpose, and was done away in Christ, who was the seed promised; the only begotten of the Father; that He suffered and died on our behalf, arose from the dead, as the first-fruits of them that sleep, a pledge and earnest of the resurrection of His people; that He is now at His Father's right hand, as their High-Priest and Intercessor, and that He is coming again in power and great glory, to establish

His throne and kingdom, and that His risen and changed saints will be associated with Him in the government of the world, and for the final subjugation of all evil? Can the faith and hope that embraces all these stupendous events, and much more, be characterized as indicating a narrow mind, and dilating on the glorious things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, as harping on one string? Why do men dare to speak so of a subject of such unbounded circumference, extending into the ages of eternity? If narrow, then Paul must have been very narrow-minded, as the closing words of the Acts of the Apostles inform us that he dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, in Rome, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him." Acts xxviii. 30.

And I have no doubt he kept it up so long as he enjoyed his liberty, for that was ever nearest his heart, as is evinced by the last letter he ever wrote, in which he enjoined Timothy to "*Preach the Word.*" 2 Tim. iv. 2. And one thing is very certain, if he were alive now, the "glorious Gospel of the blessed God" would be his enrapturing, all-absorbing theme. 1 Tim. i. 11.

I tell you solemnly in the sight of God, that the mind that would characterize such teaching as narrow is far from being in harmony with the truth and needs enlightenment.

We have long borne those sneers and taunts from an unenlightened religious community, unenlightened, I mean, in God's Word, His plans and purposes; they lay claim to great liberality because they aver it matters not what you believe, so long as you are sincere. They boast of their enlightenment and broad views, because they are full of Socratic and Platonic fancies about the dignity of their own nature, and some of them are bold enough to hold out to their fellow-men hopes of reformation in the great beyond, where, they say, under more favorable conditions they "will be forced forward by the inevitable law of progress."

They are oftentimes very religious, claiming to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit, but if they truly were, they would not

reject the Spirit's teaching as they do. This is the unfailing touch-stone by which to try all such pretensions.

Perhaps one reason why those belonging to the Apostasy are considered as broad-minded is because their clergymen treat of so many different subjects in their public discourses, but that is easily accounted for. They have no clear conception of the Gospel of Christ, justification by faith, and the law of pardon. The Resurrection is with them a doubtful theme, their whole system is involved in mystery, hence they have to wander over creation for subjects to speak on. An elder in a Presbyterian church told me his minister lectured mostly on the historic parts of the Bible; and I thought he showed wisdom in doing so, for on such subjects he would not betray his ignorance so much.

The Higher Criticism is a fruitful theme for some, while others delight in the subject of Evolution and in throwing doubts on the miracles of the Bible. Right here I will insert a criticism I wrote for the *Cleveland Leader*, entitled:

"THE HIGHER CRITICISM."

To the Editor of the Leader.

In your paper of the 21st inst., your readers are favored with a synopsis of the first of a series of lectures by the Rev. Dr. Sprecher, on "Higher Criticism," which we are informed "simply means careful study."

This is comforting to begin with, for no one will question the need of more careful study of the word; but a perusal of the conspectus does not show the careful study that we might expect from such a specious announcement at the beginning. Instead of careful study we find unproved assertions and illogical conclusions in abundance.

The doctor informs us that "it is a very curious thing that until within a few months the science of the higher criticism was almost entirely unknown to the laity of the American Christian Church; it had been developing in Europe, however, for several hundred years, until now it has the assent of the entire learned world on the other side of the water." Now, Mr. Editor, is this not a good reason why we should look upon it with suspicion? It has been imported from a country which to-day is threatened with internal disruption by Socialists

and Anarchists. That is the birthplace and home of this new system. Besides is it not an unkind reflection on the clergymen of our country? Are they behind in learning? Have they in common with the laity here been almost entirely ignorant of "the science of the higher criticism" or have they, who are expected to instruct the laity, been guilty of keeping them in ignorance of a science which promises so much? Which horn of this dilemma will the learned doctor choose?

It is very questionable integrity for a man holding the position of a public teacher to hold exoteric and esoteric doctrine. And if our public teachers have all this time been guilty of insincerity, is it not calculated to shake our confidence in their teaching, and tell them to take their hands and their knives off the good old book, which for centuries has withstood the assaults of infidelity, and been the stay and comfort for many weary wanderers, guiding their feet in the paths of righteousness and truth? But we are told this "criticism does not mean a hostile attack, but careful study." It comes in the guise of a friend to bestow a favor, not to perpetuate an injury. While we accept the good intentions with thanks, we would respectfully decline the proffered favor from the sample that has been given us. Here is a specimen. The doctor says: "I will tell you what is absolutely true about the Bible. Moses did not write Genesis." He knows this to be a positive fact, and speaks with all the assurance of a contemporary of Moses who had the denial of the authorship from Moses' own lips. We would like to know from the doctor whether he or his lynx-eyed compeers has discovered who did write it. Have they found one more capable? Moses has some pretty good endorsers. Stephen says: "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds." Acts vii. 22. May not his ability as a writer account for the variety of style, which has caused the critics, perhaps unwisely, to adopt the compost theory? Do we not all know some very able authors of varied style in their compositions? The doctor says, "In one style God is called Jehovah, and in another Elohim. Students have noticed that this is quite a difference in an important particular," and hence he concludes, "If the same man wrote both, would he not once in a while have stumbled on the word he used before?" Very likely an uninspired

man would have so "stumbled," but Moses did not stumble in the words he used. How do I know this? Because the Lord said unto Moses: "I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say," Exod. iv. 12, and knowing this we can account for his discrimination in using the words Elohim, Adonai, and Jehovah, without resorting to the hypothesis of different authors. Science overlooks God's methods of doing things, and therefore blunders.

Jeremiah said: "The Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." Jer. i. 9. And Isaiah said: "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned that I should know how to speak." Isaiah l. 4. And it would be well for our so-called scientists to ponder what he says in the eleventh verse: "Behold all ye that kindle a fire and compass yourselves about with sparks. Walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand: ye shall lie down in sorrow."

In this connection I would suggest to the higher critics that they might find it profitable to consider Psalm cx. 1, where "Jehovah said unto Adonai, Sit thou at my right hand," and then they may be better able to appreciate Moses' discrimination in using the words Elohim, Adonai, and Jehovah. Our higher critics have discovered that Moses did not write the entire Pentateuch. Will they kindly tell us what parts he did write? Christ's forerunner said positively the "Law was given by Moses," John i. 17, and He who spake as never man spake said: "Did not Moses give you the law," John vii. 19. Our critics may say this language is interrogatory, but if their criticism means more careful study let them read on to the 23d verse where Christ emphatically calls it 'the law of Moses.'

The doctor further says, "Moses never saw the Pentateuch as we have it, and every sane man should see it in this way." This must be very startling to our Governor and legislators in consideration of the present crowded condition of our insane asylums. Let them please take notice.

Politics and moral essays engage the attention of the largest number, anything or everything to entertain an audience, and gather a crowd.

The men of Athens whom Paul addressed imagined themselves very enlightened, and no doubt they were, in the doctrines of Socrates and Plato; they called Paul a babbler, that is an idle talker, while nothing could have been further from the truth; and some thought him a setter forth of strange gods, because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. Acts xvii. 18. But how narrow, how bigoted, how blinded they were, compared with the man they criticised, he who in his defence before Felix said he believed all things which are written in the Law, and in the Prophets, and had hope towards God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead both of the just, and the unjust. Acts xxiv. 14. HERE was breadth and scope enough for the great mind of Paul to dwell upon. The promises made of God unto the fathers, confirmed on sundry occasions, dwelt upon by all the holy Prophets, sung by David and Isaiah in lofty strains, and elaborated in the Gospel message by Christ and His apostles, was enough for Paul, a message that for divine power ought to thrill every heart, in every land on earth's surface. Narrow minded indeed! let those making the charge hang their heads in very shame and weep bitter tears of penitence until they are forgiven.

I do not mean to say that the enlightened religious teacher is debarred from speaking on other subjects than those indicated; far from it, but I mean the Gospel of Christ, and the subjects that cluster around it should claim his first and chiefest attention, and should ever be welcome to his hearers.

What if we do know the Gospel in all its details; should that lessen our interest in it? If we think it is only needed for converting purposes we make a grand mistake; it has sustaining, purifying power as well. The love of God in Christ is the motive power of the Gospel; and through the endless ages of eternity the redeemed ones will delight to dwell in sweet contemplation on the love of God manifested in Christ Jesus. And why not? They owe their very existence to it; and in one sense we owe our present existence to it to-day. Why? Because, but for the goodness and forbearance of God, the whole race would have become extinct.

What is there in all this to cause any one to be puffed up? Nay rather should it not fill us with the deepest humility, for what have we that we have not received? Even we ourselves,

are not our own, we have been bought with a price! O, that this were more deeply impressed on all our minds, if it were, we would not so often have cause to complain of lukewarmness and indifference.

I must not extend this address further; but I want to fortify all, and especially the young converts, by again reminding them of the language of Peter. "If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye." 1 Peter iv. 14.

May we all give good heed to Paul's charge to Timothy and "Endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim. ii. 3), ever "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, for consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself lest ye be *wearied* and *faint* in your minds." Heb. xii. 2. O, what a teacher, and what an example to follow! and one who has such a claim on our affections and our service. O, let us not be weary or faint hearted. My dear young converts, I beseech you *falter not* in your adherence to Christ and to the sublime truths of the Gospel you have learned. Your present well-being and everlasting existence depend upon it. Remember your separation from an ungodly world, and an apostate Church, and maintain that separation. God strengthen you, and grant that you may remain faithful and be crowned with life in the kingdom of His dear Son. Amen.

CHAPTER IV.

ADDRESS AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD.

THE KING OF THE JEWS.

WHY are we here to-day? What has brought us here? We must have some motive. All intelligent people have a reason for what they do.

Go, ask the shepherds who came to Bethlehem to see Him who born King of the Jews, what brought them hither? Did they come of their own accord, from the volitions of their own minds, or did they follow divine instructions? The answer comes from the angel's message, "Unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord."

"And it came to pass as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass. Which the Lord hath made known unto us," and they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger." Luke ii. 11, 15.

Could any one have persuaded those men that they were the victims of a delusion? No, indeed. They heard the message, came with haste, and found the object of their search, and they stumbled not at the lowly condition of the child, but they made known abroad the saying that was told them concerning this child. They wanted others to share in the good message, and the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. Luke ii. 20.

The story of His birth is not better authenticated than the narrative of His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension to glory. Did He institute the ordinance we have just been observing? Did He say, "This do in remembrance of me?"

The ordinance is then of divine appointment even as Paul said, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." 1 Cor. xi. 23. And the wisdom, the love and

goodness of the Lord is manifested in a marked degree in this ordinance. He knew the hearts of all men, "and needed not that any should testify of man for He knew what was in man." John ii. 25. He understood what was suited to our weak condition, knew how apt we are to forget, how liable to become cold and indifferent, knew that the things of time and sense, if allowed, would crowd out the spiritual and the eternal.

The requirement is not a grievous one, not difficult to observe. His yoke is easy, and His burden is light, but let us ever remember that this and every other service that He requires of us, is for our good. "He knows the frailty of our frame, and remembers that we are dust." Does He ask us to take up our cross and follow Him, it is for our good. And if we do not do this He tells us we cannot be His disciple. The lesson is obvious. The flesh needs crucifying. If ye live after the flesh, to gratify its desires and ambitions, ye shall die. The spiritual life will never be developed in you, "for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary, the one to the other." Gal. v. 17.

"If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Rom. viii. 13.

By remembering Christ's self-denying life, His complete abnegation, and unreserved resignation to the Father's will, we have the greatest, and the grandest object-lesson the world ever beheld.

Besides He knows that we are social beings, we desire human intercourse, human sympathy, and He intends this shall be gratified by meeting with those who fear His name, and who speak often one to another, speak of their faith, their hope, their divine expectations, and in this way cheer, comfort and exhort one another. The Lord gives the greatest encouragement to this in the words of the Prophet Malachi, which say, "And the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name, and they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

In this way the exhortation of Paul to the church at Thessa-

lonica, is obeyed, "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another even as also ye do." 1 Thess. v. 11.

See also the words of Jude to the same effect. "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Jude 20, 21.

How can the church better keep itself in the love of God than by meditating on and talking of His love as manifested in the person of His Son Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us that we might live through Him. Is not this a soul-inspiring faith, one that purifies the heart, warms the affections, promotes zeal and enthusiasm in the Master's work, strengthens resolution, banishes doubts and fears begotten of a cold lifeless formality; the insipid religion which has no "Thus saith the Lord," as a foundation to rest upon?

Christ knew His people would find plenty of opposing influence in the world to cool their ardor, dampen their zeal, and question their faith, by speaking of it as narrow and bigoted, lacking breadth and elasticity. Suggesting that zeal, devotion and enthusiasm has often been misplaced and misapplied, and that after all they may possibly be mistaken.

It is not to be wondered at that those who have not sufficiently tested the foundation of their faith should speak in that way, and we pity such with all our heart, but Christ has provided against all such allurements by the abundant admonitions in His word, by which His people are warned against being turned away from the hope of the Gospel, and admonished to steadfastness. "Therefore, my beloved brethren," says Paul, "be ye steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. xv. 58.

The world has many allurements, may fascinations to those who have not put on the whole armor of God, they and they alone are steeled against the blandishments of the adversary. The apostle knew the helps to steadfastness, when he wrote to the Hebrews in this way. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering: for *He is faithful* that promised, and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good

works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Heb. x. 23-25. Well might the apostle base the strength of his argument on the *faithfulness* of God. Our unbelief or unfaithfulness will work our own ruin, but it will not frustrate God's plans, or hinder the accomplishment of His purposes.

"It is a faithful saying, for if we be dead with Him we shall also live with Him; if we suffer we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He will also deny us; if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful, he cannot deny Himself." 2 Tim. ii. 11.

Also in his letter to Titus, Paul shows there are various ways of denying Christ. "Some profess that they know God, but in *works* they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." Titus i. 16. A form of godliness without the power will be of no avail, and from such we are commanded to turn away. 2 Tim. iii. 5. It is a fearful thing to deny Christ in any way whether by apostasy from the faith, or by wicked works, or by lukewarmness, and indifference. His words are, "Whosoever shall deny me before men him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven," but to cheer the child of God, and strengthen him to endure shame and reproach for the name and doctrine of Christ, He adds, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Matt. x. 32. O, is not that sufficient to strengthen and encourage us to endure for His name's sake? The glorious anticipation of Christ owning and confessing us before His Father may well sustain us under sickness, trials, scorn and misrepresentations incident to the present life, but in order to have this blessed assurance we must live ever near Him, drink deep into His Spirit, having His word dwelling in us feed upon it, incorporate it into our spiritual life. It will not do to follow Him afar off. Peter's sad denial shows the folly of that course. To risk it is to court disaster and ruin.

As an officer of this Church I tremble lest any should fall away without the most urgent entreaties to repent, return and live.

Brethren, as we are daily having so many examples of the shortness and uncertainty of life, even if the Master does not come speedily, our time will not be long. Let us work earnestly, vigorously while it is called to-day for the night cometh in which no man can work. Let us give all diligence to make our calling and election sure.

Even pure minds need to be stirred up, as Peter in his second epistle showed, "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." 2 Peter iii. 1. God's commandments are not grievous, to them that love Him, and moreover by them are His servants warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward. Psalm xix. 11.

THE LAST TRAGIC SCENES.

The ordinance we have been observing is fraught with many solemn lessons. The night on which it was instituted was a very sad one.

Christ knew that His hour was come; the hour He had long been anticipating, as we find by the frequent mention He had made of it. At one time He said, I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished. Luke xii. 50. And again we read, "Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge, and to crucify Him. And the third day He shall rise again." Matt. xx. 17-19. And on another occasion He said, "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour, but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name." John xii. 27. Again, when He sat down with the twelve at the last passover feast, and as He looked at the little band, with what deep emotion must He have given utterance to the words, "Verily I say unto you that one of you shall betray me." Need we wonder that they were exceeding sorrowful? Why the reading of it, even at this late day is calculated to make any sensitive disposi-

tion sorrowful. But think of their feelings when they were informed, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night."

It is true, Peter protested, "Though all shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended." "Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee." Likewise also said all the disciples. This must have yielded little comfort to the Savior, knowing as He did what the outcome would be.

The climax of sorrow was reached a few hours later when in sad Gethsemane He exclaimed, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." This sorrow voiced itself in the petition, "O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." And finding His disciples fast asleep, He saith unto Peter, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour." Matt. xxvi. 38. You that I have watched over with tender solicitude these three years and a half, took you into my confidence, and made known to you the Father's will, could ye not watch with me one short hour? Then it was that "being in an agony He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Luke xxii. 44. But what of the prediction, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night." How did Peter and the rest keep their pledge, "Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee." What did the sequel show? Peter indeed, showed a somewhat daring spirit when he drew his sword and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear. but as Jesus was led away to Caiaphas, the high priest, Peter followed Him afar off. Here was the first fatal error, and a few hours later he *thrice* denied that he knew Him. What a spectacle!! And what of the other disciples who joined with Peter in protestations of devotion to the Master? Why, "They all forsook Him and fled." Matt. xxvi. 56. Forsook whom? A sinful mortal like themselves, whose weakness, shortcomings and eccentricities had led Him into some extravagant notions, or imprudent actions which could not be justified, so that they had some pretense for their conduct in forsaking Him? No, no. They forsook the spotless Son of God, the incarnation of all goodness, the embodiment of every heavenly virtue! Forsook Him? Yes, forsook Him whose voice rebuked disease, cast out demons, stilled the stormy ocean's wave, and raised the dead. They

forsook Him and fled. Strange infatuation. What a solemn warning to all of us! How much need for humility and watchfulness! And what a voice of thunder to any who may be becoming lukewarm, cold, or indifferent. Following Christ afar off is too often the prelude to denying Him altogether. One more step in the downward course.

There is, however, another lesson to be drawn from this painful history which should not be overlooked, and justice demands that it be carefully considered. It is this. It is no uncommon thing to hear people say, "If your faith is the only sound one, or if it is so much better than other peoples, how does it come that so many of your folks relapse into their former ways? Your people do not seem to be any more stable than those of other Churches. Why should you then claim so much more for your faith? This has the appearance of sound argument, and for the time being your questioner seems to think he has silenced you. Now to reply: Justice is a great thing, every one commends it. It is an element in the divine character which stands out conspicuously. A lack of this element unfits any one for being a righteous judge. Well we grant that some who apparently embrace the truth fall away. This is the case *now*, and ever has been, but does that indicate something wrong merely? Is there any inherent defect in the faith, has it lost with the faith, or with the person merely? Is there any inherent defect in the faith, has it lost its power? Is the Gospel no longer the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth? This properly enters into the solution of this question. In other words, If a declension among some who have heard the truth from our lips would indicate that the faith we teach is unsound, what would a declension among Christ's own disciples prove? Yet the history shows that of those who heard the truth from His own lips, many went back, and walked no more with Him. And of the chosen twelve, as we have seen, one betrayed Him, one *thrice* denied Him, and they all forsook Him and fled. But no one thinks of blaming the doctrine, or charging the instability of the disciples to that account.

It is not the faith that is at fault but the individual who

proves untrue to his convictions of truth and duty, makes shipwreck of the faith, and denies the Lord that bought him.

Sometime ago a man said to one of our people, "I was at the penitentiary the other day and I saw a man there who believes as you do, that man is not immortal, and that death is the wages of sin. There now, does that not show you the tendency of that doctrine, and that if men do not believe in eternal torment, they will fall into crime?" My friend replied, "Well, I am very sorry that a man holding that belief has fallen into crime, but what about all the others who were in the same penitentiary, were they not all of your way of thinking? and if so, what does that show of the restraining influence of the doctrine of eternal torment?" and that put a quietus on the penitentiary question.

The truth of the matter is simply this, man by nature and practice is a sinful creature. God in His great goodness has instituted certain means by which he may be saved, and has designated the Gospel as the power he uses for that purpose, and because certain individuals professing to believe the Gospel have become recreant, must our faith in the Gospel be diminished thereby? Such a conclusion would be unwise, and unreasonable.

If five out of every hundred should fall away, or twenty-five, or fifty, it would be a very painful experience, but it would not lessen my faith in the Gospel, or its saving power, or prevent me from proclaiming it abroad as God's good message.

In the parable Christ spoke of the sower, who went forth to sow, ought of itself to convince us that we may expect many failures. Some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up; some fell upon stony places where they had no deepness of earth, and when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away; and some fell among thorns and the thorns sprung up and choked them; and some fell into good ground and brought forth fruit, some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty fold. Here we have *four* descriptions of hearers.

1. The wayside hearers.
2. The stony ground hearers.
3. Those choked by the thorns, and
4. The good ground.

From this we see that there are many chances that the seed sown will never come to maturity. I tell you failures are very painful, and each one has a duty to perform in trying to prevent them, but why should any one's faith be diminished because of the inconsistency of professors? If I should apostatize, why should that diminish your faith? Your faith is in God, not in me; and if one-half of you should apostatize, why should my faith be lessened thereby or why should I be relieved of my duty of still proclaiming God's method of saving men?

Paul, in his second letter to Timothy says: "It is a faithful saying, for if we be dead with Him we shall also live with Him. If we suffer we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him He also will deny us. If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself." 2 Tim. ii. 11.

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It is a fearful thing to deny Christ, whether by apostasy from the faith, or by wicked works. His words are, "Whosoever shall deny me before men him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven," but to cheer the child of God, and strengthen him to endure shame and reproach for the name and doctrine of Christ, He adds, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Matt. x. 32. Oh, is that not sufficient to meet every emergency? The glorious anticipation of Christ owning and confessing us before His Father may well sustain us under sickness, trials, scorn, and misrepresentations, incident to the present life; but in order to have this blessed assurance, we must live ever near Him, drink deep into His Spirit, have His word dwelling in us, feed upon it, incorporate it into our spiritual life. It will not do to follow Him afar off.

May we strive above all things to have His divine approval, to have the light of His countenance shining around our pathway, and then whatever our lot in life may be, whether prosperous or adverse, whether we have many or few trials to bear, with the divine recognition and approbation we will have nothing to fear.

May this be our happy lot.

In conclusion. While we should ever extol and magnify the means God has graciously appointed for man's redemption, and rejoice and glory in our own emancipation, let us avoid all vain-glory and self-exaltation, seeing we have not attained even to our present imperfect condition through any superiority in ourselves; ever remembering Paul's injunction, Let nothing be done through strife, or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, saying to ourselves, "Who maketh thee to differ from another, and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" And Paul's question comes in here opportunely, "Where is boasting then? It is excluded." Completely, and forever excluded, and let us not forget that in the highest position we can ever attain to we will be constrained to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

SELF-SACRIFICE.

This is a world of painful separations. The fondest ties of friendship and affection are soon—too soon, snapped asunder, leaving darkness and sorrow where before was sunshine and gladness. None are exempt from these sad vicissitudes. There is no home so bright to-day, that may not to-morrow be darkened by sorrow. Christ had gathered a little band of followers around Him, and His tender affection for them can be gathered from His loving addresses to them from time to time.

His prophetic eye foresaw the separation that was about to come, and gently did He break the intelligence to them. A few hints now and then of the dark cloud that would overshadow them, mingled with comforting assurances of a brighter day soon to dawn, in order to support their drooping spirits.

No mother ever watched over her offspring with so much self-sacrificing devotion as did Christ over the little band He had chosen out of the world. But He wanted them at all times

to realize, and remember this separation. "Ye have not chosen me," said He, "but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you." Christ's work always had reference to that which is enduring—permanent. The superficial had no place in His mind, and He wants His people, in this respect, as in all others, to be like-minded with Himself, to seek for the enduring.

It is not enough that they bring forth fruit, but it is equally important that their fruit should remain, otherwise they shall suffer loss, and that would be unprofitable for them. I do not know whether we are all as deeply impressed with this lesson of Christ's as we ought to be. Sometimes I fear we sow the seed in a casual way, without watering it with our tears and our prayers. We rejoice at accessions to our numbers, and it is right and proper that we should do so, for a soul to have his eyes opened, and spiritually to see the light of day, is surely cause for rejoicing, but are we grieved and distressed in soul and spirit as we ought to be, when we see floating fragments around us, which indicate a shipwreck somewhere? Ah, then let the words of Christ impress us, when He said, "And that your fruit may remain."

Stability is the great thing needed in this warfare, for "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." The unstable man on the contrary is like the ocean-tossed billow. Some of you may have stood on the ocean's beach, or on the banks of your own Lake Erie, and seen the waves tossed hither and thither by the sport of the wind, and such is man impelled by external influences and devoid of power within. James says, "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." What a fearful warning this is!!

But to return to Christ's tender way of dealing with His disciples, He must often have been sorely tried at their obtuseness and slowness to receive His teaching, giving them here a little and there a little as they could receive it. But even at the end of His three years ministry He had to say, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now,

howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak, and He will show you things to come."

This He said unto them after He told them that He was about to leave them, and that in the world they would suffer sore persecution for His name, and He adds, "These things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you, but now I go my way to Him that sent me and none of you asketh me, whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart." No wonder they were downcast and sorrowful at the thought of separation from such a benefactor.

The language "none of you asketh me whither goest thou," shows very clearly how He was watching their emotions. He evidently expected the enquiry; but in this case it may have been as it often is, intense sorrow clouds the mind, and renders it unfit for intellectual activity. But be this as it may the sympathetic sentence followed. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you. But if I depart I will send Him unto you."

What a never-failing source of comfort this is to His people in His absence, "It is expedient for you that I go away." I am going away on your account, and for your benefit. 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 unto myself. The separation will not be long, but the reunion when it comes will be permanent.

Yes, blessed Savior! All He has ever done and suffered has been on account of His people, and it well becomes us to remember Him, not only on the first day of the week, when we come around this board, but every day, and every hour.

Who is so worthy of being remembered by us?

For us He came into the world, and endured many privations, hunger, thirst, fatigue, and above all the contradiction of sinners against Himself. For us He agonized in Gethsemane where His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. For us He bled and died on Calvary's cross, and

entered the dark portals of the tomb, and for our justification He was raised from the dead, and for us He ascended to the right hand of the Father, and the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost is the proof of His being there to appear in the presence of God for us, as our great High Priest and Mediator, and He comes again to receive His people, and glorify them with Himself.

His whole history has been one of self-sacrificing devotion, without a parallel; and shall we honor, and extol Him as the Son of the living God, the only begotten of the Father by miraculous conception, higher than the kings of the earth, being made so much better than the angels, as He hath *by inheritance* obtained a more excellent name than they? Or shall we degrade Him, and expose, and advertise our own folly and unbelief by doing as some deluded men do, speak of Him as the son of Joseph?

Apart from the unequivocal, positive statement given in the 1st chapter of Luke, of His conception and birth, and the frequency with which He is spoken of as the only begotten of the Father, there is enough in His history, to convince any thoughtful mind that no son of human parentage ever rose to such an altitude, and enough to make all join in the exclamation of the Roman Centurion, "Truly this was the Son of God."

The love of God would not have been very much manifested in giving the son of Joseph, or somebody else's son to die for us, but John says, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us because that God sent His only begotten Son in the world, that we might live through Him." 1 John iv. 9.

I hope those presumptuous vain talkers will be sharply rebuked by some one for their unblushing effrontery.

I have already spoken of Christ appearing in the presence of God for us, and oh, I wish I could impress you more with the thought of how *faithfully* He performs that work, and how *perfectly*. The writer to the Hebrews calls upon all the holy brethren to "consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him that appointed Him; and speaks of Him as a merciful, and a faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God." "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but

into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." He is our representative there, and ought we not to be His representatives here on earth? We certainly will be if we are the members of His body.

In Peter's 1st epistle to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia he says, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation that ye should shew forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." 1. Pet. ii. 9.

This is such an imposing trust it almost makes one tremble to think of it, and utterly ashamed at our poor representation. What a sorry exhibit we have made of the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light! Yet there is no denying of the fact that those who are Christ's are not only expected to be light-bearers but to be patterns of good works. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." His adopted children are called children of the light, and are exhorted to put on the armor of light (Rom xiii. 12), and to "Walk as children of the light." Eph. v. 8.

Paul in his letter to the Philippians reminds them that they were to "shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." Phil. ii. 15. What a charge to be entrusted with! Let us ask ourselves individually how are we discharging the duties of this trust? This is a solemn question, and we cannot afford to evade it, or answer it lightly. Christ is our representative in heaven, and oh, how perfect and how faithful He is! How are we representing His cause in His absence? Are we ashamed at our own imperfection and lack of faithful performance of duty in the past? Let us resolve anew, with God's help, to be more earnest, more diligent in the future, that we may "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel." Phil. i. 27.

FALSE DOCTRINE.

After scenes of trial, of turmoil, gloom and uncertainty in the world of business, we meet together in this family capacity to remember our once crucified, but now risen and exalted Savior; and if we realize even in a very imperfect degree the blessedness of our relationship to Him, and the family called

by His name, our weekly reunions ought to be strengthening and comforting, and *will be*, in proportion to our spiritual preparation to receive instruction; minds seeking more enlightenment in the knowledge of divine things, hearts earnestly desiring a growing conformity to the mind and will of our Heavenly Father. Unless we have this preparation, this teachable Spirit, we cannot expect to profit. Even the secular world recognizes this affinity, and duly estimates its importance, for we often hear them speak of being *in touch* with this or that organization or undertaking; meaning thereby to be in close connection with it—in sympathy with it.

It is true there is much at the present time to cause discouragement; the love of some evidently waxing cold, and they becoming lukewarm and indifferent, and under circumstances which can in no way allow an excuse or an apology for such a condition, if indeed any condition could at any time be urged as an excuse for indifference.

The object of our meeting together ought to be to promote growth in the body, increase of zeal, faith, endurance, patience and steadfastness, for we need to be stirred up, and put in remembrance, of our many privileges and our obligations as well, for we cannot expect privileges without assuming obligations and responsibilities.

Peter believed in stirring up the pure minds of the early converts in this way, as he uses this expression twice in his second epistle addressed to those who had “obtained like precious faith.” Where he exhorts them to cultivate every Christian virtue in order that they be not idle nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; assuring them that they, the apostles, had not followed cunningly devised fables when they made known to them the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and exhorting them to give good heed to the sure word of prophecy, as unto a light shining in a dark place until the day dawn and the day-star arise.

If ever that exhortation was necessary it is at the present time of instability and unbelief, when the seeds of error are being sown broadcast in our land.

The events of the past few weeks have impressed my mind more deeply with the memorable address of Paul to the elders

of the church at Ephesus, wherein he says, "For I know this that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." No wonder with such a picture before his mind that we find him saying that "for the space of three years he warned every one, night and day with tears." Methinks were he here now the briny tears of sorrow would again flow for human folly, and he would again take up the plaintive cry, "O, foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you."

Every now and then in the history of the past half century the prediction of Paul has been verified. In my own short experience I have had to battle against four grievous delusions, some of which have been the means of rending many churches.

1. Came the wide spread snare of the mortal resurrection of the saints, a theory as baseless as the absurdities they had left behind in the Babel of confusion from which they had come out a few years previous, and equally devoid of Scripture testimony to support it, and not only so but in direct opposition to the plainest Scripture teaching, but its advocates were so infatuated that few churches escaped its rending, blighting influence. After this came the Russell and Patton delusion that Christ had already come, and was then present in the world, though invisible to mortal vision and that Christ and His Rulers would ever be invisible to the subjects of the kingdom—with a whole lot of other fallacies sandwiched in between.

About the same time, and supported by the same authority, came the fascinating delusion of the larger hope, which is very attractive to the unenlightened—unrenewed mind. The Word of God has been corrupted to sustain the theory that all men will eventually be restored. The supporters of this delusion are bold to declare that "some men may sink so low in vice, and become so debased that nothing can be done for them till they are removed to an unknown world, where, under a brighter clime, and more favorable circumstances, they will be *forced* forward by the inevitable law of progress." Who can read this without shuddering at the thought that men high in the religious world are thus alluring souls to destruction. The poison of Asps is under their tongue. Why do people not stop

to think of the absurdity of men dilating in flowery language, about the brighter clime, and laws of progress of what they themselves term an unknown world; a world that only exists in their vapory imagination, and the clime, and laws of which, however luminous they may appear to their diseased imagination, are equally gaseous and shadowy.

And now to-day, so many of our own homes are being flooded with a polluted literature, setting forth that the only begotten Son of God and thrice acknowledged by the Father as such, was neither more nor less than the son of Joseph! What audacity those men have! How degrading! How dishonoring to God who has given us a revelation of His mind and will, to trample it under their feet, and defame the future Ruler of the universe. If any one will aid those men in subscribing for, or in circulating any of their literature they are in the sight of God and man, aiding and abetting them. If the shepherd who will not warn the flock of approaching danger will be held responsible, I want to do my whole duty in this, by raising a note of warning, while I pray God that this flock and all His scattered children everywhere may be protected in these days of trial, preserved blameless, and presented spotless at the coming of our adorable Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Seeing that such dangers abound, let us "give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." These are times of great danger, and especially to the young unsuspecting minds, which need to be fortified by diligent study of the Word, and earnest prayer, and not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

Can we imagine any greater proof of that day approaching than the very times in which we live, turmoil everywhere, like the muttering sound, and quivering vibrations of a pent-up volcano, ready to burst at any moment. If we see the love of some waxing cold, let us by all the means in our power, endeavor to arouse them; and especially let us be vigilant ourselves and watch unto prayer lest the spirit of slumber overtake us, and that day come upon us unprepared.

SUFFERING, DEATH, RESURRECTION AND SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

“Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”—John xiv. 27.

In coming around this table every First day to remember Jesus, as to what He has done and suffered on our account, there are many things which ought to suggest themselves to our minds. There can be no subject for the mind's contemplation so fraught with elevating, purifying and strengthening influences as the life, the suffering, the death and resurrection and second coming of Christ.

His public life was one of toil. You remember how being wearied with His journey He sat on Jacob's well, and how He conversed with the woman of Samaria, Everlasting Life being the important theme.

He was a homeless one, as He said, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.” He suffered hunger, fatigue, thirst, reproach and scorn of wicked men, and deserted by His own followers, and all without a murmur, and with His expiring breath prayed, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.” But O, what love and zeal on our part should the thought inspire us, “That He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities.” But we must never forget that back of the Savior's love, was the love of the infinite Father. *He* it was who gave the promise, “The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.” “Scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet per adventure for good man some would even dare to die, but God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” Rom. v. 8. Here is the crowning part of this most wonderful exhibition of divine love. It was the Savior's love, and the Father's love combined, and in this, as in every other work, He and the Father were one. Oh! how that ought to fill the soul of the believer with rapture. This is so far beyond human wisdom, that although revealed in the plainest terms men of learning, men of reputed piety have stumbled at it, and oh, how perverted the story of the cross has become!

The sweet and honeyed words of Gospel truth, and Gospel

consolation, have, through the teachings of false religion been converted into flaming swords, and vengeance took the place of reconciliation.

John in his first epistle says, "*God is love,*" and not satisfied with making the simple announcement, but as if conscious of the doubting, distrustful nature of man, he seeks to impress the grand proposition on those who may read it in all time, and this he does by proceeding to tell us how God *manifested* His love toward us. You all know that whatever is manifest is *visible, apparent, and obvious.*

A manifestation is an *exhibition, a demonstration.* Well how did God manifest His love toward us? Let John give the answer. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might have life through Him." I like John's definite way of stating this all-important matter. In this short sentence we have a wonderful combination. Each branch is a gem, and when properly understood is the best recipe for enabling the believer to rejoice in the Lord always, and is a perfect bombshell that ought to blow to fragments all the false theories that have filled thousands of volumes on the atonement.

1. It was the Father who sent Jesus, He was the Father's Messenger.

2. He was sent on an errand of love, divine compassion.

3. The object was to bestow eternal life on as many as would receive Him.

Yes, thank God. The object was, "That we might have life through Him," and this clear way of expressing it throws light upon less definite, less explicit portions of Scripture where the indefinite term salvation is used; and you will find that theologians almost invariably use the expression "*salvation,*" evidently because it suits their perverted idea of what salvation is, or covers up their ignorance of what the word means. Christ indeed said unto Nicodemus, "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." John iii. 17. But He did not leave His hearer to conjecture what He meant by being saved, for He said explicitly, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever

believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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." This left no room to doubt what Christ meant by salvation. It brings Christ out in His true character as the Life-Giver, and beautifully coincides with what He afterwards testified was the object of His mission. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John x. 10. Again, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii. 36. All of which is in perfect harmony with John's testimony. "This is the record that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath the life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life." John v. 11, 12.

In all of John's writings he emphasizes Christ as the Life-Giver, and towards the end of his Gospel 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." Christ is set forth as the object of faith, and the importance of this faith is shown in the ultimate purpose in view. "That ye might have life through His name." Who can estimate the importance of that faith on which such momentous results depend?

It grieves me to hear the perverted use of the word "salvation" by those who do not comprehend its meaning, and do not understand that the "Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." My heart is often on fire to tell them of how repentance and remission of sins was at first preached in Christ's name by His divinely appointed messengers. when they entered on the work the Master commissioned them to do. Luke xxiv. 47.

It is worthy of special notice that the word "*Soteria*" rendered salvation in the common version, in 1 Peter i. 5, 9, 10, is rendered life in the Syriac version.

But to return to the manifestation of God's love in the gift

of His Son to die for us. This thought ought to occupy our minds in commemorating our Lord's death.

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John iv. 10. And Paul in his letter to the Romans expresses it thus, “But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.”

But even this display of love has been worse than nullified, it has been perverted by false systems of religion, which represent the Father with the sword of justice in His hand pursuing the sinner with a vindicative purpose, until Christ interposed, and bowed His meek head to all the storm; and then they sing:

“Rich were the drops of Jesus' blood,
That quenched Jehovah's ire.”

Now those men will talk in pious tones of the amount of infidelity in the world. I tell you the rationalist who denies the sacrificial death of Christ, and regards Him only as a martyr, may yet charge back his infidelity on a false system of religion, and I hesitate not to say that the professing Church owes the world an apology for having so long, and so persistently taught lies in the name of the Lord. A reproach has been cast upon the character of God, and every man and woman who has escaped or been emancipated from the baneful influence of false doctrine is in duty bound to vindicate the character and speak of the ineffable beauty of the God we serve. The God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ. As one who has experienced no common deliverance I say with the Palmist, “I believed and therefore have I spoken.” Psalm cxvi. 10.

Those who have been favored with light on the greatest of all subjects, are under deep obligations to shed that light around them, personally, if they can, and otherwise by sustaining those *who* can; but by all means let the light shine.

Brethren and Sisters, we live in a world of change, sickness, sorrow, pain, bereavement and death on every hand, but He whose death we have been commemorating, has left us much to comfort us. On that sad and solemn night in which He was betrayed, and knowing that His hour was come, He forgot His own sorrow in order that He might comfort His disciples. Lis-

ten to His words, they contain a divine message, and many a weary tempest-tossed pilgrim has been comforted by them, "Let not your heart be troubled."

You may have much to trouble you, loved ones. Your flesh may be filled with pain, and your heart may ache with grief, but it is the Master who speaks to you, and He knows all about you. Listen again, He repeats the same words, as if to give force to their meaning, "*Let not your heart be troubled,*" and with more than a mother's tenderness He adds, "*neither let it be afraid.*" And the Father, whose words He spake, says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver you." Psalm l. 15. With such a Father, and with such a friend, have we any cause to fear? "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

CHAPTER V.

THE TRUE FAITH.

(An address given at Lancashire, England.)

MR. PRESIDENT, Brethren and Friends, Laborers in the work of religious reformation, I thank you for the kind invitation to participate in this Conference.

In humble dependence on Divine aid, whose blessing we invoke on all our labors, and without which no effort of ours will be of any avail, I shall briefly address you on the words, recorded in the third verse of the epistle of Jude.

“Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.”

Faith is the subject here presented for our consideration. It is designated *THE* faith, and it is still further emphasized and prominently distinguished as not only *the* faith, but the faith *once for all* delivered to the saints. There is no need whatever to confound this faith, so distinctly marked, and characterized, with any other. It has the mark of Divinity, the seal of heaven stamped upon it; and it is well that it is so clearly defined and plainly described, seeing we are exhorted to contend for it; especially in this age of so many faiths, each claiming some superiority, and all so diversified.

Did I say exhorted to contend for it? That is part, but only part, and does not convey the idea which this servant of Jesus Christ wished to impart to us. His phrase is “contend earnestly.” Yes, *earnestly*. That is *ardently, eagerly, zealously*.—But why all this zeal, and ardor about faith, which is considered by many as such a shifting unreal thing that it is only synonymous with opinion, and we are sometimes told that

one man's opinion is as good as another's, and frequently Pope's couplet is cited:

“For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.”

But all this, we have seen, has no connection whatever with what Jude is seeking to impress upon us. He had his mind on something very precious and unique, which must not be confounded with anything of less value, bearing the same name. The special article to which he calls our attention has the stamp of heaven on it. And however closely it may be imitated it is as widely different from the imitation as the most rare and costly diamond excels in luster and brilliance the vulgar counterfeit bearing its name. God is the Author of this faith, and its foundation is as stable as His throne. All the attacks of infidelity cannot overturn it. But why this need to contend for it so earnestly? Why? Because as Jude further says certain men had crept in privily who were corrupting the Church and dividing it into sects, and he adds, “But, beloved, remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they said to you. In the last time there shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts. These are they who make separations, sensual, having not the Spirit. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” This shows the need of contending for it; because like its Author and Finisher it has been cast out as evil, defamed, denounced, and reviled; and those who maintain and defend it are despised, and considered heretical. Instead of being valued as a pearl of great price, or a priceless gem, it has been trodden under foot, scorned and rejected. Only those who know its value, care anything for it, and they esteem it a great honor, and privilege to be allowed to contend for it. It is nothing new for it to be treated in that way. In Paul's day those who maintained it constituted the sect everywhere spoken against; and when its founder uttered His heavenly doctrine, so bitter was the opposition that they took up stones to stone Him. Why should this faith be so stigmatized? Is it not a heavenly faith?

Heavenly in its origin, its conceptions, its influences, and results? Its left hand leans upon the cross, and with its right hand it grasps the promises of God, and holds them out for man's acceptance. It brings the future near to us, and unites us to the unseen and the eternal. It is indeed a glorious faith, and it begets a blessed hope.

Is sin a hateful and abhorrent thing, bringing misery and death? This faith tells of its utter extinction, and that the time will come when everything that has breath shall praise the Lord. Psalm cl. 6. Has the curse blighted and withered this fair creation, causing the ground to bring forth thorns and thistles? This faith tells us of a time when there shall be no more curse, but the earth shall yield her increase; and God even our own God shall bless us." Psalm lxxvii. 6.

Has sorrow and sighing, sickness, pain, and death been the lot of man from Adam's transgression onward? Death may snatch our loved ones from us, and hide them in the dark cold chambers of the tomb, but this faith tells us of a glorious resurrection to spiritual life, and of a time when death shall be no more. No more pain, no more sorrow. "The inhabitants of that land shall never say I am sick, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

What a glorious faith is the faith of the Gospel; and what a blessed hope grows out of it! It purifies from sin, gives courage in the hour of danger and trial. Lifts the mind and the affections above the things of time and sense, and sets them on the things that are enduring and eternal. It comforts the afflicted mind, consoles the wounded spirit. Earthly comforts may vanish, and decay, and earthly friends forsake us, but this faith introduces us to a friend who will never leave us; never, no never forsake us. Is such a faith not worth contending for? Fighting for? Dying for? What is there in all earth's treasures to compare with it? For what else would you barter it? You answer nothing! Nothing! Oh! then ye who have the precious boon, and know how to value it, cling to it. Let nothing separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

What have our opponents to offer us in exchange for this heavenly faith, on which our blessed hope rests. What think

ye? Why nothing but the merest speculations, a fiction, a human invention. Immortality born of paganism. Immortality alike to good and bad. To the most debased and corrupt of human kind, as much as to the veriest saint that ever lived on earth. To the most foul-mouthed blasphemer who seldom opens his mouth but to curse and blaspheme his maker; and who according to *their creed*, will go cursing and blaspheming through all eternity, associated with millions upon millions of his kind, who have no other occupation while writhing in a hell of untold torture, peopled by such monsters of depravity—and all this, within the realm, and under the jurisdiction of that God who has revealed Himself as love!! What inconsistency! What a contradiction!! Need we wonder that such a system is productive of infidelity. If it is asked, as it frequently is, how this delusion became so wide-spread? It is our duty to show such inquirers that the history of the early Church, and the condition of surrounding nations at that time, and *calm, sober reflection*, will do much to dispel this seeming difficulty. Paul in his charge to the elders of the church at Ephesus says, "For I know that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." Acts xx. 29. And in his charge to Timothy he says, "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

Why Paul? Why all this exhortation and doctrine? Why because "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim. iv. 2. And Peter in his second epistle says, "But there were false prophets also among the people even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction, and *many* shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." 2 Peter ii. 1.

The early history of the Church shows how soon these predictions were verified. And the sufferings of the apostles them-

selves show how *unwavering* was their testimony and how *earnestly* they contended for the Faith. Paul's experience as related by himself in the eleventh chapter of his second epistle to the Corinthians, would *shock* us, were it not that we are familiar with the record. He says, "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 mine own country-men, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

A few years later and we find John, the beloved apostle, banished to a lonely Island in the Aegean sea, to which the Roman government sent its convicts, and banished for what? What crime was he guilty of? Why, it was for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ he was exiled. That shows how unpopular the faith then was, and what it cost to contend earnestly for it, and how highly the apostles prized it. Rather than betray the sacred trust committed to them, they were willing to submit to the loss of all things, not even counting their own lives dear to them. Those men had not only seen the Lord, Jesus, but for years had been His companions, His daily associates, witnessed His stupendous miracles, and not only listened to His public ministry, but were instructed by Him privately, as His own disciples; understood His doctrine, and in addition to all this had miraculous spirit power conferred upon them after His ascension, to guide them into all truth; and the great sacrifices they made on account of it are an enduring monument of their estimation of its priceless worth. But over and above all consideration of Paul's personal sufferings there was one thing which absorbed his mind, and that was the care of all the churches he had planted. No one can read his epistles without being deeply impressed by his keen apprehension of coming evil. Even in his own life time the mystery of iniquity had begun to work. There were two conflicting elements he had to contend with: Judaizers on the one hand appealing to con-

servative spirits, and the prejudice of early training, insisting that the law given by Moses be recognized and perpetuated, which Paul by the most powerful reasoning, showed had been done away in Christ. On the other hand Grecian philosophy had much in it to make it attractive to Gentile converts, and this was destined to work great havoc in the Church and of this element it was well warned. See Colossians ii. 8, and 1 Timothy vi. 20.

If such grievous errors crept into the Church in the lifetime, and under the eye of the apostles, notwithstanding their faithful, pointed and powerful testimony, their earnest entreaties, warnings and admonitions, need we be surprised at the spread of false and heretical opinions so soon as such restraining influence was removed? Pagan philosophy taught by men of genius, poetic fancy and sublime ideality, was captivating to the young mind, promising them liberty as the apostle says, "Speaking great swelling words of vanity, while they themselves are the servants of corruption."

The hope of a resurrection of the dead, which lay at the foundation of the Christian faith, was utterly opposed to pagan teaching and Grecian philosophy. The resurrection was to them a "superstition" as Festus expressed it, when telling King Agrippa about the accusation of the Jews against Paul; he said they had "certain questions against him of their own *superstition*, and of one Jesus which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." And when Paul spoke to the men of Athens of a resurrection it excited their mockery.

The school of Socrates and Plato had no need of a resurrection from the dead, as they believed in the continued existence of man after death, in some other form; and when Christian doctrine brought nothing but contempt, bonds, imprisonment, exile, and death to its followers, it is not to be wondered at that the less spiritual should make a compromise with error and seek to amalgamate the Pagan idea of immortality with the Christian doctrine of a resurrection from the dead, and hence the hybrid we now have misnamed Christianity. As Wm. Tyndale, the translator of the Bible into English, says, "In putting departed souls in heaven, hell, and purgatory, you destroy the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul prove the resurrection. What God

doth with them, that we shall know when we come to them. The true faith putteth the resurrection, which we be warned to look for every hour. The heathen philosophers denying that, did put that the souls did ever live. And the Pope joined the spiritual doctrine of Christ, and the fleshly doctrine of philosophers together—things so contrary that they cannot agree. . . . And because the fleshly-minded Pope consenteth unto heathen doctrine, therefore he corrupteth the Scriptures to establish it. . . . If the souls be in heaven tell me why they be not in as good case as the angels be? And then what cause is there of the resurrection?" This eminent student of God's Word saw how incongruous and irreconcilable the two doctrines are, which many from early and constant association fail to see. With this compromise—this union between Christian and Pagan doctrine effected—it is not difficult to account for the great accessions to Christianity, thus corrupted, in the reign of Constantine, at the beginning of the fourth century.

It is more than probable that the strong delusion of which Paul wrote, to which men would be given up that they might believe a lie, then had its accomplishment, for no greater nor more wide-spread fallacy was ever propagated, and was first introduced to the world by the father of liars when he said unto Eve, "Ye shall not surely die." No snare of the adversary has been so pernicious as this, so wide-spread and so destructive through its beguiling deceptive influences; misleading at every step, blinding the minds of its followers to such an extent that Gospel truth is nullified, and the plainest statements of divine revelation *frittered* away. And so long as men are found who will believe and teach such monstrous ideas, so long will it be *our* duty to "*earnestly* contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," and what is there, or where can anything be found so well worth contending for? This faith has to do with the immutable purposes of God, it carries us back to the promise to Abraham and his seed. The promise that he should be the heir of the world, says Paul, was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Rom. iv. 13. This gives us something tangible to hope for, and Paul in his letter to the Galatians says, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not and to seeds as of

many but as of one, and to thy seed which is Christ." Gal. iii. 16. And Stephen in the solemn moments before his martyrdom plainly said, "God gave him (Abraham) none inheritance in it (Canaan), no not so much as to set his foot on." Acts vii. 5. And remember these words were not spoken by a blind, ignorant Judaizer, but a man full of the Holy Spirit, enlightened by the Spirit and speaking the words of the Spirit. And in the epistle to the Hebrews the eleventh chapter, speaking of Abraham, Moses, David, Samuel and others it concludes by saying, "These all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Hence the need of a resurrection in order to fulfill Jehovah's oath and promise. This faith, the faith once delivered to the saints, grasps all those great and precious promises spoken of by Peter in his second Epistle i. 4, and accepts the announcement to Mary by the angel Gabriel, that she should have a son, and that he should be great, and should be called the Son of the Highest. And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Luke i. 32.

This faith, I say, grasps those promises, and looks for their eventual fulfillment. Why have those promises become forgotten themes? Why have they been so generally, almost universally discarded? Why? Because they cannot dwell together with pagan doctrine; and so soon as a continued existence after death, as taught by Socrates and his disciples, was incorporated into the creeds of Christendom, and heaven came to be regarded as the home of the saints, then those promises were *divorced* as inharmonious with the general belief. No place was found for them. They could not be built into the theological structure and being *useless* were CAST AWAY. The promises of God, gave way to human speculation—human fancy. The *unreal divorced the real*. Mystery Babylon then became supreme, and the blood of martyrs was offered as a drink-offering to heathen superstition; and the faithful had to flee from human habitations, and worship God in remote and unfrequented places, on hill side and lone glen, away from the haunts of men.

Such a deep hold has that delusion taken of men's minds

that a pastor of a large Presbyterian congregation in a recent debate with a Father of the Catholic Church said:

“The Catholic Church teaches that all its members will ultimately be saved, and that logically she must hold that only such will be saved, or go to heaven at death, which is what the Protestant means by being saved.” What a definition of salvation, to come from a Protestant minister. “It means to go to heaven at death.” Alas for Protestantism! Paul in his letter to the Romans (i. 16) said, “The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” But the Gospel says nothing about going to heaven at death. On the contrary it is the good news of the kingdom to be established *under the whole heavens* (Dan. vii. 27), and in 1 Thess. v. 9, we read, “For God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with Him.” This is very different from going to heaven at death. It speaks of those who are to obtain salvation in the day of the Lord, the day of the Lord’s coming, as consisting of two classes or conditions, not those who are in heaven, and those who are on the earth, but the “waking” ones, and the “*sleeping*” ones, and are the same of whom the apostle wrote in the preceding chapter: “For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (or precede, as it is in the revised version), them which are asleep, for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; so shall we ever be with the Lord.” And this is in strict accordance with what Peter said about being “Kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” Yes! that is the time when the salvation God has provided for His people will be revealed.

“That the trial of your faith,” continues the apostle, “being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory.” When? When you go to heaven? Oh no! “At the appearing of Jesus Christ. . . . Wherefore gird up the loins of

your mind, be sober and hope to the end for the grace (favor) that is to be *brought* unto you at the revelation, or appearing, of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter i. 5, 7, 13.

What a contrast between those two faiths. Peter's faith is well defined. The salvation he speaks of is to be revealed in the last time.

Believers in this faith are now the *heirs* of salvation, but they do not go away to get it. Oh, no! It is to be brought unto them. Yes *brought* unto them at the appearing or revelation of Jesus Christ. This was the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. And thank God it is *our* faith; and it is the faith for which we are to contend earnestly. It has a firm foundation to rest upon, one that liveth and abideth forever. When the corruptions of the Church of Rome, and the errors of so-called Protestantism shall have mingled into common *ruin*, this shall remain unchanged.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word,
What more can He say than to you He hath said
Ye, who unto the Savior for refuge have fled."

When Paul said he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, it is presumptive, evidence that some were ashamed of it, and those who were ashamed of it, must have been those who adopted the Socratic idea of immortality as a continued existence. The mockery of Grecian philosphers at the idea of a resurrection was too much for them, and so, as William Tyndale said about the Pope, they corrupted the Word of God, to entertain science, falsely so-called, which says Paul, some professing have erred concerning the faith." 1 Tim. vi. 20.

To get a correct idea of the important work assigned to faith in the Christian economy, we have only to read Heb. xi. 6, "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

It is not necessary for you to have all knowledge, none of us have, nor to understand all mysteries, none of us do, but God's covenants of Promise to Abraham, and his seed the Christ, must be believed, and their requirements lovingly obeyed. I know you all want to please God, your presence here to-night shows it, oh, then remember, "Without faith it is impossible to

please God." "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness," and the Word says, "They which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Gal. iii. 9. Now if God is honored by those who exercise faith in His oath and promise to Abraham, it must be apparent to all that faith in traditions which nullify that oath and promise must be *very* dishonoring to Him. Or to put it in another form, "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness." Does it not follow that if any do not believe God it shall be counted unto them for *un*righteousness? And the Scripture says, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. vi. 9.

John appears to take that view of it when he says, "He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son, and this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life" (1 John v. 11)—has it in promise,—he is an heir of it—and it will be brought unto him at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 John ii. 25; 1 Peter i. 13.

I have already spoken of Stephen, that he was a man "full of faith and the Holy Spirit," and if all would read carefully, and without prejudice his address just before his martyrdom they could not fail to see the *character* of his faith, and how strikingly it contrasts with that of modern times as exhibited by those who claim to be guided by that Holy Spirit of which Stephen was full. This matter is so very important, we ought to impress it on the minds of all. Why should Stephen have spent the precious moments immediately preceeding his violent death, as the first martyr, in reciting what many consider to be the antiquated story of the call of Abraham, and the events connected therewith? Remember, as I have already said, he was no Judaizer. On the contrary he met his death at the hands of those who accused him of teaching that "Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us." There is but one truthful answer to the foregoing question, and that is that the promise God made unto Abraham, and his seed is the veritable Gospel and is so designated by Paul in his letter to the Galatians iii. 8. Although in these latter days it has been ruled out of Church creeds, and

confessions of faith, of human origin, for the reasons already assigned, which shows how wide-spread has been the apostasy from the faith once delivered unto the saints, and how *baneful* has been the idea that it matters little what persons believe so long as they are sincere. None can calculate how many have been ruined by that delusive snare. It strikes at the foundation of the Christian religion, and makes the Gospel a mere matter of opinion which Paul testifies is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. i. 16.

I have said no one can read Paul's epistles without being deeply impressed by his keen apprehension of coming error, and now I would add, and without being struck by his earnest desire that the faith of the churches he had planted "should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. ii. 5.

When he had been stoned at Lystra, for his unwavering testimony to the truth of the Gospel and dragged out of the city for dead, we next find him at Derbe preaching the Gospel still, and very soon he returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to what? To modify their faith, and make it more conformable to the times, and thus avoid such dreadful persecution? Oh, no! He "exhorted them to *continue* in the faith," and that we must through much tribulation, enter heaven, which, we are told, is meant by being saved. No, not that. We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Acts xiv. 22.

It cost something to be a disciple at that time. Writing to the church at Ephesus from Rome, where Paul was a prisoner, he exhorts them to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, reminding them there is but "one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism," and in order to be successful in the warfare in which they were engaged, they were to take the shield of faith, wherewith they should be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

How does this idea of one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, sound to those who are the apologists or advocates of faiths many? If, as they say, these faiths are only different roads to the same destination, and that it is impossible for men to see alike, why did the apostle exhort the church at Philippi to "stand fast in *one Spirit*, with *one mind*, striving together

for *the* faith of the Gospel." *The* faith again you observe, not faiths of the Gospel, but the good news of the coming kingdom. Did he require an *impossibility* of the church, in urging unity of faith in one mind and one Spirit?

No wonder Peter in writing his general epistle addresses it "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us." 2 Peter i. 1. There was no other faith genuine, and well he might call it precious. Yes, thrice precious. Precious because Jesus the Leader and Perfecter of our faith is the precious Cornerstone on which the superstructure is reared. Precious because of the great and precious promise it embraces, and precious because of the blessed hope growing out of it. And with what fervor may those who have embraced it say, "Precious faith, thou art mine."

Among Paul's many charges to Timothy, whom he calls his own son in the faith, none hold a more prominent place than the charge to "Fight the fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life," reminding Timothy that he had "fully known his doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecution and affliction." Now all this would have been *wholly unnecessary* if it matters little what a man believes. *How much persecution the early Church would have escaped had it conformed sooner to popular belief, which it afterwards did to its own discomfiture.*

It is very important that we carefully consider this part of our subject, before dismissing it from our minds, in order to account for the wide-spread apostasy from the truth as taught by Christ and His apostles, as we are almost invariably met with this objection, "If you are right, how do you account for so few being of your faith, and the almost universal belief in the inherent immortality of man?" I think the proof I have already adduced is clear and positive to any unprejudiced mind. The departure from the faith complained of by Paul, and of which the Church was faithfully and urgently warned by Peter and Jude, and the cruel persecution already spoken of, to which the early Church was subjected, some of which are mentioned by Tacitus, the Roman historian, ought to be sufficient to convince anyone of the great premium offered to induce apostasy as a means of avoiding such horrid cruelty and even death itself, as

many had to suffer. And while many preferred death to apostasy, the less strong could be enticed to form a partial alliance with Grecian philosophy, and a corruption of the faith would be accepted where an abjuration would have been spurned. Especially men who were not too well instructed would become an easy prey to the blandishments of skilled orators, philosophers, poets and scientists with which that age abounded; and all this in keeping with the predictions of the apostles already referred to as to the perilous times that were to arise, when they would turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables, and MANY shall follow their pernicious ways by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

And is the way of truth not evil spoken of to-day? Those who hold it are despised by some and pitied by others. But instead of being disconcerted by this reference to the paucity of our numbers, we are only the more firmly convinced that we are on the right track, seeing Christ Himself so positively declared, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt. vii. 14. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many I say unto you shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." The true Church is a little flock, and to them He says, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke xii. 32.

Would that we could impress this upon the minds of those who are all the time flattering themselves with the *largeness* of their following. If that is a correct criterion to go by, then *Romanism* far exceeds Protestantism, in that respect, and Buddhists, Mohammedans, and Pagans combined, far exceed both, being more than double.

Such considerations ought to show the *folly* and injustice of such comparisons, and lead men to *test* their religion by the only *true* and *unerring* standard given for that purpose. It is able to make men wise unto salvation.

Have I drawn the line of distinction sharp enough between the popular belief in a diversity of faiths, each of which is alike defensible on the ground of being suitable to the individual case, and the faith once delivered to the saints? No one need fail to

see the marked difference. The one is very pliant. It bends to the circumstances of the case, and accommodates itself to the prejudices and customs of the world, and those who favor such diversity are the apologists for everything dark, mysterious and hazy. They excel in the art of explaining away language that only a deluded mind need misunderstand, and they very frequently pervert portions of Scripture to justify their course, such as, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," "Now we see through a glass darkly," "What we know not now we shall know hereafter." This last is a pure fiction, nowhere to be found in the Bible, but probably a perversion of Jesus' words to Peter, when he remonstrated with the Master about washing his feet. Christ's language was, "What I do, thou knowest not *now*, but thou shalt know *hereafter*." And the "*hereafter*" was not a great way off, for the narrative reads, "So *after* He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you." John xiii. 12. *Then* they knew *what* He had done, and *why* He had done it. Could a more complete perversion of Scripture be imagined than the use made of this passage? No regard whatever for truth or honesty. If any man's writings were dealt with in that unfair way, he would have good cause to complain of the injustice of such a course. When men see through a glass darkly they get an *outline* of the object they are looking at, however *dim* and *indistinct* it may be, but those who thus pervert God's Word have such a *distorted* vision that we need not wonder at the way of truth being evil spoken of.

The faith once delivered to the saints knows no change. It is uncompromising, the same to prince and peasant. The throned potentate, and the humblest of his subjects. It bends not to suit the prejudices of any, but all must bend alike to its requirements and that is another reason, and a very potent one why so few care to accept of it. And this very feature makes it precious, and on this ground if on no other, we are ever ready to contend for it.

It is not enough that we give to every one that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us. That is our imperative duty, but we must not rest there. If we do, few will trouble themselves to ask anything about our hope. Our work is more aggressive than this. As believers it is our duty to HOLD UP the Word of Life to perishing, deluded men. If our hearts are filled with gratitude for our own emancipation from the thralldom of error, we cannot withhold our testimony, nor cease to invite others to participate with us in the Gift of Life.

Christ came to seek and save the lost ones. Men are perishing around us. "Perishing for lack of knowledge," and if the same mind be in us that was found in Him, we cannot be passive or indolent in this work, we must show our earnestness by our addresses, writings and publications being freighted, *burdened* with the love of God to man, in the Gift of Life. When we see the almost total indifference of the mass of mankind towards Bible Christianity, and the opposition of others, we are more and more convinced that if ever it were needful to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, that time is *now*, and better not contend at all, if we do not contend *earnestly*. Christianity was never intended to be a commercial commodity, and the man who would make merchandise of it, and barter his religious convictions should quit the field. Better have a few stalwart defenders of the faith who are willing to hazard their reputation, their lives, *their all* for the truth, than a host of fearful, faint-hearted men such as encumbered Gideon's army before it was reduced from thirty-two thousand to three hundred valiant men. Earnestness is indispensable to the success of any undertaking, and if necessary in our worldly affairs, how much more so in seeking to *awaken* and *arouse* our fellow-men to a more intimate acquaintance with the character of God, His plans and purposes concerning our race, and the globe we inhabit, which He has been graciously pleased to reveal to us. These are not vain speculations, vagaries of the human mind, day-dreams of men of lofty imaginations, but *stern* and *grand* realities, soul elevating, and soul purifying truths, confirmed by God's oath and promise, and such as angelic beings desired to look into.

When we come to the investigation of this subject we stand on holy ground; ground consecrated by no common sacrifices,

ground hallowed by the feet of Israel's prophets, Christ Jesus, and His apostles, martyrs and confessors.

One great difficulty I apprehend in the minds of the untaught, and the partially enlightened, is that the doctrine of life in Christ only, is not made a fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion. "A matter of opinion," says one. "A choice between two difficulties," says another. *No such thing.* It is a choice between believing God, and the serpent's lie. God threatened man with death for disobedience. The serpent said, "Thou shalt not surely die." Too long have men of high pretensions in scholastic lore tried to metamorphose that threatening into a spiritual meaning.

Let them read the sentence pronounced on the guilty pair, as recorded in Gen. iii. 19, in the light of experience and history. *Fact instead of fiction.* "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," and forever cease to pervert the Word of the Lord. The first act of an allwise and kind Creator, when man had transgressed the law of paradise was to exclude him from the garden, and prevent his access to the tree of life. Why? Let the words of inspiration answer, "Lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever." Gen. iii. 22. Could these words have been said of an immortal man? Oh, why are men so *obtuse*? Why so *blinded*? If men do not understand this fundamental truth, and realize the condition into which man was brought by sin, how *can* they understand the work of redemption?

After a long conversation which I had with a clergyman in his own parlor, his wife asked:

"What does it matter so long as we are sound on the doctrine of the atonement?"

I replied, "I cannot see how you can be sound on the doctrine of the atonement, inasmuch as Christ never died to save an immortal soul." He came and lived a life of humiliation and suffering, agonized in Gethsemane, bled and died on Calvary's Cross, arose from the dead, and ascended up on high that *mortal,—dying men,—*might be redeemed from sin and death, and He is coming again, and His reward is with Him, to confer immortality on such as have believed in and conformed their lives to the great and precious promises centered in Him, and

proclaimed for man's acceptance in the Gospel or good news of the coming kingdom, for which He taught His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come," in the government of which His risen and changed saints will be subordinate rulers, and under whose benign reign the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will cover the earth. That is the one faith and hope of the Gospel—foretold by prophets, preached by Christ, and His apostles, and of which the professing Church *now* knows so little, and this is the Faith for which you are now exhorted to contend. Of course we cannot all contend for it publicly by voice and pen, but much has been done, and may be done in a more private way, and those who have means must consecrate them to the promotion of this work. Lukewarmness and indifference will not do. "Herein," says Christ, "is my Father glorified, that ye bear MUCH fruit, so shall ye be my disciples."

In order to promote zeal in this work we must keep the coming and kingdom of Christ prominently before ourselves, and before one another.

*"The Lord is coming; let this be
The herald note of jubilee,
And when we meet, and when we part,
The salutation from the heart."*

When we view our work in connection with, and in the light of this event of all events, it is *then* we are inspired with enthusiasm to do and suffer for His name. Our (mission, and) evangelistic work, must not be neglected and our publications must be sustained; and whatever we do, let us do it heartily as unto the Lord. The work is His, and oh, if we could only realize how highly honored we are, to be permitted to be co-workers with Him, methinks the work would be greatly accelerated.

If the doctrine of Christ was more generally believed there would be less need to contend for it. But as far as religious matters are concerned, we see around us a general apathy; little of the spirit of investigation. The mass of mankind are religious sluggards, they want some one to think for them, and those who think for them regale them with speculations about disembodied immortal souls of dead men, annihilating space, and making the stars their stepping-stones in celestial explorations.

What presumption!! Undismayed they are by the awful fate of those of ancient time, who vainly said, "I will ascend into heaven, I will make my throne above the stars of God. I will be like the Most High." To all such we would say, "Better wait until you are invited there."

A certain author has said, "What a luxury of repose steals over the soul of the man who can take the *ipse dixit* of a priest as final, and the verdict of a Church as infallible." He might have added repose so obtained is by the abnegation of manhood. Sad sacrifice! Fearful price! Give me strife. Place me in the thickest of the battle, before such abnegation. The Christian life is one of *intense activity*; indolence it does not know of only to abhor.

Its precepts are, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." "Work while it is day, for the night cometh wherein no man can work."

Let us consecrate ourselves anew and throw *earnestness* and *fervor* into the work. There is no use in preaching non-immortality unless we lay down the conditions of eternal life. Belief in the Gospel of the kingdom. Repentance (change of mind), and baptism into the name of the anointed for the remission of sins, and a subsequent godly life, and a patient waiting for the Life-giver "in whom was life, and the life was the light of men."

"Contend earnestly for the faith." *Contend for it* from a desire for the glory of God, whose name is dishonored, whose character is traduced, and whose gracious purposes are misrepresented and defamed. *Contend for it* out of gratitude to God for our own deliverance from the errors that abound everywhere around us, and in which we were so deeply indoctrinated in youth. *Contend for it* out of love to our fellow-men whose minds are darkened, and their judgments perverted by false doctrine, and thus we are bound by the strongest obligations of love to God and love to our fellow-men to *contend earnestly* for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and when we advocate life in Christ only, let us realize we are dealing with no common subject, but one that touches the springs of life, and lies at the very *foundation* of the Christian religion. Never lower the standard nor make a compromise with error for the sake of numbers, and may God grant you grace to be faithful unto the end,

and crown you with everlasting life, in the kingdom of His dear Son.

One word to those who have not yet accepted this faith, and I have done. We can recommend it to your acceptance. It tells of the love of God, that He so loved a rebellious world that "He gave His Son, His only begotten, and well-beloved Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life." It brings pardon to the guilty, purity for moral defilement, peace to the troubled mind, and everlasting life to men condemned to die.

Say will you accept it *now*? It is free to all without money and without price. It may never be offered to you again. "Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation."

CHAPTER VI.

RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.—PRAYER AND PRAISE.

“And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.”—Luke xviii. 1.

“Continuing instant in prayer.”—Romans xii. 12.

“Be sober, and watch unto prayer.”—1Peter iv. 7.

THE RELIGION of Christ, as expounded by Himself and His apostles, emphasizes the importance of prayer. A prayerless saint was never known, and those most distinguished for a prayerful life are the prominent ones in the Book of God.

The patriarchs and prophets were all men of prayer, and even the blessed Son of God is distinguished for His prayerful life and submission to the Father's will.

No sooner had Abram received the divine command to get out of his country, and from his kindred, than he departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him, and he “passed through the land unto the place of *Sichem*, unto the plain of *Moreh*, and the Canaanite was then in the land. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land. And there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.”

Under the head of prayer, we shall include adoration and thanksgiving as well as supplication, as these of necessity blend and intertwine together. Special favors require special recognition; and God's appearing to Abram, and His promise, was immediately followed by an altar being built unto the Lord. Abram's gratitude for the distinguished favor conferred must get outward expression, and hence an altar was immediately built and dedicated unto the Lord who appeared unto him. Have we been as quick in our responses, for favors received? There is need of heart-searching here. Brethren, be candid with yourselves.

“With reverence at your own tribunal stand,
And answer justly to your own demand.”

Has God given you a home to shelter you, a calm retreat from the world's intrusion, and still, no altar erected there! Has He given you a loving companion to share your joys, and lighten your sorrows, and still, no altar erected there! Besides these, has thy wife become as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house, and thy children like olive plants round thy table, and still no altar erected there!

Besides all this, has God illuminated your minds by the word of truth and made you to trust in His promises, and you call yourselves Abraham's seed, faithwise, and still no altar erected there! This did not Abraham. If you want to show your relation to Abraham, erect an altar in your home to-night, and see that the altar fires are never allowed to go out. Keep them ever burning, and with David say, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Psalm cxli. 2.

Hannah was a woman of prayer, and she was honored as the mother of Samuel, and we read, she poured out her soul before the Lord, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord, mine horn is exalted in the Lord, my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies because I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none holy as the Lord, for there is none besides thee, neither is there any rock like our God. He will keep the feet of His saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness, for by strength shall no man prevail.

The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces, out of heaven shall He thunder upon them, the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and He shall give strength unto His king, and exalt the horn of His anointed. 1 Sam. ii. 2.

The Prophet Daniel was a man of prayer, and I commend to all of you, especially the young, to consider the testimony given of him by those who conspired against him. It is as follows, "Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom, but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God."

What a tribute to the excellence of that fearless servant of

God, to come from the mouth of his own enemies! But the envy and malice of those men were implacable; they must have known that Daniel was a man of prayer, hence they got king Darius to make "a firm decree that, whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions." Dan. vi. 7.

Now the crucial time had arrived to test Daniel's faith and strength of principle. Shall he stand the test or shall he vacillate? that is the question. Thank God! he stood the test, and the record is made to strengthen the saints of all time.

Had he been faint-hearted he might have reasoned with himself thus, I see no good to be accomplished by my antagonizing the king in this thing; besides, thirty days will soon come around, and then the interdict will expire. But no, the man of God could not endure thirty days without prayer and thanksgiving; the den of lions was to be preferred to that, and so we read, "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." Dan. vi. 10. The sequel you know, and his preservation in, and deliverance from the den of lions.

O how marvelous are God's dealing with His people.

You observe Daniel not only prayed, but he gave thanks while under the dread decree. Does this surprise you? Do you wonder what he had to be thankful for? He had much, very much to be thankful for, as every true child of God has. It was doubtless a great source of gratitude to him that the only living and true God was the God he loved and served, and that he had confidence in His protecting power. Thankful that the God of Abraham, of Isaac and Jacob was his God. The God of Samuel, of Elijah and David and all the Prophets, whose word of promise was ever sure, and whose faithfulness was from everlasting. Like Hannah he could say, "I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none holy as the Lord, for there is none beside thee, neither is there any rock like our God; He will keep the feet of His saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness."

Christ's words are, "That men ought always to pray and not to faint." This teaches a great lesson. It implies that

strength is acquired through prayer, and that a prayerless condition is a fainting condition. Take this truth home to your hearts, and see whether you have not been starving yourselves, and hence feeble and faint-hearted, and do you not see here, the secret of Daniel's invincible courage? Although a captive in a foreign land he was rich in heavenly treasures. God had aforetime taken him into His confidence, and in answer to prayer revealed unto him Nebuchadnezzar's dream. "Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven and said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever; for wisdom and might are His, and He changeth the times and the seasons; He removeth kings, and setteth up kings; He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things, He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with Him."

External circumstances do not always seem conducive to prayer and praise, but those obstacles are easily overcome if the heart is only attuned to God's praise. We would *not* think a jail a very likely place to inspire songs of praise, yet Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises to God, at midnight in the jail at Philippi, and who would not prefer a jail, with Paul and Silas as companions, to Herod's ball-room.

The days of our sojourn here are often full of deep trials and disappointments, but if our hearts are right with God they should not, and must not be praiseless, and thankless.

Ingratitude is said to be abhorrent to God and man. Think of how many things you have to be grateful for every day, they are more in number than you can reckon. Our common everyday blessings are seldom thought of. Did you ever thank God for the sight of your eyes? And yet there are three million people in the world, who never see the light of day. How they would delight to see the orb of day arise, and watch the beauty of the setting sun, as it casts its rich and varied hues on everything around.

A sister young in years, but advanced in Christian experience, remarked, "I hope you will dwell on the *privilege* of prayer." Ah, yes, the *privilege*, the *blessed privilege* of coming to God in prayer, that is the kernel of the whole matter. David knew the privilege it was, hence he said, "It is a good thing to

give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High, to show forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night." Psalm xcii. 1.

"I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth, my soul shall make her boast in the Lord. The humble shall hear thereof and be glad. O, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears; they looked unto Him, and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed, this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." What greater privilege can be desired than that? To seek the Lord and be delivered from all our fears, and to cry to Him and be saved from all our troubles. And then He gives this blessed assurance, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." And *then* that others may enjoy the same blessing He gives this invitation. "O taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. O, fear the Lord, ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him." Psalm xxxiv. 1-9.

We all feel that we need the divine guidance, that in ourselves, and of ourselves we are unable to direct our own paths. How important then that we should seek heavenly aid.

How can any one expect good results on the undertakings of the day who does not ask God's direction and blessing? A deep sense of our own weakness and short-sightedness should make us ask divine guidance and strength to the performance of every duty, and this humble reliance on divine aid will nerve us for the issues of the day be they prosperous, or otherwise, and go a great way to reconcile us to trials and adversity when they come.

If we would ever remember that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights" (James i. 17), our hearts would be more full of gratitude and praise, and when the perplexities of the day are past, and the shades of night cover over us, we can then with David say, "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep, for thou Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety." Psalm iv. 8.

I am here reminded of the forcible words of William Ellery

Channing, of Boston, on this subject, which I read when I was a young lad, and have never forgotten. He said, "Let not that man call himself a Christian whose days do not begin and end with God."

David said, "At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments." Psalm cxix. 62. Some might rise at midnight to ask favors, but few in number who would arise at that time to give God thanks. Let this be a rebuke to the young and those in robust health, who regard it a trial to be here at the commencement of our morning service. It is to be feared that some regard this a trial who would anticipate the dawn if some favorite amusement were on hand. Brethren, we all need monitors, and I hope you will bear with me while I thus plead with you. Remember the ten lepers who were cleansed, and only one returned and fell down on his face at Jesus feet, giving Him thanks, and he was a *Samaritan*. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? there are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. Luke xvii. 17.

There is a lesson in this for us, and I want to impress it on your minds. It is this. Is it not a fact that there are religionists around us, who are ignorant of the way of righteousness, who could set us an example in zeal, and fervor in religion? Coldness implies impending dissolution, heaven's antidote is, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." Rev. iii. 2.

There is another point I want to make, it is in regard to fixedness of mind or concentration in religious worship. You know David said, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, that is *consecrated*. I will sing and give praise. Awake up my glory; wake psaltery and harp. I myself will awake early. I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people; I will sing unto thee among the nations, for thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. Be thou exalted, O God above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth." Psalm lvii. 7.

The same sentiment is expressed in the hymn with which you are all familiar.

“My heart is fixed, O God, 'tis bent,
Its grateful tribute to present,
And with my voice, my heart I'll raise,
To Thee, my God, in songs of praise.”

This sentiment carries me back to my childhood days, when my venerable father would take up the family Bible and the Psalm-book, he would look around over the family group, scrutinizing each countenance, and say with a reverent voice, “Children, compose yourselves for divine worship.”

A solemn awe came over every face, and for the time being, we felt as though we were in the Holy of Holies.

It is frequently said, religion does not imply a long face, that is true, and we also remember Christ said, “When ye fast be not as the hypocrites of a sad countenance, for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast.” Matt. vi. 16. But that gives no countenance whatever to even a semblance of levity in religious worship. That is *wholly* unbecoming in the children of a mortal race, seeing that seraphim which are greater in power and might veil their faces with their wings “and cry one to another, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.”. Isaiah vi. 3. It is true, believers are permitted to call God Father, but then they must remember God's words by the Prophet Malachi, “A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master. If then I be a father, where is mine honor? And if I be a master where is my fear?” Malachi i. 6.

David full of the spirit of adoration says, “Who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him. O Lord, God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee.” Psalm lxxxix. 6. And the writer of the Hebrews gives this timely admonition, “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” Heb. xii. 28.

From what we have said it must appear obvious that prayer and praise are not only important factors in the service of the

sanctuary, but ought to have a prominent place in every Christian home, indeed how can we imagine a Christian home without a family altar?

The young man, who as yet has no home of his own, will find his instructions in the Savior's words, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Matt. vi. 6. Here is not only opportunity afforded for this blessed privilege, but a reward promised to those who faithfully and lovingly attend to it. And who cannot discern in all this, the wisdom and the love of God in instituting such means for our transformation and our spiritual growth, that we may be conformed to the image of the Son of God?

We have thus considered a few prominent examples of prayerful persons, also the importance, and the privilege of prayer, in being permitted to come to God with all our burdens and sorrows, in order to have our burdens removed or lightened, and our sorrows comforted. We have also considered the necessity of fixedness, or concentration of attention in the service of prayer and praise. Let not your eyes and your minds wander, and permit no levity to distract your own attention, and be a source of pain and sorrow to those who are more spiritually-minded; and now we have only time to mention a few of the subjects of prayer in a general way that claim our attention.

Pray for yourselves, and your families, that God may enable you faithfully to perform parental obligations to your children, and that you may impress their minds aright; ever remembering that you are not only forming your own character, but in a large measure giving bent and color to the characters of your children.

Pray for the Church, that the tempted may be succored, the tried ones comforted, the weak ones strengthened, and the cold and indifferent aroused from their lethargy. Pray for the elders that through the grace of God they may be enabled to perform the duties of their office. They need your prayers, and your co-operation.

Pray for the Sunday-school, that God may abundantly bless

the teachers, and children, and that the instruction there imparted may redound to God's glory in later years.

In reference to subjects for thanksgiving and praise, we have already seen they abound on every hand, no matter whether we look up to the starry expanse, or down to the ground on which we tread.

The contemplation of God's wonderful power and wisdom in creation command our adoration and our praise. It is recorded of Dr. Brewster, of Scotland, the inventor of the Kaleidoscope, one day when examining some minute objects under the microscope, all alone, he became wrapt in admiration, and was overheard to exclaim, "Oh, how good is our God."

David said, "All thy works praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee." Ps. cxlv. 10.

If you want to be of the goodly company, when everything that has breath shall praise the Lord, you must begin now. Then there will be no jarring notes, no organs out of tune.

I will close with David's glowing invitation to sing unto the Lord. "O come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our Salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In His hand are the deep places of the earth. The strength of the hills is His also. The sea is His, and He made it; and His hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand." Psalm xcv. 1.

"I will extol thee, my God O King; and I will bless thy name forever and ever. Every day will I bless thee, and I will praise thy name forever and ever. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable." Psalm cxlv. 1.

The days and the seasons are constantly reminding us of God's goodness, and His faithfulness, and while we enjoy our Christmas greetings, may our hearts arise in gratitude to God for the gift of His Son, which has made eternal life available to all who believe and obey Him.

Now my dear young brethren and sisters, I hope you will

remember the lesson I have this day endeavored to teach you, although very imperfectly.

May the lesson abide with you, and be a source of comfort and strength to you, long after the tongue which now addresses you, may be cold in death; and may we all meet in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is my earnest prayer.

DIVINE WORSHIP—ITS OBJECT.

1. What is the object of worship?
2. What does worship embrace besides making our requests known?
3. What is essential to acceptable worship?

Gen. xx. 7.—Abraham was to pray for Abimelech, king of Gerar.

Gen. xxii. 5.—“I, and the lad, will go and worship yonder.”

Deut. v. 6.—“I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land.”

Egypt.—“Thou shalt have none other gods before me.”
Also Deut. vi. 13.

Matt. iv. 10.—“Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve.”

John iv. 24.—“God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.”

We have no direct or specific answer to the first question recorded in the Word.

To answer the question aright we would have to take in a wider range than time will now permit. We have to consider God who demands man's worship; and the creature man, of whom the demand is made.

Man the creature; God the Creator.

Man, finite, circumscribed on every hand, limited in his knowledge and attainments.

God the infinite, the illimitable. God in nature was the great Unknown who Grecian philosophers ignorantly worshiped

on Paul's visit to Athens, and is as much unknown, and unknowable to-day in man's unaided efforts to scan the infinite.

Man can add nothing to God's happiness, and God cannot impart anything to man greater than a knowledge of Himself. God, self-revealed is the foundation of the Christian's hope, the basis of all spiritual life, thought and action.

There are three sources through which God has revealed Himself to man. His works, His word and His son. The Son is pre-eminently the revealer of the Father. The Father's mind, the Father's heart, the Father's purposes.

When these are made known to man, and lovingly received and obeyed, worship becomes spontaneous.

It is a law of our nature, that man becomes assimilated to the object he worships, and that is the only conceivable object that an all-wise and infinitely good-being could have in seeking the worship of man. It is for man's benefit. God designs to do certain things for His people, but He adds, "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." Ezek. xxxvi. 37.

The Bible presents to man the self-existent, omnipotent Jehovah; infinite in every divine perfection by whose wisdom and power everything exists. The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods in His hands are the deep places of the earth the strength of the hills is His also. The sea is His, and He made it, and His hands formed the dry land." This exhibition of greatness inspires the devout mind with reverence and awe, and compels him to exclaim, "O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, for He is our God and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand." Psalm xcv. 3-7.

Thus the Deity becomes enthroned in the affections of man's spiritual nature, and his admiration, and reverence and love are cultivated.

In this way the spiritual nature of man is developed, and day by day he grows up into his living head, and becomes more and more conformed unto the divine image.

Those who neglect the spiritual stimulus of worship, need not wonder if they remain stunted, dwarfed in the spiritual life.

We now come to the second question:

WHAT DOES WORSHIP EMBRACE BESIDES MAKING OUR REQUESTS
KNOWN?

Worship consists of two branches—prayer and praise.

Prayer again subdivides itself into, adoration, supplication, confession and thanksgiving.

The Bible reveals God as the ruler and dispenser of man's destiny; hence man feels his own weakness and need of divine aid, and supplicates God for assistance. Crying out "O, send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." Psalm xliii. 3. He realizes his many short-comings and imperfections, and this leads him to make confession, and implore God for forgiveness.

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions; wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me." Psalm li. 1.

Again conscious of the many favors day by day received at the hand of God impels him to thanksgiving for favors conferred, and causes him to exclaim, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" Psalm cxvi. 12. And thus we have adoration, supplication, confession, and thanksgiving as the natural consequence, the outgrowth of the relations of God to man, as Creator, Redeemer, Counsellor and Friend, and these combined find expression in psalms of praise.

"All people that on earth do dwell
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice."

We now approach the third question.

WHAT IS ESSENTIAL TO ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP?

Christ's definition meets the requirements of the case. "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." John iv. 23, 24.

I understand *that* in this way: Only those who have believed and obeyed the truth are acceptable worshipers with God.

The worship in Spirit is the worship of the Father in the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of sonship, the Spirit of trust and resignation, saying nevertheless, "Not my will, but thine be done." Luke xxii. 42.

WHAT DO THE SCRIPTURES WARRANT US TO PRAY FOR?

In looking over the Scripture record we find the field so wide, we hardly know where to begin, but taking Christ as our rule and example in this, as in everything else, we will commence with the kingdom. His rule was, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all else needful will be added thereto," (Matt. vi. 33), and so in the example of prayer He gave His disciples, "Hallowed be thy name," was the first petition, and second, "Thy kingdom come." This on the principle that the less is included in the greater. Matt. vi. 9.

Paul reasoned in that way when he said, "If God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things." Rom. viii. 32.

Spiritual blessings then, ought to take the lead, although temporal favors are not excluded as Christ further on added, "Give us this day our daily bread."

The writer to the Hebrews evidently so thought when he wrote, "Let us *therefore* (that is, seeing we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens), come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. iv. 16. This is always in order, we daily need God's mercy, and His sustaining grace, and what an invitation to come *boldly*. Do not imagine you will exhaust God's supply of mercy and grace. O no, thank His holy name the supply is inexhaustible.

We are also warranted to pray for all the saints (Eph. vi. 18), and especially for those who proclaim the truth, that utterance may be given unto them that they may open their mouths boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel." Eph. vi. 18.

We are also warranted to pray for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty." 1 Tim. ii. 2.

We are also warranted to pray for the sick; and to confess

our faults one to another, and pray one for another that we may be healed. James v. 16.

We are called on to pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us. We are commanded to watch and pray that we enter not into temptation. Matt. xxvi. 41. These were Christ's words to His disciples, on the night in which He was betrayed; He knew the weakness of the human heart, and sin is as deceitful to-day as it was then.

We are warranted to pray for divine illumination, "That the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened." Eph. i. 18. "That we may be filled with the knowledge of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Col. i. 9.

"Lead me," said David, "in thy truth, and teach me, for thou art the God of my salvation." Psalm xxv. 5. "Make me to understand the way of thy precepts, so shall I talk of thy wondrous works." Psalm cxix. 27.

You see he did not want to be enlightened solely on his own account but also that he might teach sinners in the way. Psalm xxv. 8.

We are warranted to pray for sanctifying grace: "Order my steps in thy word," prayed David, "and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." Psalm cxix. 133. "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me for I wait on thee." Psalm xix. 21. "Quicken me after thy loving kindness, so shall I keep the testimonies of thy mouth." Psalm cxix. 88.

Furthermore that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in us and we in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thess. i. 12.

We are warranted to pray for *spiritual* stability. To the end He may stablish our hearts, unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all His saints. 1 Thess. iii. 13. "Hold thou me up, (said David, who always recognized the need of divine aid) and I will be safe, and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually." Psalm cxix. 117.

But why go on in this way, there seems no end to the things we are warranted to pray for. I know of only one limitation, namely things agreeable to His will, and even Christ recognized this limitation. "Nevertheless not my will but thine be done."

The greater part of the Psalms of David are ascriptions of praise and fervent entreaties for help, for mercy, for pardon, for cleansing. The holiness of God and the exceeding sinfulness of sin was ever present in His mind, and confession was not forgotten by Him.

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” Prov. xxviii. 13. “If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John i. 9.

We are straitened in ourselves, “Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened.” Micah ii. 7.

The fifth question. On what conditions does God offer to answer prayer?

The answer to this question has been somewhat anticipated. We have seen the conditions. Prayer to the Father, in the name of Christ, for things agreeable to His will. If these conditions are observed and the petitions are accompanied with faith, there is the assurance of being heard. Of the believer on the name of the Son of God it is written, “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He heareth us.” 1 John v. 14.

David’s confidence was very great, and over and over he says, “I cried unto the Lord and He *heard* me.”

“The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are *open* unto their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.” 1 Peter iii. 12. “Ask and it shall be given you,” said the Great Teacher, “seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.” Matt. vii. 7.

John says, “Whatsoever we ask we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” 1 John iii. 22. David says, “He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him. He also will hear their cry and save them.” Psalm cxlv. 19. “Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.” Psalm l. 15.

“I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain.” Isaiah xlv. 19.

Sixth Question. What assistance is offered by the Spirit in regard to prayer?

Paul in his letter to the Romans says, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Rom. viii. 26.

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth." Psalm cxl. 18.

"Thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, seek ye me, and ye shall live." Amos v. 4. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer." Psalm cii. 17.

Instances of prayer being answered:

Exod. xxxiii. 17. Moses' intercession for Israel at Horeb.

James v. 17. Elias was a man subject to like passions.

Daniel ix. 17, 22. Angel Gabriel came while he was speaking.

Psalm cxx. 1. In my distress I called unto God and He heard.

Psalm iii. 4. I cried unto God and He heard me out of His *holy hill*.

Isaiah xxxvii. 14. Hezekiah, letter of king of Assyria spread before God.

Isaiah xxxviii. 5. Hezekiah. Fifteen years added to his life.

Acts x. 4. Cornelius, thy prayers and thy alms are come up as a memorial before God.

Acts xii. 5. Herod put Peter in prison.

Acts xvi. 25. At midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises in jail at Philippi.

Matt. vi. 30. O ye of little faith.

Matt. xvii. 20. If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed.

With all our prayers we have need to pray to God to increase our faith.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PUBLIC PRAYER.

The words responsible and responsibilities, fall upon our ears as terms of fearful import; all who have given them even a little consideration know how weighty they are.

Responsibility is the state of being responsible, accountable, or answerable, as for a trust or office, or for a debt.

It would be well for society if mankind generally realized the importance of the obligations they assume, for then fewer debts would be incurred without a reasonable prospect of being able to liquidate them, and fewer would rush into matrimony and terminate in a suit in court for a divorce.

There are, however, responsibilities or obligations of another kind which those instructed in the Word, should they seek to shirk, will do so at their peril.

I remember on one occasion a very dear relative of mine saying to me, "I am astonished that you should assume the responsibility of teaching the peculiar doctrines you entertain, with so much positiveness, to your fellow-men. What if after all you should be mistaken?" I replied, I am not teaching my own opinions. I would not DARE to do so, but inasmuch as I teach none other things but what God in His holy Word has declared, and inasmuch as God has been pleased to enlighten me in that Word, and has loosed my tongue to speak, I *dare* not keep silent, and I will not. I assume the responsibility.

So much by way of an introduction. And now for the subject proper, The Responsibilities of Public Prayer.

It is indeed a solemn obligation for any one to assume the responsibility of becoming the mouth-piece of a congregation in offering prayer and thanksgiving to God; but then, if no one would take that responsibility, public prayer would become an impossibility. God's will would not be done in that regard, and many souls would be deprived of what they esteem a blessed privilege, as well as a divine command.

That public worship was originally intended and practiced no one can doubt who is at all conversant with Scripture. Notably I would commend to your attention the ascription of thanks and praise offered on the occasion of bringing the ark of the covenant from the house of Obed-edom to the City of David to

be placed in the tent which David had prepared for it. 1 Chron. xvi. 8-36.

“Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon His name, make known His deeds among the people. Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him, talk ye of all His wondrous works. Glory ye in His holy name; let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord, and His strength, seek His face continually, remember His marvelous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth. . . . O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever. And say ye, save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel forever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord.”

There is one feature in this which is very impressive to me. It is the response by all the people. “And all the people said, Amen.” They made the thanksgiving, the supplication, and the praise, their own. They acknowledged it as the outburst of their own soul. It was theirs collectively. We have a similar expression in the Psalm cvi. 47. “Save us, O Lord, our God, and gather us from among the heathen to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting; and let all the people say, Amen, praise ye the Lord.”

This implies that the thanks and praise were spoken in an audible voice. Will our brethren, who sometimes lead us in such a very low indistinct voice, that their words can scarcely be heard, please take notice; and this not from weakness of voice, or physical disability, but simply from habit.

I would recommend to all such brethren to read carefully what Paul says in the 14th chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians about speaking in an unknown tongue. He says, “Else when thou shalt bless with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.”

As the Spirit has spoken expressly on this matter, I hope

our brethren will think it of sufficient importance to give it the consideration it deserves.

At this stage of the consideration of public prayer, I desire to fortify the minds of all and especially the young, against the assaults of infidelity which makes light of prayer by assuming to be very wise and propounding such questions as these.

If God is the unchangeable being you say He is, what is the use of praying to Him? Do you think He is going to change His mind on account of your prayers?

That is a sample of how superficial infidelity is. Such questions might stagger the unenlightened, but they do not affect our faith or hope in the slightest degree. If God were not unchangeable there would be little use in praying to Him because we would not know what mood He might be in. O what comfort it is to know that *our God*, in whom we trust, is *unchangeable*. In this we have the greatest assurance that He will hear and answer our prayers, because He has promised to do so; and His Son Christ Jesus has given us further encouragement in saying, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Matt. vii. 7, 8.

God, in His infinite goodness, bestows many temporal blessings on the unholy and the unthankful, but He has reserved the choicest tokens of His grace to be conferred on those who ask Him through believing prayer. It seems part of His divine economy to give certain favors to receptive souls only, who make their requests known in prayer; and who can question His right to do so?

That prayer cannot be neglected without inflicting great loss and injury on ourselves is evident from the fact that God has enjoined it. The divine blessings we are taught to beseech God for we cannot expect without our asking for them. "Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." Ezek. xxxvi. 37. The rule, as expressed by Paul, is "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Phil. iv. 6.

If this is necessary in the individual, is it not equally neces-

sary in the congregation? There are blessings peculiar to the Church collectively as there are to the individual personally. This you will all admit.

In this as in everything else we must draw our instruction from the Word, and from the examples therein contained.

It is one thing to "*say prayers*," according to the common acceptation, and a very different thing *to pray*. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." 1 Sam. xvi. 7. "He is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Heb. iv. 12, 13. It is obvious from this that formalism is mockery to Him; He wants the heart, and anything else is an abhorrence in His sight.

When we come to realize that God's keen eye penetrates the recesses of every mind and heart, we can better understand the great Teacher's words, "God is a Spirit and they that worship Him, must worship Him in Spirit and in truth," for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. He has invited them to come to His throne of favor. They are ever welcome there, but they must come to worship in Spirit and *in truth*. The cold formalist has no standing there. He and his supplications are alike rejected; his words are a weariness to Jehovah; as the Prophet Malachi testified, "Ye have wearied the Lord with your words."

The religious world exalts sincerity. To be earnest and sincere is everything with them, but God demands *truth*. He "desires truth in the inward parts." Psalm li. 6. No amount of sincerity or zeal will make that true which is in itself false. O, when will men learn that error is defiling, but the truth of God sanctifies. Indwelling truth: The Word believed; which makes the words of the mouth, and the meditations of the heart acceptable in the sight of God who is the redeemer, and the strength of His people. Psalm xix. 14.

As at present constituted we are all more or less influenced by the fervor that comes to us from a mind enlightened by divine truth, and a heart all aglow with the love and zeal that comes from a keen perception of the love of God in Christ Jesus. This zeal and love is greatly stimulated by our drawing near to God

in prayer,. What a promise it is that if we draw nigh to God, He will draw nigh to us (James iv. 8), and David says, "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him *in truth*, He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him. He also will hear their cry, and will save them. The Lord preserveth all them that love Him; but all the wicked will He destroy. My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless His holy name, for ever and ever." Psalm cxlv. 18-21.

Man is a being of social habits, and it is both natural and scriptural that those of like faith and hope should congregate together to praise the name of the Lord.

"I will bless the Lord at all times," said the prophet David, "His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together." Psalm xxxiv. 1, 2, 3.

God, who knew the wants of His children has arranged the order and appointments of His house to meet those wants, and the benefits to accrue to us from those appointments, will largely depend on the use we make of them. If we are found faithful to the trust committed to us, our improvement will be the more marked, and showers of blessing will descend on us from the bountiful Father.

Man in himself is a very helpless being beset by temptation, calamities and misfortunes, the thought of which would be appalling to him if left without divine aid to sustain him, and here is where the good offices of faith come in, he lifts his eyes heavenward and exclaims, "I to the hills will lift mine eyes, from whence doth come mine aid. My safety cometh from the Lord, who heaven and earth hath made."

O, what a comfort to know that we are in the hands, and under the care of one who is all-powerful, all-wise and good, and this firm reliance, this habitual trust on Him is the stay of every child of God, he takes comfort from every attribute of the Almighty.

God's unchangeable nature, as I have already said, ought to be the greatest comfort to His people, and will be if they understand His plans and purposes aright, instead of it being a hindrance to prayer it ought to be the greatest incentive, and

stimulus to it. Even to backsliding Israel, God said, "I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal. iii. 6.

In considering the responsibility of those who lead in public devotion. There is one thought which is very comforting; and it comes from the Master's own words, "When ye pray use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him." Matt. vi. 7. 8.

This does not lessen the obligation to present our petitions before Him, that condition remains the same, but gives the comforting assurance that our Father is intimately acquainted with all our wants, and when we come before Him we need not be perturbed in mind as though it were necessary to catalogue our wants to Him, but there are two conditions which God demands of all who would approach unto Him, and these are *sincerity* and *truth*.

He demanded that of ancient Israel. When "Joshua gathered the tribes to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges and for their officers, and they presented themselves before God, and when Joshua recited to them the call of Abraham, their sojourn in Egypt, and their deliverance therefrom by a powerful hand, and God's subsequent dealings with them. He then called upon them in these words, "Now, therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in *sincerity* and in *truth*." . . . And the people said unto Joshua, "The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey." Joshua xxiv. 14, 24.

You know the sequel; how recreant they were. Sincerity and truth God demanded of them, and He still demands the same, and will not be satisfied with anything less. The Church, "which is the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. iii. 15), is called on to preserve "the unleavened bread of *sincerity* and *truth*" (Cor. v. 8), and it is our contention *for* this that makes us a peculiar people to-day. All around us have sacrificed the truth, and claim that sincerity is everything, but God demands the service which embraces *sincerity* and *truth*, and these two must not be divorced.

To return to what I said at the outset, of the obligation of those who lead the Church in prayer and thanksgiving to speak in an audible voice, I would add further, lest any should still think this a very small matter. I want to point out as clearly as I can the injury inflicted on others on account of the matter of which we complain. The whole congregation are understood to participate in the prayers offered, and ought to have nothing to distract their minds. I would like each one fully to understand that congregational worship, is also individual worship, let each of us realize that we stand in the august presence of God, that it is as much a personal matter as if each one stood there alone.

The speaker is voicing your prayer as much as if you voiced it yourself, and here is where the responsibility of the speaker becomes apparent, to give breadth and scope to the wants of all. The tempted are crying for strength to overcome. The downcast is pleading for forgiveness. The thankful of heart want to express their thanksgiving, and each and all want to participate in the ascription of praise and adoration to the infinite One, the source of all life and blessing; and each and all want to supplicate divine care and protection for themselves, and the scattered members of the household, and earnestly entreat for the dispersed of Israel, and for our rulers. Now if our ears are strained in a vain and painful effort to hear the half audible expressions of the speaker, catching a word here and another there, our attention is called away from the supreme object of worship, and placed on the speaker and the injury done thereby is incalculable. You must see that in such a case, all the people cannot say, Amen, at the conclusion of such a prayer, and this everyone is expected to do either mentally or audibly.

How many of you, brethren and sisters, make it a rule to follow the speaker's words, make them your own, and at the close, at least mentally, say Amen? If this is not done, it is not public prayer; it is only one man praying, and the others listening, and this was never intended. Brethren, this is a solemn matter, and I want to press it home on your attention, and leave it with you to consider on whom the responsibility will rest in such a case.

If this admonition is not heeded, I am sorry to say, it will have the appearance of a willful transgression.

As I have already said, in our devotions we ought to realize that we stand in the immediate presence of God, and oh, what wisdom, what power, what glory; in a word what infinitude does that name imply! With what reverential awe we ought to come before Him!

If we make the prophets of Israel our type for heavenly devotion, I fear we will find how very far we come behind. They never reach such heights as when they soar on devotion's lofty wing.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord, my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment. Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain; who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds His chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind; who maketh the wind His messengers, and flames of lightning His ministers; who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever. . . . O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches. . . . The glory of the Lord shall endure forever; the Lord shall rejoice in His works. He looketh on the earth and it *trembleth*; He toucheth the hills and they *smoke*. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being; my meditation of Him shall be sweet. I will be glad in the Lord. Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Praise ye the Lord." Psalm civ. 1, 35.

How lofty the ascriptions of adoration and praise!

We now come to the humility and pathos of confession and contrition for sin.

"Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee. I will lay my hand upon my mouth." Job xl. 4. "And David said unto God, I have sinned greatly because I have done this thing; but now I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant: for I have done very foolishly." 1 Chron. xxi. 8.

"I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee." Psalm xli. 4.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kind-

ness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions” Psalm li. 1.

This again comes in striking contrast with the voice of thanksgiving. Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can show forth all His praise.” Psalm cvi. 1.

“O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.” Psalm cvii. 1, 2.

O brethren, how highly favored we are in having such a record of the struggles, the joys, the sorrows, and anticipations of God’s children in ancient times, their pathetic cries for help, their deep sense of the dignity and awful majesty of the God of heaven and earth, and their longing after a nearer approach to Him. This is a treasure which we cannot too much prize; we are taken, as it were, into their secret chambers and can listen to their pleadings with the Almighty, who is the same now as then. O that we may learn a lesson from their fervor and devotion, their reverence and godly fear.

As I am now dealing with responsibilities it seems a fitting time to remind all of you of the responsible position we occupy, on the divine principle so frequently referred to in the Word, namely, that to whom much is given of them much shall be required. Remember, I pray you, it is not a light thing to transgress God’s commandments, and it is a painful duty to remind you this morning of the words of the apostle of the Gentiles, “If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.” Gal. v. 15.

If we walk in the Spirit, or in the Spirit’s teaching, we will not do this thing. May God grant us the spirit of obedience is my prayer.

CHAPTER VII.

PRACTICAL AND DOCTRINAL RELIGION.

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine.”—Acts ii. 42.

THE PRESENT age is one of transition, upheaval, unrest. Men are growing impatient of restraint. For ages they have allowed others to do their religious thinking, and they are beginning to realize they have been misled, and it will be well if the reaction does not carry them too far in an opposite direction. The tendency is very strong that way, which fully corroborates the old adage: “None are so apt to believe too little as those who commence by believing too much.” The reign of creeds is not only past the meridian, but is fast declining into the shades of night. The occupation of the Creed-maker may be considered gone, and the change need not be much deplored, for like many of the powers of the past it has been oppressive and tyrannical.

It is to be regretted, however, that this hostility to restraint does not terminate in opposition to human creeds. Plain Bible doctrines are assailed with the same freedom as the human tenets, and frequently we hear such expressions as this, “Give us practical religion, the world has had too much of the doctrinal already.” Such sentiment as that is very misleading. It is calculated to do much harm with unthinking minds. The sentiment looks very specious I admit, and society is in a fit condition endorse it, but let us look at it critically for a little, and ask ourselves seriously, “What would the world be without doctrine?” Doctrine is essential to the well-being of society. Who could organize a government without political doctrine as a basis to rest on? And no religious system can stand without it?

The framers of the constitution of these United States recognized this fundamental principle, and therefore before promul-

gating the right of every man to the blessings of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, they based it on the political doctrine, the corner-stone of our Republican system, that "all men are born free and equal." Without such a declaration of principle as this what would all the rest have amounted to? That is the political doctrine of this great Republic on which the social and governmental structure rests. But to go back still further.

When the descendants of Abraham were being marshalled into national order under their leader, Moses, the theocracy then instituted was based on the cardinal doctrine, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Jehovah." This doctrine had first to be annunciated before the obligation of allegiance could be enforced, and then follows the code by which the civil, moral and religious duties of that nation were regulated.

In like manner when Christ came to introduce a new order of things, and make His Church a world-wide organization He was announced by prophets as a Light to lighten the Gentiles as well as the glory of His people Israel. Luke ii. 32. And His own declaration was, "I am the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. John viii. 12. To this was added Peter's declaration, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered and said, unto him, "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona. for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock (His Sonship and Christship), I will build my Church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it," and they have not prevailed, and never will prevail, as He Himself has demonstrated, for on the first day of the week after His crucifixion, He who is the head of His body, the Church, conquered death and the grave, and now He makes the glad announcement, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, amen, and have the keys of the grave and of death." Rev. i. 18. And to all His true and faithful followers He proclaims, "Because I live ye shall live also." John xiv. 19. "This is the will of Him that sent me that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life and I will raise him up at the last day." John vi. 40. Doctrines are the frame-work of the Christian religion, the

bones and sinews, to use a figure of speech, of the body corporate.

But some say, Christ inculcated duties, not doctrines, that is a mistake, you cannot have duties without doctrines. Duties grow out of doctrines as I have been endeavoring to show. You may as well say you want apples without an orchard, but we all know, no orchard, no apples. Christ's ministry commenced with doctrine, as you will find by consulting the narratives of the apostles. Mark records that immediately after John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye and believe the Gospel." You see the call to repentance is based on the doctrine of the kingdom first proclaimed, Mark i. 22, And He went into Capernaum, and straightway on the Sabbath day He entered into the synagogue and taught. And what follows? We read, "They were astonished at His *doctrine* for He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes."

Again we read when Jesus had put the sadducees to silence on the question of the resurrection, when the listening multitude heard it they were *astonished* at His *doctrine*. Matt. xxii. 33. And when He drove the money changers out of the temple and rebuked them, and taught them of the purity of His Father's house we read, "The scribes and chief priest heard it and sought how they might destroy Him for they feared Him, because all the people were astonished at His doctrine." Mark xi. 18. No wonder Jesus taught with authority when He could appeal to the miracles He wrought, and furthermore He said, "*My doctrine* is not mine, but His that sent me." John vii. 16. We are sometimes told "Jesus reprov'd the Jews for their conduct but never for their opinions." That is a great mistake. See with what severity He rebuked the Pharisees when He said, "In vain they do worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. xv. 9), and to the Sadducees He said, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." When brought before Caiaphas, the high priest, for trial, and asked by him of His disciples, and of His *doctrine*, He did not say, "I never taught doctrine, I came to set an example of a pure life, and good works," but He answered him, "I spake openly to

the world, I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing." John xviii. 19, 20. If He had never proclaimed the doctrine of the kingdom, and sent the twelve and seventy to preach the same thing, and reproved the Pharisees and the Sadducees for their erroneous doctrine He never would have been delivered over to death. The good confession He witnessed before Pilate brought the accusation affixed to His cross, "This is Jesus, the king of the Jews." But this is not all, before He ascended to the Father, He gave a commission to His apostles to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations; and He commanded them to tarry at Jerusalem, until they were endued with power from on high; and notwithstanding that they were divinely appointed and told by Christ that the Holy Spirit would teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever He had said unto them. John xiv. 26. We find people who will express doubt about the apostles' teaching, and quote something they did or said during the early days of their following Him as proof of their being incapable and unreliable.

Could anything be more unwise than such a course as that, more dishonoring to Christ who endorsed them in these words, "Howbeit when the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak, and He will show you things to come." John xvi. 13. And of Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, Christ spake to Ananias saying, "He is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel, for I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Acts ix. 15, 16. Would it show divine wisdom to send an incompetent messenger? Do the epistles of Paul show any incapacity? And now it is in order to inquire, what those divinely commissioned messengers say about doctrine? Do they ignore doctrine as something about which the less there is said, the better, and that belief in the Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man is all that is necessary, or do they enforce doctrine on the Church as indispensable to its life and growth? Let us see.

To commence with the early history of the Church, Luke

records in Acts ii. 41, 42, "Then they that gladly received His word were baptized and the same day there were added to them about 3,000 souls, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' DOCTRINE and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Here you observe DOCTRINE takes the lead, has the precedence, and rightly so, for without the *doctrine believed* there would have been no fellowship, no breaking of bread, and no prayers. The doctrine was the Gospel of the kingdom, and that believed gave them "one faith," and "one hope," and we need not wonder at the result as recorded in the Word, "The multitude of them that believed were of *one heart and one soul,*" no dissensions, no discord among them, but "great grace was upon them all." And so long as they continued in the one faith and hope of the Gospel, and sound doctrine prevailed among them, they were a united loving band, and efficient in the work they were called to do; but so soon as error crept in, grace went out and dissensions were abundant. This grieved the heart of Paul, and in his letter to the Galatians we find him bewailing thus, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel; which *is not another*, but there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ." Gal. i. 6, 7. And in his epistle to the Romans we find these words, "Now I beseech you, brethren," mark the words, it is an earnest entreaty, "*I beseech you* brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the *doctrine* which ye have learned, and avoid them." You see with Paul doctrine had no subordinate place, hence he warned them to beware of those who by "good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." We see from this that the opposers of the truth were not openly profane, but on the contrary were very attractive through their "good words and fair speeches," but nevertheless Paul denounces them as deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ even as Satan transforms himself into an angel of light. Their semblance to an apostle made them the more dangerous, even as a good counterfeit is more liable to deceive.

In writing to Timothy, Paul is very urgent telling him to "charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables." "Till I come," says he, "give attendance to reading.

to exhortation, to *doctrine*." "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the *doctrine*, continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Contrary to the teaching of some, you see their salvation depended on their continuing in the doctrine. This is Paul's charity. What do you think of it?

John also in his second epistle uses these solemn words that ought to sink into the hearts of all. "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the *doctrine* of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the *doctrine* of Christ he hath both the Father and the Son."

This brings us to that part of our subject which connects the doctrinal and the practical together showing they are twin hand-maids, and must not be put asunder.

Paul in his letter to Titus uses this memorable language, "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works, in *doctrine* showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, SOUND SPEECH that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you." There is where the truth is invulnerable when joined with good works. Let none deceive themselves with the idea that faith, however sound will avail anything without corresponding works. To all such James' words are ever applicable, "What doth it profit my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works, can faith save him?" "As the body without the spirit is dead so faith without works is dead also."

We do well to ponder the expression, "In doctrine showing *uncorruptness*;" and it would be well if all teachers conformed to Paul's rule. That which is corrupt is unclean, debased, has taint and contamination in it. It is demoralizing in its tendency. It involves dishonesty, double dealing, and perfidy, which lead to apostasy, or as the apostle elsewhere says, "Men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the faith, supposing that gain is godliness." Uncorruptness on the contrary implies purity, candor, integrity, veracity, and those who are possessed of these qualities, cannot handle the Word of God deceitfully or through covetousness with feigned words make merchandise of their fellow-men. There is a beauty and a harmony in all God's arrangements and they shine conspicuously in this divine alliance

between doctrine and practice, faith and works. If you seek to sever them, you do violence to the divine arrangement. When a correct faith leads the way, and works conform, *man is blest, and God is honored*. Without doctrine, works cannot be tested to know whether they are of any value or not. We must not then undervalue it, nor be restive under the restraint it imposes.

The truth I desire to impress upon your minds is very forcibly expressed by Jude in his short but singularly instructive epistle. He therein warns the Church concerning "Certain men who had crept in unawares, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." The connection is here very marked between the loose moral conduct of those men, and the denying of the Lord Jesus Christ. Denying Him they cast off restraint: giving up Christ's doctrine the way was open to them to fall into all manner of vice.

In contradistinction to this, Jude exhorts believers to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." He did not, like some modern preachers, say, "I have enough to do to try to keep men moral," and let doctrine alone, but he goes to the root of the matter, and urges them to "build up themselves on their most holy faith." Jude 20.

That was Jude's corrective against vice, and the safeguard to every good work. Let us strive to do likewise.

We are sometimes reminded that it is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone," as though this gave a license to go into the speculations and vagaries of which the human mind has ever been prolific. But while man shall not live by bread alone, the divine arrangement for his spiritual growth and sustenance is ample and complete, and is contained in what follows, "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Deut. viii. 3. This was advanced truth for Moses, the great prophet and law-giver, to promulgate, and was endorsed by the Son of God, and is expressed in other words by Paul, when he said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and 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." 2 Tim.

iii. 16, 17. We should ever study to speak the things which become sound doctrine, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of us. It is a fearful thing to handle the Word of God deceitfully, mystifying it, or misrepresenting it, destroying its teaching, and giving a false color to it; but this has been done for ages, and the evil is as wide spread as it is ancient. For ages men have taught the inherent immortality of man. That the human soul is deathless, and indestructible and this teaching permeates nearly all theological works; tinctures nearly every religious address, but nevertheless it is not only unsupported by Scripture testimony, but is in direct opposition to it, and subverts the plainest teachings of the Word of God, the utterances of prophets, Christ Jesus, and His apostles; and from this parent-stem proceed innumerable shades of error, which darken the human mind, and prevent the entrance of the light of the life-giving Word.

To this parent error may be traced on the one hand the revolting doctrine of eternal torment, and on the other the equally baseless subterfuge of universal restoration; both human inventions. The one distorting and maligning the character of God as a relentless tyrant, unmindful of the sufferings of His creatures, who will eternally writhe in hopeless misery, which is wholly vindictive, never having been intended for any reformatory purpose, and the other holding out to the sinner a false hope, that however wicked and base he may become, and fall so hopelessly that there is nothing more for him in this life, till he is transferred to an *undiscovered* country, and a *fairer clime*, and have another chance, where he will be *forced* forward by the inevitable law of progress. See Sunday readings in the "Chautauquan" March, 1891. Who can tell how the world has been corrupted through such false theories as these, and how simple the human mind to be deceived with such sophistry. The question arises where those knowing ones get their information about the conditions to prevail in "*an undiscovered country*," and how they know it will be "*a fairer clime*" and all about the "forcing process" under "the inevitable law of progress." In this life men are left to the freedom of their own will, although directed what to shun, and what pursue. If they follow

the teaching of divine inspiration, resist evil and persevere in the path of duty, they form *character*, and place themselves on the side of righteousness, but in the "*fairer clime*" of that "undiscovered country" if they are to be "*forced forward*" by the *inevitable law of progress* there can be no character formed. The creatures of such a *forcing process*, under inevitable law can only be *machines* that is all, and nothing more.

A beautiful outcome this, as the production of the Elysian fields invented by vain dreamers of whom we are well warned in the Word of God.

In opposition to all such human theories, and vain delusions the teaching of Scripture rises like an impregnable bulwark, an immovable tower, an impenetrable armor, and that Word declares, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 23.

I trust I need not say more to convince all of the folly of undervaluing doctrine, and the danger of forsaking the teaching of divine inspiration to adopt the false teaching, and unreliable theories of uninspired men, and thus follow the example of Israel of old of whom God, through the prophet Jeremiah, testifies saying, "My people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished O ye heavens at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate saith the Lord, for my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Jere. ii. 11-13. How completely do these words describe the various theories, and systems presented by men for the world's reformation, the world's amelioration, broken cisterns every one of them! Wholly inadequate for the purpose for which they were intended, much labor expended in hewing them out, and then wholly worthless. Of all of man's handiwork a broken cistern is the most unsatisfactory, because *utterly useless*. Israel changed their glory for that which did not profit. God sent them divinely inspired prophets, and they persecuted and killed them, and Saul, their king, became so debased as to consult a woman that practiced divination, a fortune-teller, a proceeding denounced by Israel's prophets, an abomination to God, and prohibited by divine statute.

How much better are the men of our day, who amid the boasted enlightenment of the 20th century, discredit the inspired word, deny miracles, scoff at the Bible account of the creation, the fall of man, and the atonement; but those who are too incredulous to believe the Word of God, can rely implicitly on the absurdities of evolution, based on unproved hypothesis, consult spirit mediums, and believe their communications as if they were truth and verity. They have abandoned the only reliable authority that was ever given to man and run after delusions with an earnestness and avidity born of infatuation. "They have forsaken the Fountain of Living Waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water."

With access to the Fountain of Living Waters how sad that so few heed Christ's invitation, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." "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."

"I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." John vi. 40. "The flesh profiteth nothing, the words that I speak unto you they are Spirit and they are life."

There is a famine in the land to-day, "not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." Amos viii. 11.

Men follow the vagaries of their own minds, the unreliable light of nature, whose prophets are all at variance. They will reject the teaching of God's Word and feel its requirements a restraint; and yet will *tremble* at presentiments born of abnormal physical conditions, and become the very slaves of superstition. Would that we could *awaken* them from their stupor, *arouse* them from their infatuation, and make them see that the way to everlasting life although very narrow, is very plain; well defined in the Word of God, and when learned is above all price. This heavenly "wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it." Let me

entreat all to study God's Word carefully, prayerfully. As compared with the writings of uninspired men, "The Words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth purified seven times." "The entrance of His words giveth light, it giveth understanding unto the simple." Psalm cxix. 130.

Dying sinner, there is in God's Word a message of life for you. Your sins, if unrepented of will end in your destruction, for all the wicked will God destroy, but He offers to pardon your past transgressions and give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. Unending life in the kingdom of His dear Son, if you will believe the good message of His love, repent and believe the Gospel and be baptized into Christ for the remission of your sins, and thereafter live godly in Christ Jesus, waiting for His coming and His Kingdom.

The offer of the Gospel is free to all. "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." Rev. xxii. 17.

"Ho, ye that thirst, approach the spring
Where living waters flow,
Free to that sacred fountain, all
Without a price may go.

"How long to streams of false delight
Will ye in crowds repair,
How long your strength and substance waste
On trifles light as air?

"Let sinners quit their evil ways,
Their evil thoughts forego,
And God, when they to Him return,
Returning grace will show.

"He pardons with o'erflowing love,
For hear the voice divine:
My nature is not like to yours
Nor like your ways are mine."

To those who have believed and obeyed the Gospel invitation let me say, whether you realize it or not, your responsibility is very great. God has not intrusted you with so much light to have it hid. Remember Christ's own words, "Neither do men

light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," Matt. v. 15, 16.

What are we to understand by "good works," in this connection certainly something more than charitable actions, for those are not to be sounded abroad. In the case of alms-giving the rule is the right hand must not know what the left hand doeth.

You doubtless remember the question put to Christ, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" Jesus answered, "This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." John vi. 28. This work can, and ought to be proclaimed abroad. To believe on Christ implies much more than is generally understood by that expression. It is to believe and obey His teaching, *His doctrines*, which He said were not His own, but His that sent Him. "The Father which sent me He gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak, and I know that His commandment is *life everlasting*." John xii. 49.

God's command by the prophet Jeremiah is, "He that hath my word let him speak my word faithfully." Jere. xxiii. 28. Have we believed the Gospel, embraced the truth of God contained in the covenants of promise concerning the kingdom to be established *under the whole heaven*, and the life everlasting which Christ came to make available; and shall we be silent while these doctrines are despised, and the names of those who hold them are cast out as evil? Shall we? Can we be silent? The truth of God is derided to-day by the religious community who believe that sincerity and good intentions will take the place of faith in God's promises, and whatever others do I shall not be silent, I dare not be silent. Silence would indicate a very poor estimate of God's truth. I do not mean that we should force it on any one; that is not God's method, but He wants all to be invited to come; and He has intrusted this work to His called-out-ones. "The Church is the pillar and ground of the truth." It must witness for Christ. Christ is now in heaven at His Father's right hand as our Mediator and High Priest, and He has intrusted a work to us to do in His absence. How are we

doing it? That is the question, are we witnessing for Him? Solomon says, "A true witness delivereth souls." Prov. xiv. 25. Are we delivering souls by our testimony, or are we weakening the testimony of others by becoming the apologists of the faithless?

Let us not under-rate doctrine. Paul, when writing his epistle to the saints at Rome, thanked God that they had obeyed from the heart the *form of doctrine* delivered unto them. Rom. vi. 17. This he never would have done if an amiable disposition joined with charitable actions were all that were necessary to make them acceptable to God, neither would he have commanded Timothy to "exhort with long-suffering and *doctrine*." 2 Tim. iv. 2. Nor would he in writing to Titus of the qualifications of a bishop have made prominent his "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by *sound doctrine* both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Titus i. 9. If doctrine is at such a discount, why did Paul enjoin on Timothy "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." 2 Tim. ii. 2. And again, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith, and of *good doctrine*, whereunto thou has attained." Did Paul make a mistake in giving "sound doctrine" so much prominence in his epistles? And if so, does it not reflect reproach on Christ in sending such an ambassador to carry His name and Word to the Gentiles? If philanthropy and a broad charitable spirit will take the place of the Gospel, then indeed the offence of the Gospel may forever cease.

Brethren, the time to labor is short, "the Judge standeth at the door." Whatsoever our hands find to do let us do it with our might. Faith and works must go hand in hand to be acceptable to God. Let us not under-rate doctrine and become the apologists of those who despise it, but by a firm and consistent testimony let us seek to "deliver souls," deliver souls from death, for in doing so we shall both save ourselves, and those who hear us. Amen.

"ABSTAIN FROM ALL APPEARANCE OF EVIL."

"Abstain from all appearance of evil, and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thess. v. 22, 23.

Why was the apostle so urgent in exhorting to abstain from all appearance of evil? Presumably on account of its deceitful nature. Of all things in the world sin is the most to be dreaded. People dread sickness, pain, poverty and death, but any, or all of these are not to be feared in comparison with the monster sin. It is the more to be feared because its advances are insidious. The writer to the Hebrews says: Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Heb. iii. 12, 13.

And Solomon says, "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water, therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with." Prov. xvii. 14.

The most of vices are contracted before the victim is aware of it. No one puts the intoxicating cup to his lips with the intention of becoming a drunkard, but drunkards are made thereby nevertheless.

The tendency of all evil is to blunt the moral perceptions. A wrong act once done, is more easily repeated. The gambler who frequents the shrine of chance, becomes more and more infatuated by every visit to the haunts of that vice, until his manhood is destroyed, and he has become the slave of a passion which is stronger than himself.

The apostle having thus warned the church of the Thessalonians against the first appearance of evil, he proceeds, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." This passage, like many others in the sacred Word, has been much perverted through pagan superstition, and theological tradition.

It has been used to prove a sort of trinity in man, and as some of them put it, the body is the outer shell, or husk, then

comes the soul, which is more refined, and last of all comes the spirit, which they speak of as the "sanctum sanctorum," or holy of holies, the innermost of all. Some claim immortality for the soul, while others are willing that it be counted mortal along with the body; but there they take their stand, and contend vigorously for the immortality of this more sublimate part called the spirit, and, with an air of triumph, they ask, "Does the Bible not say "the spirit shall return to God who gave it?" And they at once proceed to invest it with consciousness and individuality wholly unauthorized in Scripture.

You are all aware the word "spirit" as applied in Scripture, has various significations. Sometimes it refers to the breath, as in Gen. vii. 22, where we read of the flood, that, "All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, of all that was in the dry land died." And in Job xii. 10, we read that in the Lord's "hand is the soul (life) of every living thing, and the breath (spirit) of all mankind." And again Job says, "All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils," or as the margin reads, "The breath which God gave him is in my nostrils." Job xxvii. 3.

Sometimes it is used as indicative of moral qualities as in Numbers v. 14 and 30, where it is termed, "The spirit of jealousy," and in Deut. xxxiv. 9 where we read of "The spirit of wisdom," and in 1 Sam. i. 15, Hannah is spoken of as "A woman of a sorrowful spirit," and in Prov. xvi. 18, 19, we read of a "haughty spirit," and an "humble spirit," and again in Luke ix. 55, Christ said to His disciples, James and John, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." That is, their disposition in seeking to call down fire from heaven was not approved of by Him who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.

At a hotel, where I was once stopping, I had several conversations on the life question with a gentleman who had been a professor of Hebrew in an Eastern college, and he quoted the passage we have been considering about "spirit, soul and body," and claimed it was proof of a trinity in man. I replied, if that proves a trinity in man, we have another trinity where we read, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all the heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Deut. vi. 5), but his knowledge of Hebrew did not enable him to meet that argument.

When Paul speaks of spirit, soul and body, in this passage, we understand our whole being, man's moral, mental and physical nature. In what other light can we consider Paul's desire that the whole man, including the intellect and the affections, be preserved blameless unto the coming of Jesus Christ.

This is quite in keeping with what Paul says in his epistle to the Romans xii. 1, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." I fear that this obligation is very faintly realized by some of us; physical culture is a divine obligation which cannot be disregarded with impunity. What poor service can be rendered to God in a poor broken-down organization. I do not say this to discourage those brave souls who are contending nobly under many physical disabilities. They are worthy of all praise, but I am exceedingly anxious that the young should comprehend what a blessing they have in a sound physical constitution, and understand that they are under divine law to keep themselves pure from everything of a contaminating nature.

The young man who thoughtlessly indulges in the nicotine habit is unaware that thereby he is impairing his nervous system, lowering his moral sensibilities, doing lasting injury to his will-power, and creating a desire for stronger stimulants which too frequently seeks gratification in the liquor habit, which coils its bonds around its victim before he knows he has become a slave. O, when will men learn to heed the apostle's exhortation, "Abstain from all appearance of evil."

Strife is not the only evil the beginning of which is "As when one letteth out water." Men are not free, and cannot become strong who are addicted to any bad habit, no matter what it is.

Alimentiveness is part of our organism, and indispensable to our physical well-being, but when that becomes perverted and *pampered*, and we become the creatures of a depraved appetite, then do we lower ourselves in the scale of being, giving too much thought to what we shall eat, what we shall drink, like the pagans of whom Christ warned His disciples not to be like them. The strong man is above such considerations; he has learned to subdue and crucify his appetites, and cultivate moral force.

The whole ordering of law and Gospel is on the plane of

discipline. An undisciplined mind and body cannot be acceptable to God, no matter what amount of religious zeal it may possess.

Restrain, deny yourself, said the law. Exod. xx. 1-17. Deny yourself, said Christ. "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it." Mark viii. 34. This gives us an idea of the estimate Christ put upon His Gospel, which is so little esteemed to-day. No wonder Paul said he was not ashamed of it, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Rom. i. 16. But in order to manifest itself as the power of God unto salvation, it must control men, that is, become the governing principle. How else can its saving power be manifested?

What says the Word, "If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." The love of the world and its ways, are antagonistic. Two things so utterly incompatible, cannot dwell in the same heart.

If any are inclined to questionable amusements, let me ask you, have you forgot your baptismal vows, your consecration to Christ and to His service?

Call to remembrance, I beseech you, the former days in which after you were illuminated by the word of truth, you professed your willingness to leave all and follow Jesus. Forget not, I entreat you, the inspiration of that hour, think of its firm resolve, its holy confidence, its loving trust, and glorious anticipations; you were just then brought within the bond of the covenant, would that its conditions were ever fresh in your minds, then your hearts would be full of love, and your tongues filled with praise for the deliverance God has wrought for you: any suggestion to decline from the path of duty would fill you with abhorrence,

Why should we come around this table every first day, unless it be to have these feelings kindled anew in our hearts? We come to remember Jesus, but we cannot remember Him aright without remembering the debt of gratitude we owe Him, and our obligations to love and serve Him, who has redeemed us

with His own precious blood. Hear the words of the apostle, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward, for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise, for yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just by faith, shall live, but if any man draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Heb. x. 35.

That is a passage of the deepest importance to every child of God, showing the inestimable value of the heaven procured confidence of one justified by faith. "The price of it is above rubies, it cannot be gotten for gold. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx or the sapphire." Well might the apostle entreat, "*Cast* not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." Oh, let not the pleasures of the world beguile you, to barter this confidence for their hollow pretensions—a moment's ungodly gratification, which bitter tears of repentance may not wash away.

O, it is only a little while of self-denial and *then* He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

Oh, say, can you not watch one hour?

If we stoop to self-gratification, and become enthralled by hurtful appetites, then we lose so much strength, and become morally weak, and this weakness, if allowed, will grow upon us, and we will become slaves before we know it. Set it down as an unflinching rule, that the obstacles we meet in life will either strengthen or weaken us. If we yield to them, we are weakened thereby; but if we resist and overcome them, we are strengthened in the very act. On no other hypothesis can we account for the evil in the world, tolerated by an all-wise, infinitely good, and righteous Ruler. The word "discipline" explains the whole.

Why should we make so wide a distinction between moral and physical laws, as if they did not come from the same Law-giver, and entitled to the same recognition.

Paul in his letter to Titus says, "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to the intent that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God, and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us

that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works." Titus ii. 12, 14.

If men would give more heed to the divine teaching in this direction it would accrue to their happiness in the present life, and rank among the present blessings and privileges of believers, and thereby they would be blessed in body, soul and spirit. As the apostle elsewhere says, "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. iv. 8.

If it is our duty, and our reasonable service to dedicate our whole being to God's service, including the moral and intellectual forces of our nature, is it not reasonable that we should improve and strengthen those forces in order to serve Him better? God ought to have the best service we are capable of rendering Him. Our clearest thoughts, our purest affections ought to flow outward toward Him, and if we strive to serve Him with a determination born of a loving heart, our service will be acceptable to Him, and we will accomplish much. We will surmount many difficulties, and acquire new strength by every effort put forth in the performance of duty. The service that springs from love is never irksome, it needs no urging; it is not reluctantly given, it flows spontaneously without prompting.

Brethren, is our service of this nature or is it not? Do not be impatient with me in urging this question. I say to you to-day, passive service will not do, and reluctant service will not be acceptable to God. God requires active, willing service. When the first day morning comes, are you on the alert to go to the house of God? Is there any other place where you can take more comfort, more pleasure? If so I tremble for your condition. To derive good from this service we must come lovingly, and enter on it as if it were got up for our special benefit. The prayers offered here must be *our prayers*. The hymns sung must be made *our* hymns. We must drink in instruction for the purpose of becoming strong, not simply to be acted on for the short time we are here; that would do us little good, and if you stay away we cannot reach you with our counsels, and in that way you would inflict an injury on yourselves, and through you to the whole body.

Let us wisely consider the apostle's admonition, "Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Brethren, the time to labor is short. The Judge standeth at the door. Are we all ready? "Whatsoever our hands find to do, let us do it with our might."

THE GOSPEL.

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."—Rom. i. 16.

It seems surpassing strange that in a religious country, where nearly every one professes to be Christian, so few can tell what is embraced in the Gospel message, and month after month, and year after year they can read unmoved Paul's testimony that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth! To my mind this is the most conclusive proof that all such are practicing self-deception; that their religion is only formal, destitute of saving power. The very thought is appalling! and still we cannot shut our eyes to the sad fact that millions and millions of men and women who freely talk of salvation and faith in God, know nothing of the Gospel, and are utterly ignorant of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ.

It would seem as though common intelligence would lead them to inquire, What is the Gospel? Seeing it is assigned such a high position in the Christian formula for salvation purposes, by one divinely called to be a "chosen vessel unto Christ, to bear His name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." Acts ix. 15.

Would Christ send an incompetent messenger to bear His name before the Gentiles, and to preach His Gospel? That is a question that must be settled, and ought to be settled right here. If the answer is that He would not send an incompetent messenger, then we must believe the message He delivered. There is no getting away from this.

It must be admitted then that the Gospel is the power of

God unto salvation, as Paul claimed it was. How important then, yea how indispensable it is to know what the Gospel is. This becomes more apparent when we consider Paul's second reason for not being ashamed if it. "For therein," says he, "is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith as it is written, The just by faith, shall live." Those who have been justified by faith, they shall live, live forever. The Gospel was given to be believed, to become the ground of our faith, and only those who believe it can be saved by it. "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." But how could the righteousness of God be revealed in the Gospel if it is such an obscure incomprehensible thing as many believe it to be? That which is revealed is divulged, made plain. If the Gospel is itself a hidden mystery, how could the righteousness of God be revealed therein? We leave that question to be answered by those who regard it as a mystery; but as our earnest desire at all times is to arouse a spirit of inquiry among the careless and the thoughtless, as well as to assist the seekers after truth, my design is to throw out a few suggestions as to how we can help them. And first, as I have indicated, we need to show them the importance of the Gospel, that they cannot be saved without it; that it is only available to those who believe it; and that in order to believe it they must know what it treats of, and in some measure understand its import.

I know no greater barrier to a reception of the truth than the false notion that the Gospel is a great mystery; and so soon as we can undeceive persons in that respect, and impress them with the idea of the simplicity of the Gospel, one great step has been made toward their enlightenment.

I admit there is a show of plausibility in this commonly received error. to a superficial reader of the Word, from the expression, "Mystery of the Gospel," contained in Paul's letter to the Ephesians vi. chap. 19th verse, but a careful reading of the passage removes the difficulty. Paul there asks the prayers of the Church, that utterance may be given unto him, that he may open his mouth boldly to *make known* the mystery of the Gospel. Now the question arises, what is a mystery? A mystery is a profound secret. But when the secret is made known, divulged, or published, it is a secret no longer, and that is just what Paul

did, as he said in his letter to the Colossians (i. 26), in which he speaks "of the dispensation of God which was given to him to fully preach the Word of God, even the mystery which had been hid from ages, and from generations, but now is made *manifest* to His saints." Now, that which is made manifest is not concealed, obscure, or difficult, but on the contrary is clear, plain and obvious.

In Ephesians iii. 4-6, he tells us what that secret was, "Whereby when ye read," he says, "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." As the apostle of the Gentiles, Paul, magnified his office by dwelling more upon the grace of God thus manifested, than all the apostles. The Jews were slow to believe in this opening of the door to the Gentiles, and it is no wonder, as national prejudice was opposed to it; even Peter had to have a vision, and a divine communication to cause him to comply with the message sent to Cornelius, and you all know how he was taken to task by them of the circumcision when he returned from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, and how he had to tell them of the vision, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and ended by saying, "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I that I could withstand God?" Acts xi. 17.

The importance of the Gospel is further shown in what Paul said to the church at Corinth in his first letter iv. chap. and 15th verse: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you *through the Gospel*." Yes, *begotten* you, through the Gospel.

But is it indeed so that professors around us do not understand or believe the Gospel Paul preached? Are they indeed the victims of those who have perverted the Gospel? and who preach another Gospel than that which Paul preached?

This is a vital question,—one of momentous issues. Let us try to answer it in the fear of God, by comparing the two together.

In Matt. iv. 23, we read, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom." After this Christ sent out His twelve apostles, and His instruction to them was, "And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. x. 7.

After this the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come, and again the command was, say unto them, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." Luke x. 9.

Again in the parable of the sower. The seed sown is, "The word of the kingdom." Matt. xiii. 19. So said Jesus. Then again after His resurrection and during the forty days He tarried with them, He was speaking unto His apostles "of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Acts i. 13. This was the subject matter of His teaching. And before His ascension, He said unto His apostles, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." Mark xvi. 15. Previous to this He had told them, "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. xxiv. 14. In keeping with this we find on the persecution which arose in Jerusalem, and culminated in the death of Stephen, the disciples were scattered abroad, "and Philip went down to Samaria, and preached Christ unto them, and when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." This is what they preached for salvation purposes, and as we have seen Paul said he was not ashamed of it, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Now let us contrast this with the teaching of the present day. And so that we may not misrepresent them I will quote from the "Union Bible Dictionary," published by the American Sunday-School Union, which in the preface says of the work, "The services of one of the most distinguished biblical scholars in the country were employed in a general revision of the original edition, and many of the most important articles also received a critical examination from several others, both clergymen and lay-

men, in whose competency and fidelity the utmost confidence may be felt." Now as the portion I am about to read is an "Important Article" we must understand it has received all this careful revision by men of competency and fidelity. I quote from page 406. The article is "Kingdom," and the Scripture passage treated of is Luke xii. 32: "Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It says, "The precise import of this term can usually be determined by its connection. In the New Testament, it generally denotes either, *the spiritual reign of Christ over the hearts of individuals, or over His Church collectively.*" John xviii. 36. Kingdom of God. 1 Cor. xv. 50. Kingdom of heaven. Matt. iii. 2. These terms sometimes denote the state of glory beyond the grave (2 Peter i. 11). More generally they denote the *Gospel dispensation* under the government of the Messiah, in distinction from the typical kingdom of the Jews. Matt. iii. 2; xxi. 43; xxv. 1; Luke x. 9, 11, and sometimes they signify the Gospel, exerting *a reigning power over the hearts and minds of men.* Luke xvii. 21; John iii. 3, 5; Rom. xiv. 17."

What shall we say to this? Is it not enough to make one sad, and sick at the heart to witness such an exhibition of ignorance and folly? "The term kingdom in the New Testament generally denotes either the spiritual reign of Christ over the hearts of individuals, or over His Church collectively!" And that was what Christ meant when He said, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom!!!" Can you imagine a greater perversion of Scripture than this definition of the word "kingdom?" Do we wrong those persons when we say they are ignorant of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ? Do they not nullify the Word of God, and make His promises of non-effect?

Under such teaching what becomes of the promises to Abraham and his seed the Christ? Gal. iii. 29. What of the promise to David, "Thy seed will I establish *forever*, and build up thy throne to all generations" (Psalm lxxxix. 4), and what of the announcement to Mary by the angel Gabriel, "Thou shalt conceive, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David,

and He shall reign over the house of Jacob *forever*; and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke i. 32, 33)? These plain, positive promises given by God, and confirmed by His oath Psalm lxxxix. 35, must be frittered away, and thrown to the winds of heaven, before any such definition as that here given can be accepted.

"Salvation as understood by Protestants, says one of our city clergymen, is going to heaven at death." This is enough to make angels weep.

Do you know how many Protestants there are in the world? According to late statistics there are not fewer than 114,815,500 indulging in this false hope, and if we add Roman Catholics, 225,000,000, and add to this 84,136,000 Greek Catholics, we have a total of 423,951,500. Think of it 423 millions resting on a false hope that will never be realized. A hope founded on no promise of God; a hope altogether foreign to the teaching of Israel's prophets, Christ Jesus, and His apostles. But marvel not at the contrast, it is the work of the apostasy. "And such were some of you" before ye were enlightened by the Spirit's teaching. Nearly all of us were involved in this delusive hope, this snare of the devil. We were as ignorant as they are of the things concerning the kingdom of God, and know as little of the Gospel promises; and this thought ought to make us very humble. and should teach us to deal very kindly with them. But here arises the question, What is it to deal kindly with them? Would it be kindness to allow them to remain undisturbed in their delusion? Nay, rather, would it not be the greatest kindness to seek to arouse them by every means in our power, lest they sleep the sleep of death? But says one, "they believe in Christ, and I do not see that they are in such danger after all." They believe in Christ, do they? How do you know? Let us see. What does Christ mean? It means one anointed. Was Jesus anointed to be a king and a priest upon His throne? Yes, O, yes. Well where is His throne if it is not the overturned throne of Dávid which God has sworn to give Him, and which we have seen, the angel Gabriel said He should possess? The Christ of God is to reign on the earth. "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion," says God. "His dominion is to be under the whole heavens." Dan. vii. 27.

Is this the Christ they believe in, or is it another Christ, and another Gospel which Paul never preached? Hear what he says in his second letter to the Corinthians, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ, for if He that cometh preacheth *another* Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive *another* spirit, which ye have not received, or *another* Gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with me." 2 Cor. xi. 3, 4.

Furthermore unless we realize how sad is the condition of the 423 millions of whom we have been speaking, we cannot be half grateful for the great deliverance that has been wrought for us.

A blind man whose eyes have been opened rejoices in the light of day. You all remember reading of the lame man who sat for alms at the gate of the temple called "Beautiful," and how Peter commanded him in the name of Jesus of Nazareth to "rise up and walk," and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength, and what did he do? Did he slip very quietly into the temple lest he should be observed, and cause a commotion? No, indeed. "He entered into the temple walking and leaping, and praising God." He could not restrain himself, he was filled with joy, and therefore he leaped, he was full of gratitude, and therefore he praised God before all the people.

This should be our attitude to-day. Gratitude and praise to God at the remembrance of His goodness. "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Psalm cxxvi. 3. "Let us exalt His name together." Psalm xxxiv. 3.

There are some things in the Bible which to our partially enlightened minds are difficult to understand, but thank God the Gospel is not one of them. It is not a complex subject made up of abstruse parts, which only men of learning can understand, on the contrary it is a very simple proposition, an offer of terms of reconciliation, from a loving Father to disobedient offending children. The offer is made to all, but only those who accept the terms are benefited. It is man, not God, who limits the operation of the good message by his unbelief. Man by his hard and impenitent heart heaps up wrath, against the day of wrath. Rejec-

tion of God's offer of forgiveness through Christ Jesus excludes and unfits the rejecter of it from participating in its benefits.

God treats man as a free agent, and appeals to his reason, his intelligence and his conscience. He entreats him, and expostulates with him, saying, "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" And Christ has made it imperative on His Church to say, *Come*.

That is what we have been trying to do in Cleveland in a feeble way for the last 40 years, and more especially for the past nine years, since the opening of this house of worship.

We rejoice at what has been done, and think much has been accomplished considering the opposition and the many drawbacks we have experienced, but we must not limit future expectations to past experiences, much that has been done, has been preparatory. We have been breaking up the fallow ground in obedience to God's command by His prophets Jeremiah and Hosea. "Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns." Jere. iv. 3. "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy: break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you." Hosea x. 12.

We are now ready to sow the seed, the Word of the kingdom, more extensively, I trust, than ever, and there is an abundance of it in God's treasure house.

Each member of the household has responsibilities which cannot be transferred to another; each one has to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, believing it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. Phil. ii. 12. While at the same time, each one ought to be a light-bearer, and if we will all do this, what an army of workers we will become. Let us be untiring in beseeching God to bless our labors. Will we all strive to do this, God helping us, for the time to come, whether long or short? I trust the response of all your hearts is, *We will*. In doing so we will manifest our gratitude to God for our own deliverance, as well as our gratitude for His blessing vouchsafed on our labors in time past. If we do this, one and all, there will be no occasion to complain of lukewarmness and indifference among any of our members, and of all professors we would be the most culpable, were we to give in to supineness.

Nothing could be more foreign to our faith and hope, and it would subject us to the just ridicule of all who are about us. May God in His goodness prevent such a grievous calamity is my earnest prayer.

FAITH.

“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days.”—Heb. xi. 30.

If I were asked for proof of the harmony existing between the Old and New Testament writings, I should base my proof on three fundamental points.

First.—The unity of the supreme object of religious adoration, which is taught alike in both. To the Hebrew nation, the announcement was made, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Jehovah.” Deut. vi. 4. To the called-out-ones, from among the Gentiles in New Testament times the declaration was made, “For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there be gods many and, lords many, but unto us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by Him.” 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. And again, “For this I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Eph. iii. 14. This was not only their teaching, it was their practice as well, as we read in Acts the 4th chapter, when Peter and John reported to their own company all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, “Lord, thou art God which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ, for of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand, and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now Lord, behold their threatenings and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the Word of God with boldness." Acts iv. 23-31.

What gives importance to this prayer, and puts the form of it beyond dispute, is the confirmation by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The second fundamental point is a very important one, namely, that the same set of promises prevail in both Old and New Testaments alike. The original promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and later the call of Abraham, and the promise to him and his seed, on which the whole Gospel rests, is grandly amplified, and beautifully illustrated and explained in the New Testament writings.

The Messianic prediction of Isaiah, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. 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." Isaiah ix. 6, 7.

This taken in connection with the announcement of the angel Gabriel to Mary, "He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke i. 32, 33), shows the complete harmony between the two, which indeed make one record.

The third fundamental point of resemblance is in the importance attached to faith the old and New Testament alike speak of its saving power. We all know how very full the Old Testament is of biographical sketches of men distinguished for their faith in God, and abiding confidence in His promises, and a recital of the marvelous things accomplished through faith. And in New Testament times so far from having outgrown that condition of things its importance is more and more emphasized, and he has

read the New Testament to little account who has not made that discovery.

In the 11th chapter of Hebrews, we have a definition of what faith is. It is the ground or confidence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, and there also we have a long list of worthies who distinguished themselves by their profound faith in God, and the Word of His promise, beginning with Abel and Enoch and Noah, and Abraham, and all down through the ages, as well as a recital of some of the wonderful things accomplished by that means, to only one of which I will have time to very briefly call your attention. It is the fall of Jericho, and the writer to the Hebrews attributes that wonderful occurrence to faith. By faith, says he, the walls of Jericho fell down.

There was nothing certainly in the manner of the siege itself to bring about such a wonderful event; the compassing of the city seven days, and blowing with rams' horns, might seem to the besieged inhabitants as a very harmless proceeding and doubtless it would produce some merriment. Sceptics and scientists of our day would ridicule such procedure, but where was military stratagem ever so successful? And wherein lay the secret of the success? In one thing and one alone, and it was this, the siege was conducted in all its details, under the divine direction. Joshua had full instructions what was to be done, how and when to do it. He did not suggest any change in the divine arrangement, or allow any of the children of Israel to dare to do differently. The Lord had spoken, and all they had to do was to obey. Obey from the heart, nothing doubting but the Lord would perform His part, and He did, and furthermore He always will perform His part.

What a victory! What a signal victory the Israelites witnessed by simply exercising faith in God! By simply exercising faith in God, did I say? Is that correct? No, not exactly. Faith in God was indispensable, but in addition thereto they had to perform their part. Mark the language of sacred record. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down. Does the record stop there? Nay, verily. It adds, "after they were compassed about seven days." This shows the necessity of neither adding to, nor taking from God's Word. So we see the walls of Jericho fell down not simply as the result of a divine decree but *after*

Israel's performance of a prescribed duty, "I have given into thine hand Jericho," is the promise, but it is immediately added, "And ye shall compass the city," and the manner of doing it is all given in detail. Although the work is the work of Jehovah, as any one can see, and He alone must have the glory, yet He has a perfect right to ask of the people He is about to so signally bless, to manifest their faith in His ability and faithfulness to perform what He has promised by some outward token on their part, and that seems to be the divine rule. Brethren and sisters, you have often had the privilege of witnessing that impressive ordinance of being buried with Christ in baptism (and under the kind providence of God you may witness it again to-night). To the unenlightened it is a useless, meaningless ceremony. So was the compassing of Jericho, no doubt, to the unbeliever, but to the child of God, enlightened in the Scriptures. O how beautiful! How significant! and fraught with heavenly blessing, but faith alone can make it operative. A faith that grasps God's promises, and a heart overflowing with gratitude for the deliverance to be wrought in putting on Christ, can alone meet the divine requirements.

A sister said to me lately at the close of the meeting, while we were speaking of the present critical times, "What could we do without faith?" Yes, indeed, what *could* we do? And frequently that question has come into my mind; why without faith we would sink in utter hopelessness and give up in despair, and with a weak, half-hearted faith we might give ourselves up in despair, and with a weak half-hearted faith we might give ourselves to the spirit of slumber, figuratively and literally, but to such a condition there will be a sad awakening, and there is one thing it is impossible to do *without* faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God: and if God required of the Israelites that they manifest their faith in His promise to deliver Jericho into their hands, by requiring them to compass the city seven days, is it too much to require of the believer in eternal redemption to manifest his faith by going down into the waters of baptism? or to try the host of Gideon by causing them to lap water with their hands, thereby reducing the army from 32,000 to 300 men, lest Israel should vaunt themselves.

Gideon and his handful of men had faith in God to en-

counter the hosts of Midian, and now his name is recorded in the list of worthies "who through faith subdued kingdoms, out if weakness were made strong, waxed valient in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

I tell you, brethren and sisters, these are times that require strong faith in God, and the stability of His promises, and from this time on I believe it will be more so. I tell you there is work to be done, there are many citadels to be taken, many cities to be compassed daily. The cities of Carelessness and Indifference, the cities of Doubt and Distrust, and the dread of public opinion—and a host of others; are we compassing them daily in strong faith of overcoming? If so the walls will soon fall down, but you must do it in the divinely prescribed way. "Put on the whole armor of God, and above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." God's plan is to have His people work together with Him, He will not do everything for them, they must work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, remembering that it is God that worketh in them. What a grand alliance this is! Workers together with God. "Be then strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." At times you may feel like David when he bewailed that he was a sojourner in Mesech, and dwelt in the tents of Kedar, but then like him also, let us say, "I to the hills will lift mine eyes from whence doth come mine aid. My safety cometh from the Lord, who heaven and earth hath made." Psalm cxxi. 1. "Behold He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." Thus faith gives rise to trust. "In God is my salvation, and my glory; the rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God. Trust in Him at all times ye people, pour out your heart before Him. God is a refuge for us." Psalm lxii. 7, 8.

STEADFASTNESS.

"Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."—1 Cor. xv. 58.

These words were addressed to the "Church of God which was at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called

saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, both theirs and ours.”

They were consecrated ones, for that is synonymous with the term sanctified, which means separated or set apart. Consecration is the separating from a common to a sacred purpose, to dedicate, to a holy or religious use.

But important as the act of consecration is, it is not more vital than the condition of steadfastness. It is of no avail for any one to consecrate himself, and his service unto the Lord, unless that separation is maintained, and that dedication becomes permanent. The mass of mankind are very changeable in their nature and habits, instead of acting from fixed principle, they are acted on by external circumstances, and you never know where to find them. They drift hither and thither as the current breeze may blow, or tide carry them, and of necessity they accomplish nothing, and happiness is not their lot. This is strikingly illustrated in our Lord's explanation of the impressive parable of the sower. He said, “When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside: but he that received the seed into stony places the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet he hath no root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended; he also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful; but he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit and bringeth forth, some a hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty.” How many have we known who come under the one or other of the classes here described, especially the stony ground hearers. “He that heareth the word and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath not root in himself, but dureth for a while, for when tribulation, or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended,” and that is the last of him. He is offended, and blames this one or that one, for some real or imaginary injury; but away back

of that lies the real cause of the disaffection as diagnosed by the Master, "He had no root in himself." The root of the matter was not there, and so he declined. Steadfastness and perseverance are necessary to make a success of anything, no matter what. Without those qualities the student will not attain distinction, or the merchant success. The plodding man of ordinary ability will out-distance and far surpass in any great undertaking, the man of genius, or the brilliant flashing intellect, if with its brilliance it is unsteady and erratic in its pursuits.

In addressing the young especially, I would impress on them the importance of having a well defined object in view, and press towards that with resolute determination. Irresolution will invariably bring disappointment and unhappiness, and in nothing is this more needed than in religious matters. The apostle James says, "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." What a forcible illustration of an unsettled disposition! "For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways," and this instability will sooner or later bring defeat and disaster. The great complaint against ancient Israel was their *unsteadfastness*. The divine record says, "Their spirit was *not steadfast* with God. The children of Ephraim being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle." They could not be depended upon, and were wanting at the time they were most needed—the day of battle—"They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in His law, and forgot His works, and His wonders that He had shewed them." Psalm lxxviii. 8-11.

It is a law in mechanics that no machine is stronger than its weakest part. That is obvious to any one on very slight reflection; but if each one will scrutinize or analyze his own character or disposition can he not find some weak point which needs strengthening, some proclivity which needs watching? And if so, then is it not the part of wisdom to guard well the weak point to see that the enemy does not make encroachments on the most vulnerable part?

It is in vain that we come around the table of the Lord on the first day of every week, to remember Him who was wounded

for our transgressions, unless we cultivate this spirit. We profess to love Him for His self-sacrificing devotion in enduring the cross on our account, but when He asks us to take up our cross and follow Him, do we not too often become impatient and restive, and throw the cross down, because it feels heavy, and we think we have quite enough to do with our own troubles without bearing somebody else's burden? If we feel that way, no stronger proof is wanted that the flesh needs crucifying that the life of Christ may be more manifest in us.

The prophet David said, "The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself." Psalm iv. 3. He hath set apart, that is consecrated, sanctified him for Himself. He has work for him to do, but to be efficient in doing that work, he must remain in this separated condition; hence Paul says, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2 Tim. ii. 19. Let him not become a partaker in other men's sins, but keep himself pure. Purity is an essential quality in the estimation of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. Paul says, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils. Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." I Cor. x. 21. The Lord's table on Sunday, and the gambling table or the saloon during the week would be most incongruous, and incompatible. If any one hath forgotten he was purged from his old sins, and goes in the way of evil-doers, frequenting forbidden paths, let me entreat such to call a halt before it is too late. It is better to shed tears of repentance now than have weeping and gnashing of teeth in the future. If any are walking in devious paths the command is, "Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed." Heb. xii. 13. Yes, let it rather be healed, that is God's entreaty; He is waiting to be gracious; sends out His healing influences and pleads with every wanderer to *return*.

Slight not so much goodness. Can any afford to neglect His offered grace and continue in paths of disobedience, and sit in the seat of scorers who treat with derision the name we have taken, and the cause we have pledged ourselves to maintain?

Let us remember the apostle's warning, "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy, are we stronger than He?" 1 Cor. x. 22.

To the steadfast, persevering workers who, amidst much opposition have not swerved in their adherence to the cause of truth and righteousness, I would say, "Be of good cheer," in due season ye shall reap if you faint not; continue to walk in the light of the Gospel, live by its precepts, and daily breathe its pure and heavenly Spirit, as God's consecrated ones.

The schemes of the worldly-wise, who form alliances for their own aggrandizement will soon be at a great discount; they affect to pity you now, but in view of the speedy dissolution of all earth's pleasures, gains, and distinction, you can afford to say to them as Jesus said unto the women of Jerusalem, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves."

Your feet stand on the immutable promises of God, and there may they ever stand. The Rock of Ages is *your fortress*, and the God of Abraham is *your shield*, and your exceeding great reward. Let me impress on you to realize the greatness of your privileges, the distinguished position you occupy, in a word as Paul puts it, "Consider your high calling, brethren," a position unrivaled by that of any of earth's lords or potentates, their honor and pomp will soon be extinguished, but your hope grows brighter and brighter, unto the perfect day.

"With that blessed hope before us,
Let no harp remain unstrung;
Let the mighty advent chorus
Onward roll from tongue to tongue:
Christ is coming!
Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come!"

CHAPTER VIII.

ABRAHAM, AND THE COVENANT MADE WITH HIM THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

“Now the Lord had said unto Abraham, get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.”—Gen. xii. 1.

THERE are few more important and instructive lessons than are obtained from studying the lives of great and good men. To read of their struggles, their trials and temptations, their conflicts and victories, make us feel less lonesome as we travel the journey of life. Their deeds inspire us with courage in a world of opposition, in what might otherwise be dark hours. It does one’s heart good to contemplate the lives of men of exalted purpose and daring deeds, men possessed of earnestness and force of character, who made themselves felt in the world, doing battle in the cause of right, upholding truth, and denouncing error.

We can learn many valuable lessons from the lives of those whose illustrious examples claim our imitation. Even the biographies of those who have made great failures in life, although sorrowful to contemplate, may be made profitable to us in serving as beacon lights to keep us off the rocks on which they foundered.

The life of Abraham, in many respects, is among the most wonderful recorded in the Book of God. Here is a man reared in idolatry, as Joshua testifies. And Joshua said unto all the people. “Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor and they served other gods.” Joshua xxiv. 2.

One would naturally suppose that a man brought up in that way would not be very susceptible of spiritual influences. We are not informed of any overpowering manifestation of divine

presence, such as overtook Saul, the persecutor, on the way to Damascus, yet we are struck at the alacrity with which he obeyed the call of God to leave the land of his nativity in Ur of the Chaldees. Stephen, in his memorable address, relates the circumstances in this way: "Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran; and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land wherein ye now dwell, and He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on, yet He promised that He would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." Acts vii. 2-5.

The writer of the Hebrews says, "By faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance obeyed; and he went out not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob the heirs with him of the same promise, for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. xi. 8-10. The readiness with which he obeyed the divine command might well be imitated by many at the present time who hesitate to obey the Gospel call, because of sacrificing some family or social connection, and so disregard Christ's own words, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me, and he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." Matt. x. 37. 38.

How often are we sickened at the expression, "Calvinism or Methodism was good enough for my father, and it is good enough for me." The life of Abraham is a withering rebuke to all such, he did not say, "The gods of Chaldea were good enough for my father Terah, and they are good enough for me." If that had been his disposition and his choice, he doubtless would have remained in Mesopotamia, but he would never have been called the "friend of God," never been distinguished as the "Father of the faithful."

To become worthy of that high honor, he had to obey the divine command, cut loose from adverse connections, and put himself under divine discipline. This he did *unhesitatingly*, with implicit trust, unwavering confidence, in the almighty God who said unto him, "Walk before me and be thou perfect, and I will make my covenant between me and thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly." And to the honor of Abraham be it said, he never took a step backwards.

We read, If he had been mindful of that country from whence he came out he might have had opportunity to have returned, but he had higher aspirations, unlike his unworthy descendants whom God brought out of Egypt, by the hand of Moses, a backsliding and a perverse nation, "a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God. Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel." Psalm lxxxvii. 8, 41. They said, "It was well with us in Egypt, let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt." Numbers xi. 18; xiv. 4.

Christ doubtless remembered the instability of that people when He made His commands so imperative on those of His day. Jesus said to one, "Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." Luke ix. 59, 60. The request to go and bury his father may have been in itself quite reasonable, but here was an opportunity to teach in a very pointed and emphatic manner, that nothing subordinate must be allowed to come between Christ and the disciple. Christ must have the first and supreme place in the affections of those who desire to follow Him. And another also said, "Lord, I will follow thee, but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house, and Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke ix. 59.

What a solemn lesson this is to every one of us, and how it ought to quicken our efforts in seeking to reclaim the backsliders.

Unsteadfast and perfidious, was the sad record of ancient Israel. The children of Ephraim being armed and carrying

bows turned back in the day of battle. At the time they were most needed, they could least be depended on. "They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in His law." They turned back, and dealt unfaithfully, like their fathers. They were turned aside like a deceitful bow." Psalm lxxviii. 9, 10, 57. With such a record as this was it any wonder Christ would not admit of any excuses. His words will not admit of being modified or toned down to suit modern ideas. The ringing affirmation has gone forth. "No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God."

No such reflection stands against Abraham, but the men of Christ's day who boasted of their descent from Abraham, were but the degenerate children of their illustrious progenitor. Or to use the apt figure of Israel's prophet, "Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed; how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" Jere. ii. 21.

The combination of excellencies, and the nobility or character which mark the life of Abraham meet you at every turn. His magnanimity in dealing with Lot, his brother's son, on the occasion of the strife that arose between the herdsmen of each, is an index to the general character of the man. "And Abraham said unto Lot, let there be no strife I pray thee between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me, if thou wilt take the left hand then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Gen. xiii. 8, 9. What a notable example of the New Testament injunction, "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Rom. xii. 18. Abraham was eminently a man of peace, and wherever his descendants got their belligerent disposition from, evidently they did not inherit it from him.

His words to Lot were not the words of a nomad, or a wandering herdsman; they were words of princely dignity. Being the elder of the two, Abraham could justly have claimed the right of precedence, but he made no such claim. Lot evidently thought he was getting the best of the bargain in choosing the well watered plain of Jordan, but ultimately he must have deeply regretted his choice. He made a sad mistake when he pitched

his tent toward Sodom. What did the rich fields, and well watered meadows amount to, seeing the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord, exceedingly? Gen. xiii. 13. The desirableness of a country or a city has to be estimated by the moral standard of its people.

To return to Abraham's love of peace, it may be said, he armed his 318 trained servants and went and fought against Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him. That is indeed true, but he did not go as an aggressor, he simply organized a rescuing party; he did not sit still passively, and say, the affair is none of mine, I will have nothing to do with it. No, he interested himself on the side of right and justice, and pursued and delivered Lot and the people, and the goods out of the hand of the enemy, and the part he took was approved by Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him, saying, "Blessed be Abraham of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the Most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand."

The dignity of Abraham is further marked by his resolute refusal to accept any of the spoils of the war. "And the king of Sodom said unto Abraham, Give me the persons and take the goods to thyself. And Abraham said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abraham rich." As he called of God, he guarded his reputation, and in this he set the believer of all time an example worthy of imitation.

This scrupulous exactness, and dignity of character he retained even in the sad hour of his bereavement. This feature is wonderfully blended with his tender solicitude about a last resting place for his beloved Sarah. The cave of Machpelah is the spot selected but he who had all the land of Canaan covenanted to him for an everlasting possession, must needs negotiate for a burial place, but neither the well meant entreaties of the children of Heth, nor the kind offer of Ephron, the Hittite could induce him to accept of the land as a present, and so he urges on Ephron

to name the price, and then he weighs out the four hundred shekels of silver. Gen. xxiii. 13-16. Current money with the merchant.

But the distinguishing feature of Abraham which towers over all the other noble traits of his character and that which will distinguish him throughout all time, in *his faith*.

Wonderful beyond comparison! He never appears to have allowed a doubt to cross his mind; his strong faith saved him from all such harassment. What a subject for contemplation! What a character to study! No question as to the propriety of this or that method. God had spoken, and that was enough for him, that settled all doubts, and removed all obstacles. There was no relapsing into idolatry with him; he had left all that in Mesopotamia, the land of darkness, the land of idolatry, from whence he had gone out, never to return.

What a contrast between this man of God and his backsliding descendants; and how little he had seen of the wonderful power of God that was afterwards manifested unto *them*. "The wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea." Psalm cvi. 22.

Even the immediate disciples of Christ who were eye-witnesses of His miracles, and for three years under His instruction, cannot compare with him. He was ready at the command of God, to offer up his son Isaac, the child of promise. "Accounting that God was able to raise him up from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure." The apostles on the contrary, after having been again and again told by Jesus that He would be put to death, and the third day He would rise again" (Luke xviii. 33), on the first appearance of danger, they all forsook Him and fled, and when the tomb closed upon Him, their hope expired, and even on the morning of the third day when the women, who brought the spices to the tomb, and found it empty, and heard the angel's glad message, and went and told these things unto the apostles, their words seemd unto them as idle tales, and the believed them not." Luke xxiv. 11. And so in like manner with the two journeying to Emmaus, they could only say, "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." Luke xxiv. 21. No wonder the patient, loving Jesus, called Thomas "faithless" (John xx. 27), and up-

braided with their unbelief those who doubted the testimony of the women. Mark xiv. 14. Poor specimens they were of Abraham's seed, his robust faith had not descended to them, although their privileges far transcended his. His faith wavered not although he stood alone, without that bright galaxy of worthies whose example they had to inspire them with faith and courage.

As we have already seen, Abraham in his intercourse with his fellow-men was a man of marked ability, firm purpose, resolute will, and he so impressed those with whom he came in contact. This is clearly seen by the reverence in which he was held by the children of Heth, when they addressed him, "Hear us my lord, thou art a mighty prince among us," Heb.—"prince of God." And this must impress all thoughtful minds who make a study of his life; and in this connection it is worthy to note that his original name "Abram" signified "Father of elevation." How such a name can be given him, we are not informed; that must at present remain a mystery. The name Abraham, afterwards given him by God, denotes "Father of a multitude," and was prophetic, and both names were in his case not only very significant, but highly appropriate.

In studying the life of Abraham we are deeply impressed by the wisdom and condescension of God as manifested in the different stages and degrees of information communicated to him, and the series of promises made to him on different occasions thus opening gradually to him the high destiny to which he and his seed would ultimately attain. Very much as Christ subsequently instructed His disciples, here a little, and there a little, as they were able to bear; and even near the end of His ministry He had to say, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." John xvi. 12.

We now come to consider another striking feature in the character of Abraham, and that is his childlike simplicity, and trust in God. He never appears to have questioned anything God required of him to do, even to the offering up of Isaac, he knew nothing but a ready obedience, and an unfaltering trust.

The strain, at that moment, one would think, must have been terrible; for the strength of his affection for the son of his old age, the son of promise, through whom the realization of his hopes would come, must have been very great; but the

Scripture testimony is the only true solution, and shows what faith can accomplish, "By faith Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac, and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called, accounting that God was able to raise him up from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure." Heb. xi. 17.

What a combination of resolute will and passive submission is presented in this character! Such a combination as is rarely witnessed, and only surpassed in Him who challenges all comparison, the obedient Son of God, whose meat it was to do His Father's will. John iv. 34. They greatly err who speak of Old Testament worthies as ignorant men. The galaxy of notables mentioned in Hebrews xi., has never been duplicated. What a cloud of witnesses, to inspire with true faith, trust, and courage, the struggling ones, of all time, and especially in these times of corruption when so few are valiant for the truth.

In this very brief reference to a few important incidents in the life of Abraham, the father of the faithful, we are presented with a wide field for contemplation, from which to draw lessons for mutual edification and instruction, would that we could make the study profitable to some. May his example be an inspiration to us to greater fidelity and devotion.

The men of the religious world around us wrap themselves in a mantle of self-complacency, thinking they are much wiser than the ancients who they imagine were only in the swaddling bands of religious life, and had not yet learned to walk, they would almost sneer at getting any instruction from the life of a nomad like Abraham. We would certainly not go to him for lessons in modern architecture or electricity, but as far as spirituality is concerned, no professor in any modern theological seminary can compare with him. Enoch, before Abraham's day walked with God, and he was not for God took him, and before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God." Heb. xi. 5.

Those of our day who imagine Abraham looked only for temporal blessings are very wide of the truth. Jesus said, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." John viii. 56. Others besides him received the promises, having

seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Heb. xi. 13.

With the eye of faith, and clear prophetic vision, they looked down through the vista of time, and beheld a renovated earth, and a redeemed people, and their hearts were gladdened at the prospect. It is the people in these degenerate times, who ignore the promises, who are blind and cannot see afar off. They cannot discern the signs of the times. They are not looking for redemption in Israel. When the truth is presented to them and Gospel promises are pressed on their attention like Peter in the vision of the sheet let down from heaven, they are ready to exclaim, "Not so, Lord." They have something of their own they want to substitute. How different the language of Jesus, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Matt. xi. 26. Here is the spirit of submission. I often think Abraham's life, with a few exceptions, must have been a very happy one. It was free from the turmoils, the conspiracies and wars that harassed David's life. His faith resting firmly on God's promises, what sweet meditations he must have had in his quiet pastoral life. Men professing holiness, can profit by studying Abraham's dealings with his fellow-men—he was upright, straight and true in his dealings. A Christian should be known by his walk. If there is work to be done, let it be done faithfully. In our dealings with others, let us ever be upright and true. If you see a ship on the ocean going against wind and tide, you know there is a man at the helm although you cannot see him. May our actions with our fellow-men prove that truth and uprightness are at the helm, keeping us ever in the right course.

We have seen that Abraham was commanded to come out from his idolatrous connections, and so in like manner we are instructed that Christ and Belial cannot affiliate, and we are commanded, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. Oh, the greatness, the magnificence of this promise! Let no one lightly esteem it. It is a dreadful thing when the

world creeps into the Church, and when the Church makes friends with the world. What an unholy connection!

Brethren, while we plead with the world to take God at His word, let us also prove to them that we apply the Word of God to our own lives, that we are walking according to the revelation of God. In order to do this fully we must have Abraham's trust, and to have his trust, we must have his faith. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Rom. iv. 3.

James in his epistle says, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." James v. 10. And it is well for us to study their lives, and familiarize our minds with the sufferings they endured and the patience they maintained under it all. The study is a profitable one, it will strengthen you to bear up under the trials and crosses of life you may be called to endure, and in like manner I have presented to you to-day the life of Abraham as a bright example of faith and trust. We may not in our day be called to endure affliction like the prophets of Israel, but in this age of unbelief, this age of scepticism and fraud and deception of every kind, we need Abraham's robust faith and trust to sustain us, we profess to be the children of Abraham, faithwise, believing "that they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Gal. iii. 9. The God who appeared to Abraham when he dwelt in Mesopotamia and called him to leave his kindred and his country, is our God. The same God who hath called *us* unto His kingdom and glory." 1 Thess. ii. 12.

Our faith grasps the same set of promises he took hold of. We are cheered and animated by the same hope that cheered him. He turned his back on the idolatry of Chaldea, and we have turned our backs on the fables and traditions of men which constitute so large a part of the belief of the various religious systems to which most of us in time past belonged.

On one occasion Jesus said to Peter, "Have faith in God." Mark xi. 22. The same lesson has to be taught now, "Have faith in God." Strange that it should be so, but we belong to a mistrustful kind; otherwise it should not be so much of an effort to us as to Abraham. God's faithfulness has been veri-

fied in every succeeding generation, so that Peter, even in *his* day could say, "We have the word of prophecy more surely confirmed whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise." 2 Peter i. 19. That word has had many confirmations from that time down to the present, but unbelief was never more rampant. It is painful to know that so large a proportion of the human family are still aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and stranger from the covenants of promise (Eph. ii. 12), after all the invitations of the Gospel, and the accumulated entreaties of God's Spirit, through His prophets, Christ Jesus, His apostles and servants. Christ not only taught to have faith in God, but the whole teaching of His public ministry, and His beneficent works in alleviating human suffering were towards promoting trust in God, by exhibiting His loving kindness, and His tender mercy to the children of men. Think in this connection of the parable of the lilies, clothed in beauty, "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O, ye of little faith." Matt. vi. 30. And afterwards adds, as that which is of the first and most vital importance, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

What could be more impressive, and comforting than Christ's assurance to His immediate followers, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke xii. 32.

O, the blessed privilege of belonging to the "little flock," who will be thus honored?

Amidst the trials and perplexities of life this blessed assurance ought to quiet our anxious cares, and soothe our drooping spirits. Well did Jeremiah the prophet say, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." Jere. xvii. 7. For such it is reserved to be partakers in that eternal life which is unmixed with disappointment or sorrow; and where no cloud shall ever interrupt our delightful communion with Jesus, who will then have redeemed us from death and corruption, and where all the holy patriarchs, prophets,

apostles, and saints of all ages will eternally mingle in a society of harmony and love.

God grant that we may all be there. Amen.

FOUNDATION WORK.

“Nevertheless the foundation of the Lord standeth sure.”—2 Timothy ii. 19.

I have selected this Scripture as an appropriate motto for my address this evening, on “Foundation Work, Physically, Morally and Religiously.”

The most important part of a building or structure of any kind is its foundation. If other parts are weak and faulty, it is bad; but if the foundation is weak, faulty and insecure, all the other parts are affected by it. The first thing a wise master-builder does after becoming well acquainted with the plans and purposes of the architect, is to test well the material on which his foundation walls will rest, and in this he shows his wisdom; for what would be more unwise than to expend a large sum of money in erecting a beautiful and stately edifice, and then have the mortification of seeing its walls crack, and rend and fall!

In the city of Albany, the capital of New York, stands the State-house, a very large, stately building, on which seventeen millions of dollars have been spent. The walls of the building are of granite, and its exterior appearance is imposing, and would indicate strength and durability. Its interior is finished in the most artistic and costly manner. Stately columns of marble, and some of the ceilings, and much of the wainscoting are of beautiful onyx; but in some of the halls, and some of the rooms, the effect is in a large measure destroyed, and the beauty and grandeur marred by the cracked walls, and rent columns, indicating a weakness somewhere, and a want of strength to support the superincumbent mass; and when a citizen of that commonwealth shows the building to strangers, instead of doing so with a spirit of pride and satisfaction, his manner indicates disappointment and mortification; and the interior is now being, to a certain extent, remodelled. On the other hand, you have all seen that large, new brown-stone building on the north side of the Public Square, in this city, being

erected by the Society for Savings. It is a model for strength and durability. The builder in that case, realizing the importance of foundation-work, sunk wells to a considerable depth in order to test the material on which the foundation walls were to rest, to see that no quicksand with its unstable, treacherous, shifting ways should ever disappoint and blast his hopes; then the earth was dug out to a sufficient depth, so that the walls could be laid deep and broad with concrete, and bars of heavy railroad iron laid transversely, and then immense blocks of stone of ponderous weight were laid.

Now, if all this thought, care, labor and expense were necessary in erecting a building which will ultimately yield to the tooth of time and crumble into dust, how much more necessary—how infinitely more necessary to look well to the foundation on which men build for eternity as a mistake here may lead to utter ruin, and be altogether irretrievable?

With this brief introduction to my subject, I would say, that while each of you may have your own proper avocation in life, still, in one sense, every man, woman and child is a builder, and a builder in the largest, and grandest sense of the term. And especially is this true of the young. Each of them is building a physical, intellectual, moral and religious structure, which, if properly built, will far transcend the grandest mechanical or architectural structure ever reared on earth. How careful, then, should each one be that no unsuitable, unworthy material should enter into structures designed for such grand and glorious purposes!

God in His infinite goodness has endowed man with a grand and noble organism; the perceptive faculties to take cognizance of what is going on around him, the powers of thought and reason to compare, weigh and consider; and language to express his ideas. No one can carefully study the mechanism of the human body without being deeply impressed by the perfection of every part, even in the minutest details; and the complete adaptation of each part to perform its individual function. No mechanism ever invented by man can begin to compare with it, whether we consider separately the bones, the framework of the anatomical structure, the muscular system

in its varied uses, by which the joints perform their functions, and by which we have voluntary and involuntary motion, the alimentary canal, with its vessels for secretion and vessels for absorption, the vascular system, with its arteries, veins, and lacteals; and the brain with its convolutions and delicate structure,—the organ of thought; and that marvelous nervous system with its minute and endless ramifications, which is the source of so much pleasure in health, and untold suffering in disease. I say, whether we consider these separately, or the whole conjointly, we have to adopt the language of Scripture and say that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made,” and a knowledge of man’s own being, and the laws of life and health, ought, by right, to be at the foundation of any sound system of education, and form part of every youth’s elementary training. The languages, arts and sciences are important studies, and we would not undervalue them in the slightest degree, but we would exalt far above them all a knowledge of man’s own organization, and the laws pertaining to it. And the young man or woman destitute of such knowledge, is unqualified to rightly fulfill the moral and social obligations of life. Parents, guardians, and educators of the young ought to impress upon them the criminality and sin of doing anything to weaken or undermine their physical constitution and teach them how to govern and control their desires and appetites, and so lay a good foundation for physical health and strength.

In my early days the body was spoken of as a contemptible, worthless thing, and as between it and the supposed immortal soul that inhabited it, I have heard the question asked, “What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord?”—another instance of the perversion of Scripture. The query was and still is very pertinent as between man’s dreams and Jehovah’s words, but false when applied in the other way, and has had a withering, blighting, degrading influence, and shows the paralyzing effect of theological dogmas. Oh! that men were taught to retire within their own consciousness, and study their own nature, and try to fathom their impulses and capabilities, and thus discern what ought to be prompted and what restrained.

Loyalty to the truth compels me to say, that a sound physical organization, if not a necessary basis or foundation, is at

least a great aid to intellectual and moral development; and the sooner the young are taught the close connection between sound physical development and intellectual, moral and religious culture, the better.

How is it that we meet so many purposeless young men every day on our streets, without ambition, with languid eyes, and wasted energies? In nine cases out of ten the alcoholic habit or the nicotine habit is at the bottom of it, either in their own individual experience or that of their ancestors. Show me a young man who daily smokes cigars, or uses tobacco in any form, and I will show you one whose vital forces are being sapped, and whose nervous system will ere long be impaired if not shattered, and who, if he perseveres, will sooner or later be a physical bankrupt. He is sowing to the wind, and must eventually reap the whirlwind, for all such actions are reproductive, and produce an abundant harvest of disappointment and sorrow. The same is true in every sense of the man, young or old, who tampers with alcoholic liquors: to all such we would cry aloud, Beware! You are on the brink of a precipice, and know not the moment you will fall into that yawning gulf below. The great danger of this ruinous habit is its insidious advances. The victim knows it not until he is fettered as with an iron chain! Thousands of cases can be seen on every hand.

A short time ago a business man died in Cleveland, but only his friends and acquaintances knew the cause of his early demise: the story is easily told. He had always been a sober man, and a prominent member of one of the popular churches. He was taken sick, and when recovering, his physician ordered the insidious alcoholic tonic. He took it for a time, with the usual deceptive results, till very soon it became apparent to his intimate friends that a ruinous habit was being formed, and one of them spoke to him about it, and begged of him for the sake of all he held dear to give it up before he was fettered by it; but his reply was, "Alas! I am fettered now!" The strong man was bound and could never be released.

If the young could only realize what a ruinous percentage they will hereafter have to pay on over-drafts on their own constitutions through violating the laws, physical or otherwise,

which an all-wise Creator has given to regulate their conduct, how careful they would be not to form habits of a baneful tendency. In this connection I want to impress on young and old that good and evil are reproductive. Do you ask what I mean by that? I will tell you. It is this: All your actions, whether good or evil, will come back to you greatly augmented. He that soweth to the wind reaps the wind terribly intensified. Lashed into a fury he reaps the whirlwind. He who sows to the flesh, not only reaps the flesh, but reaps it in its most appalling form. He reaps corruption; and he who sows to the Spirit reaps the Spirit in a higher form; he becomes a partaker of the divine nature, and of the Spirit reaps life everlasting. That is what I mean by good and evil being reproductive. This divine principle established by God, you will do well to ever remember, and regulate your thoughts and actions in reference thereto.

Simplicity of life and manners is an important factor in laying the foundation of a sound constitution and vigorous health. Indulgence leads to effeminacy—weaken the moral principle, and will eventually subvert the finest organization, and destroy manhood. The inroads of this insidious foe ought to be strictly watched and sternly repulsed.

The history of ancient Greece and Rome is a sufficient commentary on the perils of a luxurious life. While the practiced self-denial and adherent to simple habits of life, they were invulnerable, but so soon as indulgence and intemperance characterized their life, they were easily subjugated and became the prey of a sterner people.

No greater injury can be done to the young than to pamper and indulge them, and parents or guardians who manifest any such weakness, give abundant proof of incapacity to train the young mind. Hence so many lamentable failures in this direction.

Of late years the law of heredity has received some attention, but not as much as its gravity and importance demands. A better understanding of this subtle and intricate subject will invest human nature with a new phase and stamp the most trivial actions of our lives with an importance hitherto unknown; but I can only here call your attention to it as a subject worthy of your deepest study.

One important point in physical, moral and religious development, is the exercise of our faculties. Show me a person who lolls around and spends a listless, purposeless life, and I will show you a sickly worm. Strength of body and strength of mind implies exercise, work, labor, mentally and physically—persevering application. This is heaven's arrangement. Sacrifice is the law of attainment; and if we want to accomplish anything great or good, we must forego personal ease and comfort, and sacrifice present enjoyment for future attainment, and this fact ought to be deeply impressed on the minds of the young. As I have already said, it is matter to be regretted that the study of physical culture receives so little attention in our halls of learning. This is one of the chief things in which the young ought to be instructed.

But I must dismiss this part of my subject in order to offer a few brief remarks on foundation-work as regards man's moral and religious training; for what would physical capacity or mental capability amount to without those moral qualities which adorn human nature, and stamp a dignity on man? In treating this subject, we must consider integrity as the basis of all moral principle, as Buckminster has said, "the moral grandeur of independent integrity is the sublimest thing in nature, before which the pomp of Eastern magnificence and the splendors of conquest are odious as well as perishable."

It is this quality which makes the man of veracity who "swaureth to his own hurt, and changeth not." In our day it is a common thing for men to seek to palliate their moral delinquencies by pleading a reverse of fortune: but who was ever tried like Job? And the Divine record tells us that amidst all his sickness, his reverses and bereavements, he "held fast his integrity," and when his sore affliction was at its height he said, "Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me." The words of such a man are worthy of being written with an iron pen, cut deep into the rock, and filled in with gold instead of lead to be remembered forever. And the royal bard of Israel who, notwithstanding his exalted position, had many sore trials, the subject of much persecution, slander, conspiracy and bereavement, often dwelt on this theme, and his prayer to God was, "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on thee."

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Again he pleads, "Judge me, O, Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity;" and again he says, addressing God, "As for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face forever;" and in an epitome of the history of the Hebrew nation it is written of David, that "God took him from the sheep-fold to feed Jacob, his people, and Israel his inheritance; so he fed them according to the integrity of his heart and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands." And Solomon says: "The integrity of the upright shall guide them, but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them." This principle not only keeps a man in the course of moral rectitude, but it inspires him with strength and courage in persecution and danger; and the absence of it makes the coward. It is not a very pleasant thing to say, and not at all complimentary, but is it not a fact, that in religious matters, if the mass of mankind are not cowards, their conduct strongly resembles something of that character? They seem afraid to come to the light; afraid to enquire; afraid to examine; afraid to hear and compare testimony, and when convinced of the truth of a proposition, are afraid to own it, very much as it was in the days of the Savior. Some were afraid to own Him lest they should be put out of the synagogue, and even the chief priests, the scribes and elders showed they were in a similar state of servility, for when Christ asked them concerning the baptism of John, "Was it from heaven, or of men?" They reasoned with themselves, saying, if we shall say from heaven, He will say, why then did ye not believe him? but if we say of men they FEARED the people, for all men counted John that he was a prophet indeed." This was the worst kind of bondage; the people were afraid of the priests, and the priests were afraid of the people. How closely our own times resembles this state of things! How many there are to-day who have felt the power of God's truth, but who dare not avow it for fear of the ministerial authority under which they are held; and on the other hand, some of the clergy are enlightened, and they are afraid to avow it for fear of their congregation, presbytery, synod, assembly or conference. Oh! what an abject condition to be in. I would like to see a race of moral athletes arise who would set them an example of manly courage, if they would not whip them.

Any dead fish can float down stream, but it requires life, courage and determination to stem the tide of popular opinion. It is the lack of this principle in society that causes so much trouble, and is ever manifesting itself in so many abominable and abhorrent ways. Every now and again we read in the daily papers of defalcations, burglaries, wife-desertion, and a host of other crimes, and in speaking of wife-desertion, if you will pardon the digression, I want in this connection to pay a tender and well merited tribute to Womankind, Woman's Love, Woman's Worth!

Whether from her more refined and sensitive nature, I do not know, but the fact remains the same, that she was more in accord with the Savior than were men. It was a woman who came to Jesus when He was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, and brought an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His head, and the same one on another occasion anointed His feet and wiped them with her hair. Another whom the proud Pharisee called a sinner washed His feet with tears and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed His feet. It was Pilate's wife who sent a message to him to the judgment hall, to have nothing to do with that just man, but he heeded not her advice. Women followed the Savior to the cross and bewailed and lamented Him; while men derided, women wept; and Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

Women hung around the cross and kept vigil till Joseph of Arimathea took down the body, and then they followed Him to the sepulchre to see Him laid away, and on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, at the rising of the sun, it was women who came unto the sepulchre and brought the spices which they had prepared, and they were the first to hear the glad angelic message, "He is not here, He is risen, as He said, come see the place where the Lord lay."

I remember receiving a letter from a friend who had just lost his mother; he said, "Mother is gone, and her absence causes a sad and lonesome spot in our hearts. Much of our present happiness we owe to her devotion and self-sacrificing on her account."

Young man, think how much of your happiness you owe to your mother's devotion and self-sacrificing on your account, and show her that you appreciate it.

Married man, think how much of your happiness you owe to the love and devotion of your dear companion, and be not slow to acknowledge it, and cherish her as heaven's great boon to man.

But to return to my subject, if people were honest in their convictions and sentiments, and every man would speak the truth to his neighbor, we would see a different state of things in the world to what now prevails. Craftiness and duplicity which abound in every department of life, ought to be branded as infamous. The foul stain abounds everywhere; in trade, and commerce, and politics. It is greatly to be deplored that the politics of all countries are so deeply contaminated with fraud and corruption; and not only in the realm of politics, but what is sadder still, in the sphere of religion, where purity and truth should have universal sway. Here also are to be found those who fill up Peter's prophecy concerning the false teachers "by whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of, and through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you." And Paul describes them as grievous wolves, not sparing the flock. And the prophet Isaiah says, "His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant. . . . they are shepherds that cannot understand; they all look to their own way every one for his gain from his quarter." Isaiah lvi. 10.

Were Paul here now, I have no doubt he would say to the false teachers of our day, what he said to Elymas, the sorcerer, who tried to turn away the deputy from the faith, "Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" And until this spirit of insincerity is cast out, need we wonder at the taunts of infidelity? In this department more than any other is needed men who are willing to do and suffer for the truth's sake.

If it is necessary to test and try foundation work anywhere, it is an hundred-fold more so here, principally because errors elsewhere may be less harmful and may be rectified, but here they may prove fatal, eternally fatal; in no department of life are so many sacrifices demanded.

When Christ Jesus, the Lord, instructed His early followers

in what was required of them to fit them for discipleship, the list was anything but attractive to human nature. Instead of present gain, it was the loss of all things; instead of popular applause, it involved reproach and scorn. Instead of home it was exile; instead of social distinction it was imprisonment; instead of a crown adorned with many jewels it was a cross that was presented to them for their acceptance; instead of the plaudits of their fellow-men they were told their names would be cast out as evil, and what sane man would enlist under such a standard? Nothing could be an inducement to accept of such conditions, but the bright anticipation of future glory. The stupendous results suspended on compliance with such conditions, and the terms of life eternal could alone suffice to create such a fervor in the human mind as would enable its possessor to "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus."

Paul delighted to view things in this aspect, and he compared himself to a wise master-builder who in preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, had laid the foundation for their faith and hope and then follows the important admonition, "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon, for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

The Master Himself used this striking language: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man who built his house upon a rock." Hence the importance of hearing the sayings and doing the will of the Son of God. As He has elsewhere said, "If ye continue in my words, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." I wish I could impress these words on the minds of all, so that they could realize them in the full extent of their meaning. That man has made a great advance in his search for truth and a great attainment in Bible knowledge who has learned that it is the truth that makes men free, and the truth that sanctifies, as Christ

prayed to the Father, saying, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth." It must be obvious to every one that if the truth sanctifies, and the truth makes men free, that error can do neither. The truth enlightens, as we read, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." Error, on the contrary, darkens and obscures men's minds.

How important, then, under such circumstances, to see on what basis our faith and hope rest; whether on the Word of God which is as immutable as His throne, or the baseless fabric of traditions, human feelings, dreams and visions. And here we must insist on candor, for nowhere else are men so apt to practice self-deception, and nowhere else are the consequences of such a course so destructive and so terrible.

We have spoken of the grand issue, the stupendous results suspended on our compliance with the terms or conditions on which life is offered to us, but this fact we have cause to think is apprehended by only very few. On no other principle can we account for the almost total indifference of so many to a subject of such momentous importance. And here I desire to combat a very common error, namely, that it matters little what a man believes, so long as he is sincere. No greater delusion than that was ever propagated. Christ again and again testified to those of the popular faith in His day that they made the Word of God of none effect through their traditions, and again He said unto them, "In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Oh, reflect, I beseech you, on this sad and solemn warning. Think for one moment, that if the holding traditions and commandments of men make worship offered to Jehovah vain, what an amount—what a fearful amount of vain worship is offered! I know very well that in pressing this home on some of you, I shall be charged with being very narrow-minded and uncharitable, but that would not trouble me any, were it not on account of those making the charge. I am willing to submit to all kinds of reproach for the name of Christ, and for the truth's sake. This is our patrimony in the present dispensation. Let me say to you, that much abused word "CLARITY" is often called on to do service in the defense of error, and is a sort of standard around which to formulate a plea for all manner of absurdity so long as those who hold it

are sincere. But the folly of such a plea becomes apparent when we consider that the sincerity in such cases is the worst feature of it. If the parties were not sincere they could only deceive others, but being sincere they deceive themselves as well; but I know some of you are aching to call my attention to what Paul said about charity in 1 Cor. xiii., and for your benefit I shall read it, but I give you due warning before I do so, that I shall drive you from your supposed fortress, and slay you with your own weapons. Let us hear what Paul says: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal; and though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing; and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Now, in order to see whether these words of Paul give you any aid and comfort, or whether you are making an entirely wrong use of them, and one that Paul never intended, I want to quote further from him, and this time you will find his words recorded in Romans, chapters ix. and x., and as you may not be quite so familiar with Paul's writings as you ought to be, I will say to you that Paul never contradicts himself. He is too close a reasoner for that, and there is nothing shallow about him either. He goes to the root of everything he handles. But let us hear him: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit." This is a wonderful—a most remarkable and impressive introduction of Paul's, and shows us that he is going to tell something of very great importance, about the truth and correctness of which he is very anxious we should have no doubt whatever. Well, Paul, what is it? "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for I could wish myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsman according to the flesh." You see Paul's grief was no light thing, as he said, his heaviness was very great, and his sorrow was continual; and in this intensity of mind he resembled the prophet Jeremiah when he said, "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter

of my people.” But let us question Paul a little, and see what this is all about. Why, Paul, what is the matter that you should be in such a state of grief and anxiety about your kinsmen? Are they not perfectly honest and sincere in their belief? And is not sincerity everything? Did you not say on another occasion, “Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind?” And besides, is it not very arrogant in you, a tent maker, to presume that you know better than the priests, the high priests, and scribes, who have spent their whole life-time in studying the law? Besides, you must remember how few and insignificant are those who are of your way of thinking, compared with the great Hebrew nation? And this is intended to be an unanswerable query, and sufficient to settle the whole matter. But be not hasty in your conclusions; listen to Paul’s reasons for his great heaviness, and continual sorrow, about his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh, for he would not own them nor acknowledge them as brethren in any other sense. “I bear them record,” he says, “that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, for they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of Christ.”

Well, but Paul, why should you judge your brethren in that way? Did you not say to the Corinthians that though you had all knowledge, and understood all mysteries, yet if you had not charity you were nothing, and though you had faith so that you could remove mountains, and had not charity, you were nothing? Very true, says Paul, but although all knowledge is not essential, a certain amount of it is essential, as it is written, “My people perish for lack of knowledge;” and again, “This is life eternal, to know thee the only living and true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” And although it is not necessary to understand all mysteries, there is one mystery that must be believed—the mystery of godliness, He who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory.” 1 Tim. iii. 16. “Concerning which I wrote to the church at Ephesus that they might understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body and partakers of His promise in Christ by the

Gospel.” And although faith to remove mountains is not essential, still faith in God’s promises is indispensable, “For without faith it is impossible to please God.” Do you now understand me? If not read what I wrote to the churches of Galatia, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel, which is not another, but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the Gospel of Christ, but though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed, and as we said before, so say I now again, “If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” Gal. i. 6-9.

This is the most correct exposition of Paul’s charity because it is Paul’s own interpretation of it. Charity in the common version is here rendered “love” in the revised version, and we cannot conceive of any higher function for love than to warn others of impending danger. For this very thing the name of Paul Revere is rendered famous in American history, for his midnight ride,—sung by Longfellow, arousing the sleeping inhabitants of Charleston and Concord to meet the British expedition. which they resisted the following day at Lexington.

The man who would see his neighbor’s dwelling on fire of which they were altogether unconscious, would show his love and humanity most by shouting Fire! Fire! Fire! to alarm the dwellers.

The Scriptures nowhere countenance this blind impulse, sincerity in ignorance; on the contrary, Jesus said. “If the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch.” Hitherto we have dealt with general principles, now let us enter more into detail, as to some of the more prominent errors in theology, commonly believed, which make the Word of God of none effect.

That Word says, “The wages of sin is death.” Theology says, “The wages of sin is eternal life in suffering.” The Bible says, “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” Theology says, “The soul of man is immortal, and can never die.” The Bible says, “All the wicked will God destroy.” And Christ says, “Fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.” Theo-

logy says, "The soul is a part of the divine essence, is immaterial and indestructible."

The Bible says, "The gift of God is eternal life," and John says, in his first epistle 2nd chapter and 25th verse, "This is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life." And in Titus i. 2, we read, "In hope of eternal life which God who cannot lie, promised before the world began." And in the 7th verse of the 3rd chapter we read, "Being justified by His grace we should be made HEIRS according to the hope of eternal life." And Paul in his second letter to Timothy commences by saying, "Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus." Now, it ought to be apparent to every thinking mind of ordinary intelligence, that a man cannot be in possession of a thing and hoping for it at the same time. Neither can he be an heir and a possessor at the same time. It does not require any large amount of legal lore to know that when a man comes into possession of an estate he ceases to be an heir.

How true it is that the Word of God is made of none effect by the traditions of men.

Again, the Word of God says: "And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints," etc., and Christ said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," and the Psalmist said, "Those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth," Psa. xxxvii. 9-11, and again, "The meek shall inherit the earth, and shalt delight themselves in the abundance of peace:" and again Psalm xxxvii. 29, says, "The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein forever." Do you think they can dwell on the earth forever, and be in heaven at the same time? And again, "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's, but the earth hath He given to the children of men," Psalm cxv. 16. And in the vision which John saw in the sea-girt isle of Patmos, the redeemed out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation in the new song say, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." Revelation v. 10.

The traditions of men say the saints are in heaven, and the catechism I was taught in my youth said, "The souls of believers

are at their death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory;" and this not only without one vestige of Scripture truth to support it, but in direct opposition to the Word of God, which plainly tells us that the dead know not anything, that the dead praise not the Lord. And Christ, the Great Teacher, said to His disciples, "As I said unto the Jews, whither I go ye cannot come, so now I say to you; but if I go away I will come again and receive you to myself;" and thus a reunion between Christ and His people, is contingent on His coming again. If Christ does not come again, there will be no reunion. In keeping with this, Peter on the day of Pentecost, being full of the Holy Spirit testified that David had not ascended into heaven, 1,040 years after his death. This is a striking contrast to our modern funeral sermons, but you are determined to go there anyway. Very well. How are you going to get there? You do not know the way; and besides, you have no means of transportation. God has never promised to take you there, and you have never been invited to go there. You may search the Bible over from beginning to end and you will not find one solitary promise of going to heaven at death. There are two passages of Scripture that have been perverted and strained to make them teach that idea; one is in Zechariah, where it says, "And the Lord my God shall come and all the saints with thee," and the other is in Jude, where it says, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints." But unfortunately for your argument, heaven is not mentioned in either passage. You are simply begging the question; the whole is an unproved assumption, but if you will follow me closely I will show you where they are coming from, and in Scripture language too. You will find a very minute and positive statement of the whole matter in 1 Thess. iv. 16, which says, "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout." Now please mark the language very closely; here the word heaven is used; we are not left to conjecture about the place. The Lord descends from heaven, and at this time He is alone—none of His saints are yet with Him. It says so. It is the Lord Himself and none other. The saints have not yet met Him. "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we

which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Now, this is as plain as language can make it. It needs no construction put upon it. It carries its own meaning with it.

The saints meet the Lord in the air, and then He comes, and all His saints with Him. They escort Him to earth, where He takes the kingdom given Him by the Father, and the saints become co-rulers with Him. "This honor," says David, "have all the saints; Praise ye the Lord."

The dogma of inherent immortality in man is not of Christ, but of Paganism, and can easily be traced to its source. It is a false theory, false to fact, false to revelation, and false to God. And here let me quote to you what Wm. Tyndale, Martin Luther and others say on this subject. Tyndale says, "In putting departed souls in heaven, hell, and purgatory, you destroy the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul prove the resurrection. What God doth with them, that we shall know when we come to them. The true faith putteth the resurrection, which we be warned to look for every hour. The heathen philosophers denying that, did put that the souls did ever live; and the Pope joined the spiritual doctrine of Christ, and the fleshly doctrine of philosophers together, things so contrary that they cannot agree . . . and because the fleshly minded Pope consenteth unto the heathen doctrine, therefore he corrupteth the Scriptures to establish it. . . . If the souls be in heaven, tell me why they be not in as good case as the angels be? And then what cause is there of the resurrection?" So wrote William Tyndale, the translator of the Scriptures into English, and who suffered martyrdom in 1536.

Richard Watson writes in *Institutes* Vol. 2, page 250, "That the soul is naturally immortal is contradicted by Scripture, which makes our immortality a gift dependent on the will of the giver." And Herodotus, the oldest historian, writes, "The Egyptians were the first who asserted the doctrine that the soul of man is immortal. Herod. p. 144.

Martin Luther in response to the decree of the Council of the Lateran held during the Pontificate of Pope Leo X. said, "I permit the Pope to make articles of faith for himself and his

faithful, such as the soul is the substantial form of the human body,—the soul is immortal,—with all those monstrous opinions to be found in the Roman dunghill of decretals.”—Luther’s Works.

But strong as this testimony is to present for the consideration of thoughtful minds, we want to impress upon you that the Bible is our standard of appeal, and that the Bible tells us of a time coming when “everything that has breath shall praise the Lord.” Do you believe it? That is a glorious anticipation! “Partial evil, universal good,” showing that evil is of temporary duration, while Truth and Righteousness are eternal. But then you cannot believe that and hold the doctrine of eternal torment—the two cannot go together—they are at utter antagonism. Do not, I beseech you, like the Jews of old, “Reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own traditions.”

But do you enquire how that state of things can be brought about? I will tell you, and tell you in the language of Scripture, too.

“All the wicked will God destroy,” Ps. cxlv. 20.

“Their end is destruction,” Phil. iii. 19.

“They shall be punished with everlasting destruction,” 2 Thess. i. 9.

“The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away,” Psalm xxxvii.

And the Devil himself shall eventually be destroyed. This is Christ’s work, as it is written, “He shall destroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil.” Heb. ii. 14. And when this has been accomplished, then comes the bright and joyous time which the exile John saw in apocalyptic vision when “Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, and honor, and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.” Rev. v. 13.

O, what a great and glorious consummation! What a prize for children of a mortal race to attain to! And each one of you may have it, if you will only accept salvation on God’s own

terms. We are commanded to invite you to share in the glories of that time, when pain and disease, and sorrow and sighing and death shall be no more; when all shall be clothed upon with immortality, "Neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

You will see from what I have quoted from Tyndale, from Luther, and Watson, and Herodotus, that our faith is not a new one. O, no; it was the faith of Abraham, the friend of God; the faith taught by the prophets of old, and by Christ and His apostles. It is the faith once delivered to the saints; and you will naturally inquire, "How, then, are we so few in numbers?" I will let Paul answer that question. In his charge to the elders of the church at Ephesus as recorded in Acts xx. 29, we read, "I know this, that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." And in his first letter to Timothy, chap. 4, verse 1, he says: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron." And in his second letter, 4th chapter and 3rd verse, we read: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables." Now, that tells the whole story, and tells it in words divinely inspired. Paul did not give an opinion of his own as modern teachers do, but he says: The Spirit speaketh EXPRESSLY of the very state of things which now prevails.

But you will urge, Did Christ not say, "In my Father's house are many mansions?" Very true; but read on as any intelligent, honest student of the Bible should do, and see what follows. "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 away, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." When you take it in its connection, your supposed proof vanishes, as you see their being with Him is contingent on His coming again. And furthermore,

He had just told them in the 33rd verse of the preceding chapter, "As I said unto the Jews, whither I go ye cannot come, so now I say to you," John xiii. 33. God has graciously promised to dwell with man on the earth, but nowhere that men will dwell with Him in heaven. Psalm lxxvi. 2; Zech. viii. 3.

Some who confess the religion of Jesus seem to have a very poor opinion of the Bible, for they speak of it as a violin, on which you can play any tune, and if so it is worthless as a standard of appeal. But the prophet Isaiah had a different idea, for he said, "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah viii. 20. Violin indeed! What a slander on Jehovah's Word, which He has magnified above all His name! No wonder that infidels scoff, sneer and scorn, when professors will thus defame God's Word.

But again, you remind me of the paucity of our numbers, and, in reply, it is only necessary for me to remind you that the true Church has always been in a sad minority. In the days of Noah it consisted of himself and family. In the time of Elijah only about 7,000 amid the hosts of Israel who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal and the prophet's own life in danger; and in Christ's own day how was it? Twelve apostles, seventy disciples, a few scattered believers, with the whole Hebrew nation in opposition, and the Greeks and Romans in pagan darkness. And how will it be when Christ comes again? Are you looking for a converted world before that time? Let me tell you it is a day dream. Listen to Christ's own words, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be when the Son of man cometh." Well may He say, "When the Son of man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke xviii. 8. And He might well say to the professing Church to-day, as He said unto the unbelieving Jews, "Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my Word."

But again you say: "What of the earnest, pious, spiritually-minded people who do not believe anything of the kind?" Their earnestness, piety, and zeal, we are ready to admit, but spiritually-minded they are not. Those only are spiritually-minded who are in subjection to the Father of spirits—believe the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God—lay

hold of the Spirit's promises, and are thus led by the Spirit. Such are the sons of God. This is just what we are trying to do, to get you to see the Spirit's teaching, and bring you into subjection thereto. But no, you want to go to heaven, and you say some of your relatives are there, you know they are there because they were so very good. Now, I want you to reflect that David, king of Israel, made no such pretension. Addressing Jehovah, he said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" That was all. None else. He did not claim any of his dead relatives to be there. And we have seen that the Holy Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, testified through Peter that David himself had not ascended there 1,040 years after his death.

Do you say my words cut deep? I beg of you to consider it is the knife of the surgeon, and it wounds to heal. The surgeon who falters in his task is unfit for duty. The malady is dreadful, and the operation to be effectual must be severe, and if it cuts into the bones and marrow, remember it is better to submit to the knife to-day, than to have mortification to-morrow.

No doubt you think I am very earnest. Yes; I am TERRIBLY in earnest. If you do not feel the solemnity of the occasion, I do. I am speaking for Christ, and in His stead pray you to be reconciled to God—reconciled to God's Word, God's plans, God's purposes, God's methods. His thoughts and yours are at variance. He wants His people to be co-workers with Him. This you cannot do, for you are going one way, and He another.

Why is it that you can treat Jehovah's Words with as little respect as if they were the words of your fellow-men? If you stood at the base of Mount Sinai to-night, and saw the mountain on fire, and the great volume of dense smoke ascending, and heard the terrific peals of thunder, peal after peal, shaking the ground on which you stood, and saw the vivid lightnings flash, you would tremble, but because you hear Jehovah's Words, without any visible or audible manifestation of His presence and power, you cast His words behind your back; but remember, it will not always be calm and serene. The Word says: "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh, for if they escaped not who refused Him who spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn

away from Him that speaketh from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He hath promised, saying, yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven."

God's message to you is to "Prepare for that great and notable day of the Lord."

See well to the foundation of your faith and hope; believe what God has spoken by the mouths of prophets, apostles, and His Son, and hope for nothing which He has not promised. The fire will try every man's work, and the wood, hay and stubble of human creeds and human traditions will be consumed, and the silver and the precious stones of divine truth will alone remain. O, then, "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."

In conclusion, let me urge on all to guard with sacred care the Oracles of God, as the foundation of our faith and hope. See that they are preserved intact from the assaults of infidelity, and in order to do this, we must be well acquainted with their teachings. The Bible is its own best interpreter, but it is not so regarded by those who stand high in the world's religions, nor need we wonder when evolution has become so popular, and is taught in our halls of learning. One famous preacher is reported as saying, "Whoever wrote the first and second chapters of Genesis, and the last chapter of Revelation, must have done so purely from imagination." Such men are seeking to undermine the foundations of our faith and hope, and well might the prophet David say, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" But thank God. His Word is too well verified, if people will only study it and rebuke the presumptuous boasters. To the ignorant such men may seem very profound when they speak "great swelling words of vanity," and "set their mouths against the heavens." Think of them trying to ridicule the Bible account of the creation of man as a nursery tale; and the flood which swept away an ungodly race as a fable; and the narrative of Jonah being swallowed by the whale is sneered at as a fish story; and Job was only a myth. Now, to be consistent, they ought to denounce Jesus Christ as an impostor. for He sanctioned and endorsed the Mosaic account of the creation of man. "Have ye not read," said He, "that He which made them at the

beginning, made them male and female?" Matt. xix. 4. And if the flood is a fable, why did Christ say, "As the days of Noah were so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be; for as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be?" Matt. xxiv. 37. If the flood was a fable, so will also the coming of the Son of Man be. Some may desire it to be a fable, but when it comes in its awful majesty it will smite those scoffers with dismay as no fable ever did.

When the sceptical Jews asked Jesus for a sign, He said, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall be no sign given unto it but the sign of the prophet Jonah; for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so that the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matt. xii. 39. Think ye He would have made a sign out of a fish story? Shame on those who profess Jesus, to thus burlesque His teaching.

If Job was a myth, how did the word of the Lord come unto Ezekiel the prophet, saying, "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, (the land) they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord. Though Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, as I live saith the Lord, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Ezek. xiv. 14-20. What kind of sons and daughters do you think a myth would have? James in his epistle cites Job as an example of patience (James v. 11), so that up to that time, the discovery that Job was a myth had not been made.

Evidently the perilous times of which Paul wrote are upon us. Blasphemers were then to abound, and the world is full of them to-day. Infidelity is assuming new and more attractive forms, hence more dangerous.

The present age requires stern, uncompromising men who will be valiant for the truth; men whom no favor can allure, nor threat dismay; men who can scorn the world's frown. The conflict may be severe, but the end will be glorious.

Who will enter the ranks in opposition to infidelity in every

form? Say, will you be one of them? Time is short, and the work is urgent; I pray you decide quickly! Amen.

“HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.” BASED ON THE PROMISES.

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of faith.”—Eph. ii. 19.

Brethren and Sisters—many of you have experienced the feelings of loneliness of a stranger’s heart, as you first set your foot on a foreign shore. Ye were strangers in a strange land. You realized your isolation; the land was fair to look upon, it was rich and good, but you were not citizens of the commonwealth, and you could not claim the privileges of citizens; in short you were *aliens*, and were under all the disadvantages, and the disabilities that term implies.

In the portion of Scripture we are considering your attention is directed to a greater commonwealth and a more distinguished citizenship than that of any human government. It is styled the “Commonwealth of Israel,” and its charter is granted by no human authority, it bears no human seal; it is given by the eternal Father, the God of heaven and earth. It is the covenants of promise. Its citizens are saints. “The household of faith.” From this you will see the distinguished honor of being permitted to be a member of this *household*. It introduces you *prospectively* into the society of the great and good of all ages. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Daniel, and a host of worthies of whom the world was not worthy.

But why is it called the “household of faith?” Clearly because the unbelieving who have no faith in the realization of those promises, have no share in it. Faith has been the distinguishing characteristic of the people of God in all ages. Abraham believed God, had confidence in His promise, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Gal. iii. 6. And we read “Without faith it is *impossible* to *please* God.” Heb. xi. 6. That is a fundamental principle of His government. Paul in his letter to the Galatians says, “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham; and the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen (Gentiles) *through* faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abra-

ham, saying, "In thee shall all nations be blessed." So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. Gal. iii. 7-9. Seeing the importance of faith as herein set forth, it is now in order to inquire, What are we to understand by "faith?" and how is it obtained?

The writer to the Hebrews answers the first question by informing us that "Faith is the substance or basis of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb. xi. 1. That meets the requirements of the case. It grasps the promises of God, lays hold of them as a reality; a something, regarding the accomplishment of which, there can be no doubt. And now as to how this faith is obtained. Paul says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Rom. x. 17.

How slow people are to realize that the Word of God must be the basis of their hope, and that no hope is valid which has not this foundation. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. We turn to that Word and read, "Whereby are given unto us *exceeding great and precious promises*, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter i. 4. This again is in perfect harmony with that other Scripture, "And holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14. The truth believed, and incorporated into our being, is God's panacea for purifying the heart of man. John says, "Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself even as He is pure." 1 John iii. 3. And Peter says, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, being begotten again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever." 1 Peter i. 22, 23. People who do not understand this, little know what they are throwing away when they reject the covenants of promise, and barter the one faith and hope of the Gospel for an imaginary, fantastic hope of man's creation. If they understood this they would not wonder at our earnestness in urging on them the claims of the Gospel, and the imperative duty of testing well the foundation of their hope. Oh, that we could reach some of them!

Let no one imagine that we put too much stress on the neces-

sity of a correct faith to the realization of a correct life. Its importance becomes apparent when we consider the high position God has assigned it, and also its necessity as a purifying agent. When we regard it in these two aspects then we can better appreciate the exhortation, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering for He is faithful that promised." Heb. x. 23.

Oh! what an incentive to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, and then to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. That is the way to have your faith *increased and strengthened*, and to have "Christ dwelling in your hearts *by faith*." Eph. iii. 17. For if the faith is not there, you have no proof of Christ dwelling there. And then to think of the comfort arising from the blessed assurance that he is faithful that promised. Can anything be more sure and stable than the faithfulness of God? But let me remind you that if our faith is a *precious* faith it will not be dead, it will be *operative*. The faith that is availing, and that pleases God, "*works* by love, and *purifies* the heart." Gal. v. 6. Abraham's faith was a living, operative faith, and if we are the children of Abraham, our faith must resemble his.

I would here impress upon you that some people make a great mistake in confounding *correct* knowledge with *complete* knowledge, and on that account we are often misunderstood, and misrepresented. A little reflection ought to correct that misconception. Let me illustrate in this way, a mathematician may work a whole month on a problem; at the end of the first week his problem is *incomplete*, but may be *correct* as far as he has gone. In like manner we do not assume to understand all mysteries, but we have Scripture testimony that we understand the Gospel, and this is what we commend to our fellow-men. That we may not only commend it by tongue and pen, but by our lives and conduct is my earnest prayer. Christ's own rule is, "By their fruits ye shall know them;" and no greater mistake can be made than to suppose that a correct faith will avail anything unless it has power to develop a holy life. This, however, gives no countenance to the oft committed error that what is commonly called a good life will take the place of faith in God's promises—the Word of the kingdom.

Jude's exhortation to "*earnestly* contend for the faith once delivered to the saints" was not given in vain. The truth was not to be presented in a half-hearted, apologetic way, but it was to be *contended* for, and that with *earnestness*. Do you realize what this word "*earnestly*" means?

It means *emphatically, determinedly*.

It means *strenuous, unflinching* purpose.

But why contend for it so earnestly? Because it is written, "The just by faith shall live." Rom. i. 17. Those who have been justified by faith—they shall live. It may be asked how does faith come to be so vital as is here indicated?

This is shown if we read the context. In the preceding verse Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek, for THEREIN, (that is in the Gospel,) is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith as it is written, the just by faith shall live." This shows that the Gospel is the subject matter of this faith, and hence valued by all those who know the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed. The righteousness which God requires of His people; and then follows, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who *suppress* the truth." This shows what a fearful thing it is to *suppress* the truth. Hold it down, restrain it from doing its beneficent work among men, in seeking their enlightenment and regeneration. This is amplified and confirmed in Paul's letter to the Philippians, in which he says, "Yea doubtless, and 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 of 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." Phil. iii. 8, 9. The righteousness which God requires. The righteousness which springs from faith, is the fruit of faith, as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness, and having faith in God's promise there was no requirement too great for him to do. He was ready to leave his kindred and his father's

house, and go into a strange land; he stopped not to question the propriety or necessity of circumcision and was even ready to offer up Isaac on the altar. It was enough that the Lord required it.

In view of the Scripture testimony herein adduced, can any one say, "It matters little what a man believes, so long as he is sincere?" If that is so, what is the use of the long list of worthies given in the 11th chapter of Hebrews of whom it is said, "These all died *in faith* not having received the promise," and why should Paul and Barnabas have taken that journey through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, *confirming* the disciples, and exhorting them to *continue* in the faith. Acts xiv. 22. Why all this toil, earnestness, and anxiety for nothing? Is it possible that Christ commissioned and sent out men to make known the way of salvation who were incompetent? Whose views were not broad enough, and whose methods can be criticized and improved on by the men of our day? This is a solemn question and I leave all who are interested in it to answer it to their own satisfaction; but in order to aid them in arriving at a Scriptural conclusion, I would remind them of the language of Christ by which He endorsed those whom He commissioned. Thus it is written, "He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me." Luke x. 16. Of Paul it is written, "He is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." Acts ix. 15.

Did the Lord make a mistake in choosing such an instrument for such a purpose? Did He? What was the work assigned to Paul to do? Listen to the divine testimony, "Delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Acts xxvi. 17, 18.

What a high and holy mission! We have heard the burning words of the well-attested messenger. We have heard, and our fetters are broken, and our hearts are glad. Verily, "The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which

sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." Matt. iv. 16.

Now the divine command is, "For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light . . . and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Eph. v. 8, 11. May this ever be our high endeavor.

We see that an intelligent belief of the Gospel, with such a true appreciation of the promises on which the Gospel rests, as will result in a loving obedience, based on repentance, puts the person in a position free from condemnation (Rom. viii. 1) transferred from bondage to liberty (Gal. v. 1), from being a stranger and a foreigner to that of a "fellow-citizen with the saints and of the household of faith." Eph. ii. 19. What a transformation! And what a subject for congratulation, to all "who have obtained like precious faith."

To all of the faithful ones let me say, you now hold an enviable position. One that we would not exchange for that of the crowned monarchs of earth. Their laurels will soon fade, their crowns soon crumble into dust, but if you remain faithful, you shall at last receive an incorruptible inheritance, "and a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 Peter i. 4.

Such a hope may well stimulate to great exertion and fidelity on your part, waver not in your profession, falter not in your adherence to Christ, for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, an unstable ocean billow. Let steadfastness be your watchword, ever remembering Paul's earnest exhortation, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. xv. 58.

CHAPTER IX.

REFORMATION AND RESTORATION.

(An Address at Waverly Hall, Edinburgh.)

MR. PRESIDENT,—Brethren, Friends, and Members of the Union Religious Mutual Improvement Association, of Edinburgh:—In compliance with your kind invitation I have much pleasure in appearing before you to-night, to deliver the inaugural address of the twenty-fourth session of this Association: and as I do not expect to present you with anything novel in thought or captivating in expression, I crave your indulgence while I offer a few plain thoughts in a plain way.

The object of your association needs no eulogy of mine, as it commends itself to every thoughtful person.

Improvement is always in order, and many things around us indicate the great need of it. Self improvement is good, but mutual improvement implies more, it conveys the idea of reciprocity—a giving and receiving—an interchange of thought with intelligent minds is of incalculable benefit to the participants. Man was never made for isolation; his whole nature revolts against it, and nothing is more laudable than the spirit of emulation properly directed. When enlisted in the work of mental culture its influence is most beneficial.

No one can properly estimate the impressions made and received in our intercourse with our fellow-men; our daily thoughts and actions not only form our own character, but to a certain extent mould the character of those around us. Some are more, and some are less susceptible of those influences; and however unobserved they may be, and pass unnoticed at the time, they nevertheless exist all the same, and are silently at work, like some of the mysterious magnetism, or electric current, felt but not seen, yet ever active like the swift revolving armature of an electric dynamo, powerful in its own field of action.

If we analyze this word "improvement" we will find that like many others in the vast *thesaurus* of the English language it has many significations, but the two most fitting for my purpose on the present occasion are expressed by the words "reformation" and "restoration." I will therefore address you to-night on the subject of the "Time of Reformation," and the "Times of Restoration."

In Hebrews ix. 8 we read, "The first tabernacle was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience, which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them UNTIL the time of reformation." And in Acts iii. 21 it is written of Christ, "Whom the heaven must receive UNTIL the times of restitution—or restoration, as it is called in the Revised Version—of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."

What fields for profitable contemplation are opened to our view through those two words "reformation" and "restoration," like two grand vistas, one on either side of us, the one retrospective, the other prospective. We look through the retrospective vista and we are carried back to the introduction of the time of reformation inaugurated by Christ at His first advent, when He came to raise a fallen race, to enfranchise slaves, break their yoke of bondage and save men condemned to die. And when we turn to the prospective vista the most sublime view is opened up to us that can engage the mind of man—it is the times of Restoration to be introduced by the Christ of God at His appearing and His kingdom.

Your Association is not only organized for mutual improvement, but RELIGIOUS Mutual Improvement; and here I would briefly remark that the Christian religion emphasizes these two ideas, "reformation" and "restoration." Individually, every son of Adam who embraces Christ's doctrine is called on to Reform. The belief of the truth, or the faith of the Gospel gives the basis for the reformation of the life and character of the man; and amidst the trials and tribulations attending his Christian warfare he is animated and sustained by anticipation of the glories of the coming age, "The Times of Restoration." His

work begins in personal reformation, and the objective point of his faith and hope is the "Times of Restoration."

On one occasion Jesus said, "Because of the people which stand by I said it," and if in addressing you to-night I shall say some things inapplicable to your attainments in Bible knowledge, you will please understand my motive. And here let me say that I hope the visitors who have to-night favored us with their presence may feel like Lambert the Frenchman who went to Marburg in Hesse to hear the memorable debate between Luther and Zwingli in 1527, "I desire," said he, "to be a sheet of blank paper on which the finger of God may write his truth." Unless men are thus divested of prejudice they are in no condition to learn the truth from God's Holy Word.

Before commencing my subject proper, I want to say to my audience, I am not here to amuse and entertain you for an hour with fancy sketches. I am no writer of romance, dealing in fiction and concealing the plot till the last. On the contrary, I tell you my object and design NOW, so that I may carry you along with me, and that you may carry home what I say and remember it till your latest hour. I want to bring two remote periods together—place them, as it were, in juxtaposition, and give my hearers, and especially the visitors, as comprehensive an idea as possible in the brief space of time allotted me. I shall lead you all the way through on solid ground, and if you imagine you find one shaky spot along the path, I want you to call my attention to it.

In the first part of my address I shall deal with historic facts, and in the second with prophecy, which is only history written in advance. I speak for God and eternity and want to impress you with the fact.

Your attention is first invited to the most important epoch in religious history, styled in my text, "The Time of Reformation." Let us look at some of the features of that time, fraught with such momentous results, and which in many respects distinguish it from all other times whether prior, or subsequent to that reformation.

A great nation, yes, the greatest nation the world ever beheld, a nation born of miracle, a nation the annals of which are adorned by the most illustrious names, a nation to whom

God gave divinely inspired prophets, a nation to whom were committed the oracles of God, had declined from its high and noble position among the nations of the earth and came under subjection to the Roman Emperor, and notwithstanding this political degradation the people vainly boasted to Christ, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man,"—(John viii. 33) which was utterly opposed to fact, for at the very time they uttered those words they were paying tribute to Cæsar, and were ruled by Roman authority, Pontius Pilate being Roman Procurator of Judea, and Herod, Tetrarch or Ruler of Galilee. And if the political condition of the time was abject, the religious condition was more so. No one can read the account we have of Christ's labors and public ministry without being deeply impressed by the fact that He received the greatest opposition from the religious teachers of His day. The priests, the high priests, and the scribes were constantly trying to entrap Him, and accused Him of being a blasphemer, a friend of publicans and sinners. They moreover suborned witnesses to testify against Him at His mock trial, and after His resurrection gave the Roman soldiers large sums of money to falsely declare that His disciples stole Him away while they slept. Think of such moral debasement for any class of men, but especially men holding the priestly office!—Expounders of that law promulgated amidst the terrific and awe-inspiring circumstances of Mount Sinai—that law which said, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," Ex. xx. 16.—"Thou shalt not receive a false report;" "Put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness." Ex. xxiii. 1. That law was TRAMPLED under foot by the expounders of it, while they tithed mint, rue, annise and cummin. What a woeful state of affairs! What a picture of the degeneracy of an ancient hierarchy! Truly it was a time calling for reformation. They had evidently forgotten all the bright examples of the illustrious men of their nation: Abraham with his nobility of character as exemplified in his whole lifetime.—Abraham the friend of God, whose faith stands to-day a monument grander, and more enduring than the pyramids of Egypt—Abraham the magnanimous, who instead of exercising the natural and inherent right belonging to him generously gave Lot the choice of the land, saying, "Let there be no strife,

I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee?—Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right. And if thou depart to the right hand then I will go to the left. Again the dignity of his character in rejecting presents at the hand of the king of Sodom. And even in the dark hour of his grief and bereavement when looking for a resting place for his beloved Sarah, he declined the offer of Ephron the Hittite to make him a present of the land, but paid the full price for it, and weighed out four hundred shekels of silver, in money current with the merchant. And Joseph the exile slave, whose moral character shrank from defilement; when temptation presented itself he sternly replied, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? And Moses the great leader and general of that nation, so distinguished for the elevation of his moral character, and who defended one of his down-trodden country-men even at the cost of having to leave Pharaoh's court with all its allurements and splendor, and betake himself to the humble occupation of a shepherd, amply rewarded afterwards by the high position to which Jehovah called him as His prophet and law-giver to that people; not to speak of David, the brave warrior, lofty poet and exalted king.

I say the early history of the nation, the call of Abraham, and God's oath and promise to him, and his seed, seem to have been in a large measure forgotten by the very men of whom above all others, better things might have been expected. Moral debasement, religious bigotry, a slavish adherence to traditions obtained from Rabbinical Targums, and a neglect of God's Word, characterized the religious teachers of that age, and that is sufficient to account for their national degradation. Verily it was a time calling for reformation.

Above and beyond all this there was a change to be introduced from the ritual to the spiritual. The Law given through Moses under the most solemn and imposing circumstances, had served its time and purpose, and was now to be done away, and a new era of Grace and Truth introduced in its stead, the light and liberty of which would so far eclipse the former, that in com-

parison thereto the apostle Paul characterized the old dispensation as a yoke of bondage condemning to death, while the Gospel of the grace of God brings salvation, life and peace. The law being only a schoolmaster unto Christ, was no longer required, but was superceded by the righteousness of faith, as we read, "Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary . . . which stood in meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances imposed on them, UNTIL the time of reformation, but Christ being come a High Priest of good things to come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us . . . so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." This was a wonderful reformation, and stands without a parallel.

We speak of the reformation from Papal dominion, Popish ignorance and superstition, in the times of Luther, Melancton, Zwingli, and your own stern and dauntless John Knox, who boldly avowed that Councils are above Popes, and that nations give authority to kings—who together with such men as George Wishart, infused the spirit of reformation into the minds of a patient and long-suffering people, and kindled the flame of religious liberty in their hearts, who, in seeking to break down religious thralldom, and spiritual bondage, protested in rather an emphatic way, and have left enduring monuments of their zeal in the ruined monasteries, convents and cathedrals, the relics of which now adorn my native land, and constitute shrines to be visited by the liberty-loving people of every nationality and clime.

When I gaze at those monuments I am proud of them. They are memorial and monitor as well: memorial of the uprising of a great people who demanded the reformation of great errors, and abuses at ANY COST; and as monitors let none despise their warning. They tell us that the human mind may for a time be CRUSHED by usurped authority—kept down by the LASH of priestly intolerance, and made to CROUCH beneath the tyrant's rod, but ere long light dawns upon the soul; the bondman breaks

his shackles—slave no longer, he stands erect—the fearful reaction has come, and THEN “vengeance takes a hallowed form, and like heaven’s lightning, sacredly destroys.”

But highly interesting as the history of the reformation of the sixteenth century is, and valuable as the blessings are which we have inherited as the fruit of the labors of those worthy men who nobly contended for the Word of God and the right of individual judgment, they left much for others to accomplish.

In D’Aubigne’s History of the Reformation it is clearly shown that a too conservative spirit in some of the reformers restricted the work of reformation, and made it less thorough than otherwise it might have been. Melancthon in writing to one of the inspectors is quoted as saying, “All old ceremonies you can preserve, pray do so.—Do not innovate much, for every innovation is injurious to the people.”—D’Aubigne, vol. 4, p. 49. And they did preserve a good many old ceremonies, and among others the popish rite of infant sprinkling. Innovations have always been troublesome to those concerned on either side. The Christian religion was a great innovation on the philosophy of Greece. Christ crucified was a stumbling block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness, and when strict adherence to the doctrine of Christ brought no earthly emoluments, but on the contrary, stripes, bonds, imprisonment and death, no wonder that the less spiritual professors made a compromise with error, and accepted the Socratic and Platonic idea of immortality, and, with this compromise effected, the great increase in numbers under Constantine, to the Christian persuasion, thus corrupted, need excite no marvel.

The darkness that still hangs over this and other lands is appalling to contemplate. While men have made wonderful achievements in the arts and sciences, they have attained little in religious knowledge, and to a close observer there is a very striking analogy between our own times, and the times of our Savior. This analogy manifests itself in two ways: 1st., as to the spiritual bondage then and now. This was strikingly illustrated on two occasions during the public ministry of Christ. In John xii. 42, 43 we read, “Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him lest they should be put out of the syna-

gogue, for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Alas, how much of this same spirit exists NOW! How many are still to be found who love the praise of men more than the praise of God!

On another occasion as Jesus was in the temple teaching His sublime and heavenly doctrine, the chief priests, the scribes and the elders said unto Him, "By what authority doest thou these things? Who gave thee this authority? and Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? Answer me. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, if we shall say from heaven, He will say, Why then did ye not believe him? but if we shall say of men they FEARED the people, for all men counted John that he was a prophet indeed." Mark xi. 27.

These two circumstances disclose to us a condition of things the most servile and humiliating. It was a system of mutual serfdom, spiritual thralldom; how many there are STILL who would rather be untrue to their own convictions than gainsay the authority of public opinion; and in this respect there is NOW as THEN great need of reformation. The other analogy to which I have referred is one of deep significance, and no less disastrous in its results.

We read in 1 Cor. i. 23, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The Jewish nation looked for Christ to come in majesty—a Prince of the house of David in pomp and splendor; the crucified Nazarene did not meet their expectations, and hence was rejected as an impostor. A closer study, and better knowledge of the writings of their prophets would have shown them that the cross came before the crown, and that even Isaiah who depicts in glowing strains the glory of the millennial reign when the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose (Is. xxxv. 1), and when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them (ch. xi. 5, 6), also wrote the saddening

prophecy of the rejection of the Son of Man, "He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised and we esteemed Him not." Is. liii. 3. It is the marvel of all the religious denominations in Christendom, so-called, why the Jews should have overlooked the predictions of the humiliation and suffering of the Son of God. It appears all very plain to us now, when it has passed into history; but what shall be said of the **BLINDNESS** of professing Christians, and their teachers, in **OUR** day, who, with the Scriptures of truth in their hands, and the mistake of the Jews as a **WARNING** before their eyes, **CAST ASIDE** and **REJECT** fully one half of the Old and New Testament writings which tell of the coming of the Messiah in power and great glory, and the gathering of Israel out of all countries, and their restoration to their own land, and the establishment of Messiah's reign over the nations of the earth, associated with His risen and changed saints, who will then be made partakers of the divine nature by receiving immortality as the gift of God conferred on them through faith and obedience?

NEVER was Jew more blind to the prophecies concerning Christ's coming in humiliation as a suffering Savior, than are the men and women of **OUR** DAY, to the glorious prophecies concerning the second coming of the anointed Son of God in majesty, to establish His kingdom of righteousness and peace under the whole heavens.

The analogy between the Savior's time and ours is again very striking in both parties, being alike unconscious of their blindness. Those of Christ's day said, "We see," therefore said He, their sin remaineth. Those of our day do likewise.

Furthermore, the error in both cases is identical, a neglect of God's Word, and following the doctrines and traditions of men. The only apparent difference being that the mistake of the Jews is not **HALF** as much to be wondered at as the unbelief of to-day. The Gentiles, having the benefit of Jewish history, besides being possessed of a **SUPER-ABUNDANCE** of prophetic testimony concerning the millennial age, which holds a **FAR MORE** prominent place in the divine record, than that of the humiliation and suffering of the Son of Man, and here our work as relig-

ious reformers is demanded, to HOLD UP the light of God's prophetic Word amid surrounding darkness.

Individually we rejoice in that light, but we must ever remember that not for that purpose alone was it given to us. As soon as error has been divorced from our own minds, and we have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine taught in the Word, just so soon does God require us to disseminate that light to those around us; and if we fail to do so it is at our peril. The dictates of reason, and the higher impulses of our nature coincide with revelation in marking out this course for us to pursue. Freely ye have received, freely give, was the Lord's command to His disciples, and it is no less binding to-day; nor will we do this as a matter of duty, simply; it will be our delight as well! and the more deeply we drink of divine things the more will we be impelled in this direction, and no holier, nor more heavenly work can man be engaged in. Christ came to open the eyes of the blind and to unstop the ears of the deaf, and although we in our present earthly nature, have not the power to perform such physical transformations, we may be instrumental in opening the eyes of the mentally blind, and the religiously deluded, and cause them to see and hear wonderful things out of God's law.

The Christian life is a warfare in two ways. The man renewed in the spirit of his mind, has still to war against the propensities of his own fallen nature, and keep them in subjection, lest he be led captive. He must also as a good soldier battle for the truth, which is so generally defamed. He must contend with ARDOR and ZEAL for the faith once delivered to the saints, and more bitterly he opposed, the need of such contention becomes the more apparent. We have almost daily examples of the dreadful power of error over men's minds. I shall never forget listening to a Presbyterian minister in Canada, addressing the congregation over which he had been the pastor some thirty years, but instead of rightly dividing the Word of Truth and declaring the whole counsel of God, he openly and positively declared it was all folly to expect Christ to come and reign on the earth. Think of it! ALL FOLLY to expect that which God has sworn with a solemn oath to perform! If his judgment had not been warped by theological teaching, and his mental vision UTTERLY BLINDED, he could have read the CERTAINTY of His

coming in the words of the white-robed messengers who appeared at His ascension, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." And the OBJECT of His coming is seen in the words of Gabriel, "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end." And the RESULT of His coming as recorded in 1 Cor. xv. 25, "For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet, the last enemy shall be destroyed, is death." But this Scripture was at variance with his creed, so he held on to his creed, FALSIFIED the oath and promise of God, and THREW the Bible away. A thousand times better—O, INCOMPARABLY better had he TORN his creed into a thousand shreds and THROWN them to the winds of heaven, and clasped the Bible to his heart.

"Holy Bible, book divine,
Precious treasure thou art mine,
Mine to tell me whence I came,
Mine to teach me what I am.

"Mine to tell of joys to come,
And the rebel sinner's doom;
O! thou holy book divine,
Precious treasure thou art mine."

Nor need we wonder that men who believe in the immortality of the soul, and going to heaven at death, reject the second coming and personal reign of Christ on earth. The sky-kingdom doctrine SUBVERTS all of God's plans and purposes, does away with any necessity of a resurrection and makes the second coming of Christ one of the last things to be looked for; and here again there is great need of reformation.

But here let me warn you that as reformers we must not be discouraged at the strength of human prejudice, and the tenacity with which men hold to errors in which they were so deeply indoctrinated in childhood and youth, and with which their minds have so long been imbued.

It takes long, patient, persevering work to overcome the difficulties in our way; and it is only here and there one that can be reached which is susceptible to the divine influence,

or a mind can be reached which is susceptible to the divine power of truth. It is our duty all the same to expose error, and thereby seek to liberate those who are enthralled by it; and when an audience can be secured, I know of no better way than to present truth and error in contrast that the LOVELINESS of the one may make the DEFORMITY of the other more conspicuous.

This warfare against error brings no remorse, it leaves no broken hearts, nor ruined homes in its trail; no mutilated, ghastly corpses along its path, but the hideous form of error—error dethroned and TRAMPLED in the dust—it leaves no wail of widow, nor sob of homeless orphan. Instead of sorrow and desolation it brings gladness to many a heart, rejoicing on earth, and joy in heaven.

Did I say this warfare leaves no mourning in its path? That is a mistake; there is one exception, and they are those whose vested interests are infringed upon. And so it has always been, for when Paul visited Ephesus the workmen whose "craft was in danger" made an uproar; the innovation was too great for them, and the sacrifice made by the new converts was immense. The books and curious arts consumed in one bonfire alone, as we read in Acts xix. 19, amounted to fifty thousand pieces of silver. No wonder that the shrine-makers were afraid, and the advocates of error TREMBLED!

A bonfire of the same kind would be of great service in Edinburgh to-day. The musty volumes of traditional literature which have so LONG BEFOGGED men's minds, and OBSCURED their vision to the light of God's truth could WELL be dispensed with.

In America there has been much discussion of late on the question of revising and reforming the Westminster Confession of Faith, and no intelligent person will doubt that it needs correction, and the parties whose creed it is have a perfect right to alter it to suit themselves, for it is their own handy work, as much as Diana was the work of the Ephesian image makers. But if it be wrong to-day it has always been wrong, and it ought to be a serious thought to people which have been teaching error for the past 240 years. No wonder they are becoming ashamed of it. The visitors may think I am very bitter against it; I AM! but not unjustly so. I have THREE counts, or allegations against it, any one of which is sufficient to condemn it. 1st., its doctrines on

almost every page, if believed, would nullify the Word of the living God. 2nd., It produces insanity and infidelity. If the hundreds who have been driven into lunatic asylums and the thousands who have been impelled to infidelity through its God-dishonoring teaching could be assembled in one vast congregation, I do not believe you could find a hall in Edinburgh large enough to contain them. 3rd., It calumniates the character of God. If any one should accuse your fathers of doing the things which that standard charges to my kind, loving, and beneficent Father in heaven, and you did not feel indignant and resent it, men would DESPISE you, and justly so. A young, and very dear friend, last Christmas sent me a small memento of affection on which was inscribed the beautiful verse,

“For the love of God is broader,
Than the measure of man’s mind;
And the thoughts of the Eternal,
Are most wonderfully kind.”

Oh! how I felt for that loving soul trying to reconcile her creed with the sentiment of that verse, “God is love;” and that creed takes from us this loving Father in heaven who is more compassionate than any earthly parent. His mercy is tender mercy, and His kindness is loving kindness; and His tender mercies, He tells us, are over all His works. I say that creed ROBS us of our Father, and enthrones a relentless despot in His stead, whom we could not worship if we would, and ought not to worship if we could. I have often held up this creed to public reprobation, and I am GLAD of the opportunity of denouncing it in the city of Edinburgh, where it was ratified and approved according to act of parliament, A. D. 1649.

When men take the living oracles of God for their guide, they have that which needs no amending, and never grows musty with age: but is as fresh and vital to-day as when the promise was made to Abraham THREE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED years ago, and will be good for all time coming till that promise be fulfilled.

But I must pass to a consideration of the second branch of my subject, “The Times of Restoration,” and this is a subject so sublime that no word of men or angels can do justice to

the theme. No wonder that it kindled rapt Isaiah's wild seraphic fire, and gave David and other holy seers who tuned the sacred lyre the key-note of their loftiest songs. Peter says in Acts iii. 21, that the "Heaven must receive (Jesus) UNTIL the times of restoration of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets which have been since the world began." The visitors will please mark this language closely, as it shows two important points very clearly. 1st., It shows plainly that Christ's abode in heaven is not permanent, but limited. He remains there only UNTIL a certain period here designated The Times of Restoration, and THEN says Peter, "God will send Jesus Christ." That is a joyful assurance to all God's people; and is what they have long been looking for (Heb. ix, 28); long been waiting for (1 Thess. i. 10); long been praying for (Rev. xxii. 20); and is in keeping with what the heavenly messengers said to His apostles, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven," Acts i. 11. And also in accordance with the message Christ sent back to His beloved apostle after ascending to courts above, "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. xxii. 12. And if His reward is with Him what stronger proof is needed that up to that time His saints had not been rewarded? This is further in harmony with the parable Christ spoke of a certain Nobleman who went into far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

His servants do not follow Him into the far country, but on the contrary, on His return He rewards them with positions in His Kingdom according to the use made of the talents committed to them; placing one over five cities, and one over ten cities. Luke xix. 12. 2nd., It affords positive proof of what I have already said about the ABUNDANCE of Scripture testimony to the glory of the millennial age, for you observe it has been the theme of God's holy prophets since the world began; and again we read, "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken have likewise foretold of these days." Let us see some of the things they have foretold of these days; but we have only time to glance at a few. The Psalms of David are full of this subject, but we can

only cull one or two passages, "Wait on the Lord and keep His way, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land, when the wicked are cut off thou shalt see it." Psalm xxxvii. 34. "Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David, his seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me." Psalm lxxxix. 35. "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory." Psalm cii. 16. "All thy works shall praise thee O, Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee; they shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power, to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." Psalm cxlv. 10. In the second chapter of Isaiah the prophet breaks out into this lofty strain, "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." "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there, the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah xxxv. 1. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent's meat; they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain saith the Lord." Isaiah lxv. 25.

Jeremiah says, "Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby He shall be called, the Lord our righteousness," chap. xxxi. 34. "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." Jer. xxxi. 34.

I might go over Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Zechariah and all the prophets in like manner if time would permit—they all speak in JUBILANT language of the times of restitution. And Habakkuk says, "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." No wonder that every loving intelligent believer should ARDENTLY desire the Lord's return. His first act will be to raise His sleeping saints, and change the living ones, and this is eminently proper, as they share with Him in the administration of the affairs of His kingdom. They are not subjects but rulers. They constitute the Bride, the Lamb's wife, as Paul addressing the church at Corinth, said, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Cor. xi. 2. And John, when recording his apocalyptic vision, says, "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth: let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready? And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Rev. xix. 6. He wraps them all around with immortality, transforms the body of their humiliation, and fashions it like unto His glorious body." Phil. iii. 21. "This mortal must put on immortality." Oh! how much weakness is expressed in that word MORTAL. How much weariness, pain, anxiety, disappointment and sorrow! But that shall all be changed then. "THIS MORTAL" bowed down with decrepitude and age, and all the disabilities attending mortal existence shall disappear; all this and much more is involved in the glad assurance, "This mortal shall put on immortality," making them imperishable and incorruptible, and then He gives reward unto His servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear His name, small and great."

Rev. xi. 18. And then also shall be sung the new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us into our God kings and priests, and we shall reign—WHERE? In heaven above? O, no! "We shall reign ON THE EARTH." Rev. v. 9, 10. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah xxxv. 10. And then the work of subjugation shall go on, in which the saints shall share, as it is written: "He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron—a powerful scepter—as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my father." Rev. ii. 26. "For the Lord Most High is terrible; He is a great King over all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet." Psalm xlvii. 2. "For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." 1 Cor. xv. 25. And not only death, but him that had power of death, that is the devil. Heb. ii. 14. Oh! then what a shout of rejoicing shall go up from a ransomed world—a world lctst by sin, and redeemed by grace, when everything that has breath shall praise the Lord; and when "every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." Rev. v. 13.

O! glorious consummation! Thrice blessed hope, compared with which how horrible the conceptions of the human mind as represented in orthodox theology, which teach the eternity of evil—evil without mitigation or cessation—evil, the polluted and leathsome billows of which shall rise and swell throughout eternity. A colony of rebels, more numerous than the redeemed, full of devilish hate, writhing in pain, and cursing with malice the author of their being. Words are inadequate to describe the horribleness of this diabolic dogma. I cannot conceive how such an idea could enter into the brain of any one who com-

prehends that God had a purpose when He created man, and that purpose His Word assures us is an ETERNAL PURPOSE (Eph. iii. 11), and His counsel is immutable (Heb. vi. 17), and that counsel and that purpose made the immortality of man in sin an IMPOSSIBILITY. How do I know this? I know it because God has graciously so informed us. Right at the beginning of the history of our race, God has told us how He made man and what He made him of—formed him of dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. No immortality nor anything approaching it is here hinted at as being possessed by man. If you want the authority of a Hebrew scholar I refer you to Kitto's Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature, vol. 1, page 59— which each one can consult for himself. That man had no attribute of immortality pertaining to him is clearly shown by the penalty which God attached to the law under which the man was placed, "In the day thou eatest thereof—referring to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—dying thou shalt die."

That the death threatened had no metaphoric or figurative meaning attached to it is evident from the sentence pronounced on the man AFTER he transgressed. It was going back to dust: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." And in order that this sentence should be carried out to the letter, God drove out man from the garden of Eden, and placed a cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. And He put on record His reason for doing so, in these words: "Lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever." Make a note of it that at that period of man's existence, no immortality was attached to him; for the absurdity of excluding an IMMORTAL man from the tree of life to prevent him from becoming immortal ought to be apparent to all. And if he became immortal afterward he must have eluded the keen vision of the cherubim, and frustrated God's purpose, which you all know would be an IMPOSSIBILITY: for God informs us in Isaiah xlvi. 10, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," and furthermore 3,400 years after that sentence was pronounced, God declared by His prophet Ezekiel, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," chap. xviii. 4. And later still by the mouth of the Apostle Paul

he declared that "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 23.

Yes, thank God, He has a purpose—A GRACIOUS PURPOSE, an ETERNAL PURPOSE, as immutable as the throne of heaven, and He has condescended to reveal that purpose unto us, in His Word, and it is to people the earth with a righteous race (Psalm xxxvii. 29), and fill it with His glory (Hab. ii. 14). And this God has sworn to perform. "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." Numb. iv. 21.

We can readily see how evil can and does exist under the government of an ALL-WISE and good God for the purpose of trial and discipline for a limited period; there is nothing irreconcilable in this, but the eternity of evil and evil doers is foreign to God's purpose, and wholly antagonistic to His nature and character as He has graciously revealed Himself to mankind.

We read that for this purpose the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil. The devil was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth. By believing the serpent's lie man forfeited his life, and a home in Eden's fair bowers. And in order to become immortal and participate in the glory of the future age, and the ages beyond, he must obtain it through Christ by belief of the truth. This INVERSE ACTION ought to be apparant to all. Believing the serpent's lie brought death. Believing God's good message by Christ Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life brings salvation, life and peace. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." John i. 4. He is the believer's life. Paul said to the church at Colosse, "YOUR LIFE is hid with Christ in God," and then he adds, "When He who is OUR LIFE shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Then and not till THEN. In the life of the Savior the life of the saint is assured; hence says Jesus to His believing children, "Because I live ye shall live also." John xiv. 19. When we see this, how easy it is to comprehend Paul's teaching in 1 Cor. xv.: "If Christ be not raised your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins; then they also who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." How does this comport with the idea that the souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory? Could the Word of God be more completely nullified?

Christ said, "As the living Father hath sent me and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me even he shall live by me. The flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life." John vi. 57. His words to profit us must be believed, and become the basis of our faith and hope, as the food we eat has to be digested and assimilated in order to sustain and nourish the physical system. Oh! I ardently wish that all who hear me to-night, who are strangers to this saving truth may be strangers to it no longer. If it were simply truth in the abstract, we need not thus labor with our fellow-men, but when we consider that it is the truth of the Gospel offered for man's acceptance and salvation, it is an entirely different thing. John says, "He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son," and lest we should be in any doubt as to the import of the record, he adds, "And **THIS** is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son; he that hath the Son hath **THE** life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not **THE** life." 1 John v. 10-12. It is important to notice the definite article "**THE**" as rendered in the revised version, "**THE** life." All men have Adamic life, but all are not heirs of immortal life, but may become so—it is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 23.

Oh! what a blessed hope, to become partakers of divine nature, share the society of Jesus, and the redeemed of every age and clime, free from sickness, pain and death. No sigh shall tell of hidden grief or unrequited longing; no shadow of anticipated trouble, but abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." Psalm lxxii. 7. We would like to dwell on this ecstatic rapturous theme, the anticipation of which lifts us to a higher plane and a holier atmosphere than earth-born pleasures can ever give.

We must now very briefly glance at the effect a loving belief of these things should have on us. John says every man that hath this hope in him—the hope of seeing Jesus, and being made like Him—purifieth himself even as He is pure. 1 John iii. 3. And Peter says, "Wherefore beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless." Seeing that ye look for such

things—what things were they looking for? Looking that when they died their supposed immortal souls would go to heaven? O! no; **NOTHING OF THE KIND.** The context shows they were looking for the day of the Lord to come, as a thief in the night, the dissolution of the present order of things and a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. And again, “Seeing that ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.” 1 Pet. i. 22. But why this constant allusion to truth as the instrument of purification if error will answer the purpose just as well? Christ’s prayer for His disciples was, “Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth.” John xvii. 17. If the truth is the agent of sanctification, how important it is to see that we are in possession of the Truth which **ALONE** can sanctify. Then again we have that memorable passage in 2 Peter i. 3, “According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” It is important to notice here the necessity of a knowledge of God and of His designs, in order to attain to the things that pertain to life and godliness; for, if we are ignorant of God’s plans and purposes, and do not believe the great and precious promises He has made, how can we become partakers of divine nature, seeing faith in those promises is the clearly defined medium through which such participation comes? That the great and precious promises here spoken of refer to the coming and kingdom of God’s dear Son becomes apparent by the context, which says, “For so an entrance shall be administered unto you, abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” This is the objective point of every true believer’s faith, and if there are any listening to me now, whose faith stops short of this, I tell them solemnly there is something **wrong, radically wrong.** The great and precious promises made by God unto Abraham and his seed, and confirmed unto

David will never be realized until Christ sits a king on David's throne. This is the kingdom for which we look when we pray, "Thy kingdom come." It is pre-eminently the kingdom of God. It is the kingdom of God's dear Son, because given to Him of the Father, and it is the kingdom of heaven, because of its heavenly origin, but one and the same kingdom.

Oh! how precious is that faith which comprehends and takes hold of God's promises, represents His loving character and gracious purposes, and enables those who possess it to draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith and hope, knowing that He is faithful that promised; and coming to Him as a kind and tender parent cast themselves on His loving care and sympathy.

This is life eternal, says Jesus, "that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John xvii. 3. If we know God we will delight to live ever near Him, confide in Him, study His gracious plans and purposes, that we may become co-workers with Him. And the more we know of Him, the stronger our love for Him will become. There is much, very much contained in Christ's reply to Philip's request, "Lord show us the Father and it sufficeth us." Jesus saith unto him "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." John xiv. 8. What a precious portion of divine truth this is, He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. Did you see Jesus when the multitudes followed Him? Instead of becoming weary and impatient with them, the sacred record says He was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep, not having a shepherd, and He began to teach them many things. O, then think, He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. Did you see Jesus when yon leper came to Him beseeching Him and saying, "If thou wilt thou canst make me clean," and Jesus moved with compassion put forth His hand and touched him, and saith unto him, I will be thou clean, and as soon as He had spoken, immediately his leprosy departed from him." Or the two blind men who sat by the way side, and cried, saying, "Have mercy on us O, Lord, thou Son of David: "The multitude, the COLD-HEARTED multitude, rebuked

them; but Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes and immediately their eyes received sight.

He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. Did you see that sorrowful widow following the bier of her only son near the gate of Nain, bowed down and broken-hearted she was? When the Lord saw her He had compassion on her, and said unto her, weep not, and restored her dead to life. Did you see the tender heart of Jesus melt into tears when He beheld Mary the sister of Lazarus, and the Jews that were with her, weeping? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. Mark that procession winding its way from the Mount of Olives toward Jerusalem, and when Jesus beheld the doomed city He wept over it, saying, "If thou hadst known even thou, at least in this thy day the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes! O, AMAZING COMPASSION! LOVE DIVINE! He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. O, may the love of God in Christ which passeth knowledge be a constraining power to every unrenewed mind this night, knowing that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that WHO-SOEVER believeth into Him might not perish but have everlasting life. John iii. 16. "For the wages of sin is DEATH, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 23.

This is the time of reformation—the time when men are called on to repent and believe the Gospel, the good news of the coming kingdom. If any neglect it, they need never expect to participate in the glories of the millennial age. I pray God that none hearing me to-night may put the Word of God from them, and judge themselves UNWORTHY of everlasting life.

Members of the Union Religious Mutual Improvement Association of Edinburgh:—As I stand on your *campus martius*, would that I could inspire you with martial courage to fight valiantly the battle of truth against error. Go on in the attainment of religious knowledge, but see that you drink from no turbid stream, but from the pure fountain of divine truth. Reverently study the Scriptures; revere them as the Word of

God, the foundation of our faith, the basis of our hope, the charter of our liberty. And in studying them see that you never sacrifice the plain to the obscure, nor bend the general tenor of Scripture to a few isolated texts. The Bible never contradicts itself; and by patient, prayerful study, light will arise out of obscurity. Remember God never promulgated His laws in metaphoric language. When He said, "The wages of sin is death, He used no metaphor, He meant it. And oh, thank God for the glorious announcement that follows it, "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

What a jumble theologians have made by their crooked interpretation of three deaths: death spiritual, death temporal, and death eternal. Instead of TREMBLING at Jehovah's word such men use an unwarrantable freedom with it. WHO AUTHORIZED them to change God's sentence of death into endless life in misery? With all their learning they have failed to see that Scripture language is frequently proleptical, speaking of condemned men as dead already, and justified ones as having passed from death unto life, although their condition is only one of HOPE, a state of EXPECTANCY, "Heirs of the grace of life" (1 Peter iii. 7), not yet in possession of it.

God is very jealous for His Word, which He tells us He has magnified above His name, and in our advocacy of the Truth among our fellow-men, we must ever seek to impress this upon them. The opinions of the mass of mankind are very strong, their prejudices are deeply rooted, and it is no easy task to meekly instruct those who oppose themselves. The high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity has graciously said, "To this man will I look even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and who trembleth at my word." This is the first and great step in the transition from darkness to light, from the fables of men to the truth of God. When men are brought to TREMBLE at Jehovah's word—TREMBLE TO DISBELIEVE it, TREMBLE TO DISOBEY it, then their stubborn wills will bend, and their hearts respond, even though the one be as high as yon Calton Hill, and the other as obdurate as the basaltic rock on which your famous Castle stands. God's Word is as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces.

Oh! how sad to hear a congregation sing:

“Praise the Lord, for He is glorious,
Never shall His promise fail,”

whose countenance fall when you begin to speak to them of God's covenants of promise, and what they contain; then my heart BURNS within me, and I sicken at the sight to see those who being ignorant concerning the kingdom of God, its location, its constituent parts, its object and design, claim it is in their hearts. They know it is there because they feel it. Why then, in all consistency, do they not cease to pray, “Thy kingdom come,” if it has already come, and is in their hearts! They seek to prove their assertion by a perversion of the Scripture which says, “The kingdom of God is among you—in your midst”—Luke xvii. 21. The fact that this was addressed to the unbelieving Pharisees makes that argument utterly worthless. The territory was there, Jerusalem is to be the city of the great king. The subjects were there, “He shall rule over the house of Jacob forever,” and the king was there in person, but they said, “We will not have this man to reign over us.”

To His own disciples Christ said, “Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom,” and which, although certain to come, is not of this *aion*, age or dispensation, and which flesh and blood cannot inherit until they are born again—begotten now by the word of Truth, and born of the Spirit on the resurrection morn. THEN they cannot sin any more, neither can they die any more, for they are the children of God being the children of the resurrection, 1 John iii. 9.—“That which is born of the flesh is flesh,”—MORTAL in its nature, TAINTED in its character. “That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.”

“Never shall His promise fail.” O! that they could realize it, and be no longer faithless but believing. God's promise to Abraham and his seed is a promise of endless life on this earth renewed, the curse rolled back, “All things made new like Eden, fair and bright.” But the faithless ones say, “Anywhere else will do just as well,” but they prefer heaven. As if God were a man that He should lie, or the Son of man that He

should repent. Hath He spoken, and shall He not do it; hath He said it, and shall He not bring it to pass?

There are two very good reasons why men will not inherit heaven: 1st., Because God has never promised it; and 2nd., Because He has said, "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's, but the earth hath He given to the children of men." And is it not a goodly heritage? When it came from the hands of the Creator, did He not pronounce it VERY GOOD? And will it not be a GLORIOUS inheritance when it is filled with the glory of the Lord, as He has sworn it shall be? Are we not filled with rapture as we gaze on it NOW, in the beautiful light of the Summer's sun? How gorgeous its Autumn tints! How inspiring its tranquil lakes, its lofty peaks, and mountain rills.

"Where every prospect pleases,
And man alone is vile;"

but oh! very well; they will be content with it, they say, if God WILLS it to be the home of the saints. But He HAS WILLED it, and PUBLISHED and declared His will; but alas, He has nowhere hinted that He will give it to the faithless ones who doubt or disbelieve His promise; and when we sorrowfully remind them of this, they turn from us in COLD INDIFFERENCE.

Notwithstanding that men are vain of scientific knowledge, religiously they are fettered—fettered by bonds of darkness and error. Then learn to handle the sword of the Spirit, the word of Truth; break the fetters and let the oppressed go free. Great achievements are before you, if you go forth, *not in your own strength*, but in the name and strength of the Lord of Hosts, the Lord of armies. Let not error go unrebuked, no matter how popular it may be, by whom endorsed, or how hoary with age it has become; slay and spare not the uncompromising opponents of wrong in every form; but see that while you deal deathblows to error, deal very tenderly with those who have been deluded by it. Remember they have long dwelt in the miasmatic mists of popular opinion, which is a very unhealthy region, and they are deeply affected by the common sentiments of mankind while you have long occupied the high lands of religious freedom, breathing a purer atmosphere and

rejoicing in a larger measure of the sunlight of divine truth than they have ever known, and think of the great pleasure of raising others to the plane you occupy. But see that your daily conduct comports with your profession. Sully not the Christian character by indifference. Stain it not by an improper conduct on your part. Be the worthy representatives of the land that gave you birth; a land renowned for its struggles for religious liberty. Walk worthy of your vocation,—your high calling. BE EARNEST! BE VIGILANT! Keep the coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ prominently before you, as your polar star to guide you, to inspire you with zeal, courage, and devotion, and to keep you unspotted from the world, then victory will be assured and the reward glorious. Amen.

REFORMATION AND RESTORATION IS DEPENDENT ON "THE REDEMPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST."

In Rom. iii. 24 we read, "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." What a delightful theme for the child of God to contemplate! Inspiring it ought to be to all of us, and especially so to the young converts to reflect on their altered condition, and the patrimony to which they have become heirs by virtue of their union with Christ Jesus. But as nearly everything becomes more impressive by contrast let us for a little while look at the converse side of the subject.

Man by nature is one thing, but man by grace is something entirely different. The former is a poor combination of opposing and contradictory elements. Sometimes they attain to distinction and even renown in fields of science, and art—and sometimes by poetic genius, like a Pope, a Byron, or a Burns, but the loftiness of their mental flights, makes the deformity of their moral character more conspicuous, and makes them melancholy subjects for contemplation: Great mental powers prostituted for lack of moral force to govern. Can anything be more sad and pitiable?

It takes the inspired pen of a Paul to vividly portray the depravity of man by nature. He describes the old man or unrenewed man as "corrupt according to its deceitful lusts." Eph.

iv. 22. "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Eph. iv. 18. Even in his renewed state we find Paul saying, "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." Rom. vii. 18. And elsewhere in writing to those who had been quickened through faith and obedience, he reminds them that "*By nature* they were the children of wrath even as others." Eph. ii. 3.

By nature dead in trespasses and sins, by grace quickened into a new and spiritual life, a life of holy devotion to God.

In the one case, under condemnation "without God and without hope in the world." Eph. ii. 12. Unwashed, unjustified, what a fearful condition to be in!

In the other case, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Rom. viii. 1.

They are justified ones, "Justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts xiii, 39. The words of our text tell us how this justification came to them, "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Paul's powerful reasoning in his epistle to the Romans shows conclusively how powerless the law was to justify anyone, and that the whole race were undone, but for the glad announcement. "By grace ye are saved."

Man's guilt has been fully established. The delinquencies of his moral character attest it at every point, and the question as to how man could be justified or absolved from this imputed guilt, would forever have remained an unsolved problem but for the "Redemption that is in Christ Jesus." The Gospel message reveals to us the laws of pardon, or *terms* of reconciliation, for in this as in every other thing God does not act in an arbitrary way, but does all things according to the counsel of His own will, and "according to the eternal purpose, which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. iii. 11. The plan appears to have been *too* simple for theological minds, who have perverted the way of the Lord, to the ruin of millions of souls, but to you who know

the truth, how simple the story, and how blessed are God's dealings with His children.

Belief of the Gospel of the kingdom, which produces that repentance which breaks off sins by righteousness, and baptism into the all-saving name for the remission of past sins, makes us participants of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, so far as the same can be realized in this imperfect state.

To the young converts, who have recently come into the bond of the covenant, there can be no subject more inspiring to their renewed minds, and within that divine circle is embraced all that the most advanced disciple can ever hope to attain to.

My design in this brief address is to impress upon you the greatness of your heritage, if thereby I can inspire you with courage to wage an uncompromising warfare against every opposing influence as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, so that in some degree you may emulate Paul, who at last could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only but unto all them also, that love His appearing." 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Paul never wrote these words in a boastful spirit, but I believe with an earnest desire to inspire you and me and other struggling souls to fight bravely. Let them be more than martial music in our ears.

The writer to the Hebrews sets before us two bright examples, of suffering reproach and affliction, Moses the servant of God, and Christ the Son of God. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endureth as seeing Him who is invisible." Heb. xi. 24-27.

We are exhorted "to look unto Jesus, the Leader and the Perfecter of the faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. xii. 2.

The redemption that is in Christ Jesus is a most comprehen-

sive theme, it embraces much, and the more we study it, the more important it becomes to us. If we should study it ever so much, or ever so long we cannot exhaust it. It gives peace and joy to the believer, strength to the tempted, and comfort to the afflicted soul.

We feel that we cannot state this too plainly or too forcefully to the young converts, and that they may profit by this lesson, we shall try to divide it into two branches, namely, present blessings, and future blessings accruing from the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

First, then let us consider the present blessings.

Those recently inducted into Christ ought to be quick in recognizing and appreciating the first great blessing, namely, the forgiveness of their sins. If we do not start right in this matter and have everything occupy its proper place and position, everything will be out of place and disjointed, and we will have no clear conception of Jehovah's plan.

For this purpose you were baptized into Christ, that you might obtain the remission of your sins; and thus you can understand Paul's expression, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Eph. i. 7.

That Paul put great stress upon this root idea, this basis for peace and joy to rest upon, we may learn from the prominence he gave it, as he uses almost the same words in Col. i. 14.

The Spirit through Paul, wanted the church at Ephesus and the church at Colosse, and all other churches, to be rooted and grounded in this initial lesson in the school of Christ.

Without faith we could not obtain the forgiveness of our sins, and until our sins were forgiven we could not serve God in a manner acceptable unto Him.

In Paul's letter to the Romans which shows at the beginning of that epistle the depths of degradation to which man in his un-renewed state may fall, shows in striking contrast the elevated position to which man is raised by grace, which called forth his profound, "Thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord," for the deliverance He had wrought, and then he gives vent to his rejoicing in this way, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

Some quote this passage, and stop there, but I warn you against doing this, we must take the Word of God in its connection, which goes on to add this important condition, "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." If we walk after the flesh we will come into greater condemnation than ever. For the Spirit adds, "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live."

Among the present blessings bequeathed by Christ unto His people was *peace*. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you." John xiv. 27.

"These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." John xvi. 33.

Among the present blessings of redemption is a heart cleansed from sin, a mind purified through belief of the truth, heavenly aspirations after divine things, and a hope blooming with immortality, but the list is too great to enumerate, and we must pass on to a very brief consideration of the future blessings to be bestowed, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, on all those who remain faithful.

No mortal tongue can speak of the glories of resurrection life, adequately. The theme is too sublime for human conception. When the present mortal existence shall bid adieu to all its disabilities, its trials and perplexities, its pains, its aches and sorrows, and put on immortality! When the corruptible man, sleeping in the embrace of death, shall hear the glad summons, and awake to a spiritual life of incorruption, glory and power and join in the exulting strain, "O, death where is thy sting? O, grave where now thy victory?"

While the immortal and incorruptible throng combined shall make heaven's arches ring with the glad acclaim,

"Worthy the Lamb that was slain."

Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." Rev. v. 9, 10.

Brethren, shall we all be there? Momentous question. As

we look around we see many vacant seats from week to week, which make the hearts of your overseers sad. We have appealed to them in vain. One more appeal we make to the households to which they belong.

Will you not make haste to stir up the thoughtless ones, the careless and indifferent, before it be too late?

When the Master comes and shuts to the door all efforts will then be in vain. May God help every one of us to do our duty.

CHAPTER X.

CONQUEST.

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”—2 Corinthians x. 4, 5.

THE HISTORY of the world is a record of war, every page is stained with blood. In whatever country you travel, your attention is called to battle-fields: This mountain and that valley have been rendered famous as the scene of some carnage; brother fighting against brother in deadly conflict; one nation subjugating another, making it own a forced allegiance, and pay compulsory tribute to the stronger power. For ages this has gone on without regard to any principle of justice, and unchecked by any humanizing consideration, but swelling the record of an unquenchable love of power; and this gave rise to the need of strongholds: military fortifications built by some monarch or some dynasty, for the purpose of perpetuating its hold on a conquered people, or for defence against an invading foe.

Such being the object and design in building them, everything is done that the ingenuity of man can invent to make those strongholds impregnable. Their foundations are laid deep and broad, and they are strengthened by buttresses of the most solid masonry, with ramparts, and bastions for additional security. Some such strongholds have withstood the severest sieges, and only yielded at last to the most persistent and determined attacks of the invading power. To get a faint idea of what is involved in pulling down strongholds, one has to read of the siege of Jerusalem under Titus, which resulted in the destruction of over one million Jews. The siege of Quebec, under Gen. Wolfe, which was considered a Gibraltar of strength, which

lasted from June to September, or the siege of Sebastopol by the allied armies of England and France, against the skill and indomitable resolution of the Russian defenders, lasting eleven months, with a loss of besieged and besiegers of one hundred and fifty thousand men; and then say if it does not require skill, courage, and determination to pull down strongholds.

The subject to which I invite your attention for a short time is one of conquest of a different kind. It comes unheralded by the clash of arms, or the pomp of worldly power. It is conquest nevertheless, world-wide in its operations, thorough and far-reaching in its consequences. "The pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." What a conquest!

When the apostle wrote these words Grecian philosophy was in the ascendent. Pagan ideas ruled the world. Religious organizations into which pagan ideas were incorporated, have followed the example of political and monarchical powers in erecting strongholds, if not of granite and solid masonry, they have at least erected barriers to human progress in the form of erroneous doctrine promulgated in creeds and confessions which darken the human mind and bind its energies, contrary to the will of God, and such are the strongholds the apostle desires to pull down; for said he, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Eph. vi. 12.

Religious and ecclesiastical power perverted to wrong uses answer this description, and the pulling down of such strongholds is frequently more difficult to accomplish than the overthrow and subversion of the strongest fortifications reared by the hand of man; but arduous as the work is, it must be accomplished.

There are many such strongholds to be pulled down; strongholds of error and superstition, strongholds of wrong-doing and iniquity that shut out the divine light, and darken the minds of men that must be abolished, and this is no trifling work, no dress parade affair.

Strongholds, as we have seen, cannot be demolished without vigorous and persistent effort. You must lay siege to the fortification, and day after day be unremitting in your attacks; pick and shovel must be applied with a will born of determination to accomplish the desired result. The smoke and dust and din of war must be welcomed as so many necessary accessories to the accomplishment of the object desired. Those who are content with things as they now are have no need to go into this warfare.

Those who desire present ease and comfort ought to keep out of it; but those who feel and realize that great errors prevail, and great wrongs exist, that need righting, and who are willing to forego ease, pleasure, and aggrandizement, and who are already to make many sacrifices to aid in the work of pulling down strongholds, for all such there is work to do. Thrice blessed are those who are willing to make the sacrifices; they may be battle-scarred, and begrimed by war, but a life devoted to such work is well pleasing to God, and will arise like sweet incense in His presence, because of the consecration of those engaged in such efforts, and the cause they maintain.

Yes, the pulling down of strongholds of any kind requires courage, determination and perseverance. These are essential qualifications.

Irresolute work is of little account under any circumstances, and is of no account whatever here. The army of those who seek to pull down strongholds must be made up of *resolute, determined* men, who will not flinch from danger or privation, and whose battle-cry will be:

Pull down the false,
And substitute the true.

We need not wonder that the apostle Peter exhorts those who have obtained like precious faith, to add to their faith fortitude, for that is the meaning of the original Greek word *arete*, and is so rendered in the Diaglott. Fortitude stands first in the list of virtues he inculcates.

This virtue was strikingly manifested in the character and life of the apostle Paul.

Immediately on his conversion he waited not to confer with flesh and blood, neither went he up to Jerusalem to them which

were apostles before him, but went into Arabia preaching the faith he once sought to destroy.

This fortitude enabled him to stand on Mars hill and dispute with the Grecian philosophers, and openly and boldly declare the grand fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion, the resurrection of the dead, which they ridiculed (Acts xvii. 22, 31), and later on to carry the Gospel message into Rome. This is an essential quality in the Christian character, and enables a man to become singular, stand out from his fellow-men, friends and acquaintances, and nobly battle for the truth. Without this element the exhortation of Jude could never be obeyed "To *earnestly* contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints." It requires courage and determination to stem the tide of public opinion, disregard popular favor, and expose the errors and abuses prevalent everywhere; nothing but the fear of God, and the love of God, and the love of one's fellow-men could induce any one to enter on, and maintain such a warfare.

The fear of man brings a snare, but the fear of God, and the love of God, and a *comprehension* of His plans and purposes, as revealed in His Word, raises one *far above* the fear of man and causes him to *triumph* over it, and enables the trusting soul to "Count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus." Phil. iii. 8.

Our desire is to make all acquainted with that knowledge, aid them in obtaining the true riches.

Fortitude, and indomitable perseverance, combined with implicit trust in God and a consciousness of the rectitude of His cause, made Oliver Cromwell the great leader he was, and enabled him to pull down many strongholds both literal and figurative, causing thrones to tremble, and subverting institutions that were considered invincible, but for those elements in his character, his heroic deeds would *never* have been performed, nor the work of civil and religious liberty thereby advanced.

I cannot dismiss this part of my subject without referring to a notable instance of courage as given by Josephus, the Jewish historian. Herod had erected a large golden eagle over the great gate of the temple, and Judas and Matthias, two most eloquent celebrated interpreters of the Jewish laws, along with some forty others, pulled it down; which greatly incensed Herod, who

had them arrested and brought before him, and when charged with the act they replied, Yes, what was contrived, we contrived, and what hath been performed we performed it, and that with such a virtuous courage as becomes men; for we have given our assistance to those things which were dedicated to the majesty of God, and we have provided for what we have learned by hearing the law; and it ought not to be wondered at if we esteem those laws which Moses had suggested to him, and were taught to him by God, and which he wrote and left behind him, more worthy of observation than *thy* commands; accordingly we will undergo death, and all sorts of punishments which thou canst inflict upon us, with pleasure, since we are conscious to ourselves that we shall die, not for any unrighteous actions, but for our love to religion, and thus they all said, and their courage was still equal to their profession, and equal to that with which they set about this undertaking." See Antiquities of the Jews. Page 513.

The heroism of those men ought to put to shame all who have not the courage of their convictions, and dread to come out from the popular belief for fear of being singular, or because of some pecuniary or social loss they may sustain.

Manly courage and determination are not more necessary for the soldier in the battle-field than for the Christian reformer in his religious and spiritual warfare, and the latter has more need of constancy to enable him, often alone and single-handed to contend for the truth, amidst the bitter opposition and misrepresentation of ignorance and prejudice by which it is assailed. It requires heroic purpose to stand firm to principle, undaunted by reproach and ridicule, witnessing for the truth of God in opposition to human counterfeits, and the misconceptions of past ages, handed down from parent to child for generations, unquestioned by people who would refuse salvation if offered to them at the price of mental activity. Who can conceive of a grander conflict, or a more glorious victory than that won by truth against error; and should the Christian warrior falter or become discouraged let him listen to the inspiring words of Paul the veteran, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

As we have seen the strongholds of error are fortified and buttressed by creeds and confessions of human origin, and in order to demolish such strongholds those creeds and confessions must be assailed and their fallacies exposed, and in doing so, rational and Scriptural means must be used. Although the walls of Babylon seemed an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the subjugation of that city by Cyrus, nevertheless he accomplished his object as effectually by changing the course of the river Euphrates, which flowed through the city, and so made a way for his army which seemed hopelessly investing it for two whole years, and thus the divine purpose was executed and prophecy fulfilled. So in like manner to successfully attack strongholds we must consider how they are fortified. The stronghold that is fortified by priestly usurpation and excluding the light of God's revealed will can best be assailed by making openings in its walls, and allowing the light of divine truth to shine into its intense darkness.

In connection with the demolishing of strongholds comes the "Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." At a very early period in the history of our race, God pronounced every imagination of the thoughts of men's hearts to be only evil continually, and its subsequent history does not show much improvement in that direction. The imaginations of men's hearts have been very lofty, and fully justify the description given by the apostle as, "Heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God." No greater barrier stands in the way of the recognition, reception, and spread of the truth to-day than the opposition of man's unrenewed will. Men will not humble themselves as little children, to accept the simple terms of the Gospel, although assured that the reception of it brings salvation. They have opinions of their own which cannot bend even to God's revealed Word. It matters not to them that God hath spoken plainly, unless His utterances are in harmony with their preconceived opinions. The arrogance of puny man, worm of the dust is very great in setting himself in opposition to the Almighty.

Man, whose days are as an handbreadth, and whose age is nothing before God have corrupted their ways and "become

vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts are darkened" (Rom. i. 21), regardless of the dictates of wisdom, which says, "Pride and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate." Prov. viii. 13.

Of all the imaginations of men's hearts that which has been prolific of the most wide-spread and ruinous consequences is the misconception regarding man's nature and destiny. Man, a being of lowly origin, created out of the dust of the ground, has come to imagine himself only a little lower than God, and sharing with God the attribute of immortality. This, in all probability, more than anything else, has had the effect of fostering vanity, and giving man an unduly exalted opinion of himself. The idea of *casting down* imaginations is suggestive of two conditions which plainly indicate the necessity of such "casting down."

First. The imaginations are *too lofty*, and in the second place they are *unworthy* of being so exalted. It is this second quantity in the problem, this phase of the subject that calls for the very expression is indicative of unworthiness, and can only be properly used in such connection. Were the subject less unworthy some other term would have been more appropriate. It indicates vehemence, active force; no parley nor delay can be allowed, the subject will not admit of toleration, or modification, no compromise can be allowed in the premises. It has no claims on our sympathy, no rights to be considered. It is analogous to casting Pharaoh and his chariots into the sea, whose destruction calls for rejoicing; or thrusting from you with violence, impatient of delay as when Paul shook off the poisonous viper that fastened on his hand.

"*Casting down* imaginations." There are times in men's lives that call for decision, prompt action, when delays are dangerous. Standing on the ocean's beach, and casting your eyes over the swelling billows you see in the distance a dark speck, and raising your glass for closer observation you make the discovery it is a human being battling with the waves, his danger is imminent. If you want to save him it is now or never, and instantly you man the life boat, and fly to his rescue. Every heaving billow only gives you greater determination, nerves your arm with more strength; all fear of personal safety is lost in your effort to save a fellow-mortal, and you slack not till the exhausted,

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sinking man is rescued. Rescued from a watery grave! Then, O, what delight, what bliss in the conscious satisfaction of having saved a human life, and what thoughts of mother, sister, wife to bless you for the effort; and if the saving of a mortal existence which at best is only as a vapor which appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away, is worthy of such effort, how much greater effort ought we to make in seeking to instruct our fellow-men in the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal.

In no field of human life do we find so much extravagance as in the imagination. If not controlled by reason there is no end to its aberrations. It ransacks heaven above and earth beneath for subjects on which to expend its inexhaustible energies. In the sciences where we would least expect to find it, even there it cannot be tabooed but has made its presence felt. This is well illustrated in the following incident recorded of Professor Sedgwick who for sometime had insisted the Poet Wordsworth should accompany him on some of his geological excursions. One day the poet went with him, and after listening for some time to the professor's theories he said, "O, professor, I begin to like your geological pursuits very much, there is so much imagination in them." And so it is; in many cases what is dignified with the appellation of science is little more than conflicting theories, unproved hypothesis. Theology, however, is the field where it revels with unquestioned authority, playing on man's love of the wonderful, it has invented system upon system, not only unsupported by God's Word, but frequently in direct antagonism thereto. Vain-glory is condemned in Scripture as displeasing to God, yet nearly every sect appears to vie with each other in extolling the nature of man as linked with the Almighty, and partaking with Him in the attribute of immortality, while poets have sung of man outliving the stars.

"The stars shall fade away,
The sun himself, grow dim with age,
And nature sink in years;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds."

This imperishable nature they tell us is not contingent on man's character or belief. The good and the bad are considered alike deathless. Instead of immortality or eternal life being the gift of God, we are told each child is born with this imperishable nature. I know they vainly attempt to draw a distinction between eternal life and immortality unrecognized in the Word of God. And as there are many requirements in Scripture not agreeable to human nature, imagination steps in and with pleasing and plausible sophistry quiets the human mind with the assurance that such and such are wholly immaterial, and may be dispensed with at pleasure, and human nature being very willing to forego all unnecessary trials and abridgements of present happiness sides with imagination and is willing to be guided by its dictates, arguing that if certain things are wrong and displeasing to God is He not merciful, and will He not in a life beyond the present afford another opportunity for man to reform, where in a fairer clime, and surrounded by more favorable circumstances man will be forced forward by the inevitable law of progress? And again imagination is extoled for its liberal and broad views, meeting the wants of all times, and suited to all emergencies. The world may be ground to powder and scattered by a mighty whirlwind. What of it? Man lives on and "lights his torch at nature's funeral pile." The workings of the imagination are very flattering to the human mind, painting everything in beautiful colors, ingeniously smoothing over difficulties, exalting man in his own estimation and extolling his works, till nothing short of heaven seems a suitable habitation for him.

Is it not sad to think that such lofty and wide spread imaginations must be cast down? But so it reads: "Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." The knowledge of God admits of no such speculations, they are at utter variance with His teachings, and subversive of His plans and purposes, and must and *shall* be cast down. There is no place found for them in the economy of God, and casting them down, however trying to human nature, becomes a necessity, but a most desirable result to those who understand what Paul terms "the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ."

These are not unmeaning words to be lightly spoken, they contain the most sublime truth, but only those who in some degree understand the plans and purposes of God can have the faintest idea of the excellency of that knowledge. That knowledge reveals unto us those plans and purposes, and herein its excellency consists.

To make known those plans and purposes, and bring man into close and intimate relation with them, was God's object and design in giving man a revelation, and if that revelation is incomprehensible, as many believe it to be, then it does not reveal anything, which would be an imputation on the wisdom of the Almighty. Let us glance at some of those plans and see wherein the imaginations of men conflict with them, which makes it imperative that such imaginations be *cast down*.

It is God's purpose to people this earth with a righteous race and fill it with His glory, and they shall possess it forever. See Numbers xiv. 21; Dan. vii. 27; Rev. v. 10. And He informs us that His purposes are immutable, no failure on the part of man will thwart His holy and righteous plans,—“My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure,” said God by the prophet Isaiah xlvi. 10. Notwithstanding this, men claim heaven as their future home.

Again it is commonly believed, but without the slightest authority, that man was created immortal. The account given of his creation, and his subsequent history preclude such a possibility. The man God created was put under law, and the penalty threatened for disobedience was death. This could not have been the case if man had been created immortal; and not being himself immortal he could not transmit an immortal nature to his posterity. All God's threatenings and promises to man treat him as a mortal being, destined to die, but capable of attaining to immortality by a resurrection from the dead, and he is told to seek for it, which would not be necessary were he possessed of an undying nature.

From the first Adam, who was of the earth, earthy, we get our present mortal nature, and we attain to immortality only through the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. That was the object of His mission into the world, so He Himself declared.

“I am come that they might have life.” John x. 10. “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.” John i. 4.

Not only must imaginations be cast down but “everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God,” and that embraces very much. Prejudices, and preconceived opinions not in harmony with the teaching of Christ are leveled by this as with one fell sweep, and all unrighteousness, wrong doing of every kind must be cast down, in order that the knowledge of Christ, the knowledge of His kingdom, and His just and equitable laws may everywhere prevail. The sky kingdom theory the supposed home of immortal souls, must be cast down in order that the Gospel of the kingdom to be established UNDER the whole heavens may take its place. Christ in that day being King over all the earth, with His throne in Mount Zion, associated with His risen and changed saints, who shall rule with Him over the nations of the earth, when famine, war and pestilence shall cease. Rev. v. 10.

The popish rite of infant sprinkling, which for ages has been a delusion and a snare, must be cast down in order that Christ’s doctrine of the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, may take its place, believers in the Gospel of the kingdom, which Christ and His disciples preached, who have repented of their past sins, being the subjects of such baptism, and immersion in water the mode, “Buried with Christ 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, for if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also of His resurrection.” Rom. vi. 4, 5. The false doctrine of God being reconciled to man as taught for ages, must be cast down, in order that men may be shown the necessity of being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, reconciled to God’s teaching, reconciled to His plans and purposes, and thereby brought into harmony with Him. O, the beauty and the grandeur of this reconciliation has never dawned on the minds of those who speak of God being reconciled to man. The one is human, the other divine. God originated the whole plan of redemption, and so loved a guilty world that He sent His Son, as the messenger of His love, to redeem it.

The horrible doctrine of eternal torment, which has so long defamed the character of God, and promoted infidelity, must be cast down in order that the grand volume of His love may be unfolded and understood in seeking to save a sinful world and bring it back to His allegiance and His favor; while death, the wages of sin, will be meted out to every incorrigible soul, and when everything that is disloyal shall become extinct, and the devil himself destroyed; and one universal anthem shall ascend to God from every intelligent creature, and everything that has breath shall praise Him. Psalm cl. 6.

If everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God were cast down what a leveling process we would have. How many institutions that stand high in public estimation would be demolished; and how many theories that have so long been cherished would of necessity have to be abandoned; but all this is included in the overturn which the apostle had in contemplation when he penned these words, "Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

From the time the captives of Israel hung their harps upon the willows, by the rivers of Babylon, and refused to sing the Lord's song, the songs of Zion in a foreign land, down to the present, captivity has been considered anything but desirable. It has been dreaded next to death; but here is a captivity which may well be sought after, and to which every well instructed disciple will bow with humble submission, saying in the fullness of his heart, O, Lord, I want to become thy captive; "Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." The happiness and prosperity of every child of God largely depends on the *completeness* of this surrender. If the believer's thoughts are not brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, it is manifest the actions never will be, for the thoughts govern and control the actions, as correct doctrines are essential to a correct life. The thoughts are the well springs of the soul. If the springs are pure the streams flowing therefrom will necessarily be pure and fit to water the garden of life. The accomplishment of such work, and the attainment of such a holy end can never result from human instrumentality, hence says the apostle,

“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.” What are the weapons given us for the accomplishment of this work? There is a complete armor provided for the Christian as we read in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and they are exhorted to put on the whole armor of God.

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, above all taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.” With this sword the Son of God met and overcame the tempter, and with this sword alone can *we* hope to overcome. Let us learn to handle it dextrously, and in order to do so we must become well acquainted with it, and able rightly to divide the Word of Truth. These are powerful weapons provided for our use, but we must never forget they are “mighty through God.” Not mighty through ourselves, Christ’s words are appropriate here, “Without me ye can do nothing.” In all our contests we must look to Him for strength, and have no confidence in the flesh, “For the weapons of our warfare, are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

May we all strive to bring our minds and thoughts into this captivity, and condition of obedience to Christ, for only then shall the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in the sight of our Redeemer and Lord.

That this brief address may be the means of persuading some to enlist under the standard of the cross, and become soldiers in the greatest of all warfares, and that it may inspire those who have already enlisted, to greater zeal, courage, and determination in prosecuting the conflict in which they are engaged is my humble prayer.

THE HATEFULNESS OF SIN.—ITS CONQUEST.

“Ye that love the Lord hate evil.”—Psalm xcvi. 10.

In all ages of the world's existence since the fall of man, God has manifested His abhorrence of sin. It is that for which He has no tolerance, and which He has decreed shall ultimately be wiped out. The prophet Habakkuk says, “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity” (chap. i. 13), and David said, “For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee; the foolish shall not stand in thy sight, thou hatest all workers of iniquity.” Psalm v. 4.

Sin is a hideous thing, a cruel monster. Men do not dread it as they ought to, on account of being too familiar with its presence.

To impress you with its heinous character, let us briefly consider what sin has wrought on earth, and for that purpose I invite you to stand with me on the confines of a new creation, and see a new world spring into existence.

The great I Am, gives the authoritative word, and order comes out of chaos. Darkness is dispelled by the creation of light. The waters are divided, and bound set to their surging billows.

The sun is given to rule the day, and moon and stars to rule the night. The ocean is filled with teeming life, from the smallest existence to the great Leviathan. Earth is clothed with the richest verdure, and presently the meadows have their occupants. You hear the lowing of cattle, and the bleating of sheep upon a thousand hills. Beautiful groves spring into existence, and those also have their inhabitants, feathered fowl in abundance of the most gorgeous and varied plumage, and birds of sweetest song, whose warbling notes produce a constant melody.

The air is full of the richest perfume from exotic plants; and flowers, in all the beauty of creation's morn, abound everywhere.

But where is man? In yonder bower amidst the innocence of Eden, are the godlike pair, only a little lower than the angels made, and now the work of creation is complete, and God pro-

nounces it "all very good." Fit occasion for the morning stars to sing together and all the sons of God to shout for joy. Job xxxviii. 7. Then the dayspring knew its place (Job xxxvii. 12), unchecked by withering winds, and blighting frosts. Fear had not yet taken possession of the breast of man, he was at peace with the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air. Tranquillity reigned everywhere. Man's dominion was complete, and unquestioned. The beauty and serenity of paradise was not yet invaded by the foul breath of sin. What a beautiful home God gave to man! We would like to linger here, and dwell in ecstasy born of the contemplation of such paradisaical beatitude, but alas! the pleasure was short-lived as the sequel shows. Sin entered, and no sooner had that invasion come than all was changed. Discord took the place of harmony, and fratricide soon followed.

Wickedness went on apace, till checked by the flood, and even the lessons of that fearful visitation were soon forgotten, for only 450 years had passed when the wickedness and defilement of Sodom brought the vengeance of fire on the cities of the plain; and what a humiliating picture of instability, and moral depravity does the history of the descendants of Abraham bring to our view, setting at naught the warnings of God's prophets, and culminating in the rejection and crucifixion of the spotless Son of God.

With such a picture before us, need we urge the counsel of the Psalmist, "Ye that love the Lord hate evil;" and the apostle's admonition, "Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." 2 Tim. ii. 22.

Men of the world are ever ready to make light of sin. A certain poet writing of himself, said, he was

"More inclined to laugh at folly,
Than to reprove it by melancholy,"

but evidently he knew not the biblical estimate of such men. There we read, "Fools make a mock of sin." Prov. xiv. 9. No greater folly can be manifested, and wherever or whenever a disposition of that kind is shown, it is our duty to frown upon it with all the sternness we can command.

Sin is a hateful thing in the sight of all right-minded persons, and never so odious as when manifested in the conduct of those who have taken the name of Jesus. The command to them is. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity." 2 Tim. ii. 19.

What makes it so offensive in their case is, that by profession they are allied to Him who "Gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Titus ii. 14. Having no zeal in that direction, they show plainly that if their profession was ever genuine, they have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins." 2 Peter i. 9. That is a fearful condition to be in.

Those who act so, frustrate the grace of God, whose design is to sanctify and cleanse the Church with the washing of water by the word, that Christ might present it to Himself a glorious church not having spot, or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. v. 26. This is in perfect keeping with the character of God, who has revealed Himself unto the sons of men, as a God of spotless purity. "Righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works" (Psalm cxlv. 17), and David has said, "Holiness becometh thine house O Lord, forever." Psalm xciii. 5.

In view of these testimonies, and many more that might be adduced, let none shelter themselves behind a false pretext as though a correct faith were all that is required, regardless of spirituality of life and conduct. If any are slumbering in false security under this delusion let them read God's unalterable purpose in Heb. xii. 14, "And holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."

This brings us to consider an important question, namely, What did Paul mean in the directions he gave about observing the Lord's Supper, when he said, "Let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." 1 Cor. xi. 28. If all he meant was what is expressed elsewhere in these words, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith" (2 Cor. xiii. 5), he doubtless would have said so; but inasmuch as he does not limit it in that way, we certainly have no right to do so. On the contrary, I think we have proof in the context

that the examination he recommended was much more *searching* and *far-reaching* in its character, for there he warns against lusting after evil things, as the Israelites did in the wilderness, such as fornication, and murmuring, and idolatry, and tempting Christ in whatever way, and adds, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. x. 12. Self-examination is a safe thing to practice, and it cannot be too thorough. It is best done when we remember we are under the all-seeing eye of Him who said He would search Jerusalem as with lighted candles. Saying in the earnestness of our souls, "Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm cxxxix. 23. I am deeply impressed with the thought that if this were more generally done, we would have less cause to complain of luke-warmness, and fewer cases of backsliding to mourn over. "Ye that love the Lord hate evil."

To learn what sorrow and desolation sin has wrought, and to see its consequences in their true hideousness, we must go to Gethsemane, and Calvary, and see the agony and bloody sweat, and hear the thrice repeated prayer, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me." Go to the cross and see the bleeding form of the Son of God. What does it all mean? It means that man has *grievously* rebelled; sinned against a holy and just God, and without shedding blood there is no remission in sin.

"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." Isaiah liii. 5. It was that hand which touched the bier, and raised the widow's son, and that also which anointed the eyes of the blind man, and restored his sight, and that hand which washed His disciples' feet, and whose healing touch restored to health the sick who was scorched with a burning fever, and that which took the hand of a dead daughter of the ruler and she arose. It was that hand whose touch unstopped the ears of the deaf, and made the dumb to speak; it was those hands which were pierced, *cruelly* pierced with nails!

It was those lips, and that tongue which spake as never man spake, giving utterance to words of divine wisdom, the

most elevating and purifying that human ears ever heard, and words of deepest sympathy, without one murmur or complaint, had to be parched with thirst, and mocked with vinegar to drink.

And those feet which travelled over the mountains and valleys of Judea, on errands of mercy, weary and foot-sore, in their mission of love, pierced, inhumanly pierced with iron, nailed to the accursed tree. "Ye that love the Lord hate evil."

With such a spectacle before you, can you do anything else but hate it? Is sin not a debasing, polluting thing, and the end bitterness and death? Let us avoid it then as our worst enemy.

1. *Because* it is abhorrent and offensive to God.
2. *Because* of its insinuating deceitful beginnings.
3. *Because* of its debasing polluting influence.
4. *Because* of its hardening effect.
5. *Because* it nailed the Son of God to the accursed tree.
6. *Because* to practice it will exclude from the kingdom of God.

Thank God we can be delivered from all those conditions and consequences through our adorable Redeemer who is mighty to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him, in the way He has appointed.

If these remarks produce strange pangs of self-reproach in any when they think of what they professed and enjoyed when they first believed the truth, let them be encouraged to return and once more take refuge beneath the wings of infinite compassion, and implore pardon, and grace to help in every time of need, and let them rest assured they will not seek in vain.

"Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy," (Lev. xix. 2), was God's command to Israel, and is no less so to us, who are more highly favored than they were. We need constantly to be reminded that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Heb. xii. 14.

THE MISSION AND WORK OF CHRIST, AND THE CHURCH ONE OF CONQUEST.

This is a great subject. We can only hope to approach the threshold this morning, and the question as to how far we will

be able to comprehend it, and how much good we will get out of a consideration of the principles involved in it will depend largely on how deeply we have drunk at the well of salvation, and how much we have each imbibed of the Spirit of Christ. "He that is of God heareth God's words," said Jesus. John viii. 47. He does not listen to them in a careless, indifferent way, but feeds upon them. The hungry and thirsty soul drinks in God's words and is enlightened, strengthened, and refreshed thereby. No one ever had or ever will have such a great mission to perform as Christ, and yet with what meekness did He approach it. This is the key that opens to us the design of that mission, showing its heavenly origin. "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." Matt. xxi. 5. The more we study the life of Christ the more we see of the spirit of meekness which characterized the life of Him who came to do His Father's will and finish the work He had given Him to do, till He bowed His head on Calvary's cross, and yielded up His spirit, having prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Christ stated His mission very briefly when He said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke xix. 10. He commenced His work by preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. Matt. iv. 17. After His resurrection He remained with His disciples 40 days, instructing them in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Acts i. 3. Before ascending on high He gave the commission to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," and thus He delegated to the Church the charge to carry on the work He had begun. But the history of the Church is a sorry recital of how poorly that work has been done. The great desideratum being that while the form even was but imperfectly retained, the Spirit of the Gospel was in a large measure lost sight of.

The love, the peace, the joy, which Christ bequeathed to His Church were neglected, while the spirit of contention was allowed to reign supreme, while thus hatred and persecution were engendered.

What a sad picture to contemplate, and what a warning to

vigilance and an earnest effort to maintain the Spirit of the Gospel, without which all else is a vain show. The Gospel was indeed the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth—the twofold nature—its details were very simple and the story easily told; but His disciples were called on to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. Their walk and conversation was to be such as becometh the Gospel of Christ: even as He set us an example that we should walk in His steps. This latter part was not so easily accomplished as the former; even in the days of Christ His disciples were slow to catch the spirit of His teaching. On one occasion He rebuked two overzealous disciples by telling them, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.” Luke ix. 55. The calling down of fire from heaven to consume men, even if they were in opposition to Christ, did not meet the approval of Him who had not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them. The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of great tenderness, compassion, and forbearance. The parable of the debtor and creditor is on that line. Who can read without emotion the pathetic parable of the shepherd leaving the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and going after the lost sheep till he found it, then returning with it on his shoulder with great rejoicing; and calling on his friends and neighbors to rejoice with him. Luke xv. 4.

The work of the Church is twofold, namely to preach the Gospel for the conversion of sinners, and also to develop Christ-like character in the lives and conduct of those who take His name. Where this is wanting the whole thing is an empty name; no true union, no fruit, nothing but leaves. The very thought of such a condition of things being possible fills the mind with anguish.

It is a terrible thing not to live up to the requirements of the Gospel, with the teachings, the life and character of Christ spread before us for instruction and imitation; but backsliders always have been and will continue to the end, and here is where the Spirit of Christ is most needed to govern and control our actions, raised above the impulses of the fleshly mind. The work of cutting off from the body is a fearful thing and can only be resorted to after every effort has failed to reclaim the fallen

one. He who wept over rebellious Jerusalem preached a sermon on compassion in those falling tears.

The Son of Man came to seek and save that which was lost. O glorious mission! the keynote of the Gospel. He had compassion on the ignorant and on them who are out of the way. Without that compassion we were undone. We must remember we owe all we are, and all we hope to be, to the tender mercy of a sin-pardoning God, conjointly with the compassion of His self-sacrificing Son, who freely delivered Himself up for all.

Christ wants the officers and the members of His Church to be men of meekness, men of compassion like their risen and exalted Head.

The Scripture promises on that line ought to be enough to cause us to emulate one another in the cultivation of those heavenly virtues.

The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way. Psalm xxv. 9. He will beautify the meek with salvation. Psalm cxliv. 4.

“He will judge with equity for the meek of the earth.” Isaiah xi. 4. When He will arise to save all the meek of the earth. Psalm lxxvi. 9. In view of all this, no wonder that Peter said, that “The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price.” 1 Peter iii. 4. “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” Matt. v. 5. Think of it brethren, what it will be to be beautified with salvation, on the natal morn of the new creation; the nervous, anxious look, the withered frame and wrinkled brow exchanged for the glow of immortal youth; no more pains, disappointments or sorrow or anything to cause disquietude; say, is that not enough to curb the angry passions, and bring into captivity every thought, emotion and action to the obedience of Christ. 2 Cor. x. 5. What a power the Church would become for salvation purposes if equipped with the Spirit of Christ; realizing that her mission is “To seek and save that which is lost,” as truly as it was the work of the Master.

What a gathering of scattered sheep would follow, and what a happy household we might become.

That is the true Spirit of the Gospel, to seek and save the

lost. Gather the wanderers, bring them home, and melt their hearts with love. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him. 1 John iv. 16. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John xiii. 35.

When Paul was exhorting the church at Galatia to walk in the Spirit; with keen prophetic vision he added, "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." Gal. v. 15. Well would it have been for the Church in all ages if it had taken heed to Paul's admonition. What heartaches and grievances it would have prevented.

As we have started out in our new departure, with the name of "The Blessed Hope Mission," let us see to it that it is no empty name, but a living reality, and make it a harbor of refuge to all who are seeking shelter from the oppression of self-seeking men, who are not serving Christ but working for their own personal aggrandizement. May we give good heed to the words of the prophet, "Take counsel, *execute judgment*; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; bewray not him that wandereth. Let mine outcasts dwell with thee; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler." Isaiah xvi. 3. "Execute judgment." How much is this needed in this perfidious age, full of treachery, when no one calleth for justice, "supposing that gain is godliness." 1 Tim. vi. 5. And let our supplications daily ascend to God, asking Him to direct and bless our efforts; realizing that the work is the Lord's, and we are only the humble instruments in His hands, and let us work with one mind and one heart, having constantly before our minds, the glory of God, the upbuilding of one another and the salvation of our fellow-men.

In studying the mission of Christ, and the lines on which He wrought, we are deeply impressed with the importance He attaches to "*the truths*" as a means to salvation.

Are men defiled by sin, and need the cleansing influence which God has provided? Listen to Jesus words, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." John xv. 3. In His prayer to the Father, we have been permitted to come into His audience chamber, and listen to words such as mortal man never heard before; they come from Jesus of Naza-

reth, the Savior of the world, and are addressed to the eternal Father. He is entreating God on behalf of His followers and He says, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." John xvii. 17. *Truth* then is the medium of sanctification. The means God employs, and we do Him great dishonor if we think *error* will do just as well. Let us no longer be guilty of saying, "It does not matter what a man believes if he is only sincere." Let us never forget that it is the "Entrance of God's words that giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." Psalm cxix. 130.

When we come to see this in its force and clearness we will never be the apologists of error which darkens men's minds, and is the greatest hindrance to a reception of the Truth. The prophet Jeremiah lamented because so few were "valient for the truth." Jere. ix. 3.

Paul bewailed thus, "O foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth?" Gal. iii. 1. Error has its enchanting influence on many minds, would to God we could break the spell.

Peter in his first epistle, who was taught of Christ, and received the charge from Him, "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep." John xxi. 15, commended believers in his day for having "Purified their souls in obeying the truth." I Peter i. 22. Such clear Scripture testimony show what a vain effort people are making in our day in thinking they can attain to holiness without the truth. O, that we could undeceive them, and show them their folly.

When men come to understand these things, then they will comprehend the force of Jesus' words, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." Matt. xv. 13. May none of us be found cherishing in our hearts plants of pagan origin, which God never planted, but which are an abhorrence unto Him, and against which He has expressed His displeasure.

There is another feature in the mission and work of Christ deserving of careful consideration, to which I called your attention sometime ago. That was His earnest desire to do the Father's will. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." John viii. 29.

Paul in writing to the saints at Philippi, says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Philip. ii. 5. "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." John v. 30. "The Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please Him." John viii. 29. And He will not leave us alone if we always do those things that please Him.

Here is room for self-examination, heart-searching to find the SPRING of all our actions.

Happy are we if we are ever doing those things that please Him. To promote this spirit we meet here, that we may stimulate one another and build one another up in our most holy faith. Jude 20.

CHAPTER XI.

CHRIST THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

“I am come a light into the world that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness.”—John xii. 46.

TROPES or figures of speech were common in oriental language, and abound in Scripture. Christ frequently adopted this style in the communicating instruction to His disciples and others.

The ancient prophets spoke of Him under various figures, as for example a Branch. “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign, and prosper.” Jere. xxiii. 5. He is also represented as “The Lion of the tribe of Judah” (Rev. v. 5), and the “Bright and Morning Star” (Rev. xxii. 16). Also as the “Sun of Righteousness, who shall arise with healing in His wings to them that fear Him;” emitting rays of celestial light to illuminate a darkened world. Mal. iv. 2. In His humiliation He was pointed out as “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” John i. 29. And He spake of Himself as “The Bread of Life,” “that bread of which if a man eat he shall live forever.” John vi. 35, 51.

These metaphors are all deeply significant. Bread, with its life-sustaining, strength-imparting properties.

The lamb was a dumb uncomplaining victim, whose blood was shed on the sacrificial altar. “He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so He openeth not His mouth.” Isa. liii. 7. The lion on the other hand was emblematic of courage and strength, before whose presence every beast of the forest must quail. “The Bright and Morning Star.” Brightest and fairest of the starry host of heaven; it speaks of the night as past and gone, harbinger of joy. “Joy cometh in the morning.” The sun is about to rise, day is dawning.

In our text He speaks of Himself as, "The Light of the world," and the object of His coming, "I am come a light into the world that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness."

Now think of what is implied in this figure. Let us consider the importance of light. Physical light, with its life-giving, health imparting and soul cheering influence. It is essential to life. Put a vigorous plant into a dark cellar, and see how soon it becomes blanched and sickly.

It is claimed by those competent to judge, that light is a very powerful disinfectant and ought to be freely admitted into every room in every dwelling, chasing disease away.

Imagine, if you can, the sun blotted out of the sidereal heavens, the moon with its borrowed light extinguished, every star obliterated, and all reduced to chaotic darkness, as it was before the Almighty said, "Let there be light." Every animated thing would die, and universal silence reign supreme. But it is not our object at present to discuss the properties of light. Its emanation from a luminous body, and the incredible rapidity with which it travels; its laws of reflection and refraction, interesting as these are; we are not dealing with light and darkness in the physical sense, only in so far as we are considering the sublime application in the figure borrowed from nature.

There is a vast difference between physical and moral conditions, but physical conditions being more cognizable, are frequently employed metaphorically to teach great lessons, and to convey to the mind moral and spiritual impressions. Especially was this so in Oriental usage where they were accustomed to types and metaphors.

It was moral and spiritual light Christ came to impart when He said, "I am the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John viii. 12. The darkness He came to dispel was mental and moral darkness, the darkness arising from the evil imaginations of men's hearts, Pagan superstition and human tradition, which had given rise to false doctrine, by which their minds had become befogged, and their ways corrupted, hence Christ's words to them, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how

great is that darkness?" Matt. vi. 23. "I am the light of the world." It is unnecessary to inquire, Who spoke those words? they bear their own impress. One, and One alone could utter them, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God. He of whom the prophet Isaiah spake, "Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; He that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and Spirit to them that walk therein; I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." Isaiah xlii. 5-7. What a glorious mission to fulfill and only the anointed Son of God can fulfill it; none other is adequate. Well might old Simeon rejoice in spirit at the prospect of the realization of the long-ago-prediction, when he took the child Jesus in his arms, and blessed God, "For mine eyes, said he, have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people. A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Luke ii. 22.

The prediction of Isaiah clearly sets forth the condition, the *abject* condition of those for whom deliverance has been provided. They are in darkness, and need light; they are blind, and need sight to be restored; they are prisoners, and need deliverance from the prison house. These conditions require *One* "mighty to save." Has such an one been found, and has His power been fully demonstrated? This question was answered 1800 years ago when John sent two of his disciples to Jesus to inquire, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them." Matt. xi. 3-5.

Demonstrated? Yes, fully demonstrated; the prison house of death was opened and the prisoners released; "the poor had the Gospel preached to them." This was the illuminating medium, "The light of the glorious Gospel of Christ." 2 Cor. iv. 4. As we shall hereafter see. The result was, "The multitudes

seeing the mighty works He did, said, "It was never so seen in Israel." Matt. ix. 33. And "they were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well, He maketh both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak." Mark vii. 37. And so the words of Isaiah were fulfilled, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light, they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." Isaiah ix. 2. But, alas! with them as with many in our own day, the impressions were short-lived. "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." John i. 5. These were the outward manifestations of a power, to which, if they had submitted, and received the divine instructions He came to impart, they would have been lifted out of the darkness, the mental and spiritual darkness they were in and had their minds enlightened in the knowledge of divine things; the truth, a knowledge of which He came to impart, would have broken the fetters of their spiritual bondage and constituted them *free men*; and a life of obedience to His requirements would have made them heirs of the kingdom He came to offer—but alas, they rejected the overtures of mercy, hated instruction and despised reproof. "They cast God's words behind them." Psalm l. 17, and as a nation they are reaping the bitter fruits of His rejection to-day. He came unto His own (nation) and His own (people) received Him not, but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John i. 11.

The fact here so clearly and positively stated that the power to become sons of God was limited to them that believe on His name, demands our special attention. This is no isolated exceptional statement of this truth, it is entirely in accord with the words of our text, "I am come a light into the world that whosoever *believeth in me* should not abide in darkness." The rejecters of Him, and despisers of His truth have no share in the promised blessing. They choose darkness rather than the light, and darkness shall be their portion. This truth is reiterated over and over again in the New Testament so frequently and so plainly that none need misunderstand. Indeed it ought to be self-evident to any intelligent mind that it is part of the Divine plan. The Gospel message is based on that principle, belief or,

and faith IN the things promised, hence the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." Mark xvi. 15.

Notwithstanding such plain, positive testimony in the Word of God, we find many who are deluded by false teachers into the belief that somehow, or by some means, all men will eventually be saved. Pleasing as this delusion is there can be nothing more foreign to the Divine record which positively declares that "Evil-doers shall be cut off." Psalm xxxvii. 9. "The transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off." Psalm xxxvii. 38. "A companion of fools shall be destroyed." Prov. xiii. 20. "Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed." Prov. xiii. 13. Is it not despising the Word to pervert it? "All the wicked will he destroy." Psalm cxlv. 20. Paul in his letter to the Philippians says, "Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is *destruction*." Phil. iii. 18, 19. Would he have said so, think ye, if he had believed in universal restoration? and did not Christ Himself say, "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat"? Matt. vii. 13. Why did He not say, Broad is the way that leadeth to universal restoration; you may reject me now, but the mistake will not be fatal; in the great beyond, under a brighter sky, and in a fairer clime, you will be forced forward by the inevitable law of progress." Sweet delusion! Only a new version of the serpent's lie.

"Ye shall not surely die,
Ye shall be as gods."

Those who teach this flagrant delusion will with surpassing effrontery quote to you from John i. 9, "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." What daring presumption to take this verse out from its connection, and its surroundings and hold out hopes of future probation to the wicked and debased, on the strength of this self-evident mistranslation, totally disregarding the limitation in the succeeding verses, "He came unto His own and His own received Him not, but as many as received Him to *them* gave He power to be-

come the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John i. 11.

The Diaglott rendering of the verse in question reads thus, "The true light was that, which coming into the world enlightens every man." Here you see the coming into the world applies to the light, not to man. But does it enlighten every man? Yes, certainly. Every man that receives it, every man that believes it, and that is all Christ ever claimed for it. "I am come a light into the world that whosoever *believeth in me*, should not abide in darkness." That ought to make it plain to every candid, intelligent mind. Here, as everywhere else in Scripture, it is the truth *believed* that saves.

"This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and *believeth on Him*, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." John vi. 40. Yes, blessed light. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. It was a living light and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." John i. 4.

What better illustration can we have that the darkness does not yet comprehend that light than the utter perversion that has been made of His words. The testimony of Paul, His chosen apostle, ought to set forever at rest the question of future probation, or a second chance. In his second letter to the Thessalonians he says, "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall 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." 2 Thess. i. 7-9. According to that testimony, everlasting destruction, not universal restoration, is what is awaiting the unbeliever and the disobedient.

Instead of the light enlightening every man that cometh into the world, it will be the condemnation of many. Christ Himself said, "This is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John iii. 19.

Truth believed with a loving, obedient heart, brings divine acceptance. Truth rejected brings divine condemnation.

Christ's words are, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John xii. 48. Instead of holding out a vain hope to the unbeliever, how much better it would be to sound the note of warning, "Behold *now* is the accepted time, behold *now* is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. vi. 2. It is true the warning may go unheeded, for the Scripture saith, "Fools despise wisdom and instruction." Prov. i. 7. "A fool hath no delight in understanding." Prov. xviii. 2.

It is a painful thing to see men destitute of understanding. Solomon tells of one he saw in this way, "At the window of my house I looked through my casement and beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding." Prov. vii. 7. He tells us it was a dark night, and doubtless the young man had little idea that any one saw him. vainly supposing the darkness would cover him, but the eye of the king caught him, and another eye saw him, too, looking down through the starry casement of the heavens the all-seeing eye saw him for the darkness hideth not from Him; but how did the king discern that the young man was void of understanding? he discerned it by his actions and the company he was in. That told the sad tale. It is not only the lewd and the profligate that are void of understanding, the class is a very large one. The man who builds without a good foundation is void of understanding, and so is the man who rests his hope for eternity on tradition. The man who forsakes the company of those who fear the Lord for that of the gay and the frivolous gives unmistakable evidence that he, too, is void of understanding.

The words of Christ we have been considering show that the world is in darkness; the whole race is involved in it, Jew and Gentile alike. The Jewish people to whom had been committed the Oracles of God, which had been given as a divine light to guide them, had betrayed their trust, they gave a deaf ear to the voice of the Prophets, and were carried away by the traditions of men. Moses aforesaid predicted of them, "Thou shalt grope at noon day, as the blind gropeth in darkness." Deut. xxviii. 29. And so it was, "they knew not the time of their visitation."

The Gentiles had drunk at the fountain of Socrates and

Plato, and were intoxicated with *their* philosophy. They imagined they were dwelling in a blaze of light. They were the disciples of the "divine" Plato, and how could they be considered as abiding in darkness? That was their own estimate of their condition. Paul had a somewhat different estimate, he said, "Professing themselves to be wise they became fools." Rom. i. 22. Jew and Gentile were alike involved, for said he, "We have before proved both Jew and Gentile that they are all under sin." Rom. iii. 9.

But Christ came to give the light of life; to enlighten a darkened world, to lift the pall of darkness which has so long enshrouded the race. The light is not offered to a favored few. Christ is not dispenser of class favors. The poor and the rich, the learned and the illiterate are alike invited. No distinction of color, or national prejudice is allowed to form a barrier. The offer is free to all; but while there is no limit to the offer, there is, as I have already shown, a clear, well defined limit to participation in the proffered blessing. The dispenser of favors has a perfect right to define the conditions on which his favors will be bestowed, and so in the present case, it is those who believe in Him who shall not abide in darkness.

I am the more anxious to impress this upon you in order that I may direct your attention to another important feature in this connection. Jesus says, "He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whether he goeth." John xii. 35. I wish some of our friends could see the force of this, who are in profound ignorance as to the state of man in death, and the home of the resurrected and changed saints. The fact that Christ has thrown the fullest light on these points is proof positive that He does not want any of His believing children to remain in ignorance on a subject that so immediately concerns them; and furthermore, it casts a serious suspicion that those who are not thus enlightened belong to the class who abide in darkness, of whom He says, "He knoweth not whether he goeth." That is certainly dangerous ground to occupy. We hope they will consider this point.

It is one characteristic of light that it reveals objects otherwise hidden from view, and here again we see the beauty and force of the similitude we are considering. Christ as the light

of the world reveals to us the Father—His loving, compassionate character, and His purposes of love and mercy to our fallen race, and never fails to tell us while He is so employed that the Father gave Him a commandment what He should say, and what He should speak. John xii. 49.

It would be well if those who profess His name would herein learn of Him “who humbled Himself and made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant—who though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered, and being made perfect He became the author of eternal salvation, unto all them that obey Him.” Heb. v. 8, 9.

This subject branches out in so many different ways that I find it most difficult to condense, and my time is nearly exhausted, but I must not close without referring you to what Paul says of the blinding influence of the world, and the illuminating power of the Gospel. His words are, “If our Gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

The Gospel is the medium Christ employs for illuminating purposes, the great search-light which flashes forth its penetrating rays with irresistible power amidst surrounding darkness, exposing the corruption of the human heart, the vanity of the world, the false systems of religion, the errors and superstitions of Christendom, so-called, and reveals the loving disposition of Jehovah in the face of Jesus Christ, or in Paul’s words, “For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” 2 Cor. iv. 6.

I trust I need not say more to show the importance of the Gospel message. It is as Paul says, “The power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” Rom. i. 16, and when we realize this we need no longer wonder that Christ went throughout the cities and villages of Judea preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, Luke viii. 1, and that He sent the twelve, and the seventy, with the same message, that He occupied the time between His resurrection and His ascension in speaking to

His apostles of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and before His departure to the Father's right hand He gave the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned." Mark xvi. 16. If there is one here who has not yet accepted the Gospel message and made it his own. I entreat him no longer to defer a matter of such grave importance. Look away from every other light and turn to this; it has enlightened many a weary wanderer, and can enlighten you. Truth believed dispels doubt and darkness. Slight not the offer of Everlasting Life, it may never be presented to you again. Think of the enormity of abiding in darkness when the light of the glorious Gospel has been offered to you.

To you who have believed and obeyed the Gospel let me say, you know how precious is the Father's love manifested in Jesus, the Christ. Forget not, I pray you, your sacred pledge, guard well and maintain your standing; abide in the light. "Ye are not of the night, nor of darkness." 1Thess. v. 5. "Walk as children of the light," Eph. v. 8, and let your light shine by holding forth the word of life to a perishing world. Phil. ii. 16.

May we all be found striving together for the faith of the Gospel, trying to emulate one another in seeking each other's good, our spiritual advancement, that there be no withered branches among us, no inert, inactive members, but may we through co-operation and individual effort uphold the cause of truth in this place.

At last, may we one and all "have an entrance ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 2 Peter i. 11. When Isaiah's prediction concerning Jacob shall be accomplished, "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory."

"Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." Isaiah lx. 19, 20.

Till then let us give good heed unto the sure word of prophecy as "unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day

dawn and the Day star arise," and while we rejoice that "the night is far spent" let us have pity on a dark world, and its children in darkness, living without hope or with a false hope, which is much the same thing, and knowing that "the way of the wicked is as darkness." Prov. iv. 19. No bright morning before them; no joyous anticipation of a cloudless day, and remembering that at one time we were darkness, though now we are light in the Lord. Eph. v. 8. Let us earnestly direct them to Him who is light, and in Him who is no darkness at all. 1 John i. 5.

In no more appropriate way can we manifest our gratitude to Him "who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 Peter ii. 9.

EXHORTATION TO WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT.

"For ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord. Walk as children of the light."—Eph. v. 8.

When Paul was an old man, a prisoner at Rome, expecting to suffer martyrdom for his testimony to the cause of Christ, he forgot himself, and his own sufferings, in his concern for the churches he had planted, nor was this to be wondered at. Hitherto he had devoted his time, his thoughts, his labors, and his prayers to those churches. The Church at Corinth, at Thessalonica, at Philippi, at Colosse, at Galatia, were all very dear to him; he had an anxious solicitude for their welfare, and on one occasion, when enumerating the personal trials, the privations, the persecutions, the hunger and thirst, the weariness and watchings to which he had been subjected, he added, and "Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me *daily* is the care of all the churches, who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended and I burn not?" 2 Cor. xi. 29.

We see from this, it was not an occasional thought, a passing consideration, but a DAILY care which rested upon him. He agonized on their account, as a father over his children.

On the present occasion it was the Church at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus, about whom he was concerned. At one time they had been dead in trespasses and sins, but subsequently they had been quickened into a new and spiritual life;

and he was anxious to remind them that "by grace they were saved through faith, and that not of themselves, it was the gift of God." Eph. ii. 8.

At one time they were "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Eph. ii. 12. He did not remind them of their former condition to harass their minds, but rather to awaken within them a sense of gratitude for their altered condition, by virtue of their induction into Christ. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner-stone." Eph. ii. 19, 20. Having thus assured them of their standing in Christ, next follows the exhortation as to how they should walk, and in this we have a most important lesson of rightly dividing the Word; a lesson totally disregarded, by an Apostate Church, and too frequently neglected by some of ourselves. It is a fundamental principle in God's Word that "without faith it is impossible to please Him," and it is worse than useless, it is absurd to expect aliens to act like citizens, or to exhort strangers from the covenants of promise to regulate their lives by the Divine rules given for the conduct of the household of faith.

When moral qualities, amiable dispositions, and generous actions are manifested by aliens, that of itself does not constitute them citizens, does not make them amenable to the rules which regulate the household of faith, and the possession of those lovely traits of character does not of itself procure, to those destitute of the faith which justifies, any spiritual blessings beyond the present life. It is well to have this impressed on our minds, otherwise we may be betrayed into giving comfort to those who ought to be aroused to a sense of their danger.

It was only a few years ago that one of our city physicians received a severe reprimand, from the coroner, who intimated that he felt like having him indicted for culpable homicide, for leaving a patient to her fate who had taken an overdose of morphine, or was suspected of having done so, without using those

antidotes and restoratives known to the profession in such cases. Now, if the law of the land is so exacting, shall God be less requiring of those enlightened by Divine truth, if through moral weakness they allow well-meaning, pious sinners to go unwarned of their danger, who are ever appropriating to themselves promises to which they are strangers?

There is a religious morphine, which is more powerful than the physical. It is very palatable, easily administered, and perniciously seductive to the unwary patient. Paul was never guilty of giving sedatives to those who needed to be aroused to a sense of their danger. Whether addressing Felix, Festus, King Agrippa, or the Church of God, he was the same outspoken Paul, but then, while we admire his Christian fortitude, we must ever remember there never has been but one Paul; he was called to do an important work, and God, who called him, fitted him for that work.

While we cannot argue as he did, or demonstrate a truth as he only could, it does not follow that we must be silent. Peter's rule comes in here in good place, "If any man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God, if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever." 1 Peter iv. 11.

Throughout all of Paul's epistles we find this anxiety, this earnest solicitude manifested for the spiritual advancement and welfare of those he had instructed in the truth, fearful lest any of them should fall away and come short of the grace of God, and he should lose his reward for all the labor bestowed upon them. We cannot tell, and only the great day of reckoning will reveal what effect those solemn, and oft-repeated appeals had on his hearers. doubtless in some cases they would yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness, while in others, who were *restive*, and impatient to be told the truth, the process would be a hardening one. Thus it has ever been, and so we may expect it to be until the end comes; but nevertheless he who teaches in the fear of God must do his duty. *Patiently, meekly*, trying to instruct those who oppose themselves.

This forgetfulness of Paul to his own sufferings, and the

fate impending him, strikingly reminds us of his Divine Master, who on the night in which He was betrayed and knowing well what was coming on the morrow, delivered that most wonderful address to His disciples, contained in John 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th chapters, which for deep sympathy and pathos stands without a parallel. May these divine examples not be lost upon us; are we bowed down with physical ailments, mental and spiritual depression, when we fail to see the fruit of our labor, as we had hoped to do, then let us relieve ourselves of the mental strain by turning our attention to others, and notably to the bright examples of suffering affliction recorded in the Word of God for our edification and strength. "For ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord, walk as children of the light." What a bold contrast between their past and present condition! What a comprehensive, and powerful exhortation, adapted to the Church in all ages, and to every individual member of the Church, to you, brother and sister, and to me: "Walk as children of the light." I shall not attempt to point out deflections from the walk here indicated, which might be more *hurtful* than *helpful*.

The light here spoken of is the divine light of the Spirit of God, communicated to us by His Word. "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." Psalm cxix. 130. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm cxix. 105. That we were once darkness, none of us will deny. That now we are light in the Lord, none of us could wish to deny. These two propositions admitted, then follows the all-important requirement, "*Walk as children of the light.*" Brethren, the solemn question arises, Are we all so walking? If not, then we are carrying our own condemnation in our hearts. God help us to be faithful with ourselves in the work of self-examination. It is only by acquainting ourselves fully of the requirements of God's Word that we can determine whether or not we *are* walking as children of the light.

May we ever be ready to avail ourselves of the helps which God, in His great goodness, has given us to that end, and for which in the coming day we shall be accountable. On one occasion the the apostle had to beseech those whom He addressed, to

suffer the word of exhortation, that was all wrong that he had to do so, but it shows that exhortation was not popular then any more than now. Heb. xiii. 22. Nevertheless the large heart of Paul could not be restrained, it was ever overflowing with earnest desire for their spiritual welfare.

“Ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord. Walk as children of the light.”

LIGHT NEEDFUL TO BE PREPARED FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD.

“The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”—James v. 8.

“But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?”—Mal. iii. 2.

You are all aware there are various ways of instructing the human mind. Sometimes by communicating direct information on some given subject which may be stored away in the memory. This is the most simple and elementary mode; at other times instruction may be imparted in an indirect manner by stimulating the mind to research to seek out for itself the knowledge desired; this last presupposes and involves labor and study. The first may be illustrated or made clear by the following example. Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians says, “Behold I show you a mystery.” 1 Cor. xv. 51. He was going to reveal, or make known to them a secret or hidden thing, with which, up till that time, they had not been acquainted.

The other example is that of Christ, in teaching the Jews concerning Himself, instead of telling them this and that which had been predicted of Him, He said, “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life. and they are they which testify of me.” John v. 39.

In other words, “You admit the credibility of the Scriptures, now be consistent with that profession, search and see for yourselves what Moses and the prophets say concerning me: Whether my works and doctrine agree with their testimony.”

My remarks will not be dogmatic or judiciary, but *suggestive*. I have questions of awful importance to propound, and shall leave them for you to meditate upon, and answer them to your own consciences.

We start from a solid basis—an indisputed and indisputable point of action.

“The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” This truth we all admit; we are looking for His coming, and many of us are earnestly praying for it. It is the desire of our hearts.

We come around the table every first day to remember Him, *until He comes*. Our presence here testifies that we are looking for Him.

There can be no doubt of the *certainty* of His coming. He said Himself: “If I go away I will come again.” John xiv. 3; and the message He sent back to the church in Philadelphia was, “Behold I come quickly.” Rev. iii. 11. Peter, in his second epistle, when speaking of the unbelievers and the scoffers of the last days, says: “But the day of the Lord *will come*,” (2 Peter iii. 10), and come in a most unexpected manner. “Come as a thief in the night.”

It will be a happy coming for the faithful ones, who have endured affliction and reproach as good soldiers of Jesus Christ; no more trials and temptations then; the day of reproaches for the name and doctrine of Christ will have forever passed away, and the words of Peter will then be luminous with heavenly glory, “If ye be reproached for the name of Christ happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.” It will then rest upon them, never more to be removed. “Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with *exceeding joy*.”

Peter’s “Exceeding joy,” and Paul’s “*Exceeding* and eternal weight of glory,” were as near as they could express that which is inexpressible.

That the glory of the Lord would one day be revealed they knew full well, for Isaiah had written seven hundred years before, “The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

What a revelation that will be! The human mind staggers under the contemplation of it. The more we meditate upon it, the more we feel like the royal Bard of Israel when he said, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.”

“The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” Day of rejoicing! Day of sorrow! O what rejoicing for those released from.

the thralldom of mortality, having forever bade adieu to all its temptations, its cares, its trials, its perplexities, its pains and sorrows; and *now* indued with the power of an endless life, and oh what heavenly ecstasy to those long held under the bonds of death, but now imancipated. With what rapture will they exclaim:

“O, Death, where is thy sting,
O, Grave where now thy victory.”

While the arches of heaven will ring with the triumphant song, “Thanks be to God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. xv. 55-57.

Day of sorrow, did I say for some? Yes! day of sorrow! For whom? To those who know to do good, and do it not. Day of sorrow for those who are unprepared. When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, no amount of knocking after that will gain admission. “Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

The condition of things around us to-day calls on all religious teachers, in trumpet tones, “Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die.” Rev. iii. 2.

God grant that I may *to-day*, even in a small degree, “Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.” The message of the Son of God, who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire to the Church in Philadelphia was, “Behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.” Rev. iii. 8.

That open door is set before you to-day and only yourselves can shut it. A careless spirit may shut it, an obdurate heart can shut it.

God in His Word, and in His providence, is saying to you to-day. “It is high time to awake out of sleep, throw aside your lethargy, the night is far spent, the day is at hand.” Rom. xiii. 11, 12.

You cannot afford to dally away the few remaining hours. “Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold the Judge standeth before the door.” James v. 9. “Let all things be done unto edifying,” building up the body of Christ. Set a watch on the door of your lips, that ye

offend not one of these little ones. Let us be watchful of each other's interests. Considerate of each other's feelings.

If any are not anxiously desiring the coming of the Son of man I beseech them to carefully examine their own hearts to see what evil is lurking there. If lukewarmness exists, there is a cause for it, and it is a condition which God abhors.

The lukewarm He will spew out of His mouth. Rev. iii. 16. And let them ask Him who searches Jerusalem as with lighted candles to assist them in the examination, saying, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm cxxxix. 23.

Christ's command is still in force, "Occupy till I come." Luke xix. 13. This charge is to every one of us, and if we would consider its importance and daily pray that we may be enabled to carry out the injunction, we will be fully occupied in watching and guarding our own thoughts and actions, and it will have a wholesome effect in preventing us from making any slighting remarks about others. On careful examination each one of us will find enough to do to prepare our own hearts for that great and notable day of the Lord, for only the pure in heart shall see God. O, let us, one and all, strive for that purity of heart which will commend itself to God.

The Sunday-school is an auxiliary, but not a substitute for home instruction. The Sunday-school teacher cannot assume the duties and responsibilities of the parent, neither can the parent delegate these to the Sunday-school teacher. I am anxious to impress this upon your minds. Home instruction, home influence cannot be superseded by anything else. God's command to Israel was, "These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Deut vi. 6-8.

You see from this God wants His work done in a *thorough* manner. Every child that comes into your family God is saying to you what Pharaoh's daughter said unto the mother of Moses, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." Ex. ii. 9. The command is to bring them up in the

nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. vi. 4. And to do this aright, you must have a family altar in your house, and meet your children there, and pray often, and earnestly, with and for them. May God help you so to do, and the reward will be yours in the ages to come.

"The coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appear-eth?

Brethren, these are solemn verities; it will not do to give them a passing consideration; take them home with you, and meditate upon them, and let me urge on you the need of *immediate* and *active* effort to rescue, if possible, the careless and indifferent, ere it be too late.

CHAPTER XII.

CHRIST'S MEDIATORIAL WORK AND SECOND COMING.

“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”—Heb. ix. 24.

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin unto salvation.”—Verse 28.

ACCORDING to God's appointment the tabernacle consisted of three apartments.

1st. The enclosed, uncovered space or court.

2nd. The sanctuary or holy place.

3rd. The most interior part, called the Holy of holies, no access to which could be had without passing through the court and the sanctuary.

In this first apartment or court was the altar of burnt offering, representing Christ crucified as the world's sin offering.

A little beyond this altar, and before coming to the door of the sanctuary, stood the Sea of Brass or Brazen Laver, implying sin and defilement, and no doubt intended to teach that the sinner must be cleansed as well as pardoned. As Christian baptism follows belief of the Gospel, and pardon and cleansing are necessary to fit any one to be a true and acceptable worshiper in the sanctuary of God.

In the Holy of holies were the ark of the Covenant, and the Seat of Mercy. There were the Cherubic figures, and the Shekinah or visible presence of the Lord, which shadowed forth the celestial tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man, into which Christ has gone, as our great High-Priest and Mediator, now to appear in the presence of God for us. But between the outside court and the Most Holy place stood the sanctuary, in which were the candlestick, and the table, and the shew bread.

The instructions for making the candlestick are as follows: "Thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold; of beaten work shall the candlestick be made, his shaft and his branches, his bowls, and his knops, and his flowers shall be of the same; and six branches shall come out of the sides of it. Three branches of the candlestick out of the one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side. And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof; and they shall light the lamps thereof that they may give light over against it." Ex. xxv. 31.

This candlestick, you observe, had three branches, on the one side of the perpendicular shaft of beaten gold, and three branches on the other side, making seven lamps or lights in all.

Now we cannot help associating this in our minds with what Christ said to John in Patmos, Rev. i. 20: "The seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches." I am the light of the world, said Jesus, and all His people are children of the light and of the day.

I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness. And again, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness; but shall have the light of life." John viii. 12. During Christ's first advent we read, "He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast in the borders of Zabulon and Naphtalim, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 'The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.'" And in like manner Christ said to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid."

There were no windows in the tabernacle, consequently the golden candlestick and the pure olive oil of the sanctuary, supplied the light. In like manner the Christian's light must emanate from the living Oracles of God; not from Nature, human reason, science, or philosophy; which however useful in their own places, are unsafe guides in matters of religion. We have this divine light now, as a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path, amid surrounding darkness, until the day dawn, and the day star arise, when the Redeemer shall come to Zion; from

whence shall be issued the glad proclamation, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isaiah lx. 1. And then in bright effulgence, o'er Moriah's golden summit shall be seen the full orb'd blaze of millennial day; compared with which, how faint and glimmering was the light of the olive oil, and the golden candlestick of the sanctuary service.

Our attention is called to another item of interest, namely, the shew bread. This consisted of twelve cakes, baked of fine flour, arranged in two rows on the table of gold in the sanctuary. These were to be renewed every Sabbath, and with our advanced light we turn from the shadow to the enduring substance, and hear Christ exclaim, I am the Bread of Life. John vi. 35. "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. This is that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." "I am the living bread which came down from heaven, if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever, and the bread that I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world." Afterwards explained by Christ in this way, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life." How important then to have a correct understanding of His Words. Otherwise they cannot be spirit and life to us. But if we have a clear perception of the work of Christ in His official capacities, some of which He is now exercising, and others upon which He has not yet entered, we can then look back on the tabernacle and sanctuary service with their handwriting of ordinances and see the object and design of Jehovah in introducing the same as a rudimental and supplemental system of religious worship, never intended to be permanent, but shadowing forth good things to come, of which Christ was the substance and the body, and then we can understand why His first advent is designated, "The time of reformation," Heb ix. 10, because He abrogated the law contained in ordinances, "*took it out of the way, and nailed it to his cross,*" as we read in Col. ii. 14, and this leads us to inquire, "What was it in the way of?" It was in the way of carrying out the Abrahamic Covenant, and consequently had to give way to a fuller development of the

plans and purposes of God, correlative with that covenant. Some of which may be enumerated as follows:

1st. That the promises made by God unto the fathers of the Hebrew nation, and afterwards designated the covenants of promise, because having reference to future blessing, were ratified and confirmed by the blood of Christ, He being appointed by the Father as the Mediatorial Testator. Heb. ix. 15, 16; Heb. x. 20; Gal. iii. 15; Matt. xxvi. 28.

2d. That the law given by Moses was supplemental in its nature, restricted in its operation, and limited in its duration, having reference to present blessings and was never intended as a life-giving instrument, is clearly shown in Paul's letter. Gal. iii.

3d. That the promise to Abraham having been made before the law, and not affected thereby, it was meet and proper that the High-Priest pertaining to the same should be of an order different from and more ancient than the high-priests under the law; hence for good and sufficient reasons He is called an High-Priest after the order of Melchizedec.

4th. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Gal. iii. 14. "That we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. iv. 5; and thus that in and through Christ's Mediatorship, and having such an High-Priest over the house of God, we thereby have access to the Father, and are invited to draw near with a true heart, and full assurance of faith. Heb. x. 21. And thus we see that all the promises of God converge in one center, and that center is Jesus Christ. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending of the Christian's hopes and expectations.

Have we a confidence of sin pardoned? It is in and through the pardon proclaimed in *His* name. Have we a hope blooming with immortal life and vigor? That hope has for its basis the glorious assurance, "Because *I* live ye shall live also." Are we looking for regal honors in the age to come? There is no such thing unless associated with *His* name. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me, on my throne." Do we expect these blessings combined. Life and regal honors in the kingdom of God? They are *suspended* on the coming of the Son of man.

The throne is *His*, and the kingdom is *His*, and *He* will share them with His tried and faithful followers. In Him the promises of God are all yea and amen, unto the glory of God." 2 Cor. i. 20. That the law was intended, as we have here described, will be abundantly clear if we read attentively what Paul wrote in his Epistles to the Romans, and the Galatians. In the former he said, "By deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified, for by the law is the knowledge of sin," Rom. iii. 20, and again, "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth," Rom. x. 4; and in his letter to the Galatians he says, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by the faith of Jesus Christ. even we have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified, for if righteousness come by the law then Christ is dead in vain." Gal. ii. 16, 21. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster, for ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. . . and if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. iii. 29, and after this full and clear presentation of the case he says, "But now after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times and years; I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." Gal. iv. 9-11. "Whosoever of you are justified by the law are fallen from grace." Gal. v. 4.

Now what is all this designed to teach us? What is the solemn and important lesson that we are to learn from it? The one grand, central idea that pervades it all is the necessity of union with Christ, and to see that the union so formed is *indissoluble*, or in the language of the apostle. to see that "nothing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. viii. 39. This union is best attested by the kind

and quality of the fruit produced as Christ Himself has given us the rule, "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." Matt. vii. 16. A certain writer whose name I do not know, once said, "I have seen a branch tied to a bleeding tree for the purpose of being engrafted into its wounded body, that both might be one, yet no incorporation followed; there was no living union. Spring came singing, and with her fingers opened all the buds; and Summer, glorious Summer, came, with her dewey nights, and sunny days, and brought out all the flowers; and Autumn, brown Autumn, came to shake the trees and reap the fields, and with dances, and mirth to hold harvest-home, but that unhappy branch bore no fruit. nor leaf, nor flower, just held on by dead clay, and rotten cords, it stuck to the living tree, a withered and *unsightly* thing." What a sad picture to behold! and so, alas! it is with every one who has a name to live, while dead. We must be vitally joined to Christ, partake of His life, drink deep into His Spirit and put forth in His strength, and by continuing to do so unto the end, we shall have an abundant entrance into His everlasting kingdom, and with Him shall become the executors of the judgments written and the dispensers of Heaven's blessings to the nations of the earth, in the front ranks of which shall stand the multitudinous seed of Abraham. Psalm cxlix. 9; Micah iv. 8.

Let us, then, brethren and sisters, in view of such grand anticipations, divest ourselves of every opposing influence, and run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel. Be clothed with humility; cultivate a meek and quiet spirit, and may the love of God rule in your hearts; and try to bring others into the light and liberty in which ye yourselves rejoice; knowing that it is high time that theology were dethroned, and the truth of God exalted; and with hearts full of gratitude to God, and love to your fellow-men set yourselves in earnestness to the accomplishment of this work; do not complain of your inability, and your weakness; use the ability you have, and in using that you will gain more.

We must all try to acquire more spiritual strength. Weakness is too much the characteristic of every church, and a large

number of church-members. The message sent by the Spirit to the Church of Philadelphia in John's day might apply to many more: "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it, for thou hast a *little strength* and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name... Behold I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Rev. iii. 8. Remember that temptations come largely from human influences, and the matter of yielding or resisting is a question of strength between the tempter and the tempted.

A brother once told me that he repaired his wasted physical strength by basking in the sun's rays. It was a grand idea. Let us in like manner renew our spiritual strength by living close to God and basking in His love. The love of God in Christ, which passeth knowledge, and then no pretence, however artful, will deceive us, and no threat, however bold, will dismay. But we cannot enumerate the blessings now conferred on believers in the Abrahamic covenant and the still greater blessings in store for them to be conferred and enjoyed hereafter, without extending a cordial invitation to all to share with us in the promised blessings.

In nothing can we more fully copy after Christ's example than in this very thing, for we read that Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and after His resurrection and just before His ascension He commissioned His apostles to "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel," or good news of the kingdom, to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be condemned, and notwithstanding this clear, emphatic, and positive declaration of Christ, we find nearly everything but the Gospel of the kingdom, in its entirety, preached at the present day. Notwithstanding that the time is drawing nigh for the setting up of that kingdom in its divine majesty and glory and the judgment of an ungodly world, the professed ambassadors of Christ have no such message to proclaim, but on every hand we hear the spirit of unbelief asserting itself, and not only the openly profane scoffers but those also who would feel insulted if you denied them the name of Christian, are saying, "Where is the promise of His coming, for since the fathers fell asleep all things

continue as they were from the beginning of the creation?" and Peter says they are willingly ignorant of the fact that the world that then was being overflowed with water perished. The story of the flood is out of date now, none believe in it who have graduated in the school of philosophy and evolution. The weak-minded and credulous may hold on to it, but we are told the great men and the mighty men have passed that and are now seeking conquests in other fields, and multitudes are following them, in their march of conquest, but we would feel condemned in the sight of Heaven if we did not raise our warning voice, and cry with all our might and main, Beware! There is a point of awful significance in the near future when the great men on this march of conquest will come to a sudden halt and we must call their attention to it in order that we clear ourselves of blood-guiltiness by giving due warning of the impending crisis; John saw it in vision under the sixth seal. You can read it in Rev. vi. 12-17. The scene was terrible, and the result was that the kings of the earth, and the great men and the rich men, and the chief captains and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand? Rev. vi. 15-17.

Evolution, philosophy and scepticism will in that day be at a dreadful discount. The bold blasphemer and agnostic is now brought face to face with that power which he so long doubted and defamed. The time will then have come, foretold by God's prophets, whose words they scorned: "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day... And they shall go into the holes of the rocks and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth." Isaiah ii. 17. Well may the prophet after giving this vivid picture say, "Cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Hitherto the saints of God, of whom the world was not worthy, wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth to escape the dreadful

persecutions of their tormentors, but the day of *their* deliverance has come, and their tormentors now in vain seek the shelter of those dens, and mountain fastnesses to hide them from Jehovah's awful power.

There are two more points to which I wish to call the attention of those who are not with us in faith and hope; for their candid and earnest consideration. Perhaps they did not observe that while the tabernacle service continued the High-Priest alone entered the Holy of holies, and that only once a year with the blood of atonement, while the people waited without for the High-Priest to come out and bless them; meanwhile diligently watching and listening to hear the sound of the bells of his garment, as he moved about in the Holy of holies, performing the duties of his sacred office, and the apostle says that "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the *figures* of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Now if the saints go to heaven at death, and immediately enter into Christ's presence, wherein was the Holy of holies of the tabernacle, a figure of the true? All similitude between type and anti-type would be destroyed.

Is it not passing strange that men of education and of no mean abilities as declaimers, should be so obtuse as not to see this point? In one breath they will tell you that Christ is now in the Holy of holies, not made with hands, officiating as the High-Priest of His people, of which the tabernacle service was typical, and in the next breath tell you the saints are in His presence, and with Him in glory. When we believe what Christ said unto His disciples, "As I said unto the Jews, so now I say to you, whither I go ye cannot come," then we see the divine harmony and the correctness of the figure.

The next point to which I referred is the promise contained in the last verse of the chapter, "Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin unto salvation, properly without a sin offering unto salvation. Now you will please observe, the promise is, "*to them that look for Him,*" and to them alone. Now will you tell us what promise there is to them that don't look for Him? You don't know any; well, neither do I, and that is a solemn thought to ponder over. If there is no promise to them, are they not then without God and

without a well-founded hope, in the world? This is a solemn, and a momentous question.

We point you to the promise of the soon coming of the King of Righteousness as an incentive to you to seek for pardon and reconciliation, and we give you the grounds for our faith and hope in His return. You know before He went away He said to His followers, "If I go away I will come again, and receive you to myself," and we have already called your attention to the fact that He told them before He departed, "Whither I go ye cannot come;" and the angels who appeared at His ascension said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand *ye gazing up into heaven?* this same Jesus whom ye have seen go into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." In like manner, that is bodily, personally. After this, and when most of His disciples had been martyred, one of them whom Jesus dearly loved, was sent into exile, away to a rock-bound island in the wide ocean, between Europe and Africa, where the Roman *government sent their convicts*, but in his exile he was visited by a messenger such as never appeared at the Roman court. He was an heavenly messenger, the angel of Jesus Christ, and no court on earth ever received such a grand message, revealing future glory, and among other things Jesus said, through the heavenly messenger, "*Behold I come quickly.*" What is He coming to do? I will tell you: In this 9th chapter of Hebrews, on which we have been speaking, Jesus is called "an High-Priest of good things to come," yes, *good things to come*, and He is coming to bring those good things. The Apostle Peter in his 1st Epistle speaks of the favor that is to be *brought* unto them at the revelation of Jesus Christ. That is just another way of expressing the same thing. Many of His good things He gives unto His people now. He gives them forgiveness and cleansing by the washing of water by the Word. Eph. v. 26. He gives them *light* and liberty; joy and peace in believing, and has promised to give them incorruption, honor and glory in the kingdom of God. These are some of the good things to come, which He is coming to bestow. This is surely testimony enough to convince you of the certainty of His coming and the

desirability of that event, and the next thing in order is to prepare for that event.

If you knew positively that He was coming to-morrow, would you not lay everything aside and prepare for His coming? No doubt of it. Well, seeing you do not know how soon He may come, would it not be wise and discreet to prepare for it *now*? But you do not know how to prepare for it, and that is just what we want to tell you.

On one occasion the people said to Jesus, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said unto them, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent," and this is your starting point. But the query arises, What is it to believe on Jesus Christ? We will be aided very much in arriving at a correct answer to this question by referring to the subject matter of Phillip's teaching in the city of Samaria, as recorded in the 8th chapter of Acts. The narrative says Phillip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them, and then follows, "And when they believed Phillip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." This short but highly important narrative answers two questions. It shows us what is implied by preaching Christ, and also what is necessary to be believed to be a fit subject for baptism. This is the work of God, to believe on Him whom He has sent. Then we have Peter's confession: "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" Matt. xvi. 16. This expresses belief in His Sonship and Messiahship. But how many claim to believe in Christ who know nothing of His Sonship and nothing of His Messiahship?

Belief in His Messiahship implies a belief in the promises to Abraham, and David, that of his seed He would raise up Christ to sit upon David's throne in strict accordance also with the announcement by Gabriel to Mary, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

The things concerning the name of Jesus unfold to us His sufferings and sacrificial death. He was wounded for our trans-

gressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, Isaiah liii. 5, and through Him is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins and cleansing from all your iniquities, and that is what you want to fit you for His coming. Christ is both the sacrifice for sin, through whom pardon is obtained, and the Brazen Laver whose cleansing efficacy is necessary to fit you for His service, and prepare you to meet Him at His coming. Will you accept Him as such, and take Him as your great High-Priest, your Lord, your Life, your all, and yield obedience to His divine requirements? Put on the Lord Jesus Christ in baptism, and abide in Him. You must first put on the Lord Jesus Christ before you can abide in Him, and it is this union alone that will make you complete in Him, and entitle you to all the family privileges of the household of faith. For they that be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. If so be that ye suffer with Him ye shall also reign with Him. Oh! who can tell the honor, the glory, and felicity awaiting those who shall reign with Christ over the nations of the earth?

This honor, glory and felicity are offered to you. Will you accept of them in His appointed way and afterwards live godly? and then when Christ shall come, as come He will, you will wear the victor's wreath, the conquerer's crown, and be for ever with the Lord! Amen. Let us then render

PRAISE FOR BENEFITS WHICH RESULT FROM MEDIATORIAL WORK.

“What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?”—Psa. cxvi. 12.

When the Psalmist propounded this question to himself he had been reflecting on his past history, all the way, by which the Lord had led him, and the deliverances vouchsafed unto him. I love the Lord, said he, because He hath heard my voice, and my supplications, because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live.

This is one aspect in which David delighted to think of Jehovah, as the hearer and the answerer of prayer. “Praise waiteth for thee O God in Zion, and unto thee, O God, shall the vow be performed, O thou that hearest prayer unto thee shall all flesh come.” Psalm lxxv. 1.

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of sheol gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow, then called I upon the name of the Lord. O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord and righteous, yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple. I was brought low and He helped me. Another example that man's extremity is God's opportunity. He satisfieth the *longing* soul and filleth the *hungry* soul with goodness. "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it" (Psalm lxxxii. 10), is Jehovah's promise.

The Psalmist continues, Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. It was such meditations as these that made the Psalmist exclaim, in the fullness of his heart, What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? and the response which he gives is, I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord *now*, in the presence of all His people. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving and I will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord *now* in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord.

David was a man of generous impulses, he wanted others to share with him, in his joys and sorrows. On one occasion he said, I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear thereof and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. Psalm xxxiv. 1.

The Psalms of David are full of incentives to praise, he is ever recounting the goodness of the Lord, and extolling Him for His wonderful works to the children of men, and he is not content with doing this himself, but he wants others to join with him in the blissful exercise, and for what else is Christian communion and fellowship intended but to bring together the scattered members of the body that each and all may dispense and receive spiritual blessing, strength and encouragement to pursue the journey of life, keeping ever in the narrow way, albeit it may be a steep and thorny path to travel.

From time to time our attention has been directed to the

subject of the manifestations of God's love to our fallen race, and it is well that we dwell upon it. The innumerable ways in which that love has been manifested is indeed overpowering, no matter whether we look up to the starry firmament or down to the ground on which we tread, or descend into the bowels of the earth where God in His love and goodness has stored away for the use of man abundant supplies of coal, iron ore, silver, gold, copper, lead and precious stones, His goodness is everywhere apparent.

But what far transcends and overshadows all these is, first, His infinite goodness in the gift of His Son; I say *His Son*, and in speaking of this at all times in this age of apostasy let us ever emphasize the fact that it was GOD'S SON, His only begotten, His well-beloved, that died for us.

Secondly, *that* marvelous condescension on the part of the Father in stooping down to us with a revelation of His mind and will.

In these two acts of the Divine Father in His dealings with His fallen creature, man, are concentrated the sum of all goodness, a ray of light that penetrates the thickest gloom, from whence the Father's benignant countenance shines forth, giving "the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. iv. 6. I say the consideration of these two acts of divine goodness is over-powering. We are entranced by it, and when we awake from the ecstasy we can only exclaim with the Prophet David, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" Psalm cxvi. 12, and this exclamation must not proceed from mere momentary impulse, the expression of fervid emotion, to subside and die out when the excitement of the occasion has passed: but rather it must be a deep-seated feeling that "the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Psalm cxxvi. 3, and this feeling must be *deep* enough and *strong* enough to produce an abiding conviction that we are not our own. "We have been bought with a price." You all know what that was. Did I say you all know what that price was? Well, you all know it theoretically, but God's dear Son, the spotless, sinless one, alone knows the agony that price involved. He who agonized in Gethsemane, forsaken by His chosen followers, when His sweat was as it were great drops of

blood falling down to the ground, He who endured the contradiction of sinners, and the cruel cross of Calvary, He, and He alone, knows the bitterness of that cup which He drank to the very dregs on our account. Oh! let us daily ask ourselves, individually, What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?

With some faint conviction of obligation let us to-day inquire, "What shall *we* render?" What *can we* render? In reply I would say the sacrifice of Christ was a willing sacrifice, inspired by love, and the service in return must be a willing service, inspired not only by love, but by love and gratitude. Here are two strong motive powers, which ought to exist, and must exist in every renewed heart, alive to its true relationship to God and Christ.

Ingratitude is defined as an insensibility to favors, *unthankfulness*; and we are told "is abhorred by God and man."

As we have seen, the love of God was manifested by the greatest sacrifice the world ever witnessed, and the gratitude ought to be evidenced by such active service as we know will be pleasing to our great Benefactor. Christ's own words are, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." John xv. 14. You are acquainted with some of those commands, which have often been reiterated in your hearing, commencing with faith, faith in God's promises, briefly styled the Gospel. Repentance, or reformation, obedience in baptism, and a subsequent godly life, but this latter part needs to be amplified, and its varied obligations frequently pointed out, and here the need of watchfulness becomes apparent. Watchfulness is repeatedly enjoined by Christ on His disciples, and in neglecting this command, more perhaps than any other, sorrow is brought on the individual; reproach on the name of Christ, and the cause of truth made to be evil spoken of. But why this great need of watchfulness? Watchfulness, you know, is required in an enemy's country, soldiers make intrenchments, and throw up breast-works around their camp, and place sentinels on duty, who are ever on the outlook watching for the enemy. And is the Christian's life not compared to a warfare, and is he not entreated to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ? 2 Tim. ii. 3. He certainly is. Furthermore the true soldier does

not long remain in inactivity, hiding behind ramparts. If he did he would have little need of sword, shield and helmet. These imply *active service*, and if our gratitude to God, for what He has done for us does not impel us to active service, then its character is somewhat dubious.

It is not necessary for me to define the nature of the service each one should render, I believe that is largely left with each one to decide, within certain bounds, of course. The Bible rule is, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." 1 Peter iv. 10. But there are general obligations as well as specific, and from these none are exempt. Watchfulness is one of these, hence Christ says, "What I say unto you I say unto all, watch." Mark xiii. 37. The obligations to personal purity or holiness is alike binding on every child of God, and must constrain each and every member. This is a self-evident proposition, and needs no argument to establish its correctness; but are we all-sufficiently alive to our obligations to hold up the Word of life? By that I mean to present it for the acceptance of our friends and our fellow-men? I fear not. Whether we realize it or not, a solemn obligation rests on all who know the truth, to present it to those around them for acceptance, and if we neglect it, the thought of lost opportunities so to do, may some day fill our hearts with bitter anguish. For the acceptable performance of this duty we ought to fit and prepare ourselves.

Christ said to His followers, "Ye are the light of the world. a city that is set on an hill cannot be hid, neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Matt. v. 14-16. But, says one, "Christ is speaking of good works." That is true, but what better work or greater work can one be engaged in than seeking to enlighten the human mind in the knowledge of divine things? If it is a good work to feed a destitute man with the bread that perishes with the using, is it not a better work, and a greater work to lead men to that "Bread of life of which, if a man eat, he shall live forever?" What think ye?

I said something of the duty of preparing ourselves for this

work; but I would not have you imagine that we cannot present the truth to our fellow-men without scholastic learning or eloquence, valuable as those attainments are. We shall not be called to account for talents we do not possess, but having a knowledge of God's truth, we hide that at our peril. The woman of Samaria, who met Christ at Jacob's well, did not require much learning to say, "Come, see a man which told me all things that I ever did; is not this the Christ?" but in doing this she performed her duty, and showed an earnestness worthy of imitation in leaving her water pot and going quickly into the city to deliver the message. She felt the great importance of what she had to communicate, and she succeeded in arousing attention, for we read, "And they went out of the city and came unto Him." John iv. 29.

In like manner a little captive Hebrew maid was the humble instrument in bringing to Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, information of the Prophet in Samaria who could cure him of his leprosy. This Naaman, we are told, was a mighty man of valor, but he was a leper, and but for that little captive girl he might never have heard of Elisha, the man of God, and died a leper. God works by means, and sometimes what seems a very trivial event to our limited vision, brings about great results.

In this work of presenting the truth to our fellow-men we need frequently to be reminded of Christ's own words to His immediate followers, "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." It requires great wisdom to say the right thing at the right time....Some persons are very combative in their make-up, and when we meet such it is not well to openly antagonize them. For example, you meet a man who is full of hope for the world's conversion. If you tell that man square to his face that his hope is a delusion, ten to one he will not listen to you. Your influence for good is lost on him, but if you tell him that is a grand subject, and one that for many years has occupied your mind, that the world is in a very bad condition, and needs to be converted, and ask him how he thinks the work ought to be done, and as he advances in elaborating his plan, you get an opportunity to point out a weak spot here and an-

other there, and then by and by you can ask him if there is no divine arrangement for converting the world? That you understand God has a plan for the accomplishment of that work, and if he will listen, you will tell him something of that plan. In this way, if he is a reasonable person, you may have an opportunity of presenting the truth to him, and if not, it would be time lost to labor with him.

I do not mean by this that under any circumstances you would be justified in affiliating religiously with any who are not in the faith; you could not do them a greater injury, inflict a deeper wound on the cause of truth, and do yourself a greater wrong.

I tell you, if we had more faith in the Gospel's saving power, and a deeper conviction of the *poor*, mutilated thing that has taken its place, by which the religious world is deceived, we would redouble our efforts to spread its fame abroad.

O, I hope none of you will ever be guilty of affiliating religiously with any who are not in the faith, that would be worse than ingratitude for all the benefits God has bestowed on you, that would be pouring contempt on the divine arrangement, and thereby you would render yourself obnoxious to the divine displeasure. May God prevent such a catastrophe!

Have you given attention as to what is proper

FOOD FOR THE BLOOD-WASHED SHEEP?

“Feed my sheep.”—John xxi. 15-17.

On the sad night on which the Savior was betrayed He addressed Peter in this way, “Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, or turned again, strengthen thy brethren.” Luke xxii. 31, 32.

After Christ's resurrection He gave the charge to Peter, “Feed my lambs, feed my sheep,” and well did he fulfill both of those charges, as the Acts of the Apostles and his two epistles fully verify. Would to God that every shepherd from that time on had been as faithful.

If you want to study a miracle of grace, read Peter's de-

nial of his Lord, then turn to his sermon on the day of Pentecost, only fifty days apart, and what a transformation! On the one hand despicable weakness; on the other a tower of strength.

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by Him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it... Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” What a fearless declaration! Can that be the man who trembled in the hall of Caiaphas? Yes! and No. It was indeed Simon; but the one was Simon in his own weakness, and surrounded by the enemies of Christ; the other was Simon full of the Holy Spirit, standing up with the eleven, in the “strength of the Lord and in the power of His might.”

Such an one could strengthen his brethren, as he often did, and all down through the ages his fervid utterances have strengthened and encouraged many a weary soul. May his words strengthen us here to-day. In his epistle to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, he commences by extolling the abundant mercy of God “by which they had been begotten to a hope of life by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” That is a wonderful inheritance. The world is full of corruption and defilement. We meet them everywhere, but that inheritance is incorruptible and free from defilement, and those qualities give it permanence. “It fadeth not away,” and that makes it in striking contrast with what prevails now, as described by Peter in these words, “For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man, as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the Word of the

Lord *endureth forever*, and this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you."

In view of this contrast, how important the exhortation of Peter, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the *revelation* of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, "Be ye holy for I am holy," and then he reminds them of the great sacrifice made on their account, "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."

This reference to the grace or favor that is to be brought at the revelation or appearing of Jesus Christ, is a very bomb-shell that ought to explode all pagan notions about the soul going to rewards at death. Peter, and those to whom he addressed his epistle, looked for no such thing, they were willing to patiently wait for the coming and kingdom of God's dear Son, that being the goal of all their expectations; and most faithfully does he exhort them to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, by adding to their faith fortitude, and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity or love, the crowning virtue.

Admonishing them that he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

No one ever valued the faith of the Gospel more than Peter, and therefore we find him in opening his second epistle, calling it a *precious faith*, and the man who does not esteem it as precious has not learned the first principles of the doctrine of Christ.

That faith is precious, because of the exceeding great and precious promises on which that faith rests. Precious because it reveals to us "the precious corner-stone which God hath laid

in Zion, and he that believeth shall not make haste." Isaiah xxviii. 16. Precious, because it reveals to us the precious thoughts of God to usward, Psalm cxxxix. 17, and again precious because of the glorious hope growing out of it. The one faith and one hope of the Gospel.

Peter seeing with prophetic vision the fables and delusions of the Apostasy and the infidelity of these last days, was anxious to impress on the minds of those to whom he wrote and to succeeding generations, the verity of the things of which he testified, hence we find him saying, "Moreover, I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things in remembrance, for we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of His Majesty, for He received from God the Father honor and glory when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory. This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, and this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount, and we have the word of prophecy made more sure, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day star arise."

Peter's second epistle shows how anxious he was to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance that they might be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of the apostles of the Lord and Savior."

From all of this we can see how earnestly Peter carried out the Lord's command, "When thou art turned again strengthen thy brethren." As a shepherd of the flock he is worthy of careful study and imitation.

The elders which are among you, said he, I exhort, who am also an elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away;

likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder, yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud, and gives grace to the humble; humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." Here again the Apostle makes it very plain *when* the crown of glory is to be expected, not at death, but when the Chief Shepherd shall appear. And also the *nature* of that crown is made prominent. "It fadeth not away."

Thus we see how Peter strengthened his brethren, and fed the flock.

Brethren, may we all strive for the unfading crown, by abstaining from all appearance of evil, and by doing that which is acceptable and well pleasing in the sight of God. Do not be weary of the long delay; remember Peter's words, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

CHAPTER XIII.

AN EARNEST APPEAL.

“Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. . . 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.”
—Isaiah lv. 3, 6, 7.

PROPHETS and apostles have been commissioned by the Almighty God, the benevolent parent of the human family, to go forth and proclaim His will to fallen men. They have come with hearts *overflowing* with benevolence and filled with pity for human woe. They have scanned the earth, blighted by the curse of sin, and have wept in bitter sorrow at the general desolation.

Under these circumstances, with hearts thus filled with love, and with the tender chord of pity made to vibrate at the sad scene which sin hath wrought on earth, and at the same time being the commissioned ambassadors of heaven with a message from the throne on high sent to fallen men, need we wonder at the earnestness with which they enter upon their work when they exclaim, “O earth, earth, earth, hear the Word of the Lord!”

And should we not expect the earth to hearken with *solemn, rapt, and profound interest* to the heavenly message? And when that message is found to convey words of *peace, pardon, and forgiveness*, how universal and rapturous should we expect the response to be!

But, alas! instead of all this, the earth is too busy with the business affairs, the frivolities and pleasures of life, to find time to listen to such a message, and consequently the ambassadors have had to exclaim, “Who hath believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

This is discouraging, but nevertheless the Gospel message must be proclaimed. The Church is still commanded to say, "Come." Jesus still stands at the right hand of the Father to plead for all who come unto God by Him.

To those who have not yet believed the report of the prophets and apostles, and to whom the arm of the Lord has not yet been revealed in its saving power,—to you I would say, in all earnestness and affection, Repent, and believe *the* Gospel; not a Gospel of man's invention, but the good news or glad tidings of the kingdom of God as unfolded in the written Word. To-day the Savior calls on you to come; all things are ready for your reception; Jesus died for you as a manifestation of *Jehovah's love*, and such a manifestation as made angels wonder, devils tremble, and may well make mortal man, on whom it is lavished, to rejoice. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16.

What although we were possessed of all the wealth of the world, with the combined wisdom of all the philosophers, ancient and modern, if we are destitute of eternal life? It would all amount to just nothing at all, in view of its transitory, fleeting duration. "For the things that are seen are *temporal*, but the things that are unseen are eternal."

Oh, then, hear the joyful news that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them! and the proclamation has been issued from the court of heaven, "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, for He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will pardon,—yea, *abundantly pardon*.

In view of the fulness and freeness of the offer of salvation to lost and ruined man, I have often been forced to exclaim, Oh, how good is our God, and how transcendently glorious the glad tidings He has given us to proclaim! Let me tell you what we are looking for. We are looking for Jesus to come again to earth,—that same Jesus who, when He dwelt on earth, was so full of tender compassion and pity for human woe, whose hand was ever ready to help, and whose voice ceased not to comfort

the afflicted and to warn and instruct those who were shrouded in mental and moral darkness. He who healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, cast out demons, raised the dead. Witness His divine power and tender emotions by the grave of Lazarus, and also by the bier of the son of the widow of Nain; then listen to His lamentations over Jerusalem, where He had been defamed and persecuted. As He overlooked the unrepenting and doomed city He wept over it, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her chickens under her wing, but ye would not." And again, while suspended on the cross, His thoughts were turned from His own sufferings to pray for His murderers,—“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” We look for His return to complete the work of restitution; to gather the dispersed of Judah into one; to raise up the throne of David, which is fallen down, in harmony with Ezekiel xxi. 27, “I will overturn, overturn, overturn it:”—the throne and kingdom of David—“and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.” And also with Luke i. 32, 33, “The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever: and of His kingdom there shall be no end.” You know that when He was here before, and just before He departed, He said to His disciples, “Whither I go, ye cannot come;” “A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again, a little while, and ye shall see me;” “If I go away I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John xiii. 33; xiv. 3; xvi. 16. And having led His apostles out as far as Bethany, He was parted from them while in the act of blessing them, and a cloud received Him out of their sight; and while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold two men stood by them, in white apparel, who also said, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in *like manner* as ye have seen Him go into heaven.” Mark the language,—“in like manner,”—that is, bodily, personally. And having reached the threshold of His heavenly home, the message which He sent back to His beloved apostle, and

through him to the loved ones of earth, was, "*Surely, I come quickly.*" And already the apocalyptic cry has gone forth, "Behold, He cometh with clouds." And, says the prophet Zechariah, "His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley." Zech. xiv. 4. And thus shall be inaugurated the physical changes that He will work on the planet earth, when instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: the wilderness and the solitary place shall be made glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. Isa. lv. 13, and xxxv. 1.

We are looking for *honor, glory, and immortality* at the coming of the Son of man (Rom. ii. 7), when these poor, frail, mortal bodies of His saints shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body (Phil. iii. 21), and free from pain and death, because *incorruptible and immortal*.

We are looking for a glorious and happy home, not beyond the clouds, but on the planet earth,—yes, this earth renovated and transformed by the power of God. The tide of sin rolled back, and the curse wiped out; all things made new like Eden fair and bright. Isa. lxxv. 17. In short, we are looking for *the kingdom of God* spoken of by the prophet Daniel (chapter vii., verse 27), to be established *under* the whole heaven, and which shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, who shall become kings and priests unto God and reign on the earth (Rev. v. 10): the land covenanted to Abraham and his seed, the land of Canaan, being the kingdom proper, while the territory or dominion of Messiah, who is the seed spoken of, shall be from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Psal. lxxii. 8; Zech. ix. 10.

That Messiah is the seed spoken of will appear abundantly plain from Paul's letter to the Galatians, iii. 16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

This is the kingdom which John the Baptist preached, and

in view of which he called on the people to *reform*. This is the kingdom which Jesus proclaimed after that John was cast into prison. To publish the good news concerning this coming kingdom Jesus sent forth His twelve apostles and His seventy disciples, and for this purpose He issued the commission,—“Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned.”

This is *our* faith and hope; it is the one faith and hope of the Gospel (Ephes. iv. 4), and we are commanded to *ask* you; to *invite* you; and to *entreat* you, to share with us the regal honors of that kingdom. The God of heaven is now taking out from among the Gentiles a people for His name (Acts xv. 14). to make them kings and priests in the new dispensation, the Age to come, called also the times of the restitution of all things spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets. Acts iii. 21. He is calling them by the proclamation of this Gospel, cleansing them by the washing of water by the Word (Ephes. v. 26), and in due time they shall be clothed with fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints, and anointed for their sacerdotal office. This is our high calling, and we invite you to share with us in this royal priesthood called to minister under the new and better covenant.

Alas! that, notwithstanding such an high destiny is presented to man, and such incentives to holiness and virtue, so many should be found who prefer to degrade themselves by ministering to the gratification of the desires and appetites of their fallen nature, who prefer the service of sin and Satan, which terminates in eternal death, to the service of the living and true God, having their fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.

This is a sad and melancholy picture, but such is the perverseness of human nature that future good of the most exalted kind is sacrificed for present enjoyment; and instead of life being controlled and governed by fundamental and abiding principles, the mass of mankind are mere creatures of impulse, actuated by the wants and wishes of the present hour; and there are many craven, cowardly spirits who are ever ready to ask themselves what would such an one think were

I to do so and so, than to inquire earnestly, with an open heart and a willing mind, "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*"

No wonder, then, that so many are groping their way in midnight darkness. We would seek to reach such, and try to arouse them to a sense of their danger. We would place before them *higher motives*, and give their life a *nobler aim*; we would seek to awaken within them a desire for *truth*, a longing after *heavenly wisdom*, a thirst for divine knowledge. Incline your ear and come to Jesus; listen to the call; hear, and your soul shall live. Isa. lv. 1. Shall love so generous, so divine, awaken no response in your souls?

Let me remind you of the solemn truth that *your* day of grace and *mine* will soon terminate, and the record be forever closed.

There was an incident connected with the loss of the steamer "Central America" which it may not be inappropriate to mention here. Some years ago, in a place of public worship, a stranger arose and begged the privilege to speak, announcing himself as captain of a vessel then in port, and a professor of the religion of Christ. "I wish," says he, "to warn the impenitent here that delays are dangerous. It is not safe to put off until to-morrow what ought to be done this day. It was my lot, when sailing, to fall in with that ill-fated steamer the 'Central America.' The night was closing in, the waves rolling high, but I hailed the crippled steamer and asked if they needed help. 'I am in a sinking condition,' cried Captain Herndon. 'Had you not better send your passengers on board now?' I replied. 'Will you not lay by me until morning?' responded Captain Herndon. 'I will try,' I replied; 'but had you not better send your passengers on board?' 'Lay by me till morning,' again said Captain Herndon. I made the effort to lay by him, but at night, with such a sea rolling, no vessel could control its position, and I never saw the steamer more. In one hour and a half after the captain said, 'Lay by me till morning,' the vessel, with its living freight, went down, and he himself, with a great majority of his passengers and crew, were confined in the deep. So much for procrastination. But for this delay the entire crew and passengers of the 'Central America' might have been saved. Sinners, when urged to immediate repentance, don't

say to beseeching friends, to offered mercy, to a striving Spirit, 'Not now; lay by me longer still, till I have a convenient time.' "

Behold! *now* is the accepted time, and *now* is the day of salvation. What more can be said to urge on you the necessity of an *immediate* acceptance of the proffered mercy? The present moment alone is yours. Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. The Church is commissioned to say come, and to-day the invitation is made to you, "Come with us and we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."

Shall these words of warning be allowed to die away on the wind, and no echo in your hearts answer the entreaties of Jehovah's Spirit? Let me urge on you, as one who has felt the power of divine truth on my own heart, "Be ye reconciled to God." Repent and believe the Gospel, the good news that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses. And here let me define what we understand by repentance. Some think it simply sorrow for sin, but the Scripture says, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance" (2 Cor. vii. 10); hence it is more than sorrow for sin,—it is a forsaking of sin, a turning away from it, a renouncing of sin, and a consecration to God through faith and obedience. It is not a dead, inoperative thing, but such as John the Baptist describes,—that bringeth forth fruits meet for repentance.

God is waiting to be gracious, not willing that any should perish, but that all should turn unto Him and live. Reject not, I entreat you, the offered mercy. Pardon and forgiveness are held out to you, and eternal life in the kingdom of God's dear Son. Through the first Adam we inherit frail, mortal, perishing bodies, subject to trials, perplexities, disease, and death; and it is only through Christ Jesus we can have *deliverance*; for there is no other name given under heaven and among men whereby we can be saved. He is the Prince of Life, the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him. If we want eternal life we must accept of it in God's own way. It is not ours to make or change the divine plan; we can only accept or reject the offered mercy.

When Naaman the Syrian came to Elisha the prophet to

be cleansed of his leprosy, the command, "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean," appeared unreasonable, and *Naaman was wroth*. 2 Kings v. 12. And so with many an one covered with the leprosy of sin. The deadly disease is gnawing at their vitals, while death, the wages of sin, is staring them in the face. There is only one way of escape,—one Deliverer; and still fallen men are ever trying to change Jehovah's plan and suggest other ways. But still the Word of God remains the same,—“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned.” We entreat you, therefore, to believe the record which God has given of His Son, and be baptized in His name for the remission of your sins. Put off the old man with his deeds, be renewed in the spirit of your minds, live godly and righteously in this present evil world, and wait patiently for the glory to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is heaven's appointed plan; are you willing to close with the offer of salvation and become an heir of eternal life,—an heir of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ, when He shall come to restore all things spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began? For the heavens will receive Him *until* that time of restitution, and *then* He will come, for the Lord is not slack concerning His promises as men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 2 Pet. iii. 9. But the day of the Lord will come, and come as a thief in the night,—are *you* ready for that day? No one can tell how soon it may come. And how fearful to be caught unprepared! Are we building on the Rock, Christ? Other foundation can no man lay than what is laid, that is Christ. But let every man take heed how he builds thereon, for the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. The wood, hay, stubble, will be consumed, but the precious stones will be enduring. Friends, on what do your hopes rest? Have you accepted Jesus as your Life-giver? Have you believed God's Word, and are you trusting in His promises? Or are you among those who are making void God's Word by holding the traditions of men? Remember what Christ said to the Jews,—“In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Matt.

xv. 9. This shows us that there is a *vain worship*, and it consists in teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, which subvert God's plan.

No sooner had Adam transgressed God's law in *Paradise* than he was expelled from Eden's fair garden; but we must view this as an loving act of a tender parent to a *fallen* son. Let the language of the Almighty be a key to the motive by which He was actuated, and be it remembered that immediately after the transgression, and just before the expulsion, God had made known His gracious purpose that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head,—thereby denoting the *final* and *utter extinction* of evil at some period, however remote. Of this purpose and design on the part of the Almighty we have *abundant, clear,* and positive testimony both in the writings of the Old and New Testaments. See Gen. iii. 15; Psa. cxlv. 20; Malachi iv. 1; Heb. xii. 29, and ii. 14. Rev. i. 18, and v. 13. And in order to carry out this *benevolent* and GRACIOUS purpose on the part of the Creator, the expulsion of Adam became a necessity. It was a prominent link in the continuous chain of man's redemption. Hence we are prepared to understand God's own language as recorded in Gen. iii. 22,—“Now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: *therefore*”—please mark the language, *therefore*, on that account—“the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from where *he was taken.*”—LOWLY ORIGIN!—“So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” Thus we see that the final *extinction of evil* and the *expulsion of Adam* from his primeval abode are very *intimately* connected. The alliance is close and inseparable, and when viewed in this light, instead of the expulsion being an act of vengeance, we can only regard it as the operation of God's *benignity*; and as intelligent believers we can only thank God that He “drove out the man,” and join in a loud and joyous anthem to Him whose mercy endureth forever, and who so loved and pitied our fallen race that He sent His Son, *His well-beloved and only-begotten Son*, into the world “not to condemn the world, but that”—observe the language, *but that*, this is Jehovah's object and in-

tention in sending His Son,—namely, that “the world through Him might be saved.” John iii. 17. Oh, *infinite goodness!* UNBOUNDED LOVE! But a false system of theology has perverted the Word, and with *unhallowed, unsanctified, and profane* imagery, represented the Father as *vindictive* and *implacable*, whose indignation and ire could only be modified by the “*rich drops of Jesus’ blood.*” This system of theology says God loves the world because Jesus died! The blessed Word says Jesus died *because God loved* the world, and loved it *so much* that He gave His Son to die that *whosoever*—this word, whosoever, includes you and me and every one—that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but have everlasting life.

Do *you* want everlasting life,—incorruptibility in the kingdom of God? Do you want to live *on* and *on* during the endless ages of eternity. in the *new earth*, and the *Paradise of God*, in the society of Jesus and the redeemed of every age and clime, where there is no more pain, nor sorrow, nor death; for the former things will have passed away? If so, you can secure this inheritance. Jesus died for *you* that *you* might live,—*live forever!* The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. “And *this is the record*, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” 1 John v. 11, 12. Do you believe the record? John says, “*this is the record.*” Do you believe it? Do not, I beseech you, try to evade the question; be honest with yourselves! Remember that without faith it is *impossible* to please God. And remember also the apostle’s definition of faith,—“Now faith is the substance”—the ground or confidence—“of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Heb. xi. 1.

Do *you* hope for eternal life through the Son of God; or do you vainly flatter yourself by the idea of inherent immortality? Faith is the belief of what God says in His written Word. “These are written,” says the Scripture, “that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ. the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.” John xx. 31. The Christ is the Anointed, the Messiah (John i. 41, and margin).

This is the *promise* that He hath promised us, even *eternal life.* 1 John ii. 25. What are the terms or conditions of the

promise? Faith and obedience. He that believeth the Gospel, and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be condemned. If we believe the witness of men the witness of God is greater, *infinitely greater*. Let us set to our seal "*that God is true.*" John iii. 33.

Now remember that through Jesus Christ is this day preached to you the *forgiveness* of sins. Acts xiii. 38. May Christ never say to you as He said unto the Jews,—“Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.” He offers it to you freely in His Word, without money and without price, but you must *come* to Him for it. “And 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.” Rev. xxii. 17.

Oh! say will you go to our Eden home, where sin and sorrow are unknown, and bask in the bright sunlight of eternal day?

“No chilling winds or poisonous breath
Can reach that blissful shore;
There sin and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more.”

To you who have believed the record which God has given of His Son,—to you let me say. “Hold fast the beginning of your confidence.” Truth is mighty and will prevail, and let me add, it needs no man’s patronage, but he who rejects it does so at his peril. No man liveth to himself, and this is especially true of all who are enlightened by divine truth. The religion of Jesus is a companionable religion; it is not enough for a man to embrace the truth himself, he must disseminate it abroad; he is not only a receptacle of the light, he must also diffuse it to those around him. He must add to his faith fortitude, and that fortitude enables him to exclaim, “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul.” Or again, in the language of the Psalmist, “Come, praise the Lord with me, let us exalt His name together.” And the divine approval has been given to this social intercourse. for we read, “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them

that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Malachi iii. 16, 17. In this age of formal religion, when the mass of professors are abandoned to speculation, and when the Word of God is so generally perverted, it becomes all who know and love God's Word to openly confess it.

"Whosoever," says Jesus, "shall be ashamed of me and of my words, . . . of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." Mark viii. 38. From this we see the importance of openly avowing the *words and doctrine* of Christ. Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Rom. i. 16. And why should any man be ashamed of such a Gospel? A Gospel which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" is a glorious Gospel. Let us cling to it and cherish it as the bulwark of our faith and hope. Christ says, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. . . . For without me ye can do nothing." John xv. 4, 5. And John says, in his second epistle, 8th and 9th verses, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." Could language stronger and more forcible than these words of the apostle be used to set forth the importance, yea, the absolute *necessity* of receiving the doctrine of Christ and abiding in it? It is hardly possible to realize the grandeur of your position as believers, and the importance of the work assigned you.—both to work out your own salvation in the way indicated, and also to bear testimony for Jesus by witnessing for the truth.

Christianity, or the religion of Jesus, divested of the false and superstitious dogmas which human tradition has added on to it, is a grand and ennobling subject for human study and reflection. Giving strength to the intellect, purifying, elevating, and refining the sentiments, it presents the Deity to us in

the most attractive, tender, and endearing view as a compassionate, loving Father who has a Father's interest in His children and a Father's concern for their welfare and happiness. His is not the blind impulse of a weak, ignorant, earthly parent, but a clear-sighted, comprehensive purpose, such as might reasonably be expected in a God who is supremely good. His mind alone can fathom the wants of the human heart, and comprehend with unerring accuracy, because seeing with unobscured vision capable of declaring the end from the beginning. Such is the Being revealed to us in the Bible, and although our weak finite minds cannot grasp the infinite Being, still we see so much of the wonders and varieties of His creative power to deeply impress us with a sense of His greatness; and through His infinite goodness and condescension He has made known to us, in His written Word, enough of His character, His designs and purposes, to inspire us with filial trust and confidence in the full accomplishment of all His promises, which promises not only concern "the life that now is," but also extend far beyond the present order of things into "the dispensation of the fulness of times," when every opposing influence will, ultimately, be subdued, the incorrigible destroyed, and peace, truth, and goodness shall dwell in every heart. Hence, in view of this, let us give heed to

A NOTE OF WARNING—AN APPEAL TO BE READY.

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."—Rev. xvi. 15.

The coming of Christ is much talked of at present among professors of religion in very many denominations where such a thing was unheard of before; but it is painful to think of the crude, and erroneous ideas they have on the subject, and one is at a loss to imagine what there is in it to excite *their* interest, or to make it in any way desirable to them; the whole thing is so utterly incongruous.

If, as they believe, all down through the ages, men have been dying, and going to heavenly glory, where they tune golden lyres, and wear golden crowns, constantly receiving new

accessions to their numbers, and thus breaking the monotony by personal recognition of those who follow them to those Elysian fields of perennial bliss. If such were the case, we cannot imagine how they should desire a change, or what they would gain in leaving the courts of heaven, for an abode on the earth, even in its renewed state. But in this, as in many other things, the actions and imaginations of men are unaccountable on any principle of reason, or sound judgment, and may best be described in the language of Paul, in speaking of the Gentiles. "Carried away unto these dumb idols, even as they were led." 1 Cor. xii. 2. This implies a blind following, without any intelligent apprehension on their part, or an ability to assign a reason for being thus led.

In contrast with this, how very different is the condition of those whose minds are enlightened in the knowledge of divine things. They realize the death state, in which the saints of all ages are held prisoners, and in which they would forever remain, but for the coming of the anointed One—"The Prince of Life." To them the Advent of Christ is a necessity, without which they would be destitute of hope. They understand that the summarizing of Scripture teaching on this head is no advent, no resurrection, and no resurrection, no future life. Hence the *importance* and the *necessity* of the second coming of the Son of man.

As we are all well convinced that the Lord is coming, and coming soon, coming as a thief in the night. Suddenly, without outward observation, let us turn our attention to the all-important part as it concerns us, namely, a brief consideration of the need of watchfulness, and for what purpose?

"Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

No sooner had man sinned in Paradise than the need of something to conceal his nakedness became felt, but the means adopted by the guilty pair were wholly inadequate for the purpose, and so in spiritual things, the various devices tried by man to hide his shame, have at best been shallow expedients which expose his true condition, and add to his guilt.

If a sin covering had not been provided by God, it would

have been altogether different; and God in His abundant goodness thus pleads with man, in his abject condition.

“I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich, and *white* raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.” Rev. iii. 18. With such a generous invitation as this, what excuse can at last be found for any appearing without a wedding garment on? and the sad thing of it is that this language was addressed to the church of the Laodiceans, who imagined themselves “rich and increased with goods, having need of nothing.”

Oh, the infatuation of the human heart!! Self-deception is a fearful thing; let us pray God that we may be delivered from its deadly influence.

Let us not settle down in a self-complacent spirit, congratulating ourselves that we know the way of life, forgetting that the greater will be our condemnation if we are not living up to our privileges. As we travel along life’s journey, are we *watching*, and keeping our garments? in obedience to the admonition of the Word, “Let thy garments be always white.” Eccl. ix. 8. White raiment is appropriate for the saints of God. The phrase is significant of moral purity—“unspotted from the world.”

When John was privileged with a vision of future glory, the seven angels he beheld coming out of the temple were “clothed in PURE and WHITE linen” (Rev. xv. 6), and the “armies in heaven are represented as clothed in fine linen, *white* and *clean*.” Rev. xix. 14. And of the Bride, the Lamb’s wife, it is said, “To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, *clean and white*, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” Rev. xix. 8.

How much instruction is found in the message of Christ to the Church in Sardis. “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.” Rev. iii. 4. “He that overcometh the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels.” Rev. iii. 5.

Brethren, what an impressive lesson this ought to teach us! Do we need any further argument to convince us of the need of watchfulness? What a fearful thing to think of even the possi-

bility of any of us having our names blotted out of the Book of Life! What a spectacle of shame and disgrace before men and angels. Nevertheless such will be our fate if we prove unfaithful, and allow our garments to become defiled with the corrupt ways of the world.

John says, "The whole world lieth in wickedness." Do we believe his testimony? If we do, shall we willingly ally ourselves to its institutions, take an active part in its politics, and seek our pleasure in its questionable amusements and frivolities?

Brethren, I am impelled to speak a word of warning to you because I believe that in these perilous times there is great danger of some becoming too complacent and easy-minded, as though they had already attained; and so fall from their own steadfastness.

I tell you the truth, to be a witness for Christ in these times requires great firmness of character. Resolute for God and duty. There is no place for supineness in this warfare, and if any make shipwreck I am resolved they shall not do so unwarned by me. Fearful is the doom of the watchman who proves unfaithful of his trust. Listen to the Word of the Lord by the prophet Ezekiel:

"When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die: and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life: the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."

Again, "When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die; because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness, which he hath done, shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

"Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul." Ezek. iii. 18.

I tell you the truth, brethren, there is no use in us com-

forting our hearts with God's gracious promises of consideration and recognition, unless we comply with the stipulated conditions. It is utter folly to deceive ourselves in this matter, the consequences involved are too momentous to be trifled with.

If we are to "keep ourselves unspotted from the world," we will have great need to be watchful of the company we keep. In this we ought to make David's experience our own. He said,

"With persons vain I have not sat,
Nor with dissemblers gone,
The assembly of ill men I hate,
To sit with such I shun."

The unholy brag and bluster of campaign work, as it is carried on and the ribaldry, and bribe-taking which too often characterizes and disgraces the halls of National and State Legislation, would ill accord with the "chaste conversation, coupled with fear," which becomes the prospective bride of Christ.

One of the State Legislators told me himself that sometimes members would express themselves in such indecent language that before giving it utterance they would have to look over the hall to see whether any ladies were present, and those expressions were followed by a loud laugh, which spoke something worse than a "vacant mind."

Who would want to tarnish his reputation by such associations?

If David had been compelled to listen to such, we might hear him say,

"Rivers of waters from mine eyes
Did run down, when I saw
How wicked men run on in sin,
And do not keep thy law."

And again, "Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men, in whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes, but as for me, I will walk in mine integrity; redeem me, and be merciful unto me." Psalm xxvi. 9.

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the

seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth He meditate day and night." Psa. i. 1. This is the proper frame of mind to cultivate, and these the meditations to indulge in, if we are daily looking for the Lord. The allurements of the world will have no charms for us, and its vain honors we will despise. If political preferments are thrust upon us, let us sternly reply, It is written, "If sinners entice thee consent thou not." Prov. i. 10. A few such rebuffs as this and the devil will leave us; and behold, angels will come, and minister unto us.

Oh, my brethren, I am anxious to show you this, and what grand possibilities you are throwing away if you stoop to parley with the world; and especially those of you who have children, who need to be "brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. vi. 4. If you neglect this now it is at your peril, and may give you days of grief and sorrow, when it is too late to recall lost opportunities.

The Lord is coming! Who knows how soon? Are we ready to meet Him? Momentous question, before which everything else pales, and sinks into insignificance. But let us ever remember that eternal destinies are suspended on present actions. It is a fearful thing to think of and invests our everyday life with a grandeur and an importance beyond the sphere of angels.

To look at this from a human stand-point alone, we should be overwhelmed. But then come sweet words of comfort to the believing, trusting soul, saying, "In me is thine help." Hosea xiii. 9. And then we think of David's prayer, "What time my heart is overwhelmed and in perplexity, lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Psa. lxi. 2.

The need of watchfulness is further apparent from the fact that over twenty times it is urged in the New Testament by Christ and His apostles, shall we, brethren, give heed to the admonition? It applies to every one of us.

"Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."

Two days before the passover feast, when Christ suffered for us, He spoke the following memorable words to His disciples, "Watch ye, therefore; for ye know not when the Master

of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto *all* watch." *All*, all my disciples in all time, and Peter says, "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless." And again, "Seeing that ye know these things before, *beware* lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Let me therefore enter

AN APPEAL TO SERVICE.

"He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully."

My Friends, the lesson I now offer is very brief, but very significant. What I shall say is in the fear of God and the love of Christ, and I trust you will listen to me patiently and without prejudice; a prejudiced mind cannot be benefited.

Christ's utterances are very pointed, and never more so, than when He said, "If any man serve me let him follow me." John xii. 26. "If any man serve me, him will my Father honor." There is a depth of meaning in this short sentence which is not seen at first sight. It distinguishes the service which Christ demands, and which alone can be acceptable to Him.

There are many kinds of service. There is the self-righteous service, the mechanical service, the service of the outer man, without the glad service of the heart. There is willing service, and reluctant service; there is acceptable service, and service that however specious it may appear to men, will in the end be rejected as it does not meet the divine requirements.

It is to be feared that many are trying to serve God without having fully apprehended this great principle. They are vainly endeavoring to serve Christ in this way and that, of their own choosing, without giving due consideration to the condition herein involved. "If any man serve me, let him follow me."

It is this following of Christ which gives the motive power,

and coloring to the service rendered, which makes it acceptable, and without which the whole becomes a vain show of will worship, in a round of services easily performed; very pleasing and very popular but which will sooner or later, be scattered to the winds.

It grieves our hearts when we think of how many poor souls are endeavoring to serve God in the spirit of bondage, of dread and gloom; and some in the spirit of self-will. Such services are dishonoring to Him. Christ came to emancipate and enlighten men, and it is the loving service of such souls *who follow Him* that He desires. Hearts consecrated to His service through the consciousness of having been redeemed by His precious blood; and that they owe everything they are, and all they hope to be, to the free grace of Almighty God, thus dispensed through the Son of His love. The true service of Christ is a suffering service, and there is where so many turn back and walk no more with Him.

A servant. That implies obedience. If any man serve me, let him follow me. Not a set routine of prayer and praise, that could be easily done, but this following Jesus implies much more. It implies going down with Him to shame and ignominy, and perhaps death.

“If any man will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” Matt. xvi. 24. This means active service, toilsome service, cross-bearing service. Do not think these terms severe, they are coupled with the promise, “My grace is sufficient for you.” 2 Cor. xii. 9. It is a great mistake to think that zeal and fervor will take the place of obedience; God has made no such provision in His Word, on the contrary, He requires of all His people to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world. Even Christ Himself “although He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.” Heb. v. 8.

This obedience is everywhere demanded. Jesus says, “Why call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” Luke vi. 46. And again, “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” John xv. 14.

There is nothing so common in the religious world as self-deception, and the more zealous and fanatical the person is, the greater the liability to self-deception. The devout Catholic who goes to early mass at five o'clock in the morning, goes home self-satisfied that a religious duty, of saving power, has been performed, which will bridge over the snares of the devil till the next time comes for a repetition of the same will-worship.

The quiet unostentatious service of God, doing His will, from an humble loving heart, directed by enlightened judgment, meets the divine approval.

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” Matt. vii. 21.

The quiet, prayerful, trusting mother, bowed down with grief, nursing by the bedside of her sick child or husband, may serve God better, and more acceptably than any service rendered in court or temple.

Our attention is called to many worthy examples of faith, of patience, of trust and suffering, recorded in the Word of God; and Paul in writing to the church at Philippi says “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example, for our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” Phil. iii. 17. But we must remember there is only One perfect example, the spotless Son of God, of whom Peter says, “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.” 1 Peter ii. 21. And He says, “If any man serve me, let him follow me.” What an illustrious example to follow!

But alas, alas, how far short we all come of the Bright Example set before us! O, brethren, let us cry mightily to God for greater spirituality, more conformity to His Word. But I must remind you and myself, that the Word is nigh us, and it is all written there, and in order to be spiritually-minded we must conform to the dictates of the Spirit as recorded in the Word. There is no proposition plainer than this, none more obvious. It has a strong claim on our attention, may it receive the attention that its importance demands.

Paul, in his usual affectionate, fatherly style, entreats the Ephesians to be "Followers of God as dear children." Eph. v. 1, How can we be followers of God? In one way and one only, by following the Lord Jesus Christ. He came to reveal the Father unto us; He was the brightest manifestation of divine wisdom and goodness the world ever beheld. The Father dwelt in Him; He spake the words of God; and performed the work which the Father had given Him to do. To such an extent was this so that He could say, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father," and hence to follow Jesus is to be followers of God.

Man cannot be called to any higher honor than to follow such a Leader as this. Strange that the fact is not better apprehended by some who seek to serve Him. He was the true Light, which, coming into the world, enlightens every man who will be enlightened by it. The bright effulgence of that light followed Him through life. It shined in all His words and actions, and while He delivered His heavenly messages, and performed His stupendous miracles, His humility was unequalled. He said, "I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak." John xii. 49. What an example of humility is here set before us. A being possessed of such wondrous power, and putting Himself in the form of a servant. This has no parallel. Oh, blessed Son of God, we adore thee for the greatness of thy power, and for the greatness of thy humility. If we follow the Lord with a true heart, in the spirit of meekness and humility which He ever manifested, we will on the first token of repentance, forgive one another as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us. There will then be harmony, peace will reign supreme; and our united efforts will once more go forth for the spread of the truth, and the welfare of one another, and the glory of God.

Following Jesus involves truthfulness which knows not a shadow of wavering, it involves integrity which is unbending; a fearless sincerity from which no frown of man can swerve us, or the blandishments of the world seduce us. In following Jesus we must cultivate the spirit of meekness, forbearance and compassion which characterized His life and conduct. It is,

however, a great mistake to think that meekness means supineness; it is by no means incompatible with the stern rebuke of wrong-doing. Who was so meek as Moses? and yet when he came down from the mount and came nigh unto the camp of Israel and saw what the people had done, and the golden calf which they had made, Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them to pieces; although immediately after we find him entreating the Lord on their behalf. To follow Jesus, is not only to imitate His example but to teach and inculcate the doctrines, duties and motives, which He taught and practiced, and adorn the same by consistent lives, living "Soberly, righteously and godly in the world;" with a mind raised above its vanities and corruptions, showing truly consecrated lives, which give spiritual activity in every hour and power in every act.

It is no difficult thing to follow Christ in baptism for example, which is only a single act, and easily performed, and then obey Him in a few other things which do not require any special sacrifice on our part; such service is not acceptable to God. "His commandment is exceeding broad." Psalm cxix. 96. And Christ's instructions to his apostles, sent to make disciples of all nations, were "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Matt. xxviii. 20.

He who would follow Christ aright must be single-hearted, and sincere in studying the Word as to his rule of duty. In all family, social, and religious compacts, there are rules to govern the members in their intercourse one with another; God in like manner, has made special provision for the government and discipline of His Church; and when we ignore or transgress those requirements, and substitute our own methods, then we are not following Christ; but on the contrary showing a want of reverence to His expressed will, for which no gratuitous service of ours will ever compensate.

Friends, the problem that presents itself to us at this time, is simply this, As the objects of redeeming love what can we do to further our own and one another's spiritual welfare? An heavenly calling and an high destiny has been set before us, and we are in great danger of coming short of it. The Scriptures abound with examples of faith, of patience, of compassion and

charity; and added to all we have that bright pattern of the Christian life in the Son of God, whose example has no rival; who asks us to follow Him; and it is only by following Him that we can reach the goal. With such motives to spiritual activity, are we ready right now to accept His yoke, lay aside every weight and run the race with renewed ardor? Let us follow Him as far as our feeble powers, our imperfect natures and ability will permit, remembering the claims He has on us for our reverence, obedience, imitation and love.

He instructed the ignorant, let us make our light shine by trying to displace the false doctrines concerning God and His purposes; the nature of man and his destiny. The love He showed toward His enemies, may we show to ours, and extend forgiveness to all who confess wrong doing, and show signs of true repentance. He went about continually doing good, and showing unflinching compassion to the weak, the fallen and the suffering. Let us imitate Him in acts of benevolence, compassion and long-suffering; and thus render the service He desires in return for the rich grace, mercy and love bestowed on us.

The young also need our earnest attention. I think it will not be out of place to add a few thoughts given before the Y. M. C. A. in the city of Burlington, entitled:

AN APPEAL TO YOUNG MEN.

“He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise.”—Prov. xiii. 20

Young men of Burlington:—I congratulate you as to the beautiful city in which you live; beautiful in its location, its elevation, its well shaded avenues, its elegant homes, its ample lawns, its schools, colleges, libraries, and this grand Y. M. C. A. building, which a generous public has provided for your use. These are privileges to be highly prized, and if wisely used, ought to have a powerful influence in forming your characters, and fitting you for the conflict of life.

Through the kind courtesy of your Mr. Gibson, I am invited to address you briefly. I gladly accept the invitation, as it is always a pleasant task to address young men, and young women too, and I am sorry that none of them are here to-day.

You have doubtless from time to time had the advice of

old men heaped upon you, the same things repeated over and over again, until they have become tiresome. Do not imagine I am going to subject you to such an infliction. I shall rather endeavor to throw out a few hints, and suggest a few problems for you to work out and elaborate at your leisure. After all, the one great problem which involves, and overshadows all others, is the problem of life—how to make it a success.

I am well aware that many young men feel discouraged when they read of how few comparatively succeed in any one pursuit or avocation of life, but that need not discourage you, but on the contrary stimulate you to discover the reason why so many fail, and in this way their failure may assure your success.

A little investigation, I believe, will suffice to show that they were not possessed of the necessary outfit. There are certain elements which enter into this composition, and if any of them are wanting failure is liable to follow.

First comes thorough preparation for your particular calling, whatever that may be. A man should not rest until he is master of it, and then come the necessary qualifications to conduct that craft or profession to a successful termination. These qualifications are, first of all *principle*, and without that no one has a right to succeed. Then comes good judgment, quick, and clear perception, these give a man tact in managing any business, and then an indomitable will-power, that will insure *push* and perseverance to overcome difficulties.

Then, again, few men are aware of the latent powers they possess. Young men seldom realize their own capabilities, and hence we find so many with an ill-defined purpose in their minds, which is not strong enough to control them. They are ever fluctuating; never find any solid anchorage anywhere, they are driven hither and thither impelled by external circumstances. Impressed by a powerful religious speaker they form good resolutions, and are sincere in their resolves to reform, but no sooner does temptation, in some form or another, present itself, than they stumble and fall; they have no root in themselves. The devil is likely to get the blame of it all, but I tell you it is will-power they lack, and this will-power can be cultivated and strengthened until it becomes *invincible*, or it can be neglected, wasted and destroyed, leaving a moral wreck behind.

The apostle James, in his practical epistle says, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed." Most of you have stood on the ocean's beach, or the banks of your own Lake Champlain and seen the waves tossed hither and thither, the sport of the wind, and such is man impelled by external influences, and devoid of power within.

There are two great enemies to success, and human progress abroad in the land to-day, the liquor habit, and the nicotine habit. The evil consequences of these destructive habits are incalculable. To impress this on your minds, I shall here relate a few instances that came under my own observation.

I tell you, young men, if you learn how to govern yourselves, there are vast possibilities within your reach that may be unfolded in your lives. There are prizes along life's highway, but they are for men of keen discernment, quick perception, men of thought, men of action.

There are two books that I would suggest to you to read if you have not already read them; one is, *The Life of Benjamin Franklin*, the other, "Success, and Its Achievers," by Wm. M. Thayer. Published by A. M. Thayer & Co., Boston.

But worldly achievements, no matter how prosperous, do not constitute a successful life. You may acquire the wealth of a Gould, or a Vanderbilt, and your life may after all be a conspicuous failure.

I call that man poor, who has not learned to study God's Word intelligently.

The Bible is God's storehouse, and O, what an inexhaustible treasure house it is, to which we may ever come for fresh supplies. We are impure, and there we learn how to cleanse our ways. We are ignorant and the entrance of His words give light. They make wise the simple. We are weak, and there we get spiritual strength. Oh! how my heart rises in gratitude to God for His great kindness and condescension in giving us a revelation of His mind and will, making known unto us His own character and attributes, as well as His wise and gracious purposes concerning our race, and the world we inhabit. Does this not show His fatherly care over us? He does not want us to be in ignorance of Himself, and He has even taken us into

His confidence, and revealed His plans to us for a long time to come. It is true He claims our homage, but is it not that He may thereby raise us to Himself? It would be no satisfaction to Him to have His footstool worn by the knees of a myriad of slaves, who would crouch in terror beneath His sovereign power. He wants the loving homage of sons and daughters who will reflect His image.

In view of this, is it not very dishonoring to God when men neglect His Word, treat it as a book that cannot be understood, and slander it as some do by comparing it to an old violin on which you can play any tune you please? Such persons would not treat a common dime novel as they treat the Bible, judging from the numbers that are sold, I take it that they read enough of them to become interested in them. How can people expect to understand the Bible who mutilate it, taking a small portion here, and another there, without any reference to their connection?

Allow me to suggest a few simple rules that may aid you in studying the Bible.

1st. Study it with a reverent and earnest desire to understand its meaning unprejudiced by preconceived opinions.

2nd. Never do violence to the known rules of language.

3rd. Never sacrifice the plain to the obscure or bend the general tenor of Scripture to a few isolated texts, but such rules are of little avail, so long as popular fallacies silence God's Word.

Christ charged the Jews in His day, with having made void the Word of God through their traditions. He said, "In vain do they worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

Popular creeds have ever been a hindrance to the reception of the Gospel of Christ in its beautiful simplicity. Men's minds are darkened through the teachings of Socrates and Plato, that inherent immortality is the present possession of all men. This doctrine has usurped the divine teaching that Jesus only has immortality and that He will confer it on those only who are God's adopted children, through faith and obedience.

"The soul that sinneth it shall die." Ezek. xviii. 4. "The

wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 23.

The believer's life is hid with Christ in God, and when He who is our life shall appear, *then* shall we also appear with Him in glory." *Then*, and not till then; believers are only heirs now, not possessors.

In 1 John ii. 25, we read, "And this is the promise He hath promised us, even eternal life."

Titus i. 2, "In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began."

Titus iii. 7, "Being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

1 John v. 11, "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in His Son."

CHAPTER XIV.

ORACLES OF GOD.

“If any man speak let him speak as the Oracles of God.”—1 Peter v. 11.

HERE is a rule of universal application, one that we have always with us, one that never changes. It is the Lord Himself who speaks to us through those oracles, and this thought ought to make us listen very attentively and tremble if we are not in line with the truth. His Spirit enlightened and inspired the prophets of old; He communicated to them His will and purposes. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter i. 21. Their words were words of precision and accuracy, measured by divine rule; not random and vague utterances to suit a certain occasion, but written for all time, and alike binding on all embraced in the conditions, wherever on earth's surface their home may be, whether in the frigid or the torrid zone.

This same apostle who took pains to tell us how prophecy came in old time, seeks to impress on the Church the power and solemnity of the words spoken, tracing them back from man to God: the source of all purity; the fountain-head of all truth.

Knowing the vagaries of the human mind, and the liability to substitute some human invention, the product of the fleshly mind, plausible and fascinating to the thinkings of the flesh; he sounds the solemn warning, “If any man speak let him speak as, or in conformity to, the oracles of God,” and then follows the object or incentive to such conformity, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever Amen.” No thoughtful student of the Word will have any difficulty in seeing the connection between such conformity and the glory of God.

If a desire for the glory of God were ever uppermost in our minds, many words would remain unspoken. Untruthful

words are an abomination to the Lord; and a hasty spirit He condemns.

“Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God.” Eccl. v. 2.

The town clerk of Ephesus, although an idolater, could teach a lesson of moderation to many professors of the religion of Christ. Acts xix. 36.

The oracles of God. What an example of correct teaching! What an object lesson is held out before us, in which, by careful study, we may discover our own deformity, and be elevated to a higher plane by a contemplation of the divine. Here is a record of what God has done for man; there a prophecy of what He intends to do.

Here a word of comfort to the drooping despondent soul; there a word of censure for wrong-doing, and earnest warning to the wayward, the thoughtless, and to all who are out of the way.

Now if God has been so condescending as to give us such a revelation, the plain inference is that we ought to be very painstaking in studying its divine instruction, and earnest in teaching that word to others; and especially the imperative duty of parents to teach it to their children. If this work was more faithfully done how much personal mortification and heart-burning might be prevented in after years.

I am afraid we too often forget the requirements of God to the children of Israel to teach His statutes to their children. These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” Deut. vi. 6. We see from that that no opportunity was to be lost in seeking to instruct the young mind. With the temptations of to-day how much more needful to give such instruction, with increasing earnestness and prayer. Now if God has stooped down to us with a revelation of His will, for the beneficent purpose of raising us up to Himself through such instrumentality, shall we deprive ourselves of the proffered blessing by becoming restive and impatient of the corrections of the word? Should we not rather in humbleness of mind desire a greater knowledge of His Word and a growing conformity there-

to? The man who will speak as the oracles of God dictate, may expect much opposition, and perhaps abuse, but that is part of his patrimony; and duty must not be neglected at any hazard. God's instructions are, "Speak all the words that I command thee to speak unto them, *diminish not a word.*" Jere. xxvi. 2. "And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." Ezek. ii. 7. The servant of God has to do his duty; he is not accountable for results.

The oracles of God tolerate no wrong-doing and sternly require repentance, and a return to moral rectitude to insure the forgiveness and acceptance of God.

"He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons with God." Col. iii. 25; Rom. ii. 11.

"If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God." How do the oracles of God speak? They warn, reprove, exhort, admonish, comfort, strengthen, cry aloud, and spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Isaiah lviii. 1. In Paul's charge to the elders of the church of Ephesus (Acts xx. 28) he predicted a fearful condition of things and said, "therefore watch and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

We know not what effect those tears and warnings had on the church, but they enabled Paul at last to say: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

The oracles of God say, "Strengthen ye the weak hand, and confirm the feeble kness, say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you." Isaiah xxxv. 3.

The oracles of God cover up no wrong-doings; conceal no transgressions. Even David, although king of Israel, is not shielded by his position, and Nathan said unto David, "Thou art the man." 2 Sam. xii. 7. The contrition and repentance following had the desired effect and David's sin was forgiven him.

The history of Peter's denial is a wonderful example of human weakness and divine compassion; when on the morning of the third day the Angelic messenger gave the command, "Go tell His disciples *and Peter*, that He goeth before you into Galilee." O, wonderful compassion! Divine love. Peter who denied Him is not forgotten. On the contrary He is singled out. "Go tell His disciples and Peter." Those penitential tears were not shed in vain; and the Master's prayer on his behalf was heard and answered.

Peter might have felt ashamed to meet Him, having denied such a gracious Lord. Hence perhaps the special invitation "Go tell His disciples and Peter," let Peter know the Master has not forgotten him. His love goes out to him and welcomes him back. O, loving God, compassionate Savior! "If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God." Let this be your talisman, your guide, and pattern. Keep in harmony with the truth. This is the best of all harmony. If your name is cast out as evil what of it? Prophets, apostles and Christ Jesus shared the same. The approval of God is sufficient compensation for the reproach of men.

If the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts, and if the lamp of truth is kept burning brightly there, and we come to the house of worship with hearts consecrated and prepared by secret prayer, then we may hope and expect to come together for the better, and not for the worse; otherwise, and it is sad to say it, our labor shall be in vain.

Whatever we do or say let us do and say it in the fear of God and the love of Jesus Christ. If we cannot do this then we had better be silent.

Paul exhorted the church at Thessalonica to warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. 1 Thess. v. 14.

To the church at Corinth he says, "Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be children, but in understanding be men." 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord: and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

"He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully." Jere. xxiii. 28.

Paul's charge to Timothy was "that nothing be done by *partiality*." 1 Tim. v. 21. That is a vital principle the neglect of which produces much harm, and disturbance in the body, no society can long exist or work harmoniously where this principle is violated. Its justness commends itself to all fair-minded persons.

Peter says, "The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer." 1 Pet. iv. 7. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability, which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever, Amen." 1 Pet. iv. 11.

When trials and perplexities surround the child of God, and his name is cast out as evil, it is comforting to turn to the oracles of God, and read of the experience of a true soldier of the cross when he said, "It is a very small thing that I should be judged of man's judgment, but he that judgeth me is the Lord." 1 Cor. iv. 3.

Amidst a whirlwind of opposition the consciousness of moral rectitude has a sustaining power, vouchsafed by the God of all grace, and he comforts himself with the thought that, "Every man shall bear his own burden," Gal. vi. 5, and that "Every one of us shall give account of Himself to God." Rom. xiv. 12.

He knows the secrets of every heart, and the nearer we live to Him, and the closer our communion and intercourse with Him becomes, the more independent we are of outward surroundings. Of these things we can be assured if we

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.

"Search the Scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39.

Nearly nineteen hundred years ago a child was born in Bethlehem, of Judea, whose advent created a sensation throughout the land. Strange tokens appeared at His birth, but very soon the excitement appears to have died out, and little more is heard of Him till He arrived at twelve years of age, and then at the feast of the Passover, in the temple of Jerusalem, He astonished the Doctors of the Law by His questions and answers,

and all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding. Luke ii. 47. Time passed on, and little more is heard of the young Nazarene until He began to be about 30 years of age, Luke iii. 23, at which time He came to John and was baptized of him in Jordan, and then the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and lighted on Him, and lo a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Matt. iii. 16. Succeeding this comes the scene of the temptation in the wilderness. Jesus had fasted 40 days, and the tempter thought it was an opportune time to suggest to command the stones to be made bread; to which Jesus answered, "*It is written*, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Deut. viii. 3. Foiled in this, the tempter suggested that if He were the Son of God, He might manifest it by casting Himself from a pinnacle of the temple. Again Christ replied, "*It is written* "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Deut. vi. 16. A third time the tempter tried to allure Him with the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, if He would only fall down and worship him. Again Christ promptly replied, "*It is written*: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Deut. x. 20. This notable event, together with the scene in the temple referred to, and Christ's conversation with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, Luke xxiv. 27, plainly show that during His private life in Nazareth He had studied well the sacred writings, and His own experience was a bright example of the lesson He afterwards taught the unbelieving Jews, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of me." They were in a doubting, unbelieving condition, and they sent to John to enquire, and he bare witness unto the truth, said Jesus, "but I have greater witness than that of John . . . the Father Himself which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me: Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape, and ye have not His word abiding in you, for whom He hath sent Him ye believe not."

That was a fearful charge, "Ye have not His word abiding in you," and it is sad to think how many are in the same condition to-day. If they had *searched* the Scriptures without prejudice, and desirous of knowing the truth, they would not have

remained in darkness. Did not Moses say, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren like unto me; unto Him shall ye hearken." Deut. xviii. 15. Hence Christ said, "Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me." John v. 46.

Did not Isaiah predict, "A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His name shall be called Immanuel"? Isaiah vii. 14. And Micah predicted the place of His birth, "Bethlehem Ephrathah." Micah v. 2. Isaiah predicted His rejection, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from Him. He was despised, and we esteemed Him not . . . He was oppressed, and He was afflicted yet He opened not His mouth, He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth." Isa. liii. 3.

Did not David foretell, "They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." Psalm lxix. 21. And Christ Himself directed their attention to the prediction of His own rejection. "Did ye never read," said He, "in the Scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner; this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?" Matt. xxi. 42.

But they were blinded. Blinded as to the events of His first coming, just as the people of this day are blinded to the events of His second coming, although both are plainly foretold in the Scriptures. The injunction to "search the Scriptures" is as much needed at the present time as it ever was.

There is no use, however, in asking any to search the Scriptures who do not believe in their divine inspiration, and those who do believe in them as such, should not need to have this obligation *pressed* on their attention.

The Scriptures are read by only a few, and it is one thing to read them, and quite another thing to search them. I want you to get the full import of that word "*search*." It means to study, to examine, to investigate, to scrutinize, to analyze. The weeks, months and years that men frequently spend in scientific research, or it may be only a vagary of their own imagination. The hard application and persevering industry with which they follow it up, ought to be a burning rebuke to men who pro-

fessedly believe in the divine inspiration of the Bible and who will not trouble themselves to investigate its sacred pages. You know the Bereans of old were commended by the apostle, as being more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind and *searched* the Scriptures daily whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed. Acts xvii. 11. Their belief was the result of their searching; and it will be the result of every honest investigation of the Scriptures; and no doubt their faith was firm, deeply rooted. They were not stony ground hearers. In their case, no doubt, the word of the kingdom fell into good and honest hearts, and would spring up unto everlasting life.

Some search with the spirit of opposition and contradiction. Such seldom derive any benefit, although sometimes even they are smitten with the two-edged sword of truth.

One would suppose that it would be unnecessary to urge on any one to search the Scriptures who believes in their divine inspiration, but even this does not appear to be a sufficient inducement. The mass of mankind admit the inspiration of the Word, and appear to be shocked when that is challenged by an avowed infidel, but from some strange infatuation they appear unwilling to trouble themselves to become acquainted with the heavenly message. They profess to believe it as a whole, but do not care to examine any one doctrine. They inherit their religion as they inherit anything else, and do not want to be troubled about it, or have anyone question the foundation of their hope. To do so would be considered a breach of etiquette and etiquette must be maintained even if a soul is lost!

Being persuaded that popular religious belief is unsupported by divine testimony, it has been my practice for nearly half a century to try to induce men to test their beliefs by the divine standard, and while I have succeeded in a goodly number of cases, the large majority turn a deaf ear to all remonstrances, the common objection being that seeing there is such a great diversity of opinion, and such an uncertainty as to who is right, and who is wrong, it is no use trying to determine.

Now we are fully convinced that this is an unwarrantable

and dangerous conclusion to come to. No such uncertainty need exist if people will only divest their minds of prejudice and preconceived opinions and come to an investigation of any subject with an honest desire to understand it, and seek the divine blessing in the effort. It is true, words admit of various interpretations, therefore, in a critical study of the Scriptures every word and sentence must be weighed and carefully considered, and then understood and explained according to the nature of the subject under investigation, taking into account the time *when* it was spoken, by *whom spoken*, and the object and *intention* of the speaker or writer so far as the same can be ascertained.

In reading the Scriptures, we will find some things which were of local, and temporary application, and care must be taken that we do not apply to ourselves language which is totally inapplicable to our time and circumstances. Sometimes persons trusting to marginal references, which are quite unreliable, will confound events which occurred centuries ago in the land of Idumea, or at the destruction of Jerusalem with events connected with and immediately preceding the coming of the Son of Man.

From this you will see plainly that a critical study of the Scriptures implies more than a superficial arrangement of words, such as may be found in marginal references or a concordance. Those helps are not to be despised, but they must not be relied on implicitly, as too often they have been the work of men who themselves were ignorant of the truth, and consequently incapable of teaching others. If a man does not understand God's plans and purposes himself, how can he be expected to teach others?

From a careless, superficial study of the Word, arise many grievous misconceptions which result in false doctrine. This being admitted the remedy becomes apparent, namely, a more critical and careful study of the Word, with a single-hearted and honest purpose to understand its meaning. What is the rule then to be followed? Simply this, to compare spiritual things with spiritual. 1 Cor. ii. 13. Let Scripture interpret Scripture, and always allow the plain to explain the difficult and obscure, and in no case to bend the general strain and

scope of Scripture to a few isolated passages, about the meaning of which there is much doubt, and uncertainty, and even such instances, we have great cause to be thankful, are very rare, but when they do exist, the safe thing to do, is to wait for more light, not that we may expect a new revelation, for that were unwise, but not infrequently the light comes by clearing away the rubbish of ages by which the seemingly difficult portion has been darkened and its beauty obscured; and when such relief is obtained, let us hail it with joy, and lay it among the priceless gems stored in the casket of our memory to be used when occasion requires, so that as Isaiah expresses it, we may "Know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." Methinks there must be many weary souls, if we only knew how to reach them; weary of the doubt and darkness of sectarianism, weary of the heavy burdens it imposes, who grope for the wall like the blind, and grope as if they had no eyes; and stumble at noonday, as in the night. Who are in desolate places as dead men." Isaiah lix. 10. And such is the condition of thousands, and the thought that it was our own condition not so many years ago, ought to make us the more earnest to lend them a helping hand, and no tribute of gratitude for our own deliverance could be more appropriate.

It is much to be deplored that too many persons of a religious turn of mind think that all that is necessary is to read so many chapters of the Bible daily, and that accomplished, their minds are at rest, as having performed their whole duty. I have known many persons who have read the Bible daily for a whole life-time, who were ignorant of the Gospel and the elementary principles of the Christian religion, and why? Is the Word so obscure, so difficult to comprehend? No, not that; but they read it simply as a religious duty, and its words are obscured under a thick veil of human tradition so that their true import cannot be comprehended.

That is a very different matter from searching the Scriptures. The one bears no resemblance to the other. Men have to dig *deep* for knowledge and understanding and search for them as for hid treasure. The words of inspiration are, "My son if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee, so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply

thine heart to understanding. Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God, for the Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous, he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly." Prov. ii. 1.

When men go exploring for gold or silver, or any of the precious metals, they apply themselves to the task with earnestness, camp out nights in cold, cheerless places, and submit to many privations in order to accomplish their purpose. Oh, that men would make one-tenth of the effort to attain to the true riches, which spring up unto everlasting life.

But return to the Savior's example: Oh, how prominently it stands out in the scene of the temptation, already referred to, where we found He met every attempt of the adversary with divine authority, "*It is written.*" That ended all controversy with Him, no parley was tolerated, and why? Because "*It is written,*" was sufficient for Him. Oh, what a precious lesson we have in this bright example of the spotless Son of God. "*It is written*" that is enough. My Father has spoken, and no voice of man, or insinuation of Satanic influence must dare to drown His words, or call His authority in question.

Christ's familiarity with the Scriptures is further illustrated in the conversation He had with two of the disciples on the way to Emmaus already referred to, where it is said, "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke xxiv. 27.

In Paul's second letter to Timothy we find these words, "Study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." But where can we find such a notable example of rightly dividing the word of truth as we have in Luke iv. 18. When Jesus went into the synagogue of Nazareth, where He had been brought up, it was on the Sabbath day, and He stood up for to read, "And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias, and when He had opened the book He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord

is upon me because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." The narrative goes on to say, and He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down, and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him, and He began to say unto them, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." By turning to the prophecy in Isaiah lxi. 1, we find that Jesus stopped in the middle of a sentence, which goes on to say, "and the day of vengeance of our God," and so we see that if He had finished the sentence, He could not have said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." He rightly divided the word, as the second branch of the sentence belongs to His coming "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. ii. 8.

To those who will diligently and prayerfully search the Scriptures a rich mine of treasure will be opened up to them. The Psalms are brimfull of assurances of God's goodness, and the grandest and most cheering exhortations to *trust* and *rejoicing* that were ever penned by the hand of man, "In God is my salvation and my glory, the rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God. Trust in Him at all times, ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us." Psalm lxii. 7, 8. "Be glad in the Lord and rejoice ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart." "Rejoice in the Lord, O, ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright." Psalm xxxii. 11. "O, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." Psalm xxxiv. 8. The young man who will ponder over the book of Proverbs will be well repaid for the research. The snares of youth are there depicted in their true colors, and a fence thrown around the innocent.

While the New Testament epistles contain fit warning and admonitions to every child of God, whether only beginning in the Christian race, or far advanced in the battle of life. The words of Christ apply to all, "Search the Scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which

testify of me." And if anything further is needed to promote a spirit of search, and humble reliance on God's Word, let it be the thought that the Scriptures are able to make men wise unto salvation, having been given by inspiration of God and are 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." 2 Tim. iii. 15.

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

Amidst the many proofs we have of the Divine authenticity of the Scriptures, and the goodness of Him whose gift they are, we cannot overlook the line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept and the principle which characterizes them. Isaiah xxviii. 13.

We sometimes feel impatient, when we see lessons which have been taught again and again *plainly, pointedly*, and which really may be considered rudimental, either forgotten or ignored, but however discouraging this may be, it must not be allowed to form an excuse for neglecting such teaching, nay rather it ought to become an incentive to add more *force* and *pointedness* to the teaching, taking the divine example of "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little."

It seems a weakness or tendency of the human mind to forget those things that demand sacrifice, or are irksome to us, while we are much more ready to remember the things which gratify us most. Even pleasures that are innocent in themselves, we need to watch that they become not uppermost in our minds and affections.

The different sects of religionists that exist around us, have all of them more or less truth in their perverted systems. The Calvinist, who believes in the eternal torment of millions upon millions of the human race will write volumes upon the subject and bolster up his perverted conceptions of the Almighty by profuse quotations from Scripture on the sovereignty of God, entirely overlooking the elements of mercy and Justice which go to make up His character.

In like manner the Universalist on the converse side of

the question stakes his belief on the love of God, with as little reason as the former; ignoring God's abhorrence of sin and His avowed intention to utterly destroy all the wicked of the earth. Psalm cxlv. 20.

With such an inexhaustible store-house of spiritual knowledge freely given by the beneficent Father, for the enlightenment of His children, it is sad to think of the ignorance that prevails on matters of such vital importance, affecting the well-being of the race.

Amidst the free and easy spirit of the age there is danger of the Church itself becoming affected by the idea that God is too good to be exacting, and as we are mortal, He will overlook this and that in our conduct which is not strictly in accord with our profession. I tell you when the mind begins to reason in that way, there is danger ahead, and the danger signal had better be displayed.

If we are diligent students of the Word we cannot but learn that the character of God is made up of many attributes, and those attributes are not at variance, but all act in perfect harmony, consistent with the unity of His person, and the oneness of His purpose, as revealed in His Word, and manifested unto us in the person of His Son.

God does not act by blind impulse, and His favors are not bestowed in a random fortuitous way. If He did so act, one chief claim on our adoration would be removed.

God is a God of love, blessed be His holy name, but He is also a "jealous God" and so revealed Himself unto Israel, through His servant Moses.

The inhabitants of the land promised to Abraham and his seed were idol worshipers, and this was an abhorrence to the Almighty, who taught the children of Israel, by the prophets, that He was one Jehovah, and that the worship due to Him must not be given to another. "Take heed," said He, "to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee, but ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves; for thou shalt worship no other god; for the Lord whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God." Again and again, through Moses and Joshua, this feature of Jehovah's

character was made prominent. Exod. xxxiv. 12-15; Deut. iv. 24; Joshua xxiv. 19.

Just before the death of Joshua, he "gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers and they presented themselves before God." Then he recited to them the call of Abraham, their sojourn in Egypt, and their deliverance therefrom, by the hand of Moses, and then in a most solemn manner reminds them that God is a holy God, and a jealous God, and warned them saying, "If ye forsake the Lord and serve strange gods then He will turn and do you hurt, and consume you after that He hath done you good." And the people said unto Joshua, Nay, but *we will* serve the Lord," Joshua xxiv. 20, 21, and no doubt they were honest and sincere in their purpose, but their history from the beginning and onward is a history of backsliding, and what a commentary on the immutable character and purpose of God, as delineated by Moses and Joshua, has been His dealings with that people. Their dispersion among all nations, and the cruel treatment to which they have been subjected was all predicted, should they disobey God's commands, which they did; and their history should be a terrible warning to us. "If God spared not the natural branches," said the apostle, "take heed lest He also spare not thee." Rom. xi. 21 "While He is a merciful God, and long-suffering, He will by no means clear the impenitent." Exod. xxxiv. 7.

These truths lie on the surface, they cannot be called in question, they are plain, and ought to be patent to all. Paul in writing to the church at Corinth of backsliding Israel, says, "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." Again he adds, as if to make it more impressive, "Now all these things happened unto them for example, and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the age are come, wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. x. 11, 12.

The tendency of the age, as we have said is toward taking a very complaisant congratulatory view of things. "God is good," say they, "and things will come out all right anyway."

While those men have no faith in God's promises, they have an unbounded faith in their own conceits, and we have to be ever watchful that we be not contaminated with the same spirit.

What a sad example we have in the person of old Eli and his sons. He appears to have been a very simple-minded, good-natured, kind-hearted, pious old man, he was ever ready to say, "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good," but because he restrained not his sons, he, and they came to a fearful end, and over the once happy home the inscription had to be written, "Ihabod," the glory is departed. 1 Sam. iv. 21. It may seem a very trivial thing to allow young persons to have their own way whose minds are not mature enough to decide matters of weighty importance affecting their temporal and spiritual welfare, but those whose duty it is to counsel and advise, if they neglect or shirk the responsibility, let them take care lest some day it may be recorded of them, "and they restrained them not." 1 Sam. iii. 13.

Restraint is a wholesome thing, and a very necessary element in the tuition of the young, and if neglected at the proper time, may cause no amount of trouble, heart-burning and reproach later on in life.

Restraint is also necessary in the house of God. In coming here to worship Him we ought to do so with becoming reverence; levity ought to be laid aside, and our thoughts and minds concentrated on the service, whether that be prayer, praise, or listening to the Word preached. If we do not do this we will lose much of the benefit to be derived from the service, and when opposition presents itself we are unprepared to defend the truth, and the cause of justice and equity will suffer, and languish in our hands.

Those whose ways are not right are ever ready to point out some defect or inconsistency in some professor, and allege *that* to be a sufficient reason why he should neglect to obey the truth.

Wicked Ahab would fain make it out that Elijah was a troubler in Israel, but Elijah's reply was pointed and truthful, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.

The cause of truth often suffers from an injudicious attempt at being pacific. Conciliatory measures will not do with a person who is in open hostility to the Word of God, and whoever countenances Him is an abettor of his evil deeds. God has denounced envyings, jealousies, strife, factions, and divisions in the Church, as the works of the flesh, and says, they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Gal. v. 19. This is dreadful to contemplate.

Those who make light of this must not have searched what is the mind of the spirit in reference to it. They appear to fail to see that the injury inflicted on the body by dissensions, involves the head as well, but it certainly does. God has denounced those who sow discord among brethren, as hateful in His sight, Prov. vi. 16, 19, and the Church is not allowed to be passive and indifferent in this matter, but on the contrary the command is given, "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them." Rom. xvi. 17.

"AVOID THEM," that is the order, keep aloof from them. You will not improve them, but they may contaminate you. Shall we disregard the Spirit's teaching, the divine instructions we have on this matter, and instead of avoiding those who do such things, shall we affiliate with them, and thereby give them aid and comfort in their sinful practice? We do well to ponder this, and see that we be not caught in the fowler's snare.

To enlighten our minds and teach us our duty under all circumstances was the word given, and it 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. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Let us thank God for such means of instruction, and take it as a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path until the day dawn and the day star arise. 2 Peter i. 19.

Hoping that that day is not far distant, let our soul wait for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, to catch the first glimpse of the rising sun.

CHAPTER XV.

ADDRESSES ON MISCELANEOUS TOPICS.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”—Rom. viii. 1.

THE PHRASE “*in Christ*” is of frequent occurrence in the Scriptures, and conveys to our mind an impression of a state or condition of profound importance. Out of Christ, God is a consuming fire to the workers of iniquity. To be “in Christ” is to be in a condition of perfect security. Hence we read in Isaiah xxxii. 2, “A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” And in view of this, taken in connection with the judgments coming on the ungodly world, how important the entreaty, “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee, hide thyself as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpast; for behold the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain.” Remember, too, that the children of Israel were safe from the destroying angel while within their dwellings, whose door-posts were sprinkled by the blood of the paschal lamb.

Before coming to a consideration of the question, “How is a person to be inducted into Christ?” we will first look at some of the reasons why the condition of being *in Christ* is of such vital importance. And first we remark that the promises of God meet and centre here, for all the promises of God *in Him* are yea, and *in Him* amen. The first promise made being that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent’s head, and the subsequent promise to Abraham, “In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Also, “All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever;”

as recorded in Gen. xiii. 15. The import of the expression "*thy seed*," as here used, is clearly shown by the apostle Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, iii. 16,—“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ.” Having thus seen who the seed is, we will now look more fully at the promise to this seed,—“And the Lord said unto Abraham, . . . Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. . . . The Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.” Gen. xiii. 14-17; xv. 18.

That Abraham never possessed this land is evident from what Stephen says in his memorable address before his martyrdom (Acts vii. 5),—“And he”—the God of glory—“gave him”—our father Abraham—“none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.” This is further apparent from the fact that when his wife, his beloved Sarah, died, he purchased of Ephron the Hittite the field which was before Mamre, which contained the cave of Machpelah for a burying-ground, and there buried he Sarah. The same is Hebron in the land of Canaan. Gen. xxiii. 19.

That none of the subsequent fathers of the Hebrew nation were possessors but simply sojourners, is very evident, as we read in Heb. xi. 13, 39. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. These all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us that they without us should not be made perfect.

In order, therefore, for us to participate in these promises we must by some means or other become children of Abraham,

for the promises are to Abraham and his seed. But how is it to be done? We who are Gentiles by nature, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise. And here it is at this critical juncture that the mystery of God comes into operation, resolves the difficulty and opens up the way to life and immortality, even that mystery which Paul says was not in other ages made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto the 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 (Eph. iii. 4-6). "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Rom. iv. 13. "Know ye therefore," says Paul in his letter to the Galatians, iii. 7,— "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." "And if ye be Christ's,—*i. e.*, as I understand it, if ye be *in Christ*, if ye have put on Christ,— "then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. iii. 29.

Hear Paul exclaim in writing to the Philippians, iii. 8-11. "Yea doubtless, and 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 mine 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." You should here observe the connection existing in the apostle's mind between the condition of being *found in Christ* and that of attaining to the resurrection from among the dead. *This is very important*, and I cannot too deeply impress it on your minds.

Having thus very briefly glanced at the importance of union with Christ, we are now prepared to inquire, "How is this union to be obtained?" Paul in addressing the Galatians (iii. 27), says, "For as many of you as have been baptized INTO Christ have put on Christ," and again, in his epistle to the Romans, vi 3-5,

he says, "Know ye not, that so many of you as 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection." So also in 1 Cor. xii. 13, we read, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized INTO one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles." And hence, Paul says at the 27th verse, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." If it were not so that baptism is the inducting ordinance into Christ, how could so much importance be attached to it, as we find by the command of Jesus? Mark xvi. 15-16.— "And He said unto them (His apostles), Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth *and* is baptized shall be saved." Who dare separate what God hath joined together! Believe *and* be baptized,—it is not belief *alone* nor baptism *alone*, but *both* together. Consequently on the day of Pentecost, after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we hear Peter saying in answer to the question, "What shall we do?"—His reply is, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Acts ii. 38. Is there any other way that has since been discovered that is divinely authorized? Remember by whose authority Peter spoke. Jesus says to His apostles, "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that heareth me heareth Him that sent me." But at this part of our subject it is very important to remark that thousands have been immersed in water who have never been scripturally baptized: there are certain conditions on which baptism is predicated in order to make it scriptural; and these conditions reveal to us who are the proper subjects of baptism. These conditions are *repentance* and *faith*,—mark these two requisites,—REPENTANCE and FAITH. Thus we hear Paul saying, "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts xx. 20, 21. By repentance we understand that change of mind resulting in a change of con-

duct, and it is spoken of by the apostle as repentance from dead works. Heb. vi. 1.

The importance of repentance is very forcibly set forth in what Jesus Himself said to His apostles, when He was made known to them after His resurrection from the dead. "Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved 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." Luke xxiv. 45-47. And so we see, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Acts ii. 38. In like manner the memorable testimony of Peter after the angel of the Lord delivered him and his fellow-apostles from prison. He says, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give *repentance* to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts v. 30, 31.

So also after the conversion of Cornelius and his household; when Peter returned from Cæsarea to Jerusalem and rehearsed to them of the circumcision the call of the Gentiles, "They glorified God saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted *repentance unto life*." Acts xi. 18.

Some make the great mistake of confounding sorrow and repentance; they seem to think that sorrow is repentance. But repentance is *more* than this; it is, as we have said, a change of mind resulting in a change of conduct. It is a *reformation* of life, or, in other words, FORMING LIFE ANEW. It is a *hating* of sin and *forsaking* it. Paul, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, vii. 9, 10, distinguishes very clearly between mere sorrow and repentance. He says, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: . . . for godly sorrow *worketh* repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

This godly sorrow resulting from a sincere conviction of sin is the state of contrition that causes the sinner to exclaim, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Acts ix. 6. The man must realize that he is *entirely wrong*, and that God is *entirely*

right. He must be willing to lay down his own will, and willingly and cheerfully submit to the will of God.

What a wonderful example we have of this spirit of submission in the character of our dear Redeemer!—"Who though He was a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." Heb. v. 8, 9. He openly declared, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." John vi. 38. And in that dark hour in the garden of Gethsemane, when He suffered for *you* and *me*, when His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, He could even then say, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not *my will*, but THINE, be done." Luke xxii. 42.

Man's will must be crucified, and God's revealed will must become supreme,—the governing, ruling principle of the renewed mind.

It must also be borne in mind that true repentance is inseparable from a belief of the Gospel, as it is written, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye and and believe the Gospel." Mark i. 15. What Gospel? The preceding verse tells us,—“Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of *the kingdom of God*.” So also when Philip went down to Samaria, we read (Acts viii. 12),—“And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women.” From these and similar portions of Scripture we learn that repentance and faith are indispensable prerequisites to baptism; and when these do not exist at the time of a person's immersion, such an one cannot be scripturally baptized. From these and numerous other portions of Scripture we conclude that baptism—a *scriptural baptism*, a baptism preceded by repentance and faith—is God's appointed way of inducting into Christ, making a person so inducted a member of Christ's body; and “If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.” Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Having spoken so fully on the nature and necessity of repentance, let us look now at the “things concerning the king-

dom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ," which, as we have seen above, Philip preached to the people of Samaria, and which we are informed they believed before being baptized. The things concerning the name of Jesus Christ are manifold: chief among which are His miraculous conception, His sacrificial death, His resurrection and ascension into heaven, His work there as our great High Priest and Intercessor, His coming again, in power and great glory, and His personal reign on the earth, associated with His risen and immortalized saints.

His miraculous conception is plainly and positively taught in Matt. i. 18-25, and in Luke i. 26-35. There is nothing in the whole Word of God more clear, definite, and positive than the teaching in these portions of Scripture. At His baptism, and on the mount of transfiguration, God owned Him as His beloved Son by a voice from heaven. Matt. iii. 17, and xvii. 5. And He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. i. 4.

"Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. i. 21. This introduces Him at His first advent as the meek and lowly one, the Lamb of God, that was wounded for our transgressions, and was bruised for our iniquities. Isa. liii. 5.

His resurrection from the dead, whereof He testifies, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Rev. i. 18. His ascension into heaven, and His work there,—“We have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.” Heb. iv. 14. And His coming again,—“Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” Heb. ix. 28. “Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” Psalm ii. 6-8. Likewise in Luke i. 32, 33,—“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob

forever: and of His kingdom there shall be no end." In this last passage we have not only things concerning the name, but things concerning the kingdom as well. They are so intimately connected as to blend together in very many passages of Scripture.

What are we to understand by a kingdom? A kingdom is composed of many parts, or, in other words, it has different constituents. It has a sovereign head, subjects, territory, laws, subordinate rulers or judges, etc. Now, in the passages quoted the origin, name, and title of Jesus are not only exhibited, but His kingly authority is set forth; and the territory and subjects of the kingdom not only brought to view, but its perpetuity as well. It is the throne of David overturned, as prophesied in Ezekiel xxi. 27, and restored again to Israel (Acts i. 6), and described by Daniel as "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom *under* the whole heaven" (not above it). Dan. vii. 27. As in Psalm ii., above quoted, Christ will have "the uttermost parts of the earth" for His possession, and the perpetuity of His kingdom is assured in the words of the angel at the annunciation,—“Of His kingdom there shall be no end.” Luke i. 33.

The things concerning the kingdom are further brought to view in such portions of Scriptures as speak of those who shall be "joint heirs with Christ," ruling under Him in conducting the affairs of the kingdom. From Matt. xix. 28, we see that the apostles shall occupy "twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." To the overcomers will be granted "power over the nations." Rev. ii. 26, 27. And the redeemed cut of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation will say, "Thou has made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign *on the earth*." Rev. v. 10. And as to the laws of the kingdom we read, "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us 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." Isa. ii. 3. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His law." Isaiah xlii. 4. If any will carefully read the prophecy in the

second chapter of Isaiah from which I have quoted, they will find abundant proof that the time for the fulfillment of that prophecy is still in the future. The prophet says, "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 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." And in the 20th and 21st verses the time is still further described as the day when idolaters shall go into the clefts of the rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth. Men are still fighting and still learning war, but when the time spoken of in this prophecy shall have come, men shall learn war no more.

And now having seen the requirements of God's Word, let me ask you, fellow-sinner, fellow-mortal, will you come to Jesus now? Do not, I entreat you, put off till to-morrow a matter of such vast importance. Come needy, helpless, and sin-burdened as you are.

"If you wait until you are better, you will never come at all; Not the righteous, but sinners, Jesus came to call."

Do you feel your need of *Him who is mighty to save*? Oh, do not deceive yourselves by raising objections to God's own plan! Remember the case of Naaman, the captain of the host of the king of Syria, who was smitten with leprosy. He came to the prophet Elisha to be cleansed, but he had his own notions about how it ought to be done,—the prophet's instructions were too simple in his opinion. "Go wash in Jordan seven times," made Naaman wroth, and he went away, and said, "Behold, I thought, he will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and

recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? Se he turned and went away in a rage." *Fit emblem of man's natural condition.*

Without faith it is impossible to please God. Heb. xi. 6. *Faith must be the basis.* Adam's unbelief and disobedience lost his life, and a happy home in fair Eden's bowers. And how shall we, his descendants, return but by *faith* and *obedience*? But some will say, "I don't consider baptism essential." Let me ask you, Was Noah's ark essential to the saving of him and his household? No doubt that ark was the jest and derision of an ungodly world, but when the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and God opened the windows of heaven, then a place within the ark was worth more than all the world beside. And what does Peter say about baptism in his first letter, iii. 21? Speaking of the ark wherein few—that is, eight souls—were saved, "The like figure," says he, "whereunto even baptism doth also now save us." But Noah did not dispute God's word. One hundred and twenty years he kept on his even way as a preacher of righteousness. He did not ask, "Might not some other kind of wood do as well as gopher wood?" or, "Might I not go up into an high mountain and save all this labor?" No, not at all; and it was recorded of him for all succeeding generations, "According to all that God commanded him, so did he." Gen. vi. 14, 22.

We must ever remember that God is the offended party, and He alone has a right to dictate the terms of reconciliation. And the sinner may accept or reject the proffered mercy, but has no right to dictate or suggest a change in the conditions of salvation. Oh! who would not hate sin? See what misery sin has wrought on earth. Through it man lost the primeval happiness of Eden. On account of sin the flood was brought on the world of the ungodly. They would not repent; they had become thoroughly debased and incorrigible, and their thoughts were only evil continually. Sin brought destruction on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and consumed their inhabitants with the fire of God's judgments. On account of the transgressions of others, the Son of God was nailed to the cross. He was wounded for transgressions: He was bruised for our iniquities. Oh, what

misery is predominant all over the world to-day as the fruit of sin! How many fevered brows, aching hearts, and desolate homes! Man with his mighty intellect has become the degraded slave of passions fierce and violent; and on himself and his boasted achievements are inscribed *Fleeting, Transitory, Perishing*.

Say, do you want to escape from the general desolation?

“Delay not, delay not, why longer abuse
The love and compassion of Jesus, thy Lord?
A fountain is opened, how canst thou refuse
To wash and be cleansed in His pardoning blood?”

“ ’Tis the last call of mercy that lingers for thee;
Break away from thy bondage, oh, sinner, be free.
Be not a sad mourner—‘the harvest is past,
The Summer is ended’—and perish at last.”

Will you take the glorious position to be found *in Christ*, walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit? Oh, happy they who are in such a state! All things are theirs, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are theirs; and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's. 1 Cor. iii. 22. Only let them persevere and hold fast their profession without wavering; ever remembering that He is faithful who has promised. But if any man draw back, God will have no pleasure in him; and Jesus testifies, “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, *and they are burned.*” Now is the time for heart-searching, and for men and women to prove themselves whether they be in the faith, and to see whether their baptism was preceded by repentance and faith, not in the traditions of men but in the promises of the living God.

And now to you who have obeyed the truth. Fellow-pilgrims to our heavenly home, you now hold an enviable position; one that we would not exchange for that of the crowned monarchs of earth. They have a perishing crown, but you are heirs to a crown of glory that fadeth not away. I trust you seek day by day with prayer, and communion with our heavenly Father, to realize more and more the blessedness of that man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sin is covered, to whom the Lord im-

puteth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. Psalm xxxii. 1 Be vigilant and keep up a constant warfare. You must crucify the flesh with its affections and evil desires. Put on the whole armor of God, and omit not the *shield* of faith and *breastplate* of righteousness; remembering that there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. All things are yours, and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's. But hold fast the beginning of your confidence steadfast unto the end. Lose not your vantage-ground, sully not the Christian character by indifference: stain not by any improper conduct on your part. Remember you have only crossed the Red Sea, and that a wilderness of temptation lies before you ere you enter the promised land. But let your daily prayer be,—

“Savior, through the desert lead us;
 Without Thee we cannot go,
 Thou from cruel chains hast freed us,
 Thou hast laid the tyrant low.
 Cheer us all our journey through.
 Then lead on, Almighty Victor,
 Scatter every hostile band.
 Be our guide and our protector
 Till on Canaan's shores we stand.
 Shouts of victory
 Then shall fill the promised land.”

Earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3), but while you do so, see that ye cultivate the fruits of the Spirit,—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Against such there is no law. Gal. v. 22. You observe that first and prominent in the list of graces is *love*. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. xiii. 10. Charity (love, R. V.) covereth a multitude of sins; charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not, vaunteth not itself; and we are commanded to have *fervent charity* among ourselves (1 Pet. iv. 8), not a bogus charity but the genuine thing, *warm, glowing, ardent*.

We have in these times, brethren, great cause to heed Joseph's advice to his brethren when he was sending them back to their father in Canaan. “See,” said he, “that ye fall not out by the way.” Gen. xlv. 24. If a brother is overtaken in a

fault, whether should we blaze it abroad to friend and foe, or weep over it and pray over it, and seek to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted? (Gal. vi. 1.) Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. If ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your heavenly Father forgive you. Let us think for a moment,—is there a day of our lives that we have not cause to ask God for forgiveness? Where there is a lack of charity there is something wrong, woefully wrong, either with the head or the heart. Oh! that we had the spirit of David when he said, “I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.” Psalm xxxix. 1. Instead, then, of spreading a brother’s faults, we would say, “Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.” 2 Sam. i. 20. We must each one remember that a race begun is not a race well run. We have all need to lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us in the Gospel. It will not do to limp along in a ready-to-halt kind of a way. Brethren, let me entreat you with all earnestness and affection, so run that ye may obtain the prize. 1 Cor. ix. 24. And so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

And oh, what a blessing it is to be safe from the

STRIFE OF TONGUES.

“I trusted in thee, O Lord; I said thou art my God.”

“O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men. Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence, from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.”—Psa. xxxi. 14, 19, 20.

We search in vain the records of the past for one who had the varied experience of the prophet David. Taken from the sheepfold to be king over Israel was great promotion; but amidst it all David had great and sore trials. The killing of Goliath, of Gath, brought him great distinction, but the acclaims of the daughters of Israel, “Saul hath slain his thousands, and David,

his ten thousands," were too much for the narrow-minded, ungrateful Saul, he quickly forgot how he and all Israel *trembled* in the presence of the champion of the Philistines; and God's great deliverance by the hand of David, making a nation rejoice at the liberation from a power that threatened their existence, and Saul not only forgot the obligation, but strange to say, he sought the life of the nation's liberator; although David had again and again spared Saul's life when he was completely in his power—another instance among many of man's ingratitude for favors done. Distinguished services are soon forgotten, and the hand which bestowed the gift or wrought deliverance, is treated with contempt and scorn.

Contumely is born of jealousy and hate, and falls with crushing weight on the head of its innocent victim.

History is ever repeating itself, and lessons from the book of experience make the deepest impressions, and are not soon forgotten, and well is it for tried souls when beset with such bitter experience to commit their way unto the Lord, and earnestly entreat Him to hide them in His pavilion from the strife of tongues.

"They rendered me evil for good," is the experience of more than one of God's people. The consolation in all such cases is that there is one that knows it all, He judgeth righteously. Let us constantly seek His divine approval, by doing those things that are acceptable in His sight. The sustaining power that comes from this assurance we cannot estimate too highly. It will draw us into closer communion with the Father, and more intimate fellowship with His Son Christ Jesus, who endured the contradiction of sinners, and was deserted by His own disciples, for whom He had done so much, in the hour of His extreme sorrow, with the cross immediately in view.

Alas, alas for humanity with such examples of *neglect* and *perfidy*! But although David felt bitterly the tongue of calumny, he knew where to go for strength and succor: "Though a host should encamp against me," said he, "my heart shall not fear, though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident, . . . for in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me upon a rock." Psalm xxvii. 3, 5.

This persecution from Saul, knit the hearts of David and Jonathan together, and so we read, "Jonathan loved David as he loved his own soul." 1 Sam. xx. 17.

When Jonathan was trying to shield David from his father's anger, how tender the scene of their meeting. "They kissed one another, and wept one with another." 1 Sam. xx. 41. What could be more pathetic than David's lament for Jonathan; "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan, very pleasant hast thou been unto me, thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." 2 Sam. i. 26. If we look for the spring of all this affection we have not far to go. It is contained in one word, "*Fidelity*." Mutual fidelity. This knits hearts together with an *indissoluble* bond, which death alone can sever.

Love is a plant of heavenly birth, but it must have something to feed upon, or it will die out, and infidelity on either side may cause a rupture which no power on earth can heal.

In dealing with such cases, great care must be taken not to come to too hasty a conclusion, but give opportunity to show misunderstanding. You may remember the grave mistake made by the king of Israel when the king of Syria sent Naaman unto him to be cured of his leprosy. The king of Israel rent his clothes and said, "Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me." When the truth was, he sought nothing of the kind, but was very anxious to have his servant healed, and thought the king was a proper person to send him to. 2 Kings v. 7. This and similar narratives ought to make us very watchful not to bring a hasty accusation against anyone. But on the contrary to put the most charitable construction on the words and actions of our fellow-men and our brethren, awaiting a fuller investigation of unsolved problems. If this were more generally practiced it would prevent much of the strife of tongues. Take for example a machine of wonderful construction, perfect in all its parts, how quietly and smoothly it runs; *no jar, no friction* of any kind anywhere, but let one bolt protrude out of its place, and what a racket it produces, and if not soon restored to its proper position will wreck the whole machine, and so is everything in the house of God that is not in accordance with the divine plan, it plays *havoc* being out of gear, and must work destruction.

Let us, brethren, think of the venerable Paul, who, after all his labors, privations and sufferings, could only say, "I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I *press* toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." "Striving if by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead." Phil. iii. 11, 13, 14. And again, "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 castaway." 1 Cor. ix. 27. Peter exhorts thus, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time." 1 Peter v. 6.

James says, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He shall lift you up." James iv. 10.

The consideration of man's ingratitude to his fellow-men for favors done, should fill us with extreme solicitude and watchfulness lest we prove ungrateful to the Father of mercies for all His goodness bestowed upon us in giving this beautiful world as a transient abode to the children of men, with the promise that it shall become the everlasting inheritance, renewed and greatly beautified, of all who live godly in Christ Jesus, walking in humility and lowliness of mind serving the Lord in loving obedience, and when we add to this His goodness and condescension in giving us a revelation of His will, making known to us His character, and attributes, and His purposes concerning our fallen race, and then add to all this the gift of His Son Christ Jesus, whose death on our account we have been commemorating; and then say what cause for gratitude and love for such a wonderful combination of favors so undeserved on our part, such considerations as these may well fill us with deep humility. Are we not wanting in this Christian virtue?

It matters not how correct our faith may be if our lives are not consistent with our profession. The apostle James says, "Faith without works is dead." Not only so, but our profession will increase our guilt, for again he says, "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James iv. 17. If we disregard the rights of one another, the Lord will not hold us guiltless, but sooner or later a day of retribution will

come, and it will be no satisfaction to be "not far from the kingdom of heaven," if debarred from its enjoyments and have the gate shut against us.

"Indeed I say to you," said Jesus to His disciples, "unless you be changed, and become as little children you will never enter the kingdom of the heavens." Matt. xviii. 3. (*Diaglott.*)

Conviction and confession, of trespasses done and forgiveness by those who have been wronged, will do more to abolish the strife of tongues than all other devices put together. We can implicitly trust the

FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

If there is one thing more plainly taught than another in the Word of God, it is the divine faithfulness. The Old and the New Testament abound in testimony to that effect.

It is a great *condescension* on the part of God to make a revelation of His mind and will to fallen man. If this principle is not recognized and appreciated, CLEARLY and DISTINCTLY, God's revelation will not be valued as it ought to be. His Word contains many promises, and the apostle Peter with a clear insight, and an intelligent appreciation of the importance of those promises, calls them great and precious and not only so, but he *emphasizes* the expression and calls them *exceeding great and precious promises*. And their greatness and preciousness are evidenced by the design the Almighty had in making them. What was that design? "That by these, ye might be partakers of the *divine nature*."

In our present earthly, mortal nature we have but a dim and indistinct impression of what is contained in these words, "divine nature." If mortal nature is associated with *weakness*, suffering, pain and death. Divine nature implies power, glory, and endless existence. In view of all this the apostle might well become enraptured in speaking of the "high calling," and the "heavenly calling," and earnestly desire that the Ephesian church and believers in all time may have the eyes of their understanding enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. A dim comprehension of this is necessary to enable us to strive to attain the prize, and to enable us to

bear the taunts of our fellow-men, who regard us with suspicion as narrow-minded enthusiasts.

I have spoken of the promises of God, but what of those promises if they are not backed by an assurance of God's faithfulness? If God is not a covenant keeping God, His covenants would be of no value. But it distresses me to speak this way even in argument. Moses' words to ancient Israel as recorded in Deuteronomy vii. 9, are right to the point here, he says, "Know therefore, that the Lord thy God, He is God, the *faithful* God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations, and David says, "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy *faithfulness* reacheth unto the clouds." Psalm xxxvi. 5. And again he says, "Thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens." Psalm lxxxix. 2 "O Lord, God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee." Psalm lxxxix. 8.

Isaiah also, speaking of the Rod that shall come forth out of the stem of Jesse, says, "Righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and *faithfulness* the girdle of His reins." Isaiah xii. 5. This trait in the character of the Almighty is not only dwelt upon by prophets of old, but the apostles of Jesus Christ take up the theme. Paul in his first epistle to the church at Corinth, in enforcing unity says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment," and he founds this exhortation on the assurance that "God is *faithful* by whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." 1 Cor. i. 9, 10.

In like manner in his first letter to the church of the Thessalonians, where he prays that they may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, he adds, "*Faithful* is He that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thess. v. 23, 24.

So also in Paul's second letter to Timothy, he says, "It is a faithful saying, For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we suffer we shall also reign with Him, if

we deny Him He also will deny us. If we believe not, yet He abideth *faithful*. He cannot deny Himself." 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12, 13. In view of God's oath and promise, well might David exclaim, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever; with my mouth will I make known thy FAITHFULNESS to all generations." Psalm lxxxix. 1.

This faithfulness and immutability of God's purpose is forcibly expressed in the letter to the Hebrews, in which we read, "Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise, the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath. That by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whether the forerunner is for us entered even Jesus made a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. vi. 17-20.

But some may inquire, is the faithfulness of God ever called in question? I answer certainly it is. It is called in question when those promises which God made of old, and confirmed by an oath, are doubted, and disbelieved, and not only so, but the denomination in which I was trained in youth used to teach, that the day of judgment would give many surprises, that God as a sovereign ruler, had elected some to salvation irrespective of any faith or character on their part while others of saintly character would be rejected.

We are sometimes told to enjoy our own religion and allow other people to enjoy theirs. This might do very well if present enjoyment is the thing we are seeking. That is not our object or aim. We are a witnessing people, and a suffering people, and as God in His goodness has made us to see the glorious light of His Gospel He will hold us accountable for its presentation to others. Do we realize this? If we are duly impressed with this we cannot be silent. Whatever conflicts with God's Word must be exposed. Let us resolve, that if the Gospel is hid it will not be hid by us, God helping us, we will try and pluck some brands from the burning.

God is not an arbitrary being, despotic in His government of the world, and those who represent Him as such do violence

to His character. If God at last will give surprises by rejecting those who have come to Him in His own appointed way, through faith and obedience, and accept the unbelieving and the faithless, by a simple act of His sovereign will then is He not a covenant keeping God, and if people would only realize what is contained in that admission they would *tremble* in making it. There will be surprises in the day of judgment, but they will be among those who have been vainly trying to serve God in their own conceits teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. They have another hope than the hope set before us in the Gospel, and to such God will at last express the sad sentence, "I never knew you." The thought of having it in our power to avert such a calamity ought to make us strain every nerve, in witnessing for God, and seeking to enlighten those around us.

Let us say with the prophet Isaiah, "O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things, thy counsels of old are *faithfulness* and truth." Isaiah xxv. 1.

Let us hold on with tenacity to this leading attribute in the character of God, without which our hope would be destitute of its sheet-anchor, and the Almighty would cease to be the Adorable One He now is.

We have an exhibition of faithfulness in

CHRIST'S LAST BEQUEST.

"My peace I give unto you."—John xiv. 27.

With mingled feelings of joy and sorrow we come around this board. Sorrow at the changes and vicissitudes time has wrought, and joy of heart that the Eternal Father, and His Son Christ Jesus, whom we have met to honor and adore, change not. They are ever the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. What a comfort and consolation this thought affords; and His plans and purposes are as immutable as the nature of His existence.

If we have sorrow of heart, our Lord and Savior had the same. On the night on which He was betrayed He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death."

He had labored long and faithfully, but those He was seek-

ing to free from the bondage of sin, and exalt to fellowship with God were seeking His life, and one who partook with Him at the Passover feast was about to betray Him. No wonder He said, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death," and was impatient for the retirement of Judas when He said to him, "What thou doest, do quickly." And we read "He then having received the sop, went immediately out." John xiii. 30. And Jesus relieved of his presence, commenced those tender words of sympathy to His disciples, commencing with the 14th chapter of John, "Let not your heart be troubled," etc. In a continuation of that address, He says to His faithful followers, "Peace I leave with you, 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." John xiv. 27. As this is the second time in that address in which He said, "Let not your heart be troubled," it is evident He knew they would experience many things calculated to trouble and perplex them.

There is much meaning in those words of Jesus, "Not as the world giveth, give I unto you." The world bestows its favors from selfish motives; too often for the purpose of promoting its worldly schemes. Christ's giving on the contrary is altogether disinterested, He is seeking the well-being and spiritual advancement of His disciples, and in all His actions, and all His words, this is manifested: and how could it be otherwise in one who gave himself a willing sacrifice for a lost world. "My peace I give unto you." What a bequest from the Savior to His disciples, on the night in which He would agonize in Gethsemane, and the following day pour out His life-blood on Calvary.

The history of the Church in all ages shows what a poor estimate it has put on that bequest. Christ had no home or lands to give. He Himself said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." Matt. viii. 20.

Christ put a true estimate on spiritual things. Would to God the same could be said of the Church.

In the sight of the law it is considered a very heinous crime to pervert justice, or to try to defraud the heir of an estate of the portion coming to him; very few would dare to do such a thing. But how much greater the offense to deprive the Church

of the peace and tranquility bequeathed to it by Christ. Yet this is often done in ways we little think of. Sometimes through thoughtlessness, sometimes by more aggravated transgression, but whichever way it is, it is a terrible thing when this last bequest of Christ, given in His parting words, amidst the solemnity of a scene unparalleled in the history of the world. We say it is a terrible thing when the rich streams of this bequest are checked in their ceaseless flow from the throne of God to bless and strengthen those for whom they were intended.

This bequest of Christ, as we have seen is wholly disinterested; prompted by divine love, for which we can give no adequate return.

The Church, although composed of mortal and fallible men and women, is a divine institution. Organized and governed by divine laws, the ultimate object and end being the spiritual advancement and growth in grace of its individual members, and if this is overlooked, and less worthy feelings, aims and ambitions are allowed to supplant and take the place of God's beneficent design, sorrow then becomes the lot of every right-minded officer and every pure-hearted member of the household. If shame comes upon one member, all the members have to share in the reproach. There is no getting away from this condition of things.

Sin is the fruitful parent of sorrow; it brings remorse and sorrow in its path, but thank God, He has made provision for the weakness of sinful flesh. So that if any one is overtaken in a fault he need not be handed over to the blackness of despair, but restored in the spirit of meekness (Gal. vi. 1, 2), on confession and satisfactory proof of repentance.

As we value Christ's last bequest, let us all strive for the peace and unity of the household.

"Peace I leave with you, 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." John xiv. 27.

"These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." John xvi. 33.

O, blessed Savior! O! compassionate One, who didst give "good cheer" to thy followers, on the dark night of thine own

sorrow and betrayal give us a large portion of thy Spirit, in every trying hour.

Is it any wonder that on Christ's natal morn a multitude of the heavenly host sang praises to God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

No wonder that Isaiah in looking forward with prophetic vision to the conquests of the millennial age called Him the "Prince of Peace." Isaiah ix. 6. "My peace I give unto you." C, rich bequest, that which the Church and the world most needs to-day and Christ ends that memorable passover address, in these words: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John xvi. 33. May His life be inspiration unto us to also *overcome* the world, and every worldly desire that may arise in our minds, seeking to "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. x. 5. When we do this, let us earnestly seek the "Peace of God which passeth all understanding, to keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Philip. iv. 7. What a sublime idea the apostle had of this peace, it was inexpressible, he could only say, it "Passeth all understanding." No wonder that in writing to the Church at Colosse He exhorted them to "Let the peace of God *rule* in their hearts" (Col. iii. 15), having the controlling power there, be *governed* and guided by it.

Brethren, let us prize Christ's rich bequest, above all earthly treasures, "My peace I give unto you," and as we come around this board on the first day of each week, to remember Him. May we cultivate and cherish His Spirit, remembering that "the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits without partiality. and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. James iii. 17, 18.

This is the Bible doctrine; *purity* and righteousness is the basis of that peace which God bestows. "There shall in no wise enter into the holy Jerusalem anything that defleth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they that

are written in the Lamb's book of life." May our names be written there, and have no fellowship with

THE APOSTASY.

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith,' or, The just by faith, shall live."—Rom. i. 16.

If Paul was a true messenger of Jesus Christ, what he here affirms must be taken as an indisputable fact, one that cannot be controverted. The language is plain and unequivocal; it cannot admit of two meanings.

"The Gospel," he says, "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Paul had his commission direct from Christ. "He is a chosen vessel unto me," said Christ, "to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings and the children of Israel; for I will show him what great things he must suffer for my name's sake," Acts ix. 15, and consequently he must have been abundantly competent to express himself correctly on that subject. Furthermore his statement does not stand alone, unsupported by collateral testimony. On no other ground can we understand the depth and importance of the commission given by Christ to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be condemned." Mark xvi. 15. Need we wonder that Paul in his letter to the Corinthians should say, "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel." 1 Cor. iv. 15. This was the begetting power, and in his letter to the Galatians he says, "For I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Gal. i. 11.

If this central fundamental truth were duly apprehended, and its importance realized we would not find so many professing Christians who cannot tell what the Gospel is. No sane man realizing its importance, and convinced that life and death are suspended in the issue, would stop short of settling the question, What is the Gospel? What constitutes this good message?

When Christ preached the Gospel about all Galilee, it was called "the Gospel of the kingdom." Matt. iv. 23. Later He said, "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." Matt. xxiv. 14.

Never in the history of the world was such a clear and comprehensive message given, with such *tremendous* importance attached to it, and shall I say, no message has been so dreadfully disregarded and so fearfully misunderstood. Jew, and Gentile alike blinded, only in different ways. The Gospel of to-day is a Gospel with the kingdom left out. The kingdom is conspicuous from its absence. Would you trust your salvation to such a Gospel? Or allow your friends to risk theirs without a ringing protest, a *loud*, a distinct and prolonged warning? If we want to be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises we must believe as did Philip's converts in Samaria, "When they believed Philip preaching the things *concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.*" Acts viii. 12.

This shows the twofold nature of the message, but still one Gospel, two branches, and each branch dependent on the other, to carry out Jehovah's purpose. The Jews rejected the Christ of God. Of what use was the Gospel to them? None whatever. The Gentiles reject the kingdom, they have no use for it; their immortal souls go to heaven at death. Now can you tell me what the Gospel will do for them? I cannot, unless it condemns them for their unbelief.

When we speak in this way we are charged with being bigotted, narrow-minded, out of sympathy or touch with the times. People now-a-days, we are told, are liberal-minded, take broad views of things. We will not dispute this, if they will include one more broad thing, and say they walk in the broad way. But on the authority of Christ Jesus, the way to life eternal is narrow, and the gate strait, and inasmuch as His people are a peculiar people, on the authority of Paul, His servant and apostle, we prefer to walk in the narrow way and be considered peculiar, and suffer reproach and scorn of the so-called liberal-minded, who hold broad views and are in touch with the times.

We are not in touch with the times, and why? Because the times are not in touch, or in sympathy with Christ and His doctrine.

The religious world around us know very well that we are not in sympathy with them, and moreover we desire that they should know it. Unless we protest against *their* methods and witness against *their* errors we are silently endorsing them, and in view of the soon coming Judge of all mankind, we cannot, we *dare* not take neutral ground. The call of Providence to-day is as loud and emphatic as was the voice of Joshua of old to the wavering hosts of Israel, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Joshua xxiv. 15. Or the trumpet call of Elijah, "How long halt ye between two opinions, if the Lord be God follow Him, but if Baal, then follow him." 1 Kings xviii. 21.

Men prominent in the religious world curl the lip, and with a scornful look that is intended to silence all opposition will say, "*The idea that* a handful of men should presume that they are right, and everybody else wrong. Why, the thing is preposterous."

These are the adversaries, the wicked ones of whom Christ spoke in the parable of the sower, who, when the good seed, the Word of the kingdom is sown by the wayside, cometh immediately and taketh it away, and so in like manner that sown on stony ground shares the same fate.

I now propose to trace before you as well as I can, some of the causes leading up to this sad condition of apostasy by both Jew and Gentile. I do this from no spirit of controversy, but from a sincere and earnest desire that all of you, and especially the young may be fortified against this charge of bigotry and narrow-mindedness, to which we are frequently subjected.

You are all aware that at the time of Christ's first advent the Jewish nation was in expectation of the Messiah; and the question naturally arises; Why then did they reject Him? The answer is a very plain one, simply because they were not guided by what the prophets wrote concerning Him. With the exception of old Simeon, a just and devout man, who was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and one Anna, a prophetess, who was of great age, and departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. These two, with

probably a few others, stumbled not at His lowly birth, but gave thanks to the Lord, that they had lived to see the salvation of God. But it was far otherwise with the large majority, who were carried by human prejudice, and the tide of popular opinion. He did not come in the way *they* expected, and evidently like the people of our day, they had their own idea of the fitness of things. Instead of carefully studying the Scriptures as to the manner of His coming, their minds were blinded by prejudice and Jewish traditions so that they could not receive His teaching.

It is indeed recorded that "the common people heard Him gladly," and once or twice public sentiment appeared to rally in His favor, but it was superficial, fluctuating and short-lived. The people were largely under the influence of the priests; and the high priests, the scribes and the pharisees being galled at His sharp reproofs for their hypocrisy became completely set against Him and joining with the Herodians, a political party, mostly Sadducees, they sought His overthrow, and at last clamored for His life, as we read in Mark iii. 6: And the Pharisees went forth and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against Him how they might destroy Him, which finally culminated in His crucifixion, and so the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled. He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and familiar with grief. Isaiah liii. 3.

It is the marvel of all the religious denominations in Christendom, so-called, why the Jews should have overlooked the predictions of the humiliation and suffering of the Son of God, and so rejected Him, but is it not more marvelous that they in turn should be equally blinded as to Christ's second coming, and personal reign on earth? The Jews rejected the King, and the Gentiles reject the kingdom, and between them the Gospel is completely nullified. Let us endeavor to trace the cause of this rejection on the part of the Gentiles. You remember Paul's prediction that the "time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim. iv. 2. And Peter in his second epistle says, "But there were false prophets also among the people even as there shall

be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." 2 Peter ii. 1. This is again being fulfilled before our eyes in the case of the Josephites. Emphatically they are denying the Lord that bought them.

The early history of the Church shows how soon those predictions were verified. In Anno Domini 54, when Paul wrote his *second* letter to the Thessalonians, he warned them that the mystery of iniquity had even then begun to work. 2 Thess. ii, 7. It is worthy of remark that this epistle was written from Athens, at the very time he encountered the Grecian philosophers there, who mocked him when he spoke of a resurrection from the dead. Those followers of Plato never had any faith in, or need of a resurrection of the dead. The Socratic and Platonic belief was evidently making itself felt, for ten years later when Paul addressed his letter to the church at Colosse, he warned them to "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy, and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Col. ii. 8. That the faith of some had been subverted in this way is apparent from Paul's letter to Timothy, in which he counselled him to avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so-called, which some professing, have erred concerning the faith. 1 Tim. vi. 20.

But notwithstanding all these warnings and admonitions the work of corrupting the truth went steadily on, and no doubt the dreadful persecutions to which all were subjected who remained steadfast in their adherence to the faith greatly hastened the work of corruption. Think of Paul's recital of the stonings, the bonds, the imprisonments and the stripes, the hunger and thirst, the cold and the nakedness, he was subjected to, in witnessing for the truth, and not he alone, but hosts of others, and then you will be in some measure prepared to comprehend without amazement the alliance between truth and error, Christianity and Pagan doctrine that took place during the reign of Constantine, in the beginning of the fourth century, which was more of a political than a religious movement.

If such grievous errors crept into the Church in the life time,

and under the eyes of the apostles, notwithstanding their faithful, pointed, and powerful testimony, their earnest entreaties, warnings and admonitions, need we be surprised at the spread of false and heretical opinions as soon as such restraining influence was removed? Pagan philosophy taught by men of genius, poetic fancy, and sublime ideality, was captivating to the minds of youth, promising them liberty, as the apostle says, speaking great swelling words of vanity, while they themselves are the servants of corruption.

As we have already said, the school of Socrates and Plato, had no need of a resurrection from the dead, as they believed in the continued existence of man after death, in some other form, and when Christian doctrine brought nothing but contempt, bonds, imprisonment, exile and death to its followers, it is not to be wondered at that the less spiritual should make a compromise with error and seek to amalgamate the Pagan idea of immortality with the Christian doctrine of a resurrection from the dead, and hence the hybrid we now have, misnamed Christianity.

We have traced this monster evil from a certain point to its culmination in the union between Church and State, at which time it is claimed Christianity was established, and if so, I must say, when Christianity was so established then it fell. Fell from its high state of purity and spirituality to become the tool of statecraft and priestcraft, and has been cruel and oppressive in its enactments and persecuting in its spirit to all who would dare to call its authority in question, but if time permitted we ought to trace this gigantic evil to its Satanic origin, when the serpent deceived the first pair with the insolent lie, "Ye shall not surely die." This is the root of the whole matter. Paganism, and a false system of religion have preserved and propagated the original falsehood, and the religious world have been carried away with it, and now they taunt us with not being in touch with the times. No, thank God, we spurn all such alliances, and I pray God, what I have said, may fortify you to bear reproach for the name of Christ and His doctrine, and stimulate you to defend His Gospel, contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. And live in harmony with the divine requirements, and then no matter what reproach and scorn you may

have to bear, you will be owned and blessed at the coming of the kingdom of God's dear Son.

To those who have recently taken Christ's yoke upon them, more especially let me say, shrink not from reproach for the name and cause of Christ, you know you enlisted to suffer reproach, that was one of the conditions. The flesh naturally shrinks from it, but then the flesh in this, as in other things, needs crucifying, and every time you bear the cross courageously the more strength you will gain for future efforts, till ultimately like the apostles of old, you will rejoice when you are counted worthy to suffer shame for His name, and to strengthen you for greater endurance, remember that He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed, and remember further how meekly and uncomplainingly He bore it all. This thought should forever silence any murmuring on our part, and check the rising spirit of impatience, and to cheer you on reflect that in due time you shall reap if you faint not; and on, the ecstasy of glory of the reaping time is far beyond human comprehension, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but, if we remain faithful, we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." 1 John iii. 2.

If there is one here to-day who has not yet embraced the truth in the love of it, to such I would say, to you is the Word of this salvation sent. Acts xiii. 26. Slight not the offer, lest to you it may never be sent again.

To-day the invitation is come, come for all things are now ready.

Whosoever will let him take the water of life freely.

Believe the Gospel, repent, and be baptized into the name of Christ, for the remission of your sins, and then live godly, and wait for Messiah from heaven to crown you with life in His kingdom, to die no more. I also think it would be well to occasionally engage in a

REVIEW.

In thinking of a subject that would be elevating, strengthening, and comforting to present to you to-day, it occurred to

me that I could not do better than follow the example of Sunday-schools with regard to reviews. Every now and again they have a review of their work, and studies, and I have no doubt, but reviews are profitable. They are strongly recommended in Scripture, and ought to be more generally practiced. They are safe, both for individuals and for churches. The church at Ephesus was counseled to review. They had many things for which they were commended, but there was one sad declension: they had left their first love, and were commanded to *remember* from whence they had fallen, and repent, and do the first works. Rev. ii. 5.

The churches of Galatia were also advised to review. Paul wrote to them in the most impressive and earnest manner: O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you. I marvel that ye are so soon remove from Him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel, which is not another, but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. Gal. i. 6. Just as if he had said, "Review your past life, think of your early experience in the Christian race. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? There was a time when you were sound in the faith before you were led away by human speculations and got entangled in their snares. You were devoted to the Master's work, earnest and sincere in your profession. Where is the blessedness ye spake of? What has become of it, have ye bartered it away for something of less value? I tell you, brethren, there is no standing still in this procession, we are either advancing, or retrograding. If our faith is not stronger to-day than ever before, our love for Christ and His cause more ardent, our trust greater, and our knowledge of divine things more extended, there is something sadly wrong which needs righting.

The resurrection of Christ is the foundation of the Christian's hope. The keystone of the arch which spans redemption's work hung over the world while Christ was in the tomb, the intense agony of those three days! No darker hour has the world ever beheld since the deluge swept an ungodly race from the earth. But, O, what joy on the morning of the third day awaited the brave, loving women, who, before the break of day,

went to the tomb and found it empty, and heard the glad angelic message, He is not here, He is risen, as He said, come, see the place where the Lord lay. What an eventful day! Think of the glad surprise to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, as the Lord made Himself known to them, and then they go and carry the news to the eleven, at Jerusalem, saying: "The Lord is risen *indeed* and hath appeared unto Simon." Yes, "risen *indeed*," it is no delusion, but a joyous reality. The dark cloud has burst, the gloom is dispelled and hope reigns once more.

But, thanks be to God, He was seen of more than Simon, having been seen of above five hundred brethren at once, and having again and again appeared to all the apostles, with whom He remained for forty days after His resurrection, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and preparing them for the work of proclaiming the same; this had ever been His all-absorbing theme and will be ours if we are duly impressed with its sublime importance.

Not only is His resurrection well attested by eye-witnesses of the events of those forty days of His post-resurrection sojourn; the experience of Paul in his later manifestation is overpowering, and when we come to the closing revelation to John in Patmos Isle, it is then that we feel the force of Isaiah's words, quoted by Paul, "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."

The glory of that age would be too dazzling to us now. "When the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isa. xl. 5. That glory shall be enduring, as the prophet David has said, "The glory of the Lord shall endure forever, the Lord shall rejoice in His works." Psalm civ. 31. The transfiguration of Christ is the best representation of the glory of that age. "His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." Matt. xvii. 2. (Reminding us of Isaiah's prophecy, Who is this that cometh from Edom. Isaiah lxxiii. 1.)—Paul in writing to the Corinthians refers to the glory of Moses' countenance which had to be veiled when he came down from the

Mount Sinai, says, If the ministrations of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, . . . how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? 2 Cor. iii. 7. Doubtless you all remember that at the grave of Lazarus, Jesus said to Martha, "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" John xi. 40. Now, if the glory of God was exhibited in raising Lazarus from the dead, how will it be exhibited in raising the whole company of the redeemed ones to glorious spirit life, of unending duration, who will be equal unto the angels who excel in strength, and then think of the fulfillment of those grand predictions—"All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power, to make known to the sons of men, His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." Psalm cxlv. 10.

If this is to be the employment of the saints in the future, it ought to be their delight now. Christ's ministry, before His suffering, was preaching the Gospel of the kingdom; and, as we have seen, during the forty days He remained on earth after His resurrection. He was employed in speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Acts i. 3.

In like manner, if that is to be the future occupation of the saints, it will be their delight now. You observe they speak of the glory of His kingdom and talk of His power. It is a delightful—all-absorbing theme to them: now they are transported by it. The contemplation of it raises them above the things of time and sense with their anxieties, perplexities, and troubles, and carries them forward in imagination to the realization of their hopes, when all God's works shall praise Him; and not only is it a delightful subject of meditation, and topic of conversation with them, they desire to interest others in it. The Psalmist says their object is "to make known to the sons of men, God's mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom." The sons of men, at the present time, care very little about God's kingdom, their minds are occupied with other things, which engross the whole of their attention. It is the *present* that concerns them, and although, as reasonable men, they must see how

very fleeting are all earth's pursuits, yet a false system of religion quiets their minds, and makes them passive and indifferent to the things concerning the kingdom of God. Brethren and sisters, may this review be profitable unto us, and let it ever be our chief delight, amidst the opposing and conflicting elements and influences around us, to keep the coming and kingdom of Christ uppermost in our minds, prominently before us. We need its cleansing, strengthening, comforting influence every day of our lives, and as we rejoice in contemplating the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, may we ever remember that His rule is, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and let us try to interest others who may, as yet, care for none of these things. In this way, more than in any other, can we best promote the glory of God, and the good of our fellow-men.

CHAPTER XVI.

“TO THE JEW FIRST.”

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”—Rom. i. 16.

I HAVE long been deeply impressed with the sad fact that the treatment of the Jews in all lands, and the cruel persecutions to which they are subjected in many countries, does ill-accord with the high position assigned them in the Word of God.

No nation under heaven has had such distinguished favors granted unto them as that of the Jew. The call of God to Abraham, and the promise made to him, “And 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 curseth thee and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” Gen. xii. 2, 3.

One would suppose that such a threatening as this would make Jew-haters tremble, the world over; but such people fear not God, and do not tremble at His word. The grand prophetic truths regarding the restoration of Israel, are to them a dead letter; and, so thoroughly disregarded as to have no effect on their lives, and the Jews are still despised, and everywhere considered fit subjects for contempt and scorn.

The marvel is that so many professing Christianity should have forgotten what the world owes to that nation, whose early history is unrivaled amidst the nations of the earth. Their deliverance from Egypt, when about two million people passed through the Red Sea on dry land, the returning waters of which engulfed Pharaoh and his host; such a deliverance was never vouchsafed to any people, and their miraculous preservation during their journey in the wilderness, when God “bare them on eagle’s wings, and brought them unto Himself.” Exod. xix. 4.

Unto no other nation under heaven did God bestow divinely inspired prophets, teaching them heavenly wisdom and opening the veil of futurity and telling them of things to come, many of which have been fulfilled, some of which are fulfilling now, and some are yet in the future, which will assuredly be performed as God's oath and promise are pledged for their accomplishment.

God has promised to bring this people back to their own land, and the Old Testament is full of such promises. Read carefully Exekiel xxxiv. 11 to the end; also chapter xxxvi. throughout, and when you have done so, remember God's promise concerning the mountains of Israel. "I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded; and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit; and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." Ezek. xxxvi. 10, 11.

Let us consider what we owe to the Jews, through them we received the Old and the New Testaments. The prophets were Jews, Jesus, the Christ of God was a Jew, the apostles were Jews; Paul knew what he was saying when speaking of the Jews he said, "Who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen." Rom. ix. 4 and 5.

In view of these things, it becometh us to cherish nothing but the most kindly feelings toward the Jews; and in our dealings and intercourse with them, let them understand that we are their friends, and have a deep interest in their welfare; and in this way they may give us a hearing, and we may be instrumental in lifting the veil from their minds and ultimately they may see in Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah promised unto the Fathers, and may we ever remember the divine injunction, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee." Psalm cxxii. 6.

I am convinced there is no more hopeful field for missionary labor at the present time than among the Jewish people, if they

are approached in a right spirit, and by persons who themselves believe the promises made unto the Fathers of the Jewish nation, and are looking for their fulfillment in the light of divine prophecy, and such only are prepared for this work.

When one considers the large amount of money yearly expended in China, in Africa and in India in missionary work, which to a very large extent is fruitless of results, in Christianizing the natives, we feel like entering a protest and presenting a petition that some of that money may be turned into a better channel, and applied towards enlightening that nation through whom we originally received the life-giving oracles—not forgetting Paul's order of things when he said, "To the Jew first, and also to the Greek." The Jew having the precedence, and the superior claim.

The following lines written by my dear departed wife, Margaret McEwen-McLaughlan, being apropos, I have transcribed them here:

THE JEW.

He wanders 'mong the nations,
As first from Judah's hills,
Not time, nor place can change him—
A Jew he wanders still.

He falls before the dread simoon,
That in the desert blows,—
He shivers underneath the blast,
'Mid the lone polar snows.

Landless and exiled on he roams,
Distinct in every clime,
While the Turkish crescent's waving o'er
His own loved Palestine.

The rise and fall of empires,
Have passed his wondering view.
Ah! what a life of destiny
Is that of thine, O Jew!

The proud, the impious Babylon,
The seat of pride and lust;
He writhed beneath her captive chain,
Then passed her in the dust.

The blaze of Persian glory,
 Like the meteor flash had gone,
 And the ray that brought deliverance,
 No longer on him shone.

He trod the streets of classic Greece,
 When laurels wreathed her brow—
 'Mid the tombstones of her splendor
 We see him linger now.

He gazed on Rome in glory,
 As she spread her eagle wings—
 Soaring mistress of the nations,
 Her voice the law of kings.

E'en his queenly Jerusalem,
 Strewn 'mid the desert sands,
 But the everlasting hills are there—
 Mount Zion ever stands.

Jerusalem's promised glory,
 His waiting eyes shall see,
 And Israel's son no longer roams,
 From bondage now is free.

When Judah's scattered children
 Throng to their promised home,
 And Messiah sways the scepter,
 A King on David's throne.

At the breaking of bread, let us ever remember that it was the King of the Jews who gave His life as a ransom for many.

The subject for our consideration to-day is the warning words of Jesus to Peter—"Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Matt. xxvi. 41. We recently had the beautiful subject, "The Lord is my Shepherd," but on the night when the Memorial Supper was instituted Christ said unto His disciples "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." The fervid, impulsive Peter replied, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I *never be offended.*" And when Christ told him that that very night he would deny Him, Peter replied, "Though I should

die with thee, yet will I *not* deny thee: Likewise also said all the disciples.”

Subsequent to this protestation of regard, and after they arrive at Gethsemane, where Jesus selects Peter, James and John to accompany Him, He utters the warning, “Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.” The same *three* who were with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration, and were eye-witnesses of His majesty, and heard the voice from the excellent glory saying, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased,” were selected to witness His terrible agony, the bloody sweat, and hear the thrice repeated earnest prayer, “O, My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt.” But instead of watching they fell asleep, and the lone, agonizing Savior, said unto Peter, “What, could ye not watch with me one hour?” Later they all forsook Him and fled, and Peter, who was so self-confident a few hours before, *thrice* denied that he knew Him! Poor, weak human nature! how unreliable in the hour of need. Sad record. Peter who aforetime confessed, “Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God,” which drew forth the Lord’s approval, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven.” Matt. xvi. 16. Peter, who had been with him so long and witnessed His miracles; had stood with Him on the holy mount; had so recently been with Him at the last Passover feast in the large upper room, and listened to His thrilling address, those tender, fervid words that fell from His lips; Peter who walked with Him to the Mount of Olives, on that sad night. and was permitted to go with Him into Gethsemane. Can it be the same Peter? O, no it cannot be! But wherein is the difference? The one was Peter under the Shepherd’s care, the other Peter left to himself; “I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.” What a contrast! Strength and weakness were never so manifest before. Peter essaying to walk upon the water, was all right when he cried, “Lord, save me,” but here he forgot to call upon his Lord, who although buffeted and spit upon was still able to save; and so he fell. But to come to our own case. We are living in an enemy’s coun-

try, surrounded by snares and pitfalls, where constant watchfulness is necessary. There is much to allure the thoughtless mind, and ensnare the unwary. Believers are very properly designated soldiers in the writings of Paul the Veteran, and he exhorts Timothy to "war a good warfare." 1 Tim. i. 18. "To fight the fight of faith." 1 Tim. vi. 12, and to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. ii. 3.

Now when soldiers are encamped in proximity to an enemy the first thing they do is to place guards, at the different outposts, all along the line; men, who while on duty shall be ever vigilant, and give alarm on the first approach of the enemy. And in some countries it is a crime punishable by death for a soldier doing guard duty to fall asleep, and the necessity of this rule becomes apparent when you consider that the safety of the whole army might be imperiled by such want of vigilance. Peter realized the need of watchfulness when writing to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia he exhorted them to be sober. "Be vigilant because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour, whom resist. Steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." 1 Peter v. 8. And again he says, "The end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." 1 Peter iv. 7. No doubt Peter felt greater solicitude about his brethren, and the need of watchfulness, when he remembered his own fall, and the Master's warning unto him, and through him to every weak, tempted disciple, through all time. "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." Matt. xxvi. 41.

As a notable instance of the danger of unguarded exposure to the enemy's strategems, the history of Babylon stands conspicuous. It was, as you all know, a city of great dimensions. The wall was 60 miles in circumference, and it has been computed would include eight cities as large as London. The wall was 350 feet high and 87 feet broad. Under the reign of Nebuchadnezzar it was the seat of universal Empire. Isaiah called it "The glory of kingdoms, the beauty of Chaldees' excellency." Isaiah xiii. 19. It was adorned with towers, palaces, and hanging gardens, and was a city of great pride and luxury. Five

hundred and forty years before Christ the armies of Cyrus besieged the city, and the siege lasted two years, and there is no telling how much longer it might have withstood Cyrus's army, but the Babylonians in their pride and luxury must indulge in revelry, and on the night of a great festival, when they were eating and drinking, all unconscious of any evil befalling them, Cyrus turned the waters of the Euphrates and made the channel of the river a highway for his army, and the inhabitants knew it not till Cyrus's army stood at the palace gates. They came unheralded by any note of warning, and sprang upon them by surprise, and Babylon, the Golden city, was conquered, and its glory perished. Such illustrations of the danger of indulgence and carelessness give force to the Savior's earnest warning: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be over charged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares, for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." "Watch ye therefore, and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." Luke xxi. 34. Also Paul's warning to the Corinthians xvi. 13, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." Don't be unstable, don't be vacillating, "but be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. xv. 58. Well would it have been for Peter if he had heeded the Master's warning, and saved his bitter weeping. Well will it be for us to profit by his experience.

Not only are we living in an enemy's country with unpropitious influences around us, the case is worse than that, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household," yea even worse than that, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, wrong impulses." These are the things which defile a man. Oh! the constant need of watchfulness, and the spirit of prayer, to guard against so many snares. We need to watch and pray that we be not conformed unto the world. We need to watch and pray that we do not become cold in our affections to divine things and indifferent to the enlightening, and bringing in of those around us. Ever remember that your efforts in that way can-

not exceed God's gracious message, which is to the *whole world*. O, how glad we ought to be that the offer of salvation is free to all. "Whosoever will let Him come," and let us do all in our power to bring as many as possible under the sound of the Gospel. Do not stay away from the church service, and say, "I know the Gospel, I have no need of any one to preach the Gospel to me."

Just stop there and consider where would you have been if some one had not brought you under the sound of the Gospel of the kingdom? and then instead of wrapping the mantle of indifference around you, you will be filled with zeal to come yourself and bring others with you to hear the joyful sound. Although we know the Gospel we will never tire of hearing it when it is not given in a cold formal way entirely out of harmony with its spirit, but when it comes from a heart on fire, boiling over, to tell others the joyful message, then it has an inspiring influence. I tell you a solemn fact, my dear brethren and sisters, it is this, and mark it well, if the Gospel message has no charms for you, God help you. If you have outgrown that, how will you ever be able to join in the Song of the Redeemed? for the Gospel message is the basis of that song, where they ascribe honor to the Lamb saying, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." Rev. v. 9. I love to hear the Gospel message. Do you? It tells us of the love of God to man; elevating theme; ennobling theme; purifying theme; comforting theme; unchanging love, undying love. Let us bask in its bright effulgence till we are changed into the same image. Let us not sleep as do others. but let us watch and be sober. Men and women of God enter into your closets, and hold communion with your Father in heaven, through the Christ of God: pray for yourselves, pray for your families, pray for the Church, for its purity, for its unity, its peace and prosperity, pray for your elders that they may be strengthened to do their duty! Pray for your evangelists, that a door of utterance may be opened to them, and that they may win souls to Christ. Do not forget to make supplication with thanksgiving. How apt we are to forget our blessings! How many say "God be

merciful," who seldom, say "God be praised." It is an awful thing to be ungrateful; how we feel it when we do kindness to our fellow-men, and instead of acknowledging it they abuse and insult us! Oh, let us be a thankful people! Thankful for the lamp of truth. Thankful for God's love manifested in the person of His Son Christ Jesus. Thankful for His great and precious promises. Are you in tribulation and sorrow, be thankful for the prospect of the soon coming Deliverer, and pray fervently day by day that we may all be ready to meet Him at His coming. "Watch therefore for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Matt. xxiv. 42. Watch, like the watchmen on the tower, like the soldier on guard, with the enemy in view, like the pilot when nearing a rock coast, like the life-saving crew on a stormy night. Watch! "Watch," said Jesus to His apostles. "Watch," said the apostles over and over again to the Church. The heavenly message to the angel of the Church in Sardis was, "Be *watchful* and strengthen the things which remain If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come unto thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee," Rev. iii. 2, 3, and again "Behold I come as a thief, Blessed is he that *watcheth*, and keepeth his garments lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." Rev. xvi. 15. May this blessing come upon all of us.

The elders of every church organization should be on the watchtower to guide their charge through the darkness of the midnight hours.

The Palmist has said, "They know not, neither will they understand. They walk on in darkness, all the foundations of the earth are *moved* out of course." Psalm lxxxii. 5.

Babylon still holds sway. Confusion reigns everywhere alike in the political, religious and scientific world.

Each school of scientists holds ideas not only at war with every other school, but often at variance with the acknowledged principles of their own school. These are the knowing ones who will debate about the age of rocks with as much earnestness as if the fate of a nation depended on the issue, and with as much positiveness as if it could be demonstrated with the precision of a mathematical problem. They will laugh at you, and think you weak-minded, and credulous, for believing the Bible account of

the creation, and yet they will swallow the evolution theory, and at the same time hold on to the idea of man having an immortal soul, entirely ignoring the well-established axiom that the stream cannot rise higher than the fountain-head. Such is the inconsistency of human nature, with all its boasted attainments. And when we come to the religious world the diversity is even more startling and becomes a source of humiliation to those who own the Bible as a common standard, and the need of careful, prayerful study of the Word is thrust upon us at every corner. The tendency of the age is toward speculation and no theory, however absurd, can be propounded but it will obtain followers. How is this condition of affairs to be met, and what influence can be brought to counteract the prevailing tendency?

The Church OUGHT to be the great conservator. Paul designates the Church of the living God as the pillar and ground of the truth. But what sorry things do we find all over the land bearing the name of churches.

It is very true that the Head of the Church recognizes the *twos* and the *threes* who meet in His name, and He does not despise the gathering in the upper room, on the hillside, or in the lone glen. But where any considerable number of believers stately meet it is their obvious duty to organize on Bible principles in order that they may become more efficient in carrying on the work assigned to them by the Master.

Men are weak and helpless in a state of isolation. In order to accomplish anything great or good, combination is necessary. Look at a drop of water, how insignificant it is—but turn your eyes to the mighty ocean on whose bosom float the navies of great nations, and the millions of vessels that carry the commerce of the world. And what is this vast imposing ocean but an accumulation of drops of waters? How insignificant in isolation, how magnificent in combination!! Christ said, the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. Luke xvi. 8. See what combinations are made for political and other purposes, and how thorough and complete the organizations; officers are elected and bye-laws are framed and adopted for regulating the affairs of the society; the better to enable them to carry out the objects of the association; and if men will thus combine for worldly purposes, how much more

ought we to combine not after any order or government of our own creation, but according to the Word of God, with a code of laws of divine origin, and for purposes the most beneficent and ennobling.

What is the work the Master has assigned the Church to do? We answer, it is two-fold, and may be expressed as preaching the Word, and edifying the body, in other words the Gospel must be preached to unbelievers for their salvation, and it is the duty of the Church to do this, and then when believers are added to the Church they must be nourished by teaching and admonition suited to their condition, and this is called, feeding the flock. Let us examine how all this is to be accomplished. A more beautiful and instructive study than the order and complete arrangement of the Church cannot well be imagined. The apostle Paul very aptly compared it to the human body where each organ has its own proper functions to perform and where none are independent of the other, but the whole are bound together by mutual dependencies. The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee, nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you; and so on through the whole body to the lack that each separate joint supplieth. 1 Cor. xii. 21. And this reminds us of what Paul has elsewhere said, that God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. 1 Cor. xiv, 33. And as a means to advance this order and harmony in the Church, God has in His infinite wisdom and goodness, with a knowledge of the wants and weakness of human nature, put the affairs of the Church, for the good of the whole, under the control and direction of elders, pastors, or bishops, which are interchangeable names for the same office; and to them was given the charge. "Feed the Church of God which is among you taking the oversight thereof not a constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being eusamples to the flock." 1 Peter v. 2. And to the Church is the command given, "Obey them that have the rule over you;" mark the language: *obey them*, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief. Heb. xiii. 17. Paul also in his first letter to the Thessalonians (v. 12) says, "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor

among you, and are *over you* in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." This is very different from treating them spitefully and with envy. Brethren, it is no light thing to hold this office. The earnest devoted worker must often feel like Paul, when he said, Necessity is laid upon me; yea woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel, 1 Cor. ix. 16, and they are entitled to our sympathy, our love, our earnest prayers, and our co-operation. The divine rule is "let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine, 1 Tim. v. 17, and if we do not accord them this honor then are we not in harmony with the divine arrangement.

If they *must* preach the Word be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine (2 Tim. iv. 2), shall we so far forget ourselves as to cause them pain, anxiety and mortification, by irregularities and inconsistency on our part? Instead of this, it is the duty of the Church, and ought to be esteemed a privilege especially by the young members to ask counsel and advice of the elders; and if worthy of their office, their hearts will yearn over you with a fatherly care.

The beloved John could say, I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth. 3 John 4. And when a man has devoted his time and spent his energies in preaching the Gospel, and has been the humble instrument in directing your minds to the truth, the reception of which has at once proved your emancipation and your salvation. And when such a one watches over you with a jealous care, shall the generous impulses of his loving heart be checked by a cold rebuff such as "What have you to do with me?" Or if when kindly spoken to of the necessity of forsaking former associations and laying aside the badges of secret societies, whose funeral rites and ceremonies are repugnant and obnoxious to Bible truth, to be told "If you don't stop talking to me, I wont come to the meeting any more!" Well, friend, suppose you don't come, who will be the loser? —you or the *earnest* overseer who was faithfully performing a painful duty? Shame on us if we do not recognize the divine arrangement and bow to all the appointments of God's house. We need not recount instances of insubordination and the bane-

ful results produced by them. It is in this as in insubordination to human governments. He that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God. Rom. xiii. 2. As a church you may have been remarkably free from dissensions which have rent so many other churches all over the land; and yet you may not have altogether escaped this trial of the enemy. How much of this has been due to the untiring watchfulness of the elders of the Church the Master knows, and those who have thus labored and fought He will bless.

So far, I have only referred to the office of elder, and now we come to consider the important, but subordinate office of deacon, whose official business it is to attend to matters affecting the temporal wants of the Church as may be seen by consulting Acts vi. 1-7. From this it appears that Jewish feeling or national prejudice had very early manifested itself in the Church, and as a consequence the Grecian widows appear to have been neglected in the distribution of temporal relief, and as the apostles had so much to attend to in the ministry of the Word and prayer, their time was too precious to serve tables. The qualifications of a deacon, are very clearly expressed in 1 Tim. iii. 8-13, and prominently we notice gravity. A spirit of gayety and frivolity is unbecoming to the thoughtful Christian, but the deacons *must* be grave. The necessity of this qualification becomes apparent when we reflect that they must so often come in contact with human suffering where anything like frivolity might wound the already stricken heart. Walk softly when you go into the home of want, or approach the couch of sickness, and let words of deep sympathy, cheer and comfort attend you when you visit the house of mourning, where the eyes are dim with tears, and the heart is bowed down with sorrow. Furthermore, the deacons must not be partial in their attention, no sectional feelings, no national prejudices must mark their path.

They must hold the mystery of the faith in a good conscience, that "in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. iii. 28; Eph. iii. 6.

The appointee to this office must first be proved, hence the apostle's injunction: "Lay hands suddenly on no man." 1. Tim. v 22. How perfectly simple, yet how beautiful the divine ar-

rangement, what harmony would pervade our churches, if they were constituted of the right material and organized on the divine plan. From what we have seen, it appears that the guidance and direction of the Church is entrusted to the elders, and if they are the shepherds of the flock, the overseers of the building they are certainly the ones to select and approve of proper subjects for investigation in the Church, so that everything may tend to edification and instruction, and that all vain jangling, strife and dissensions may be avoided. This does not preclude individual research on any topic, but does not allow a visionary man to drag all his crochets into the Church to mar its peace and harmony, striving about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. 2 Tim. ii. 14. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace as in all churches of the saints. 1 Cor. xiv. 33.

For where envy and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. James iii. 16. This conservative course would seem to be dictated by the divine injunction, "Let us therefore, follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. Rom. xiv. 19. If we reflect on the grave responsibility that rests on the elders, I am sure we cannot withhold from them our earnest prayers that they may be faithful and that God may sustain them in their arduous labors. To them properly belong the responsibility of examining all applicants for admission to the Church, and this alone is a *weighty matter* to make sure that the applicant realizes his true condition, under sin, *condemned to die!* and no way of escape only through Christ Jesus. What a terrible thing it would be to have the same charge preferred against one that Jehovah charged against the prophets of Israel, "Ye have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, peace, peace; when there is no peace." Jere. vi. 14. The people must be told that the leprosy of sin is dreadful, and a fatal malady, incurable by any human nostrums, and that nothing but the blood of Jesus Christ, *God's Son, can cleanse from sin.* 1 John i. 7. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ. I have sometimes heard men, who ought to be better informed, say, that baptism is the door, but this wrong. Jesus says, *I am the door* into the sheepfold. John x. 7. Baptism is an important ordi-

nance not to be neglected, but we must not transpose things and put them out of their proper place, their relative position, this is a great mistake and ought to be guarded against.

Above all, brethren, cherish brotherly love, remember Joseph's charge to his brethren, on sending them back to his father in Canaan. See that ye fall not out by the way. Gen. xlv. 24. We must expect to encounter false brethren, even Paul did not escape this trial, and who can deal a more *cruel* blow or inflict a deeper wound than a false brother.

When the man who has knelt with you in prayer, and for months and years has sat with you at the same communion table, becomes your false accuser, and the traducer of your reputation in order to make merchandise of you. It is the recollection of these past associations, that gives venom to the sting of your accuser, and poison to the arrows that are aimed at your heart; but in the history and experience of Paul we have a bright illustration of the dignity of conscious integrity and the serenity attendant thereon. He withstood the assaults of such false brethren, and although in their sublime egotism they appeared to be somewhat to those who were deceived by specious appearances yet Paul yielded no subjection to them *no not for an hour*. Gal. ii. 5. With a mind firm in the sense of right and truth he reproved the dissemblers, and stripped them of their dissimulation, yet with all this varied experience Paul's faith remained unshaken and his love for the Church was unabated, and he could exulting say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. Phil. iv. 13. But had he omitted Christ as the source of his strength, his exultation would have been a shallow pretense indicative of the sheerest egotism.

Brethren, may we all have a realizing sense of our dependence on Christ Jesus. This should be ever present with us; we ought never to lose sight of it. We must ever feel that there is no merit in us; we have nothing in ourselves whereof to boast. Our origin and sinful nature should ever teach humility. Like Paul, if we glory, let us glory in the cross of Christ, by which the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world.

To the young members let me say, value your privileges. Prize highly Christian fellowship and intercourse. Those only who are excluded from such hallowed associations know how to appre-

ciate them; and O, let me entreat you, watch with a jealous care your standing in Christ Jesus. Let nothing cool the ardor of your love, or dim the bright hope within you. You have dedicated your hearts to Christ, see now that you devote your youthful energies to His cause, while the elasticity of youth is yours, and before the cares and trials of more advanced life take hold of you and in your daily intercourse with the world, walk worthy of your profession. Let your daily prayer be, Let me not be ashamed of my hope; but "let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer." Psalm xix. 14.

In conclusion, let each and all strive for the general good. Contend *earnestly* for the faith once delivered to the saints. Keep looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, and never for a moment lose sight of the "*crown of life*," James i. 12, the unfading crown of glory, 1 Peter v. 4. The prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Phil. iii. 14.

What a glorious hope is ours! For poor, frail, mortal man to attain to immortality! To be made partakers of the divine nature, and to LIVE ON, AND ON, throughout eternity, in the society of Jesus and the saints of every age and clime, enjoying unmingled bliss without alloy. O! is not this worth *striving for? Suffering for? Dying for?* Brother, sister, will you not strive, *strive more than you have ever done*, that you may obtain an incorruptible crown? And when the blood-washed throng shall meet in resurrection life, may you and I be there to swell the general anthem of honor and glory, to Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.

Is there one here who is yet a stranger to the covenants of promise, living without God and without hope in the world? O! let me *beseech you, let me entreat you*, Be ye reconciled to God. 2 Cor. v. 20. Hear the joyful news, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses. God is love! full of compassion, and of great kindness. He is waiting to be gracious, and *to-day* He is calling on you to *repent* and believe the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Not *a gospel* of man's invention, but *the Gospel* of the grace of God! He offers you

pardon, peace and salvation through Jesus, including unending life in the kingdom of God's dear Son.

To secure this a holy life is necessary. There is nothing more out of harmony with the Christ life than

GAMBLING.

I propose to consider this sin under two divisions.

1st. The character of gamblers as a class, and

2nd. The forms of gambling as commonly practised.

We begin then with the inquiry, What is gambling? The popular meaning of gambling is to play wantonly and extravagantly for money. A gambler is a knave, whose practice is to invite the unwary to game and cheat him. From this definition it is apparent that there are three qualities which preponderate in the character of the gambler, viz.: The love of money, the love of excitement, and craftiness, or more properly and in accordance with the science of phrenology, acquisitiveness and secretiveness predominate, while cautiousness and conscientiousness are very imperfectly developed. According to this rule a gambler stands at a very low point in human organism. This is true of gamblers as a class, if not applicable to each individual member. Intellectually some of them excel, as may be shown from the quickness of perception which they usually exhibit; but animal propensities and intellectual faculties largely developed without the moral qualities to govern and direct, never do bring out such a character as we would approach in intimacy and call friend. On the contrary, in coming into the presence of one of this class you feel a strong predilection to keep at arm's distance, having your eyes *open* and your pockets *close*.

Let us consider the gambler then under these three leading features in his character. and

1st. The Love of Money. The mass of mankind are Mammon worshipers—go where you will you will find more who bow the knee to the golden calf than the everlasting Jehovah. The service of the one is a matter depending on many contingencies. The feelings of friends, ease, comfort and popularity have all to be consulted. Everything is sacrificed to the adoration of the

other, nothing is allowed to stand in the way or to interpose between the worshiper and his god.

This thirst for gold is the bane of society, and is alike condemned by sound reason and revelation. Paul says the love of money is the root of all evil, and they who will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful desires, which drown men in destruction and perdition, and so it has been realized to the letter, what evil has the love of money not wrought in the earth. It invented and prosecuted the accursed slave trade. It covered our own fair Scotland with malt houses and distilleries, and opened innumerable dens of destruction for the furtherance of the damning liquor traffic, as if men were resolved on McAdamizing the world and making it one grand highway to eternal ruin.

A thirst for gold has filled the factories with females and helpless children, and protracted the hours of labor almost beyond human strength or endurance. In short, a thirst for gold has been the remorseless task-master of the poor and unprotected, and has interwoven itself so much into the institutions and customs of the world as to fully justify the destructive appellation, Root of all evil. The honest and honorable approaches to wealth and competency are tedious and toilsome, involving much self-denial and plodding industry. To avoid this dull and weary round of care and frugality and still determine to secure the prize, the gambler chooses to start off in another direction. Seemingly convinced that he has found out a royal road to wealth, he prefers to risk all to good luck or fortune (which, by the way, are terms fit only for the lips of a gambler), and by the uncertain throw of the dice resolves to make a spoon or spoil a horn. Gambling is pursued in many different ways, according to the taste and rank of the individual, but they generally more or less exhibit this feature of attempting to make money by other means than that of honest industry. Where this feature is wanting there is another which supplies its place, and this brings us to the second element in the character of the gambler, namely, the Love of Excitement. Those who don't play for money play for amusement and drown their hours of idleness in the giddy dissipation of the gambling table,—and here, for once, the hungry mendicant and the purse-proud lord-

ling are on an equal platform, with this difference, that the one is a knave and the other a fool, for all gamblers of whatever degree, belong to one or the other of these classes. The one is the cunning, artful dodger, the other the simple dupe. Wisdom and honesty cannot both dwell in the breast of the gambler, or they would be at constant war together.

As a general rule, the votaries of gambling are men of impulse, who wish to accomplish much by fits and starts, but who have not patience or perseverance enough to follow anything with a fixed aim.

Firm resolve, steady determination to any given thing, unflinchingly adhered to is altogether foreign to their nature. Besides they are an unproductive class of the lowest grade, living upon the community, neither improving themselves nor benefiting others, they are worse than blanks in society—obstructing its onward progress, a drag upon the whole civilization.

Without referring to the fascinating, bewitching nature of the different forms of gambling—which we reserve for the second division of our subject—I would simply remark under this head that it must be apparent to you all that the mind which gives itself up to the effervescence of the gambling table must be light as vanity. According to the law of assimilation it cannot be otherwise. The gratification of a constant desire for pleasurable excitement without attending to the principles of improvement and having no inspirations for a higher development is certain to produce disappointment and will altogether frustrate the object of its votaire, deserting him in the hour of his utmost need, and will leave him helpless and alone, unloving and unloved. Cast upon himself, he is like a drowning man in a darksome, desolating sea. In the whole course of his life he has built up no solid friendship, where now he can seek for solace. His views have been ever floating over the same surface. The unhallowed waste of shallow selfishness without having been once directed in search of a solid foundation on which to build a lasting superstructure. How can such a life yield anything but misery. It will not stand a retrospective glance, for at each prominent point stands out in ghastly distinctness some spectral monument of his misdoing.

How opposite to this is the life and experience of plodding

industry always adding a little to the spare funds, and by slow but honest perseverance accomplishing wonders. His path is strait and direct and he follows it conscientiously, firmly resolved that if the world make him unsuccessful it shall never make him base. For as the poet says:

"True Valor Tullus
Lies in the mind, the never yielding purpose,
Nor owns the blind award of giddy fortune."

Or as the *Boston Chronotype* has it:

"Does Misfortune's face look sour,
Keep at work.
She may smile again some day.
If you pull your hair and fret,
Rest assured she'll have her way,
Keep at work.

"Are you talents vilified,
Keep at work.
Greater men than you are hated;
If you're right, then go ahead.
Grit will be appreciated,
Keep at work."

We come now to consider the third leading feature in the character of the gambler. I mean cunning, or phrenologically secretiveness. Gambling is not a solitary evil, it cannot be practiced without the aid of false pretensions,—cunning in its lowest form. The gambler, to be successful, has to assume positions in order to entrap and mislead his less artful antagonist, and he who has this quality the largest and practices it the most unscrupulously is generally the most successful—provided that the other is not more acute in the perceptive faculties.

I think I cannot better portray this feature in the character of the gambler than by citing the following lines from Sir Walter Scott's "Lord of the Isles," on Cormac Doil, he says:

"For evil seem'd that old man's eye,
Dark and designing, fierce, yet shy,
Still he avoided forward look,
But slow and circumspectly took
A circling, never-ceasing glance
With doubt and cunning marked at once,
Which shot a mischief-boding ray
From under, eye-brows shagg'd and grey."

This system of duplicity, constantly practiced, blunts the sense of truth and justice. Call it *finessing*, *bantering*, or what you will, you cannot change the real nature of the thing, the plain English of which is *falsehood*, for whatever is calculated to mislead and is expressed for that purpose comes under the broad appellation of falsehood.

Having thus very briefly defined the leading, distinctive, features of the gambler under these three heads, the love of money, the desire for excitement, and the disposition to cunning and duplicity, we are prepared to make this affirmation that gambling grows only on the wreck of man's better nature. Benevolence, veneration, conscientiousness, and justice are all immolated on the profane altar of gambling, and the more the individual becomes an adept of the artful game is he the more debased and sunk in the scale of humanity.

This brings us to the next part of this topic, viz: Some of the forms under which gambling is usually practised, passing over the system of dog fighting and cock fighting as too gross for present consideration, I would direct your attention to another form which, though still more humiliating, cannot be neglected in justice to the present subject. I mean prize fighting—men being the combatants. Is it not fearful to reflect that in this age of boasted enlightenment, the 20th century of the Christian era, and at the close of the 6,000 years of the world's existence, men should still be found reveling in those bestial sports which disgraced pagan Rome? If any of you have seen that sporting newspaper, *Bell's Life*, published in London, you may form a faint idea of the description and magnitude of this evil,—who can hear without emotion that there are no fewer than from thirty to fifty fighting matches or challenges to fight published weekly in London, the details of which are given afterwards. and many of them are perfectly revolting to any one possessed of the common feelings of humanity, and they boast of being patronized by noblemen and gentlemen; alas for such specimens of nobility! I do not envy, nay, I pity, the man who can contemplate such scenes as these without having his inmost soul stirred up within him, resolved on having revenge on the system by means of weapons of no carnal nature—The power of Truth.

Next in order, and a step higher in the scale of popularity, comes horse racing. This is certainly less objectionable than the former, but cannot be justified by any who have given the subject more than a passing thought; leaving altogether out of view the plea of cruelty to that noble animal, the horse, which is a disputed point, and which we can afford to leave to those better acquainted with the nature of that animal; there is the injury to man's moral and physical nature, which cannot be extenuated by any sophistry whatever. I ask, Can that practice be defended which frequently requires for its accomplishment the debilitating of man's physical constitution? Think of man, fearfully and wonderfully made, how varied and intricate the mechanism. The prototype of all mechanical power and action is here combined; how each joint and relative socket is fitted with a nicety, which defies the precision of the most accomplished artisan, tied together by muscles and ligaments which exceed in strength and durability the product of the most skillful manufacturer—to which is superadded that mysterious network of nerves of volition and involuntary motion—in addition to which comes the organs of respiration, circulation, digestion and secretion, not to speak of the organs of thought, the throne of reason, wisely protected by that arched incasement, alike admirable for its capability of resisting external pressure, and adding to the adronment of the man without proving cumbersome for its bulk or weight, and man thus formed, thus wisely constituted, is physically deteriorated by the form of gambling now under our consideration. Are you aware, my friends, that that jockey whose very humble occupation it is to spur and whip the impetuous race horse, has frequently to lie for days and nights together in a stable, having for his bed the accumulated refuse of his companion, the horse, with two or three rugs thrown over him for a covering—and thus his body is literally steamed over the horse's excrement, until pale and emaciated, he rises like a man out of a fever and cannot without the use of alcoholic liquor muster strength enough to go through that performance which has assembled all the gamblers from John O! Greats to Land's ends to witness the far-famed Epsom races or Derby stakes, and what, you will inquire, is the cause of passing through the ordeal which I have just described? Why, the object is reduce the man

in weight, and this has been found the quickest means of accomplishing it. This is no romance. I have been myself acquainted with a man who at one period of his life went through all I have described, and I have seen one of those victims on a hot Summer day sent to walk four miles with three coats on to sweat as much out of the system as would reduce him to the minimum weight. Can that practice be defended which thus requires the sacrifice of things great and noble to accomplish that which is low, mean, and groveling, gratifying to those only who are debased and sensuous? Reason and enlightenment answer No.

The other forms of gambling, including billiards, dice, cards and chess, may be dismissed with this general notice, viz.: that they are unworthy of the time and attention of a being possessing the capacity of thought, the power of reason with which man is endowed. Only think of the precious hours thus frittered away—and who can put a proper estimate on time or calculate its value? Chemists may analyze and define the component parts of the external world—and astronomers compute the relative size and degrees of distance of the planets in the solar system; but that man only who is about to part from time can tell its value, for he counts by moments. Only reflect on the rich mental feast unfolded to man in the Book of Nature (not to speak of a more Divine Revelation), how varied and comprehensive the subjects indicated on its vast title page.

Next comes the master of the sciences. Stern and somewhat cynic in his looks to strangers, yet withal attractive to those who have the honor of his acquaintance, how does the old sire scowl when idle gamblers meet his eye, and with what significance does he point to that heap of volumes, royal quarto and octavo, dedicated to the theoretical department, while in juxtaposition are those well-worn instruments of every shape and form pertaining to the practical, which boldly indicate the fact—we take nought for granted here. Literature also, and the claims of history, which by its magic wand preserves the incidents of to-day, and makes them equally the property of future generations; all are neglected by the mind once fairly entrapped into the snare or sucked into the vortex of gambling.

There are other forms of gambling not usually considered as such. But when examined, whether analytically or synthetic-

ally, are found to belong to the same family. What is it that actuates the speculative merchant to risk his all on the slim chance of success in some bold adventure—what but the same feelings, hopes and intentions of the gambler, nought else, “For he has thrown his all upon a cast, and he must stand the hazard of the die.” Such cases we have known in which honest industry has been worsted, while the unprincipled gambler escaped, he having nothing to lose but everything to gain by the enterprise.

The railway mania in Scotland, and the Californian and Australian gold fever were productive of thousands of cases illustrative of what I have here advanced. The annals of Australian gold digging partake more of the features of gambling than a person at first thought would imagine. Then fancy that fraternity of gamblers who infest our cities and stroll through the country, imposing upon the credulity of the verdant ones—the examples of this are so varied ingenious and amusing as to palliate in some degree, we think, the otherwise audacious fraud. Just conceive of a man pawning treacle and black pepper upon the gullables as a patent invention of her Majesty’s head physician and administered by him to all the royal family—sold at five shillings a pound; a second produces the infusion of leeks under a long unpronounceable name, as the best antidote for corns and bunions ever discovered by the Faculty; while a third, with a mixture of brick dust and whitening, produces a Peruvian polish which has the effect of making pewter spoons resemble silver. Now, bad as this gambling is, it is not to be compared with the far more disgraceful system of adulterating human food, which is practiced to an extent untold. A man of ordinary perception will avoid the clutches of the thimblenigger and the chain-dropper, but it is not so easy to escape the fangs of your very respectable grocer who is probably a member of the council board and a much respected citizen, but whose tea by some means or other contains a large percentage of thorn leaves, well dyed with copperas, and whose coffee from the amount of dandelion it contains is found to have a very inflammatory effect upon the kidneys, being a strong diuretic to most constitutions, and the balls and lozenges he puts into the hand of the little child for being so smart as to go her mother’s messages, contains 50 per cent of stucco, the most undigestible thing in all the world. The

child soon complains of pain in the stomach, and gets a little of its mother's tea (containing the ingredients above described) as a remedy. The grocer inquires of the father how his family is. Is sorry to hear of the sickness of little Nanny—she was such a clever little child. Don't know how it is, but young people now-a-days don't seem to be so stout as in olden times. Bless you, sir, my father never knew what it was to have a headache till he was 60 years of age—don't understand how it is. Ah! my friends, of all the systems of gambling this is the most iniquitous, the most *damnable*.

I intended to have further directed your attention to the species of gambling practiced by many of the publishing houses of the present day—the prospectuses issued and the feelers thrown out to see how the current goes, and then swims with the tide, and flatter all who go with them, that they are in the right direction. The immense sacrifices these men are always making for the benefit of society are only certain cards suited for a certain portion of the game and are applied when requisite.

It was my intention further to have spoken of certain governments in Europe, the conduct of which resembles nothing so much as the finessing of the gambling table of which France holds a prominent position.

Look at the different figures made use of on the political chess board. Compare the coup d'état and the coup de main of Louis Napoleon, and say if he is anything but an artful adept at gambling and jugglery.

But I must conclude, and in winding up my remarks on gambling and gamblers I would ask you whether in justice to that class we may not use the language of the poet and call them :

“Types of countless generations
That have lived since earth began,
And have died without an effort,
To increase the good of man;
Heedless, that the proper mission
Of each race upon the soil
Is to make the next a better,
By its wisdom and its toil.”

CHAPTER XVII.

A LESSON FROM HISTORY.

“Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?”—Matt. xv. 3.

THE WORDS of the Savior were frequently very incisive, but seldom more so than when the scribes and pharisees came to Him and inquired, “Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?” But He answered and said unto them, “Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by *your* tradition?” How cutting the rebuke! The traditions of men put in the balance with the commandments of God! Of what account were they? Not only useless, but *absolutely pernicious*, inasmuch as they set up their own opinions and conceits, in opposition to the commandments of God, and THEREBY made the Word of God of none effect. How scathing the rebuke, “Full well ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own tradition.” Mark vii. 9.

Of what use is history and biographies of great men of those records of the past, if they do not form lessons, and give instruction and admonition by which the men of subsequent generations may be taught? The life history of our Lord as He came in contact with ignorance, with prejudice, with unbelief and hypocrisy is full of such lessons. It would be well if the men of our day, who profess His name, would sit humbly at His feet and drink in the divine lessons which He taught.

Let us for a little while look at the men with whom He came in daily contact. Who were they? and what was their character? They were children of Abraham by descent, but very unlike him in character, and disposition. They were proud and boastful of their family distinction. “We have Abraham to our father,” was their continual boast. It is true, Abraham had no such distinction to boast of; he had come of an idolatrous people, but how does it come about that a people who had such

an ancestor as Abraham, and whose early history was marked by so many visible tokens of Jehovah's presence and power, should have so far degenerated? The fact of their degeneracy cannot be called in question. Let us hear what God said by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah, "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; know therefore, and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts. Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed; how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me? For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God." Jere. ii. 19, 21, 22.

To diagnose this case correctly, we must try to find out the cause of this sad backsliding, and again we have to turn to the sacred record, and again Jehovah is the speaker. Listen attentively. They are words of awful solemnity.

"My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken *me* the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Is Israel a servant? Is he a homeborn slave? Why is he spoiled?" Jere. ii. 13, 14.

Ah! why? Another sad instance of revolt; that is why. He was once a son, much beloved, "For I am a Father to Israel, saith Jehovah, and Ephraim is my first born." Jere. xxxi. 9. But he has thrown off his allegiance to parental authority, hence his degradation, he is now the slave of willful passion.

The eminence THAT people once had is graphically portrayed in the book of Ezekiel, where Jehovah speaks of Israel under the figure of a spouse.

"I clothed thee with brodered work, and shod thee with badger's skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck, and I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head, thus wast thou decked with gold and silver, and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and brodered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil; and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom, and thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy

beauty; for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God, but thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, . . . thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians, and thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians." Ezek. xvi. 10-15, 26, 28.

Then listen to God's entreaty, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you, surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord." Jere. iii. 14, 20.

Can you imagine anything more pathetic than this appeal of the Lord God of Israel, to that backsliding people, putting them in remembrance of the honorable position to which Jehovah had exalted them, saying, "I am married unto you." No other nation under heaven had such proud distinction.

The wonders God has wrought for them in Egypt, and terrible things by the Red Sea, were events of such magnitude in their history that would lead one to imagine they could never be forgotten by them.

Their temporal and spiritual blessings were unsurpassed set forth in oriental imagery by the symbols of brodered work, fine linen, and silk, and ornaments such as bracelets, chains, earrings, and jewels, but really typifying the goodness of God to them as a nation in communicating to them divine instruction by prophets and angelic messengers, much the same as Jesus afterwards sought to teach that same people of their national death that would soon overtake them, as portrayed in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, which has so long been misunderstood by means of another fallacy, which we shall speak of hereafter. The history of ancient Israel is a history of backsliding. "My people," said God, "are bent to backsliding from me, though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt Him." Hosea xi. 7.

To the descendants of this people, Christ came, and delivered His Father's message, but they regarded Him not; they set at naught His entreaties, and despised His most gracious invitations; they were full of blindness, full of unbelief, and bitter hatred, it mattered not that He reminded them of the sayings of

Moses and the prophets, concerning Himself, their hearts were obdurate, and their malice implacable, which culminated in the death of the Son of God, and the cutting off of that people as Paul described it in his letter to the Romans, and the engrafting of believers taken out from among the Gentiles.

Their unbelief, as we have seen, arose from their neglect of the living oracles, and giving themselves up to the traditions of their backsliding forefathers, and that brings us to the practical and important part of this lesson, for there is a lesson of deep significance in it to us, and to all mankind, if they will only study it aright; but we cannot reach it hastily. To do the subject justice, we must be content to review patiently the history of the Church from the call of the Gentiles onwards, and it is a sad record; but withal instructive.

In beginning at this point in the Church's history we do not wish to be understood as teaching that the Church did not exist before then, on the contrary, we find that Stephen in his memorable address speaks of the Church in the wilderness with Moses.

You remember that in Christ's first commission to His twelve disciples their labors were restricted to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It reads in this way, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and as ye go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" Matt. x. 5. But after His resurrection the commission was world-wide, saying, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not, shall be condemned." Mark xvi. 15. The invitation was then extended to the Gentiles, and who were they? Not a very high class of humanity, on the contrary, they were idol worshipers, and steeped in heathen practices.

Their terrible degradation and corruption are set forth in the 1st chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans. In like manner he reminds the church at Corinth, that they were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led." 1 Cor. xii. 2.

What a sad spectacle they presented; but O, what a trans-

formation was produced when the Gospel was preached and believed. When through belief of the truth, and the obedience of faith they got into the Anointed One! Hear what Paul says of those same persons. "For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." Eph. v. 8. Once they were "strangers and foreigners, but now fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Eph. ii. 19. Once they were unclean, but now, said Paul, "Ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Cor. vi. 11.

Paul knew what he was talking about when he said, "The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. i. 16. But how does the Gospel have such wonderful power? Simply because it is not the cold abstruse proposition or the dark mystery many believe it to be. On the contrary it is an active energizing principle, which enlightens the understanding, renews the affections, and purifies the heart. It does this by revealing God to us as the sinner's friend, and by making known to us, God's plans and purposes in redemption work. Love thus manifested begets love in the believer, and supplies the motive power of action to man's whole nature. The hope of future glory in unending existence lifts the man above the grovelling desires of his animal nature, and while it puts him under severe discipline, it supplies, under the divine blessing promised, the power necessary to withstand temptation.

Thus we see the Gentiles, through the preaching of the word of truth, were *lifted* from their degraded condition and *exalted* to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph. ii. 6.

Poor Lazarus had now died to his poverty, he had no longer to beg at the rich man's gate. The apostles of Jesus were the messengers, employed to carry him into Abraham's bosom, and bestow upon him greater, and more distinguished favors than were ever given to the cut-off branches of Judah's olive tree. Rom. xi. 24. Hence Paul exhorts the Gentiles to watchfulness and warns them against being "Wise in their own conceits." But on the contrary to learn by the example of Israel to be beware of unbelief, saying, "Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear;

for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." Rom. xii. 20. And again, "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office."

To fully understand Paul's earnestness in this matter we must read what he said to the church at Corinth.

"As my beloved sons I warn you, for though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers for, in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel." 1 Cor. iv. 14. Hence a father's anxiety, and tender regard for the welfare of his children, as manifested in all his epistles.

To the church at Colosse, he writes, "*Beware*, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Col. ii. 8. Paul with prophetic vision saw the danger ahead and faithfully did he lift his warning voice. Otherwise he could not have said to the elders of the church at Ephesus, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men."

You are doubtless aware that through the chain of Lakes on which our lake traffic is conducted, there are many reefs and and dangerous places which threaten the safety of navigation, and getting on these reefs makes costly damages to the owners, and sometimes the total loss of vessels. To prevent such casualties, lightships and signals are stationed there, to warn mariners of the impending danger.

In like manner Christ and His apostles, seeing the perils that threatened the Church at that time, and in subsequent generations, hung out danger signals to guard the voyagers on the tempestuous ocean of life, seeking the haven of eternal rest. All along the course they are displayed like so many beacon lights. They read, "*Take heed.*" "*Beware.*" Again and again Christ admonished His followers to "*Beware!*" "*Beware of false prophets.*" Matt. vii. 15. "*Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.*" Matt. xvi. 6. "*Take heed that no man deceive you.*" Matt. xxiv. 4. Of His coming

again, He says, "Take ye heed, watch and pray for ye know not when the time is." Mark xiii. 33.

The writer to the Hebrews says, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, but exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Heb. iii. 12.

Peter also adds his testimony, "We have the prophetic word more confirmed, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise." 2 Peter i. 19. And again he says, "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, *beware* lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." 2 Peter iii. 17. Paul got very much stirred up about vain talkers and deceivers in his day, and he wrote to Titus:

"This witness is true, wherefore rebuke them *sharply*, that they may be sound in the faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men that turn from the truth." Titus i. 13.

How have those warnings been received, and what fruit have they borne? These are burning questions, and they claim our attention in the consideration of this subject.

We cannot shut our eyes to the sad fact that the warnings and earnest entreaties referred to have been sadly neglected if not almost totally disregarded, hence the condition of the religious world to-day, amid the babel of confusion arising from conflicting ideas and sectional strife. Gentile professors wonder at the blindness of the Jews, and forget that they themselves occupy an analogous condition. Israel foundered on the rock of unbelief. The Gentiles, notwithstanding Paul's fervid entreaties, have done the same.

Israel, as we have seen, committed lewdness with Egypt and Assyria, in going into their idolatry, their sorcery and heathen practices. Saul, himself, having departed from the God of Israel, and became so weak and degraded as to consult the witch of Endor. The Gentiles, while professing the name have been corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 2 Cor. xi. 3. They sacrificed the purity of the Gospel to Grecian philosophy,

and pagan superstition, when they bartered the hope of a future life through Christ and a resurrection from the dead for the false dogma of Platonic immortality; two things so utterly opposed to one another that they cannot agree.

To trace the rise and progress of this monster evil in the Church, we have to go back to Paul's time, when he said in his second letter to the Thessalonians, written A. D. 54, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work." 2 Thess. ii. 7. And ten years later he wrote from Rome, to the saints at Colosse, "*Beware* lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ," (Col. ii. 8), probably recalling his encounter with the Epicurean philosophers at Athens, who "held that matter is uncreated, indestructible, and that all material things were self-evolved, without a supervising or directing intelligence," from whom some of our modern evolutionists appear to have borrowed *their* theory.

The Christian doctrine of a resurrection from the dead was antagonistic to their theory and of course they mocked.

We now come to the last letter written by Paul, shortly before his martyrdom, and the care of the churches was still the burden on his mind. Looking forward through the vista of time he said, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." In the same epistle we have Paul's antidote for this state of things. It is this: "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." 2 Tim. iv. 2-5.

Paul and Timothy's voices were soon stilled in death, but the work of the destroyer went on. The terrible persecutions to which the early Christians were subjected, greatly hastened the work of corruption.

When Christian doctrine brought nothing but contempt, bonds, imprisonment, exile and death to its followers, it is not to be wondered at that the less spiritual should make a compromise

with error, and seek to amalgamate the pagan idea of natural immortality with the Christian doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, from whence we now have the hybrid misnamed Christianity.

With this union between Christian and pagan doctrine effected, it is not difficult to account for the great accessions to Christianity, thus corrupted, in the reign of Constantine at the beginning of the fourth century.

With the meagre information left us, no one can imagine, much less form a just estimate of the dreadful sufferings, and privations endured by the children of God, during that period, and subsequently, braced up and strengthened as they were by the words of Paul, and inspired by his personal example, but we can rest assured they bore them nobly trusting in God's un-failing promises and looking forward with longing hearts to the glory to be hereafter revealed.

The Gospel of life in Christ, and the kingdom to be established under the whole heavens, has in all ages been the hope of the people of God, and that hope as we have seen, has been able to sustain them under the most trying circumstances, bonds, imprisonment, exile, and death; they were "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus ii. 13), to destroy death, remove the curse, raise His sleeping saints in glorious incorruption, and change the living ones from mortality to immortality.

As time advances, the evidences accumulate that the faith we have so long tried to uphold here is no new doctrine, but on the contrary is the same as was taught by the prophets of Israel, by Jesus Christ, and His apostles.

The latest testimony which may interest some who have not investigated the subject, comes from the Hon. Wm. E. Gladstone, of whom it is said, there was no greater scholar, or better informed man on nearly all subjects, of the present day. In his articles on the future life, which appeared in the *North American Review*, he has done much to awaken a deeper interest in this subject.

He says, "Tatian says in express terms, the soul of man in itself is not immortal but mortal."

This Tatian was born about A. D. 130, and enjoyed the friendship of Justin Martyr.

He also quotes from Lactantius, one of the Christian fathers, born about the middle of the third century, a distinguished orator, and one of the most learned men of his time, who said that "the distinction between the righteous and the wicked would be canceled if all were immortal."

He also quotes from an elaborate work on behalf of conditional immortality, the author of which includes in his claim, Barnabas, Clement, of Rome, Ignatius, Hermas, Polycarp, and Clement, of Alexandria.

Barnabas, was a companion of Paul, Clement, of Rome, presided over the Church from A. D. 91 to 101. Ignatius suffered martyrdom A. D. 115. Polycarp was a disciple of John, and suffered martyrdom about A. D. 155, and Clement, of Alexandria died about A. D. 220. And so you see the supporters of our faith are not of yesterday.

Gladstone further says, "Even down to, and after the time of Gregory the Great, Flugge finds no approach made towards the formation of a Christian dogma of eschatology. There was a disposition to dwell on the immateriality of the soul, but it was regarded as in its own nature *perishable*, and as deriving immortality only from the knowledge of God." Near the end of the sixth century, he further says, "The doctrine of *natural* as distinguished from *Christian immortality* had not been subjected to the severe tests of wide publicity and resolute controversy, but had crept into the Church by a back door as it were, by a silent though effective process, and was in course of obtaining a title by tacit prescription."

Theophilus, of Antioch, said, "That Adam was neither mortal nor immortal but capable of either." And according to Irenæus the soul in its own nature is not life, but receives its life from God, on whom therefore its continuance depends. It is subject to the law of death, but will owe persistency of life, as a divine gift, to God its Author."

Gladstone further says, "The eternal punishment of the wicked in general for the sins of a life not finite only, *but brief*, is thought by some to present an aspect of great severity.

"When this proposition carried with it the notions of inability

ty to escape from sinfulness, and of adverse divine decrees, and when further, damnation for original sin was extended to infants, and the heathen were excluded wholesale from salvation, it may be said, that a theology so fashioned did indeed hold heavy burdens for the human mind to bear."

Time will not permit our going further into this subject at present, but I trust enough has been said to show the grievous departure from the oracles of God; and if Christendom would look at itself in the mirror here held up before it, it might well tremble at its present condition, and impending doom. But the door of mercy is still open, and the beacon lights of truth are still burning to warn against foundering on the shoal of unbelief, and to-night the Gospel message is still, come! Come, for all things are now ready. Christ is revealed to us as the Lifegiver, in whom alone the children of a mortal race can attain to immortality. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." John i. 4. He is soon coming again to establish His throne and kingdom on the earth, and to which honor you are invited to share with Him, when He comes, in conducting the affairs of that kingdom.

The requirements are, belief of the Gospel, repentance or reformation, baptism into His name, for the remission of sins, and a subsequent godly life.

God is now waiting to be gracious; may He not wait in vain, and may His servants learn

HOW TO DO EFFECTIVE WORK.

"Work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 12.

Conflicting schools of theology not noted for their careful study of the Scriptures. have frequently attempted to show a contradiction between the teachings of Paul and James, as to the relative value of faith and works in the problem of man's salvation; Paul, affirming that "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. iii. 28), and James asserting, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." James ii. 24. Superficial readers of the Word naturally con-

clude there is a conflict here; but a closer study of the writings of both, shows a wonderful unanimity in sentiment, with only such a diversity of expression as serves to show there is no collusion between the parties; and thus the testimony of those two inspired witnesses, instead of weakening only strengthens and confirms each other's position. We might cite many instances of this, but the passage which I have selected to address you on, is right to the point: James could not have spoken more emphatically, "Work out your own salvation." This is an individual matter and implies labor, *exertion* on your part, and rightly so, as in the natural world, so in the spiritual in this respect. God has so ordered the physical condition of man that labor is essential to his existence. He has placed man in a world which demands constant exertion to supply the wants of his nature. His exposure to cold and hunger brings him into conflict with the material world; he has to fight against the elements in order to self-preservation. Like the young oak on the mountain side, tossed by tempests which only make the roots strike deeper into the soil, thereby attaining permanence and stability, so is the man who has to battle with opposition in a righteous cause, acquiring new strength by every conflict, more power of resistance, more courage to tackle fresh adversaries, and gain new conquests.

Without a daily effort of the will man he would become dwarfed in intellect, enfeebled in mind and body; and lose that discipline so essential to the formation of character.

Conflict with evil makes man morally great, every victory he gains over evil around him, and within him, gives him new strength and courage for fresh achievements; and this alone can train him to endurance and perseverance, and make him robust in body and mind.

The uses of toil are more than a mere means of acquiring sustenance, they extend beyond the present: Life is a school, and toil is disciplinary, and the man who does not labor in some field, mental or physical, is a poor specimen of humanity; he lacks that exercise which develops the growth, energy, and activity of the human mind.

Of all lives, an indolent, aimless one is the most barren and unsatisfactory. I have read of a man who was born to a princely

fortune, he was well educated, and had all that health, wealth, leisure and taste could give him: a friend who visited him one day at his country residence thought he must be one of the most happy of men, and so remarked to him; but judge of his surprise when the reply came, Happy! no, not happy; I committed one fatal error in my youth, and dearly have I paid for it; I started in life without an object, and without ambition. I said to myself, "I have all that I see other men contending for; why should I struggle?" I know not the curse that lights on those who never have to struggle for anything; I ought to have created for myself some definite pursuit, so that there would be something to labor for, and to overcome. Then I might have been happy."

There could scarcely be a more pitiable object than such a picture presents to us. Lost for want of ambition. A life without an aim! The wealthy and luxurious become effeminate; they that wear soft clothing, said Jesus, are in king's houses, you need not go to the wilderness to find them. They are mere reeds shaken with the wind, they have no resistance, no endurance. The stern qualities that go to make up a reformer are best subserved by simple habits and coarse apparel, and such was John, the Lord's forerunner. He was clothed in a garment of camel's hair, and his meat was locusts, and wild honey, but no greater prophet had arisen up to his time; and when a nation had to be reproofed, and called on to reform, he was the man to do it, although his reproof of wrong-doing eventually cost him his life.

Work out your own salvation. Do not think that your salvation is something that another can do for you without your co-operation, as a man may extinguish the flames that are consuming his neighbor's dwelling. The sinner must co-operate with the Savior, in order to be delivered from the curse of sin. If not, why all the gracious invitations, threatenings and admonitions that are made to the race of man. The Savior calls through the Gospel, on men to *come*, but the sinner must take hold of the hand of the Savior when He stretches it out for His aid. Or to drop the figure, he must believe, the Gospel, repent and be baptized into the Christ for the remission of sins, and hence forward, live godly, and so make his calling and election sure. But let us examine more critically the language of Paul and James, in order that we may see how harmonious they are when rightly under-

stood. The law Paul refers to, when he said, "By works of the law shall no flesh be justified," was the law that was added, because of transgressions. The law that gendereth to bondage never was a life-giving instrument. It was given only for a limited time, and for a specific purpose, namely, until the Seed should come to whom the promise was made. Those are not the works James is extolling. He was consistent in his testimony, and his epistle to the twelve tribes scattered abroad is in perfect harmony with his wise counsel given some ten years earlier, when Peter described the old dispensation as a yoke of bondage which was unbearable. James then advised to write unto the Gentile converts, not imposing the requirements of the law upon them, but requiring of them to abstain from pollution of idols and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood, and his epistle is in perfect harmony with the opinion he then gave. He is here speaking of the necessity of works as evincing a living faith. For says he, "As the body without the spirit, *pneuma*, breath of life, is dead, so faith without works is dead also." James ii. 26. The works he is enjoining are those done under what he designates the "Royal Law," "The Law of Liberty." It may be called the Royal Law, being given for the government of the king's household. and the law of liberty, because given to regulate the conduct of those who have been made free from the law of sin and death, even as Paul wrote to the Romans, "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death, for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The faith Paul extolled was the faith which worketh by love. Gal. v. 6. It was not an inoperative faith, and in this the oneness of the teaching of Paul and James is fully demonstrated.

"Work out your own salvation." There is no indolence encouraged here. Do not set yourselves down to rest complacently, saying, "My faith is correct, I am all right."

Let us see,—your faith may be all right and you may be all wrong,—show your faith by your works. says James. That puts it to the test. Remember, "as the body without the spirit

(breath) is dead so faith without works is dead also. James ii. 26. Works show that faith is alive and active; as fruitfulness shows the life of the vine. It is the proof of vitality.

Work out your own salvation. I cannot work out *your* salvation, and you cannot work out *mine*. This is an individual matter; "none can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." Psalm xlix. 8. This is a solemn thought. Two may journey through life together, and share each other's joys and sorrows, but each must work out his own salvation. We may aid and stimulate one another in the work, but so far as one doing the work of another, it cannot be done.

Work out your own salvation. It is a difficult and tedious process, like the sculptor forming a beautiful and perfect statue from a block of marble; blow after blow is struck with the mallet and chisel, with great precision and accuracy, while the form in the mind of the artist is being evolved. Hard knocks where they are required; and light and delicate touches where necessary.

I once heard of an artist who had been at work for a long time on an oil painting. A friend called to see it, and after some weeks called again. "Why," said he, "are you still at work on that painting? I do not see what you have done to it since I was here before." The artist tried to explain that certain expressions needed softening, while others had to be brought out and strengthened. Oh! said he, these are mere trifles. To which the artist replied, Such trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle. And so it is with character-forming. Whatever tends to the perfecting and strengthening of our characters is no trifle, and let none regard it as such.

Work out your own salvation. But how are we to work it out? The answer is right at hand. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." No room for boasting here. The work is not of a kind that will admit of boasting. *It is no holiday task.* It requires *hard persevering labor.* The propensities of man's fallen nature are ever ready to assert themselves, constantly craving indulgence, and if listened to, and not controlled, would lead the possessor captive at their will. These, says the Apostle, must be mortified. Crucify the flesh with its affections and desires. On no other ground can we account for the existence of evil, under the government of an all-wise and good God.

It seems to be necessary for disciplinary purposes, to try men, by exposing them to temptation; and thus afford them an opportunity to develop character by resisting and overcoming evil. "I see, says Paul, another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members," and this produces a sense of wretchedness, "O! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Who shall deliver me? Man left to himself, is unfit for the conflict; but there is one who can deliver. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you." That lets in a flood of light on an otherwise dark subject, and solves the difficulty. How much strength and courage this assurance ought to afford! Co-workers with God, who says "My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." 2 Cor. xii. 9.

Man, unaided by a higher power, is a very helpless being, and the higher the position he occupies his weakness becomes the more apparent under trying circumstances. How strengthening and comforting then to know we are under the care of One who knows our wants, and weaknesses, and is ever ready to render us assistance when we ask Him. The Father knows the frailty of our frame, and remembers we are dust, and our intercessor was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Oh! that we had more and more of a realizing sense of divine aid, and avail ourselves more frequently of it; how strong we should then become and have less occasion to be forever bemoaning our weakness. We should then be animated with such a confidence as would assure our success. And not only is it God that worketh in us, but He worketh in us to will and do of His good pleasure. The Apostle has elsewhere told us, "This is the will of God even your sanctification." His good pleasure is to give the saints the kingdom; so Christ has said; and in order for them to get the kingdom they must be prepared for it, made meet for the inheritance of the saints. Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Wherefore, says Paul to the Ephesian Church, be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Eph. v. 17. Remembering that "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word that He might present it to Himself

a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. v. 26. And, says James, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he hath been *approved* he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord promised to them that love Him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil and He Himself tempteth no man." We must not only crucify the flesh with its affections and evil desires but we must cultivate the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace.

"Work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." "Work out your own salvation." "This is no place to dream away the hours, all should be earnest in a world like ours."

"Be strong all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and *work*, for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts." These were the words of God to ancient Israel by the mouth of the prophet. Haggai ii. 4.

Work diligently. "Giving all diligence, says Peter. Add to your faith fortitude, and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity, for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore, the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure, for if ye do these things ye shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you *abundantly* into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 2 Peter v. 11. He that lacketh these things is blind. There is light around him, but he cannot see it, he is blind. There is work to do, urgent work to be done. but he does not see it, he is blind, blind to his own interests, blind to the responsibilities of his position, blind to the obligations he assumed when he enlisted under the banner of the Cross. He hath forgotten he was purged from his old sins. What a sad picture to look at; and to meditate on!

Work out your own salvation. Remember how you started on the Christian race, what earnest love, what holy fear. Ye did

run well, who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? Gal. v. 7. It is only a few years since you began the contest. how has your love and ardor failed so soon? Hear the Apostle's exhortation, "Be not weary in well-doing." "Faint not." Can you expect to wear the victor's crown, and not fight the fight of faith? Laurels are not so easily won. You must endure hardness as a good soldier if you expect to gain the conquest and camp on victory's ground. "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. vii. 21. These are the Master's own words; how awfully important they are. The trouble with too many is they forget. It is God that worketh in them, and trusting to their own strength they fail, forgetting Him who said, "Of mine own self I can do nothing;" but hear what Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philip. iv. 13. This dependence on Divine aid in all our efforts is a wonderful power within us, a wonderful stimulus. the greatest tonic that ever was discovered.

If you contend in camp or field, senate or forum, with a man who has this indwelling principle, you encounter no common foe. Better oppose a dozen men of brag and bluster than one such. It gives endurance, and endurance is the key to success.

In union there is strength; a combination of men will accomplish what one would not dare to try alone, but when human effort is backed by divine power, the result is irresistible. It is God that worketh in you, and Paul in all the fervor and enthusiasm of his nature, exclaims: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The assurance of this alliance gives confidence and courage for any emergency, and is more than half the battle. But this must not be confounded with fanaticism. That is only frenzy, and many wild things have been done under the enthusiasm of delusion. Men must not be carried away by feeling; that is a very unsafe guide. The understanding must first be enlightened. You must have a clear conception of what salvation is, what it consists of, and the principles involved in it, and *then*, work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling, having full confidence in Jacob's God. but none in the worm Jacob. Again, remember Paul's words, "Brethren, I count not myself

to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I *press* (mark the words) I *press* toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." With such experience he could well exhort Timothy to "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." "Fight the fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." The Christian life is one of activity. *Be astir; be up and doing.* No time for indolence here. *Work! Fight! Press forward!* That is the idea.

There is a race to be run, a battle to be fought, a crown to be won, but there are rules laid down for the contestants to which all must conform. No use in striving unless you strive lawfully, for such only will obtain the prize. So, run that you may obtain. Bind yourself to a task, and let that task be to work out your own salvation, it is a deep problem, and if you would do it successfully, you must do it with fear and trembling, believing that it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. That is the work God hath given you to do. What a notable illustration we have in the life of Paul, of arduous application, patience, and perseverance. He was by no means egotistical when, in comparing his work with that of others he said, "In labors more abundant." The facts amply justify the claim. His travels and privations in spreading the Gospel of the kingdom, in planting churches and taking care of those churches, watching over their spiritual welfare, and writing letters of encouragement, of warning and admonition, *involved herculean labor*, and at the same time always recognizing the hand of God in it as he said to the Church at Colosse, "Christ in you the hope of glory, whom we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ." "Whereunto I also *labor, striving* according to His working which worketh in me mightily." Men may work. We all work, but are we *laboring, striving* in this direction? There is much implied in that word STRIVING. It is no common effort. It means to *labor hard*, to STRUGGLE.

Are we all laboring hard, *struggling* in this direction? As an incentive so to do, remember ye are co-workers with God. It is God that worketh in you. The weakness inhering in our fallen natures I know is very discouraging. "When I would do good

evil is present with me," is the experience of more than Paul, but then comes the admonition, "Flee these things," cling to God, and the word of His grace which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified; and hear His *cheering, comforting words,*

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid.
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and will cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, Omnipotent hand.

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose
I will not, I will not desert to its foes.
That soul, though all men should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, *no never*, NO NEVER forsake."

We will then be able to recognize

THE SOCIAL CHARACTER OF TRUE RELIGION.

"O, magnify the Lord with me, let us exalt His name together."—
Psa. xxxiv. 3.

The religion of the Bible is eminently a social religion. *Inward* in its conception and apprehension of the truth, and *outward* in its expression in the life and conduct.

The language of the Psalmist which we have just quoted has always appeared to me to be the utterance of a heart that was full to overflowing. There is nothing cold and formal about it. No one can study the life of David without being impressed with the fact that he was a man of strong impulses from his youth up. His early history shows it. When he was yet a shepherd boy feeding his father Jesse's sheep at Bethlehem, and when the whole host of Israel were sore afraid at the threatenings of the Philistines and fled at the sight of Goliath of Gath, this impetuous youth offered his services to King Saul to meet in personal combat this champion of the Philistines. In vain did Saul try to dissuade him, saying, "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth," but David was not to be daunted, and his reply showed on whom he depended for help. He recited an encounter he once had with a lion and a bear, and added, "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion,

and out of the paw of the bear, *He* will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.”

You see, David treasured up God’s deliverances, and that is what every child of God ought to do, and draw strength and comfort from the remembrance of them. That was evidently the frame of mind David was in when he wrote this psalm, for he begins, “I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad,” and anticipating this gladness of the humble heart, he gives vent to his pent-up feelings, by the exclamation, “O, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.”

The Psalms of David are full of incentives to praise; He is ever recounting the goodness of the Lord, and extolling Him for His wonderful works to the children of men. And he is not content with doing this himself, but he wants others to join with him in the blissful exercise. In Psalm cvii. he dwells on the goodness of God to his people, notwithstanding their waywardness and many declensions, and he commences by saying, “O, give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever,” and he proceeds, “Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.” Observe the language, “Let the redeemed of the Lord *say so*,” not let them *think so*, or let them *feel so*; that would be very good so far as it goes, but that is not enough. If they think so, and feel so, let them *say so*. David realized that God’s people were to be a witnessing people, and that silence did not become the recipients of so many favors. With many it is a commonly received opinion that religion is a private, personal thing, a concern between an individual and his God, and so secret that our neighbors need not know it, citing as proof, “Your life is hid with Christ in God,” meaning thereby their Christian life or conduct.

In my young days I listened to a sermon advocating that view, and to give it a show of Scriptural authority, what do you think was the passage chosen? I do not suppose you could imagine if you had a whole year to try. Why it was that text with which you are all so familiar in Paul’s letter to the faithful brethren in Colosse, in which he says, “Your life is hid with Christ in God.”

Brethren, be not startled at the ignorance. It is thick darkness, to be sure, but just such darkness as many of us were in; and if we have been enlightened and experienced deliverance, can we suppress our joy and gratitude and not feel self-condemned? When I consider the gloom, the darkness, and the thralldom of Calvinism in which I was brought up, teaching such unworthy views of God and His government has struck terror into the heart of childhood and drove manhood into infidelity, I cannot restrain myself. I must give vent to my feelings by outward expression, and thank God that the light of the glorious Gospel ever dawned on my mind, and that I have been begotten to a hope of life, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Is there anything Pharasaical in that? If there is I cannot see it; nay, rather, is it not following the Divine injunction, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." And if the gratitude is in any degree commensurate with the deliverance it will be very outspoken, for I hesitate not to say that no man uncorrupted by false theology can look upon Calvinism with anything but abhorrence.

If we should try to restrain ourselves our experience would be akin to that of Jeremiah when he said, "His Word was in my heart as a burning fire, shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing and I could not stay."

David in the psalm referred to says, "He brought them out of darkness, and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder." No less than four times in that psalm he gives vent to his inward emotions by exclaiming, "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men."

Brethren, we have much, as a Church, to be thankful for to-day. By the recent accessions to our numbers, a new song has been put into their mouths, as well as our own, even God to magnify, and not only so, but the hope of others coming in the near future.

Again we have reason to sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving for the brotherly love, the peace, and unanimity that has prevailed among us in the year about to close. No jarring, discordant voice has marred our internal harmony. For this con-

dition of things let us be devoutly thankful, and consecrate ourselves anew to the work before us.

If we value this peace and harmony as we ought, let me impress on you, one and all, to guard it well. See that no treacherous hand is laid upon it. No Church can long exist without brotherly love, and no Church can prosper without harmonious, undivided, concentrated effort. The blessings we enjoy must be guarded with vigilance, and only by such vigilance can we show we are worthy of them.

Let a discordant element get in, I care not under what pretence, and your usefulness is gone. Numbers count nothing. Only let the peace of God and the love of God rule in your hearts.

As we value the work in which we are engaged, the double work of building one another up, strengthening one another in the faith and hope of the Gospel, and in seeking to publish abroad the knowledge of God and of His Son Christ Jesus, the knowledge of God's plans and purposes, what He has ordained of old and will by and by make manifest let us see to it that no discord be allowed to enter here. With our thanksgiving services let us pledge ourselves anew, with greater energy and determination, to the service of Him who died for us, and rose again, who claims our undivided love, the pure affection of sanctified natures.

The social nature of our religion is further shown in the testimony of the Prophet Malachi, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name, and they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

As yet we have only dealt with Old Testament evidence of the social nature of our religion. We now come to the New, and early in the public ministry of Christ we have abundant testimony.

In the first chapter of John, we have a very brief account of the introduction to Christ of two of His apostles. One of them, Andrew by name, goes off and finds his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah which is being interpreted, the Christ, and he brought him to Jesus.

Andrew could not keep quiet about it, he wanted Simon to know what he had found, and he brought him to Jesus. Has each one of us brought some one to Jesus? Have we? That is what we are expected to do, and what we will most earnestly do, if we have a true realization of the favor conferred upon us, and our responsibility arising therefrom. The following day Jesus found Philip, whether through the intervention of Andrew and Simon we are not told, but not unlikely for he was of the same city, but be that as it may Philip loses no time in finding Nathanael and communicates to him the good news, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

When one's eyes are truly opened to the importance of a knowledge of the covenants of promise, and the necessity of believing and obeying the Gospel in order to transfer aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, into the position of being members of the household of faith, and joint heirs of Christ, then such an one may be expected by every tie of nature and affection to try to lead their own relatives at least into the way of Life. It is not only necessary to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, with all that that belief implies, but it is also necessary to confess His name, and it may be under circumstances where that involves reproach and scorn. And *then* we ought to rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer for His name. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation, for the Scripture saith whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. Paul said he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, and no one will be who comprehends its import. It is true, it cuts at the root of many fallacies, and if in proclaiming its excellence we come in conflict with long established error, whose fault is it? People generally inherit their religion, it goes unchallenged, they investigate nothing, and who shall *dare* to hide the truth lest it should come in conflict with some long-cherished and wide-spread error? God forbid that any of us should do this thing.

There is another New Testament case to which I want to direct your attention, illustrating the alacrity with which those enlightened in the knowledge of divine things ought to communi-

cate it to those around them. It is that of the woman of Samaria, who met Jesus at Jacob's well. When she had become convinced that Jesus was the Messiah she did not tell it in a casual, indifferent way to some of her neighbors in a day or two, or a week or two, after the circumstance occurred, no, she went right off, did not even take her water-pot with her; her mind was too much absorbed with what she had learned. She went into the city, and saith to the men, "Come see a man, which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?" John iv. 29. Let us then, one and all, follow the example of David when he said, "Come and hear all ye that fear God and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." Psalm lxvi. 16.

"I was in darkness, groping at noon-day as the blind gropeth in darkness, and His Word enlightened me; I was in deep despondency, and He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Psa. xl. 2, 3. What cause for thanksgiving and rejoicing! God by His Word and providence is constantly manifesting to us His goodness and His faithfulness, would that thereby we might learn lessons of wisdom, of gratitude and trust. Gratitude for past and present blessings, and trust in Him at all times. Remembering, "He is a buckler to all them that trust in Him." 2 Sam. xxii. 31. "Trust in Him at all times, ye people, pour out your heart before Him." Hesitate not to confide in Him, "God is a refuge for His people." Psa. lxii. 8. Are ye weak? Trust ye in the Lord forever for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Isa. xxvi. 4. Brethren, may the services we are privileged to engage in here from week to week be a never-failing source of strength and comfort to all of us, and permit me to remind you that whether this will be so or not depends largely on whether we have the necessary preparation before coming here.

Minds subdued by the grace of God, and hearts set on fire by His love, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, will not be sent empty away. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it," is Jehovah's promise. Psalm lxxxi. 10. If the conditions are complied with the promise is well assured.

Let us also be careful about making

UNWISE COMPARISONS.

“For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves among themselves are not wise.”—2 Cor. x. 12.

Sometimes the inquiry is made, “Who were these remarks intended for this morning?” I want to preclude the necessity of such an inquiry by telling you just now who the present remarks are intended for. They are not specially intended for John, or James, or Thomas, or Peter, but they are intended for everyone of us, myself included.

No one wants to be thought unwise; but Paul says, “They who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves among themselves are not wise.”

No one at all acquainted with Paul’s writings will question his earnest desire for the welfare and prosperity of the churches he planted. There was no ostentation about him, no self-assertion on his part, on the contrary he was willing to abase himself if thereby he could permanently exalt them, he knew the Master’s teaching, that “Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” Matt. xxiii. 12. So in writing to the church at Philippi he could truthfully say, “I know how to be abased.” Phil. iv. 12.

It was this spirit which gave the apostle so much power, and enabled him to speak with so much plainness to the churches; he always made it apparent that it was *their* good he was seeking, not his own; and not so much in telling them so, as in the *loving, earnest* spirit he at all times manifested.

In the catalogue of perils and sufferings to which he had been subjected he adds, “Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, is the care of all the churches. “Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?”

There is the secret of Paul’s power; no wonder that the elders of the church at Ephesus, and the disciples at Cæsarea wept sore on parting from him. He had been a father unto them, watched over them with the tender solicitude of a parent. He had a right to use great plainness of speech, and such plainness of speech as we cannot use to one another. Why? Because

the conditions are altogether different. And even although he had planted those churches he was humble enough to say, "Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to *enjoin* thee that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I rather *beseech* thee, being such a one as Paul, the aged." Phil. 9. That is although he had the power to command he would rather entreat, beg, implore.

Why should we measure ourselves by ourselves, and compare ourselves among ourselves, when we have such a bright example to follow, and a still higher example in the person of Christ Jesus, whom Paul tells us, "*Pleased not Himself.*" "We then, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please ourselves; let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification, for even Christ pleased not Himself; but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." Rom. xv. 1.

That is why we come around this table to remember Him. He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Isaiah liii. 5.

I wish you to mark especially the expression, "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him."

On the evening of His betrayal, He used these pathetic words, "Peace I leave with you, 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." He knew He was about to suffer, but He forgot Himself in seeking to comfort *them* in advance, and strengthen them for the trials awaiting them, and at the close of His address He said, "These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace." This is Christ's bequest to His Church; and on the same day on which He arose from the dead, at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst of them and saith unto them, "Peace be unto you," and when He had so said, He shewed them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus unto them again, "Peace be unto you." This shows that these words were more than a salutation, and might be regarded rather as a benediction.

What a heavenly meeting that was, joy and peace combined; and why cannot we have such heavenly meetings now? It is true, Christ is not here in person, but how many promises has He given of His spiritual presence now.

“Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age.” Matt. xxviii. 20.

“Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matt. xviii. 20. “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.”

The more we catch of this divine Spirit by imbibing the teaching of Christ and His disciples, and incorporate the same into our spiritual life, the more complete will be our communion with the Father and the Son, and our thoughts and aspirations will be on a higher plane, breathing a holier atmosphere and enjoying to a more marked degree than we have ever known before the contemplation of divine things.

This is the true upbuilding that we need and this ought to be the prime object of all our teaching; spiritual improvement in the broadest sense, embracing the affections as well as the intellect, and if we do this earnestly and faithfully what an uplifting effect it will have on all of us. It will make us considerate of each others feelings; “Speaking the truth in love,” as Paul expresses it, and so grow up into Him in all things, which is the head even Christ. Eph. iv. 15. If we measure ourselves, we shall forever remain in an undeveloped condition—dwarfed.

We must place a perfect pattern before us if we want to attain to a high standard of moral and spiritual excellence, and that is what we should all be striving for, and nothing short of that should satisfy us.

If we will only reflect earnestly on the greatness of the calling wherewith we have been called, I am sure we will become convinced that it will take hard and continuous effort on our part, with the divine aid superadded to qualify us for such a position, and believe the apostle Peter was of this mind when he penned these words, “Wherefore the rather, brethren, *give diligence* to make your calling and election sure.” There is no use in our praying to have an entrance ministered unto us abundantly into

the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. unless we are disciplining ourselves by the rules prescribed in the divine record; evidently so thought Paul when he wrote: "If a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully." 2 Tim. ii. 5. "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one obtaineth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." 1 Cor. ix. 24. I *press* toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Phil. iii. 14.

So far was he from being boastful, he said, he had not already attained, either were already perfect, but he was making strenuous effort, "If by *any means* he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Phil. iii. 11.

He had a clear conception of the glory to be revealed; and we have all need to anoint our eyes with the eye-salve of truth, that our spiritual perceptions may be brightened, and thus, "That Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; that we being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth; and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God," and so walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called." Eph. iii. 17-19; iv. 1. In so doing, we shall not only "build up ourselves on our most holy faith," but we shall also promote the spiritual well-being of each other, and this is the scriptural idea of edification, namely to build up, to instruct and improve in moral and religious knowledge, in faith and holiness.

"Let us, therefore," says Paul, "follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." Rom. xiv. 19.

In this way we will give no offense to the Church of God, but be builders of the holy edifice.

Let us all so strive, and may God bless our feeble efforts, is my humble and earnest prayer, and may we give earnest heed to

THE CLAIMS OF GRACE.

Paul, in writing to the Romans, vi. 14, in his usual forcible style says: "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." What a contrast! "The law," Paul says, "gendereth to bondage"

(Gal. iv. 24), represented by Agar, who was a bondwoman, but while he tells the Galatians (iii. 13) that Christ had redeemed them from the curse of the law, he does not leave them to consider themselves free from all law, but on the contrary as under law to Christ, hence he says to them, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Gal. vi. 2. "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Gal. v. 13. And to the Corinthians he writes: "Being not without law to God, but under law to Christ." 1 Cor. ix, 21. And the great principle underlying all this, was the suffering of Christ on their account, hence he reasons, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God's." 1 Cor. vi. 19. Such language has been made sad havoc of, by those who do not understand God's character, and do not comprehend His purposes.

It is important that we understand how Christ was made a curse for us, namely, by submitting to a death which the law pronounced accursed. Gal. iii. 13. So far as the Father was concerned He was ever well pleased in Christ, and expressed Himself so at His baptism, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt. iii. 17. And again the same attestation and commendation is given on the mount of transfiguration, where it is added, "Hear ye Him." Matt. xvii. 5.

If theologians were not utterly blinded, and their minds perverted they could read that after Christ's temptation, angels came unto Him, and ministered unto Him. Matt. iv. 11. And in the sad hour in Gethsemane, when His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, even then He was not forsaken of His Father, for there appeared an angel unto Him, from heaven strengthening Him. Luke xxii. 43. Even Isaiah who predicted Christ's terrible sufferings could sing, Behold my servant whom I have chosen, *my beloved* in whom my soul is *well pleased*. I will put my Spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles." Matt. xii. 18. If, in view of this constant attestation of the Father's love and satisfaction in Christ, any are in perplexity as to why Christ should have died, let them read Hebrews ix. 15-17, "And for this cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament (or covenant)

that by means of death for the redemption of the transgression that were under the first testament, they, which are called, might receive the promise of eternal inheritance, for where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator, for a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." O brethren, what a beautiful figure, and what a mine of truth is here. God had made a covenant, a testament, which contained rich bequests. David said "it was an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Christ came in His Father's name, ratified and confirmed the covenant, "For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator." Hence, Christ, when He instituted the supper, could say to His disciples, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you." Luke xxii. 20.

When men come to see that the death of Christ was a manifestation not of wrath, but of divine love, the love of God to a ruined world, then the motive power of the Gospel is understood. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son; that *whosoever* believeth into Him should not perish but have everlasting life." John iii. 16. So spake the unerring Teacher, and John, the beloved apostle testifies, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John iv. 10. Paul, who was a chosen vessel to bear Christ's name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel, in like manner testified, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. v. 8.

O, why should men be so blinded as to pervert all this; and in violation of this plain loving testimony, teach that God loved the world *because* Christ died. In other words, the death of Christ made God propitious!

Can any one fail to see that the motive power of the Gospel is lost, or destroyed by such false and pernicious teaching? Let us follow Paul's reasoning a little, founded on this view of the love of God, he asks, What shall we say then, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?

The true Sabbath for the true disciple is to cease from our

own works, as God did from His. Be consecrated to God's service, renewed in the spirit of our mind, then our service to God will spring from gratitude. "We love Him because He first loved us." "By grace are ye saved through faith." Eph. ii. 5.

When one realizes his standing in the sight of God, as a pardoned sinner, freed from condemnation, being justified by faith, and having peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." What an incentive to a life of *purity*. That "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14.

"There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. viii. 1.

To preserve this freedom from condemnation, the prescribed walk must be maintained. It is confined to those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. It is a sad thing for any one to forget that he was purged from his old sins. 2 Pet. i. 9.

It is true we read in 2 Cor. xiii. 15, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith," but Paul's instructions about self-examination to those about to eat the bread and drink the cup at the Lord's Supper are not restricted in that way, or indeed in any way, which makes us think the examination was intended to be very *searching* and far-reaching, and this impression is confirmed when we consider that Paul's charges against some members of the church at Corinth in his first letter were principally directed against immoral conduct. Does not show that the self-examination, imposed on them was deep and far-searching, and not restricted only to see whether they were in the faith. To so restrict it would be dangerous ground to take, considering the tendency of the human mind to excuse itself.

The examination herein imposed must be done as under the All-seeing eye of Him who said He would search Jerusalem as with lighted candles. Zeph. i. 12.

If this search produces strange pangs of self-reproach in any when he thinks of what he professed, and enjoyed when he first believed the truth, let him be encouraged to return, and once more take refuge beneath the wings of infinite compassion and implore pardon, and grace to help in every time of need, and he will not seek in vain.

We need constantly to be reminded that "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

"Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God, am holy" (Lev. xix. 2), was God's command to Israel, and is no less so to us, who are more highly favored than they were.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ADDRESS AT THE BREAKING OF BREAD.—CONVERSION.

“But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”—Luke xxii. 32.

WHEN thou art converted strengthen thy brethren.” There are many weak persons in the world. Weakness to a greater or less degree is inherent in all of us. Nevertheless weakness is a calamity, whether we consider it in a physical, moral, or religious point of view, and he is a benefactor to his race who helps to strengthen his fellow-men, whether physically, morally or religiously. It is not my design at present to speak of the intimate connection between physical, mental, moral and religious conditions however close that connection may be, as that is a physiological and metaphysical question apart from our present purpose.

Christ, during His sojourn on earth, had been an eye-witness of the weakness of our race, and was ever ready to commiserate and help the fallen. Full well he knew Peter's impulsive nature, that however ardent and sincere in his attachment, there was a trial awaiting, which for the time being would overpower him, and hence his charge to him: “When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren.” Or as we have it in the Revised Version, and the Diaglott, “When thou hast *turned*, strengthen thy brethren.” Noyes in his translation from the Greek text of Tischendorf uses the word *returned*, “When thou hast returned to me, strengthen thy brethren.” This seems the more natural and the more appropriate rendering, when taken in connection with what Christ had previously said, “All ye shall be offended because of me this night, for it written, I will smite the Shepherd and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.” There was a scattering and then a returning: and this becomes more impressive when taken in connection with what Peter says in his first epistle, “For ye were as sheep going

astray, but are now *returned* to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." 1 Peter i. 24. It is most interesting to study Peter's epistles in connection with this charge given him by the Master. It seems as though he never lost sight of it. Most faithfully did he perform that obligation. He was constantly guarding and strengthening his brethren. Although John did outrun him in going to the sepulchre on the morning of resurrection, Peter was the first to enter the empty tomb and make sure his Lord was not there,—and subsequently on answering the thrice repeated question, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" he received the commission "Feed my lambs," "Feed my sheep."

Most effective work he did on the day of Pentecost, which made the assembled multitude cry out "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins," Acts ii. 38, which led to the conversion of 3,000, and no one appears to have complained of the number, or thought them too many. Well would it be for the men of our day to follow their example. Notable service he again rendered at the house of Cornelius, in opening the door to the Gentiles; but we come to his epistles, and almost immediately after the introduction to his first epistle he launches out in this way, "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind" as if he had said, I know you are weak, but Christ told me to strengthen my brethren, and with His help I am going to do it. Don't be weaklings any longer. "Gird up the loins of your mind and hope to the end." Peter knew what was a good tonic. Destroy hope and weakness is sure to follow; the motive for exertion is gone. Hope quickens the mind into activity, makes labor pleasant, and enables its possessor to endure pain and trials without murmuring. Hope to the end. Do not become despondent; some of us get depressed when we contrast ourselves with the divine requirements, and are ready to say, "Who then can be saved?" but these are generally the earnest ones and are no doubt living nearer to God than the self-complacent who are full of self-adulation and self-assertion. Let us strive to avoid both of these extremes, and hope on, no matter what opposition we encounter, or even discouragements from our own brethren, which of all trials is the hardest to bear. But hope for what? "For the grace that

is to be brought unto you, at the revelation of Jesus Christ," and what will that grace, or favor be? Nothing less than life, *eternal life*, and regal honors, in the kingdom of God. What a hope to cherish! but he proceeds "As obedient children not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written "Be ye holy: for I am holy." "And if ye call on the Father who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: forasmuch 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 . . . Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." 1 Peter i. 22. "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." 1 Peter ii. 1, 2. And again he says, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." 1 Peter ii. 11. "Finally be ye all of one mind, having compassion one on another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called that ye should inherit a blessing." 1 Peter iii. 8, 9. Evidently he knew where their weak spots were, and where they needed strengthening. "But," says he, "the end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." Here is another element which enters into the strengthening process, and above all things have fervent charity among yourselves, for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. 1 Peter iv. 7, 8, and in closing this epistle he seems to have had the same idea of imparting strength to them before his mind, for he adds "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus after ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, *stablish, strengthen, settle* you." 1 Peter v. 10. In reading this passage I was struck with the similarity of the idea expressed by Paul, in different language, when, in

writing to the Ephesians, he prays that God "would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be *strengthened* with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being *rooted* and *grounded* in love," etc. When a tree is firmly rooted in the earth you know how difficult it is to move it, and when a large boulder, or rock, gets *grounded*, sunk down into the earth, it is almost impossible to move it, and that is the kind of stability Paul and Peter wanted to see, rooted and grounded in love. The same spirit pervaded his second epistle, for right at the commencement of it he reminds those he addressed of the "Great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; and besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith fortitude, and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity, for if these things be in you and abound they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ: but he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins: wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you *abundantly* into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 2 Peter i. 4-11.

An abundant entrance into this kingdom is what we all desire, and here is an unfailing recipe how to attain to it. Do we all desire it so ardently as to comply with the conditions? That is the searching question. Do not put it from you, but meditate on these things.

After warning them earnestly about the scoffers that would come in the last days, Peter closes his epistle with this affectionate appeal, "Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing that ye know these things before *beware*, lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness; but grow in grace, and in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."

Peter was not alone in this work of strengthening the breth-

ren, for we read that Paul and Barnabas when they had preached the Gospel at Derbe, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra and Iconium and Antioch *confirming* the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. Acts xiv. 21. And we read again of Paul going to Antioch and over "all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, *strengthening* all the disciples." Acts xviii. 22, 23.

Thus we see that Paul realized that not only must the Gospel be preached, but the converts so made had to be *confirmed* and *strengthened* as well: not confirmed through showy ritualism, and popish mummary but by instruction, exhortation and prayer, and reminding them as Peter did that they had not followed cunningly devised fables when they made known unto them the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His Majesty, when they were with Him in the holy mount. 2 Peter i. 16.

I cannot close without referring to that beautiful passage in the prophet Isaiah xxxv. 3, "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; say to them that are of a fearful heart. *Be strong: fear not: behold your God will come, with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come to save you* And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads, they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

O, how the goodness of God shines out in these strengthening, comforting assurances, sent unto us by prophets, Christ Jesus, and His apostles. May we daily feed upon them and in doing so become strong men and women in Christ Jesus. Strong to resist evil; strong in the accomplishment of good. But let us ever seek divine strength and not trust in ourselves, so that we can say "The Lord is my strength and my song, and He is become my salvation." Exod. xv. 2. That was evidently what Paul had in his mind when he wrote to Timothy, "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. ii. 1. That is the source from whence your strength must come. In this way alone can we understand Paul's expression in his second letter to the Corinthians, "When I am weak then

I am strong." 2 Cor. xii. 10. This must seem quite paradoxical to those inexperienced in spiritual life, but to the child of God it is all plain.

Let us give good heed to the message to the angel of the Church at Sardis, "Be watchful and *strengthen* the things which remain," Rev. iii. 2, and so shall we fulfill the apostolic injunction, "Comfort the feeble-minded, and support the weak." 1 Thess. v. 14. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand. . . . Stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth, . . . and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace." Eph. vi. 10. May this be the happy lot of all of us, is my earnest prayer. Among the strengthening elements here presented to us, stand prominent, hope, watchfulness, and prayer.

Keep hope bright and untarnished, never forget that you have been purged from old sins, and watch against future contamination.

In your weakness seek strength from God, the source of all strength, riches, and wisdom, and so become *strong, rich, wise, and good*; and then you will be able to say with Paul, "When I am weak, then I am strong." Amen. And with this strength will come

THE PEACE OF GOD.

"Let the peace of God *rule* in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."—Col. iii. 15.

"Peace I leave with you, *my peace I give unto you*: not as the world giveth give I unto you."—John xiv. 27.

Notwithstanding the priceless value of this bequest, we saw that the history of the Church in all ages showed what a poor estimate had been put upon it.

Instead of unity and peace, it has been *envy, strife, dissensions, and disruptions* from the apostles' day to the present time.

We will now for our enlightenment and edification consider some of the safeguards that are thrown around this bequest of Christ by the sacred writers whom He commissioned for that and other purposes.

The Spirit foresaw that many disturbing elements would arise

that would tax the Church severely in dealing with them; such as human ingenuity would be unable to cope with, and has given rules for the prevention of all such, and also has given directions how to deal with such cases when they do arise.

Apart from those flagrant cases which nothing but incisive action can reach, experience shows that a tendency in the human mind to judge one another and pass sentence, with very imperfect knowledge of the facts involved is frequent cause for bitter animosity, which might have been prevented with a little forbearance, and a more careful research into the evidence necessary to judge righteous judgment.

Such cases are an illustration of what the apostle James says, "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." James iii. 5.

Forbearance, then, is one of the safeguards provided for preserving and maintaining the peace of the Church. Paul well understood this, as we see from his letter to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, written when he was an old man, and a prisoner at Rome. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all *lowliness* and *meekness*, with *long-suffering*, *forbearing one another in love*; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph. iv. 1-3.

Here we have a whole list of preventives which ought always to be kept to hand, *lowliness*, *meekness*, *long-suffering* and *forbearance*.

The opposite of these are *self-esteem*, *love of approbation*, *self-assertion*, *desire to rule*.

These are baneful elements to be guarded against, which have destroyed the peace of many a Church.

Paul, ever faithful to the trust committed to him, in his letter to the Colossians, says, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, *bowels of mercies*, *kindness*, *humbleness of mind*, *meekness*, *long-suffering*, *forbearing one another*, and *forgiving one another* if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye; and above all these things put on *charity*, which is the bond of perfectness." Col. iii. 12-14.

Here, again, humility is introduced as an element of vital importance. It is *essential* in the make-up of Christian charac-

ter. Devoid of this virtue a man cannot safely be intrusted with power.

Christ ever taught His followers to have an *humble spirit*, and exemplified it in deed when on the night of His betrayal He girt Himself with a towel and washed His disciples' feet. John xiii. 5-17.

Paul, in his whole life work, showed that he had drunk deeply of the Master's Spirit in this respect. Again and again he exhorts to humility.

In writing to the Philippians he said, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in *lowliness* of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. . . . Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but *made Himself of no reputation*, and took upon Him the form of a *servant* and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man He *humbled Himself*, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Phil. ii. 3-8.

Thus he points to the Son of God as an object lesson of *humility*; and exhorts them to copy after Him.

Who was so strong as Paul? Who so irresistible in argument as he? Yet how does he speak of himself? In addressing the elders of the church of Ephesus, he said, "Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, *serving the Lord with all humility of mind* and with many tears, and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews." Acts xx. 18.

Boastful was he? No, never! "In me, (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Rom. vii. 18. Did he claim to have already attained or were already perfect? No verily. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, I *press* toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." "Striving, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Phil. iii. 11. In reading such testimony of Paul, I am frequently forced to exclaim, "My God! what a bright example of a valiant soldier!"

Peter, also, who learned a lesson of humility through bitter tears and sad experience, enjoins the Church to "*Be clothed with*

humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. *Humble* yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." I Peter v. 5-7.

Listen once more, "Finally be ye all of *one mind*, having *compassion* one of another, *love as brethren*, be *pitiful*, be *courteous* not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrarywise blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." I Peter iii. 8.

What a recipe for the peace of a Church. I entreat you by the mercies of God, *Resist not the Spirit*; to-day he is speaking to you in those pathetic words of Peter, who received the commission from Christ, "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs." John xxi. 15.

That Peter who was humbled by temptation, and restored through bitter tears of penitence, to whom Christ gave the command, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Luke xxii. 32. He speaks to us to-day, in those memorable words, "Be *clothed* with humility." Put it on as a garment; let it cover you.

"Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; *love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.*"

Now look at it candidly. If we are not willing to do this, are we in any measure prepared for the coming of the Lord? He who on the night in which He instituted this memorial supper, which we have been observing prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth: neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

When on earth He said, "Blessed are the *peacemakers*, for they shall be called the children of God." Matt. v. 9. Do we come within that category?

That peace is of paramount importance and indispensable to the prosperity, and usefulness of the Church may be seen from the frequency with which it is enjoined. The prophet David says, "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile, depart from evil, and do good, *seek* peace, and *pursue* it."

Psalm xxxiv. 13. It is not enough to seek it in a careless casual way, but to *pursue* it, determined to obtain it. *Chase* after it.

Paul, who was ever watchful of the churches welfare, in nearly all his epistles exhorts to the maintenance of peace.

To the Thessalonians he said, "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake; and be at *peace* among yourselves." 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

To the Romans he said, "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God; let us not, therefore, judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way. . . . Let us, therefore, follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." Rom. xiv. 12, 13, 19.

He reminds the Corinthians what he told the church at Colosse, that "God had called them to peace." 1 Cor. vii. 15.

In his epistle to the Hebrews, we find these words: "Follow *peace* with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14.

Now what is to be done under existing circumstances? Let one and all of us, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and ask His forgiveness. If we do this in the right spirit. He will exalt us in due season.

Remember what James says, "In many things we all stumble," or as the Diaglott reads, "In many things we all are faulty." James iii. 2. "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." James iii. 2.

The prophet David, although he was the king of Israel, was a man of *humility*, and great *contrition* of heart. He exclaims, "Who can understand his errors?" and then cries to God, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults, keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me." Psalm xix. 12.

Finally, brethren, "Let the peace of God *rule* in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful." Observe the language: Let the peace of God *rule* in your hearts.

It is not enough that it be there in some small degree, it must be the *guiding, directing, governing* principle.

If this is not done, brethren, let me admonish you, there will be a fearful reckoning by and by, from which no combination will shield us. "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." Rom. ii. 16.

These are solemn verities. Let us take them home to our hearts, brethren, and consider them well, and not only so, but faithfully proclaim the message found in

CHRIST'S COMMISSION TO HIS DISCIPLES.

"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."—Mark xvi. 15.

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, said Paul, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."—Rom. i. 16.

There are some things in the Bible which, to our partially enlightened minds, are difficult to understand, but thank God, the Gospel is not one of them.

It is not a complex subject, made up of abstruse parts, which only men of learning can understand, on the contrary, it is a very simple proposition, an offer of terms of reconciliation from a loving Father to disobedient, offending children.

It is called Gospel, that is good news, glad tidings or message.

Paul tells us, he is not ashamed of this message, and gives the reason why.—What is the reason? "Because it is the power of God unto salvation. Is it the power of God unto salvation to all men? Oh, no! The number who are benefited by it are limited. How is this? Was the offer not meant for all men? O, yes, as we have seen, Christ's command to His apostles was, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to *every creature,*" but He adds, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

Paul's language is in harmony with this. "It is," he says, "the power of God unto salvation to *every one that believeth.*" It is man, not God, who limits the operation of the good message by his unbelief. Man by his hard and impenitent heart, heaps up wrath, against the day of wrath. Rejection of God's offer of

forgiveness through Christ Jesus, excludes, and unfits the rejector of it from participating in its benefits. This is according to the divine arrangement. God does not, by an act of His sovereign will, compel any one to accept salvation. That would make man a machine, and would not answer God's purpose. He treats man as a free agent and appeals to his reason, his intelligence, and his conscience. He entreats him, and expostulates with him, saying, Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? By the prophet of old, he said, "Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, for He will have mercy upon him, and to our God for He will abundantly pardon."

In like manner, Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles says, "As if God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

These are sufficient to show that the advances are *from* God *toward* men. He is ever merciful, and waiting to be gracious.

"Come unto me," says Christ, "all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Sin-burdened soul, are you weary of serving the carnal desires of your unrenewed heart? If so, the invitation to you to-day is, come, come, for all things are now ready.

"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."

Peter, in his second epistle, says, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

It is unnecessary to heap up further testimony to show God's desire for the sinners reformation. His readiness and willingness to forgive, and blot out his transgressions if the terms of pardon and reconciliation are complied with. What are the terms? They are briefly: Faith, repentance, and obedience. Repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The sinner must see that he is all wrong, and God is all right, and then with a penitent heart he will exclaim: Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

The testimony of Peter on the day of Pentecost, as recorded

in the second chapter of Acts, is in point here. When the Jews cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said unto them, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." Acts ii. 38.

This is the divine arrangement for reconciliation and pardon; and an enlightened and loving compliance with the terms constitutes the subject a consecrated, separated one, and a candidate for honor, glory and immortality in the kingdom of God, soon to be established under the whole heavens, when war shall cease to the ends of the earth and righteousness and peace shall have universal sway.

With such an offer as this presented to the human mind, what inconceivable folly and infatuation must it be to neglect so great salvation!

Can we entreat any to listen to the warning voice, and flee from the impending storm, to the hope set before them in the Gospel?

To all such we would say, the door of mercy stands wide open, how long it will remain so, no mortal can say. "To-day if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

CHAPTER XIX.

ADDRESS AT THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD.—CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

THE CHURCH of God is a unit, one body, made up of many members, and each member having its own distinct function to perform, as Paul very aptly said, "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee, nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you." 1 Cor. xii. 21. And so in like manner the bread and the wine which we use to commemorate the broken body, and the shed blood of Christ teach the same thing, as Paul again says, "The cup of blessing which we bless is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ? for we being many are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread."

This idea of oneness ought to make each one strive for the general weal, the happiness and prosperity of the body, sacrifice his own individual wishes, if necessary, and consistent with duty, if thereby the best interests of the whole will be promoted. This is what I understand to be the fellowship of the saints in a broad sense. This unity of the body is again and again spoken of by Paul in nearly all his epistles, and the Church is exhorted to maintain it. In writing to the saints at Philippi he says, "If there be any consolation in Christ," wonderful expression that for a man to make, whose great, and only consolation was in Christ; "if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye may be like-minded, having the same love, being of *one accord*, of *one mind*. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Phil. ii. 1.

Here the state of mind, or the disposition necessary to maintain this unity is clearly defined, negatively, the avoidance of all strife and vainglory, and positively it is cultivating lowliness of

mind, and being of one accord, and all prompted by love. "Speaking the truth in love." Eph. iv. 15. "Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth." 1 Cor. viii. 1.

Amidst the disappointments, the sorrows and bereavements of life, from which none are exempt, we need all the comfort and consolation we can get, and I believe Christian fellowship is largely the channel through which God dispenses these great blessings. Over a year ago I received a letter from our lamented Bro. Wm. Glen Moncrieff, author of "Man's only hope of Immortality," "Future Probation," etc. In that letter he recognizes the principle I have here expressed, and says, "Lately I felt somewhat depressed, thinking of how little good I seemed to be doing in the world, and lo, to cheer me, and I was cheered, came two copies of the Indian reprint of "Man's only hope," and your cheering letter. The Lord works wonderfully as a comforter of His servants, and I say, therefore, "Blessed be His holy name.'" In another letter written about a year before that, he said, "Your very kind letter was duly received by me, and I thank you for it. Such a letter as yours does me good, and especially is a stimulus to me, and an encouragement to hold on to the testimony. I have been feeling somewhat lonely of late, and depressed by the prevailing indifference in this quarter, to the truth, and the claims of our blessed Master, and your letter was so earnest and loyal in the great service that my spirits rose in reading it, and like Paul, I took courage to endure, and to witness amid all discouragements. It seemed to me like a voice from a higher source than the speaker, and I thanked God for the cheer your lines carried to my heart. And thus we see there is a giving and receiving in things spiritual, as well as temporal, and imparting of knowledge at one time; at another comforting an aching heart, soothing a wounded spirit, or warning some one of impending danger, and all this through channels of human agency, divinely appointed; but in order to do this effectually the heart must be touched with divine sympathy, and just here is where we too often fail." When I penned that letter, I little thought, that the plain, simple words of a humble person like myself should have touched the heart of a man of the wonderful attainments of Wm. Glen Moncrieff, but I apprehend the secret lay in the humble, loving disposition of the man; softened by ex-

perience, and divine teaching, so that he was susceptible to such influence. Let us try to quicken, not deaden our susceptibilities in that direction.

In Romans xv. 5 the apostle uses these words, "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another, after the example of Christ Jesus, that ye may with one mind, and one mouth, glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." "After the example of Christ." What a high standard! That was a wonderful example. "When he was reviled He reviled not again." Are we the subjects of ingratitude? Let us murmur not. Are we treated contemptuously? receiving kicks instead of thanks for favors done? let us take it patiently, *after the example of Christ*, who gave His back to the smiters, and His face to be spit upon. Paul says, "If any man seem to be contentious we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." 1 Cor. xi. 16. And again he says, "Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ, stand fast in one Spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel." Love is the active principle in building up the Church. In no other way can it be built up. Strife and debate will pull down, not build up. "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith we may edify one another." Rom. xiv. 19.

In consulting with my fellow-laborers, the elders you have elected, we have concluded that it is desirable to devote the time around the table to building up the Church, by inculcating and dwelling upon those graces which make up and adorn the Christian character; developing our spiritual natures, rather than to subjects of an argumentative nature. This is work in which all can profitably join, and in which it is hoped as many as possible will take part, and in order that they may be the better prepared to do so the subject for consideration will, as far as possible, be made known one week ahead, and in this way it is hoped the meeting will become both interesting and profitable. Above all let us one and all cultivate *earnest, private prayer*; communion with our Heavenly Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and thereby seek to crucify the flesh with its affections, and evil desires, subduing our own wills, which are ever ready to assert them-

selves, till every thought is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

We are again met around the table to remember Him who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. Oh, what cruelties, what insults He endured on our account. Surely the contemplation of such self-sacrificing devotion ought to awaken the most lively emotions of love and gratitude in our hearts. Let us examine our own hearts in the light of God's Word, and if there is aught there out of harmony with Christ and His cause, *scourge it out*, and cry to God, "For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions; wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin," for "the wages of sin is death."

WHAT IS DEATH?

"You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. ii. 1.

The death state is one of fearful realities; view it as we may it is repulsive to our nature, and mankind meet it with repugnance. There are those, however, who say there is no such thing as death.

I heard that sounded forth in the temple in London, by that great orator, Dr. Parker, and lesser lights have caught the same high sounding and pretentious idea, and the latest edition of it came to us some time ago, from the police court of our own city, in the testimony of a medical man who was giving evidence about the circumstances attending a certain lady's death.

Those persons hang tinsel trappings around the tomb, but their personal unwillingness to enter its portals shows how hollow their pretensions are, and strongly suggests self-deception, or a certain relationship to the proverbial boy who on a dark night whistles to keep his courage up. Death is a sad reality nevertheless, and it is a bitter draught, although men have been made to drink of it in all ages. We may familiarize our minds with it as we may, still it is an unwelcome visitor.

It is no small attestation of the correctness of our faith that we differ from nearly every other denomination of religionists of our day, in that we describe death as a going back to dust. We comprehend how *decisive*, and how *positive* the law was under which Adam was placed when God said unto him, in reference to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "In the day thou eatest thereof dying thou shalt die." "But," say our opponents, "death is something more, or something different from what you claim it to be, for the Bible speaks of sinners as dead in trespasses and sins, so instead of death being a cessation of life, is it not rather an alienation from God?" When you hear people speak in that way, you may know they have been imbibing from a polluted cistern, and need to be brought to the fountain of living waters. They need to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God. They do not seem to understand that the people, to whom the language we are considering, was addressed, had, from their earliest days, been accustomed to tropes or figures of speech. All through the Old Testament this style of language is common. When the prophet wants to portray the unprofitable and wretched condition of Israel, and invoke mercy on their behalf, he begins in this way: "Thou has brought a vine out of Egypt, thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it, thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars; she sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river. Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it. Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts, look down from heaven, and behold and visit this vine; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself, it is burned with fire, it is cut down; they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance. Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand upon the son of man, whom thou madest strong for thyself, so will not we go back from thee; *quicken* us, and we will call upon thy name: turn us again, O Lord, God of hosts, cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved." Psalm lxxx. 8, 19.

Again, when God wants to tell in advance of the approach

of the king of Assyria, against Samaria and Damascus. He compares him to a river, thus, "Behold, the Lord bringeth upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory, and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks; and he shall pass through Judah, he shall overflow, and go over, he shall reach even unto the neck, and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O, Immanuel." Isaiah viii. 7, 8. If there never had been a vine, Israel would not have been represented as one. If there had never been a river, and if rivers did not occasionally overflow their banks, causing devastation and ruin, then no such figure would ever have been used of the king of Assyria.

But now to Paul's letter to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, highly honorable appellations, and no doubt they were worthy of such distinction, for Paul says, "Grace be unto you, and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." You see they were pardoned ones. Paul says so, for they had received the forgiveness of their sins according to the riches of God's grace.

But distinguished as those persons were, there was a time when they had no such record. They had been aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, they had been walking according to the course of this world, according to the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. This was their former condition; and at that time the apostle says they "were dead in trespasses and sins." Now what are we to understand by this language, in the connection in which it is used?

We can understand it in two ways, and in either case comprehend its meaning. In the one case we can understand it proleptically, that is by way of anticipation, as the apostle puts it in his letter to the Romans, when he said, "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death." Rom. vi. 21. Or as James puts it, when he said, "When lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James i. 15.

That is, death is the outcome, the inevitable result of living in sin.

Or we can understand it tropically, that is in a figurative manner, as we have already referred to, and the similitude is very striking. The dead are literally unconscious, and those living in sin are insensible to their own best interests; frequently dead to shame, unconscious of their own degradation. The susceptibilities of their nature have given place to obduracy.

Jude speaks of some whom he describes as "twice dead, plucked up by the roots." Here you see a very expressive figure is used to set forth their utter degradation. Those at Ephesus had not sunk to this hopeless condition, for they were made alive again. "You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Like the parable of the prodigal son, "This my son, was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found." Luke xv. 24. Their restoration was great cause for rejoicing and giving of thanks, for Paul tells them that he ceased not to give thanks for them, making mention of them in his prayers, that the God of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened." This brings us to consider the quickening process. What a mighty transformation is here! What produced it?

The dead know not anything, but here are men who once were dead; their eyes were closed, and their ears were shut, but *now* the eyes of their understanding are enlightened. Let us consider what has produced this mighty change; and here I would remark, we have another attestation of the correctness of our faith in our recognition of God's method of quickening sinners. David says, "Remember the word unto thy servant upon which thou hast *caused me to hope*; this is my comfort in my affliction for *thy word* hath quickened me." Psalm xix. 49. Here is a key to unlock much precious truth given elsewhere. David, you observe, had hope, and his hope, he tells us, had a sure foundation; it rested on God's Word. God had been making promises to him, and he said, "This is my comfort in my affliction for *thy word* hath quickened me." It is no wonder in view of this, that we find him saying, "*Quicken* me after thy loving kindness, so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth."

And still later in the enthusiasm of his soul, and knowing full well the means by which he had been quickened into new life, he exclaims, "I will *never* forget thy precepts, for with *them* thou hast quickened me." Psalm cxix. 93. Need we marvel that a man of such experience should bear testimony in this way? "The entrance of *thy words* giveth light, it giveth understanding unto the simple." Psalm cxix. 130.

This shows that men are quickened by an intelligent comprehension of God's will, and falling into line with it. How can a man who does not comprehend God's law of pardon, know how to avail himself of its conditions? Can you tell me how? I am sure I do not know; and still we cannot fail to see the intimate connection between being quickened by God's good message, and complying with the conditions of the law of pardon, for in Paul's letter to the Colossians he says, "Buried with Christ in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead, and you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh hath He *quickened* together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses." Col. ii. 12, 13.

The obedience of faith is what places one in the relation of a pardoned sinner. The Gospel message believed, brings conviction to the sinner's heart; he realizes his undone condition, and seeks a place of safety. But whither shall he flee? Seeing there is none other name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved than the name of Jesus, it becomes a vital question with the awakened soul, how to get into that all-saving name, and here again the Spirit's teaching is the only safe guide, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you, into the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Acts ii. 38. When this is accomplished nothing remains to be done but to maintain the divine union; having been quickened by the Spirit's teaching the vital action must be preserved by abiding in Him. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth," says Jesus, the flesh profiteth nothing, the *words* that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." John vi. 63.

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." It is a wonderful word this. As we have seen, it has *quickening, enlightening, cleansing, and comforting* power.

“Abide in me and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more ye except ye abide in me.” “Without me ye can do nothing.” John xv. 3. 4.

Having thus considered the means God has employed to bring men out of the fearful condition of deadness in sin, and to quicken them into new life, we cannot but extol the goodness of our God in stooping down to us and giving us a revelation of His mind and will, that by this means He may *raise* us up to Himself, quickening us into moral and spiritual activity, through a union with Christ, and if that union be maintained then ultimately we become partakers of divine nature, and crowned with glory, honor, and immortality at the coming and kingdom of our Lord.

There is another condition of deadness to which I wish to call your attention, and it is a very desirable condition to be in. It is the opposite of that of being dead in trespasses and sins. Paul applies it “To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, which are at Colosse.” In his epistle to them (iii. 3) he says, “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” It now becomes us to consider in what sense they were dead, and what had brought their death about. Paul says positively, “Ye are dead.” Yet he writes to them as living men; there must be a sense then in which they were dead while yet living.

We have not to go far to find the apostle’s meaning. In his letter to the saints at Rome, he says, “Know ye not that so many of us as 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, for if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.” Rom. vi. 3-5. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin, for he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. . . Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Here we

have the apostle's meaning clearly expressed, "Dead unto sin, but alive unto God."

So also in his letter to the Colossians, Paul speaks of their being dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, its ordinances and commandments. Col. ii. 20.

So also in Paul's letter to Timothy, he says, "It is a faithful saying, for if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him, if we deny Him, He also will deny us." 2 Tim. ii. 11. Peter also expresses it very forcibly in his first epistle in this way, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we *being dead to sins*, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Peter ii. 24. Here, then, we have the truth presented unto us in language that need not be misunderstood: man by nature, "dead in trespasses and sins." Man by grace. "Dead to sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ."

Within this brief compass we have an epitome of God's gracious dealings with man, and it is well for us to dwell upon it in order that we may learn a lesson of humility that will forever demolish all self-exaltation, and utterly extinguish vainglory, in remembering what we were by nature, and contrasting what we have become by grace, and what we hope to attain to by the same means.

Let us consider the words of the prophet Isaiah, "Hearken unto me ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord; look unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Isaiah li. 1. That is, consider your origin, and your connection, descendants of a fallen race, children of degenerate parentage; "by nature the children of wrath even as others." Where is boasting then? It is excluded, forever excluded, for what have we, that we have not received! Are you alive now, alive unto God through Jesus Christ? Remember, once ye were dead, condemned to die, under sentence of death, and if sentence against an evil work had been executed speedily, your day of grace would have been, ere now, forever closed. In this, then, is manifested the long-suffering, and forbearance of God. Do you see now? Remember, once ye were blind, and the eye-salve by which you were anointed, and by which you regained your sight, was not your own, but graciously

provided by the goodness of Him, against whom you had rebelled, and offered to you without money and without price.

Are you rejoicing in hope of the glory of God? The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believed. "Remember, at one time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Eph. ii. 12. Homeless wanderers ye were, away from your Father's house, destitute of everything, and perishing with hunger. Consider the pit out of which ye have been taken, so that a new song may be put into your mouth, even God to glorify. Psalm xl. 3.

"You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Can you cease to extol His quickening power who has forgiven your iniquity and covered all your sin? Psalm lxxxv. 2.

I often think of what David said of the captivity of Israel,

"When Zion's bondage God turned back,
Like men that dreamed were we,
'Then filled with laughter was our mouth,
Our tongue with melody.'" Psalm cxxvi. 1

Truly God hath done great things for us, whereof are we glad, but it seems to me sometimes, that we are too much like men that dream, we are not yet fully awake to our privileges, our glorious prospects in the future, if we remain faithful; and it is to be feared that the corresponding obligations that rest upon us are not fully realized.

Not only should our hearts be filled with gratitude and praise for what God has done for us, but with what holy fears should we guard our ways, and pray God to order our conversation aright, lest any of us should come short of the great reward.

This involves great watchfulness, and zeal. Watchfulness over our own personal conduct, lest we cause reproach; and zeal for the spread of the Gospel of the kingdom, and the prosperity of the Church, keeping ourselves unspotted from the world.

You see the quickened ones, are the same as the called out ones, and they constitute the Church of Christ, of which He is

the risen and exalted head. It is designated the "One Body," in Eph. iv. 4; 1 Cor. xii. 13, and Rom. xii. 5; and God is very jealous that its unity be preserved.

If we have been quickened together with Christ, we cannot better assure our own hearts that we have been made alive from the dead, or demonstrate so to others, than by obeying the Spirit's teaching. Let no one rest contented in his knowledge of the divine process of quickening. The all-important question with each of us ought to be, Have I been quickened, vivified by divine influence, and is this vitality being maintained?

My dear brethren and sisters, let us consider one another to provoke unto love, and to good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Heb. x. 24.

If the union with Christ is maintained, the result will be manifested in the amount and quality of the fruit produced. "By their fruits ye shall know them," is the Master's own rule, men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles. Let us carefully consider the enumeration of the fruit of the Spirit as given by Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, v. 22-26.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law, and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the passions, and desires."

"Let a man examine himself," said Paul. Do our hearts, when examined in the light of God's Holy Word, attest that this is the fruit we are producing? and is it becoming more abundant? John says, "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." 1 John iii. 20. "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."

"Rejoice, believer, in the Lord,
Who makes your cause His own;
The hope that's built upon His Word
Can ne'er be overthrown.

"Though many foes beset your road,
And feeble is your arm;
Your life is hid with Christ in God,
Beyond the reach of harm."

CHAPTER XX.

ADDRESS AT THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD.

“Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”—1 Thess. v. 22, 23.

WHY was the Apostle so urgent in exhorting to abstain from all appearance of evil? Presumably on account of its deceitful nature. Of all things in the world, sin is the most to be dreaded. People dread sickness, pain, poverty and death; but any, or all of these are to be hailed in comparison with the monster, sin. It is the more to be feared because its advances are insidious. The writer to the Hebrews says, “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” Heb. iii. 12, 13. And Solomon says, “The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water; therefore, leave off contention before it be meddled with.” Prov. xvii. 14.

The most of vices are contracted before the victim is aware of it. No one puts the intoxicating cup to his lips with the intention of becoming a drunkard, but drunkards are made thereby nevertheless. The tendency of all evil is to blunt the moral perceptions. A wrong act once done, is more easily repeated. The apostle having thus warned the church of the Thessalonians against the first appearance of evil, he proceeds, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This passage, like many others in the sacred Word, has been much perverted. It has been used to prove a sort of trinity in man, and as some of them put it, the body is the outer shell, or husk, then comes the soul, which is

more refined, and last of all comes the spirit, which they speak of as the *sanctum sanctorum*, or holy of holies, the innermost of all. Some claim immortality for the soul, while others are willing that it be counted mortal along with the body; but there they take their stand, and contend vigorously for the immortality of this more sublimate part called the spirit, and with an air of triumph they ask, "Does the Bible not say the spirit shall return to God who gave it," and they at once proceed to invest it with consciousness and individuality wholly unauthorized in Scripture.

You are all aware that the word "spirit" has various significations as applied in Scripture. Sometimes it refers to the breath, as in Gen. vii. 22, where we read of the flood that "All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, of all that was in the dry land died;" and in Job xii. 10, we read that in the Lord's "hand is the soul (life) of every living thing, and breath (spirit) of all mankind." And again Job says, "All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils," or as the margin reads, "The breath which God gave me is in my nostrils." Job xxvii. 3. Sometimes it is used as indicative of moral qualities, as in Numbers v. 14 and 30, where it is termed "The spirit of jealousy," and in Deut. xxxiv. 9, where we read of "the spirit of wisdom," and in 1 Sam. i. 15, Hannah is spoken of as "a woman of a sorrowful spirit," and in Prov. xvi. 18, 19 we read of an "haughty spirit," and an "humble spirit;" and in Luke ix. 55 Christ said to His disciples, James and John, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." That is, their disposition in seeking to call down fire from heaven was not approved of by Him who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. In my last Summer's vacation I met a professor of Hebrew in an eastern college, who was stopping at the hotel where I put up. I had several conversations with him on the life question, and he quoted the passage we have been considering about spirit, soul and body, and claimed it as proof of a trinity in man; but I replied, if that proves a trinity in man, we have another trinity Deut. vi. 5, where we read, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." But his knowledge of Hebrew did not enable him to meet that argument. When Paul speaks of spirit, soul

and body in this passage, we understand our whole being, man's moral, mental and physical nature. And in this light we shall consider Paul's desire that the whole man, including the intellect and the affections, be preserved blameless unto the coming of Jesus Christ. This is quite in keeping with what Paul says in his epistle to the Romans, xii. 1, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." I fear that this obligation is very faintly realized by some of us, and perhaps not fully realized by any of us. Our physical natures, partly through ignorance and partly through indifference, have been sadly neglected. Physical culture is a divine obligation which cannot be disregarded with impunity. What poor service can be rendered to God in a poor, broken-down physical organization. Well do I remember being in a friend's house a few years ago, when the young man of the house, an only son, tried to defend the tobacco habit, to which he had become addicted, as harmless. I was grieved to see both father and mother smile at the young man's thoughtless words, but soon after the fruit of the nicotine habit began to show itself in an impaired nervous condition, a lowering of the moral sensibilities, and a desire for a stronger stimulant, which found gratification in the liquor habit, making him a slave; and the father and mother who smiled at the indulged young man in defending the nicotine habit, now mourn the ruin it has brought. O, when will men learn to heed the apostle's exhortation to "abstain from all appearance of evil?"

Strife is not the only evil the beginning of which is, "as when one letteth out water." Men are not free, and cannot become strong who are the slaves of any bad habit, no matter what it is.

Alimentiveness is part of our organism, and indispensable to our physical well-being, but when that becomes perverted and *pampered*, and we become the creature of a depraved appetite, then do we lower ourselves in the scale of being, giving too much thought to what we shall eat and what we shall drink, like the pagans of whom Christ warned His disciples not to be like them. The strong man is above such considerations; he has learned to subdue and crucify his appetites, and cultivate moral force.

The whole ordering of law and Gospel is on the plane of dis-

cipline. An undisciplined mind and body cannot be acceptable to God, no matter what amount of religious zeal it may be possessed of. Restrain, deny yourself, said the law, Deut. xxx. 15-20. Deny yourself, said Christ. "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it." Mark viii. 34. This gives us an idea of the estimate Christ put upon His Gospel, which is so little esteemed to-day. No wonder Paul said he was not ashamed of it, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Rom. i. 16. But in order to its manifesting itself as the power of God unto salvation, it must control men, that is, becomes the governing principle. How else can its saving power be manifested?

If we stoop to self-gratification, and become enthralled by hurtful appetites, then we lose so much strength, and become morally weak, and this weakness, if allowed, will grow upon us, and we will become slaves before we know it. Set it down as an unfailling rule, that the obstacles we meet in life will either strengthen or weaken us. If we yield to them, we are weakened thereby; but if we resist and overcome them, we are strengthened in the very act. On no other hypothesis can we account for the evil in the world, tolerated by an all-wise, infinitely good, and righteous Ruler. The word discipline explains the whole.

Why should we make so wide a distinction between moral and physical laws, as if they were not appointed and ordained by the same author. Paul in his letter to Titus says, "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live *soberly*, and righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God, and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works. Titus ii. 12-14. If men would give more heed to the divine teaching in this direction, it would accrue to their happiness in the present life, and rank among the present blessings and privileges of believers, and thereby they would be blessed in body, soul and spirit, as the apostle elsewhere says, "Godliness is profitable unto

all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. iv. 8.

If it is our duty, and our reasonable service to dedicate our whole being to God's service, including the moral and intellectual forces of our nature, is it not reasonable that we should improve and strengthen those forces in order to serve Him better? God ought to have the best service we are capable of rendering Him. Our clearest thoughts, our purest affections ought to flow out toward Him, and if we strive to serve Him with a determination born of a loving heart, our service will be acceptable to Him, and we will accomplish much; we will surmount many difficulties, and acquire new strength by every effort put forth in the performance of duty. The service that springs from love is never irksome, it needs no urging; it is not reluctantly given, it flows spontaneously without prompting. Brethren, is our service of this nature, or is it not? Now, do not become impatient with me in urging this question. You have put me in the position of overseer. That was your action, not mine; but having assumed the duties of the responsible office I hold, I want to be faithful, that I may be free from the blood of all men, knowing that I have to watch as one who shall give an account. I say to you to-day, passive service will not do, and reluctant service will not be acceptable to God. God requires active, willing service. When the first-day morning comes, are you alert to come here, saying from your heart, "I joyed when to the house of God, go up, they said to me." Is there any other place where you can take more comfort, more pleasure? If so, I tremble for your condition. To derive good from this service, we must come lovingly, and enter into it as if it were got up for *our* special benefit. The prayers offered here must be *our* prayers. The hymns sung be *our* hymns. We must drink in instruction for the purpose of becoming strong, not simply to be acted on for the short time we are here; that would do us but little good. But if you stay away, we cannot reach you with our counsels, and so you inflict an injury on yourselves, and through you to the whole body. Brethren, the time to labor is short. The Judge standeth at the door. Are we all ready? Whatsoever our hands find to do, let us do it with our might, and give heed to the voice of

WARNING.

“Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?”—Rom. vi. 1.

It is much more pleasant to speak of the love of God, than to dwell on His judgments. The glory to be revealed in the faithful is a delightful theme, but the terrors of the Lord have nevertheless, a place. Says Jesus, “If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” John xv. 6. “Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He—the Father—taketh away.” Are we all fruit-bearing branches? I cannot answer that solemn question for you. Every one shall give account of himself to God. Are we all prepared for the reckoning?

The grace of God is a well established fact. Our very existence bear witness to it. It permeates the whole divine record. It lies at the foundation of all that God has done, or ever will do for our race.

It is the key which unlocks the book of God; the touchstone by which to try all doctrines presented for our consideration.

Peter calls God “the God of grace,” 1 Peter v. 10, and Paul calls the Scriptures “the Word of His grace.” Acts xx. 32. Do we rejoice in the Gospel? Paul calls it “the Gospel of the grace of God.” Acts xx. 24.

Do we long for salvation? Paul says, “It is the grace of God that bringeth salvation.” Titus ii. 11.

Shall we hide or diminish the grace of God, lest by giving it prominence, any should underestimate the enormity of sin? That has ever been the argument of those who plead for the doctrine of eternal torment. Paul does not so teach; when he puts the question, “Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” He promptly and emphatically answers, “God forbid, how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein.”

The grace of God can afford no excuse whatever to indulge in any sinful act or practice; on the contrary Paul in the beginning of this epistle says, “Despise thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.” Rom. ii. 4.

The goodness of God, and the grace of God, ought to be the

greatest incentives to moral purity, and should produce the greatest abhorrence of sin in every form, knowing how displeasing it is to God. Would any of you, having a loving devoted mother, who lavishes all the affection of her nature upon you, and to spare *you* would willingly inflict on herself, mental and bodily suffering; would you, or could you indulge in anything that would cause grief or sorrow to that fond mother? Would not the very thought of it sting you to the heart, and restrain you from any improper act? I am sure you will all answer, yes, oh, yes. Well intensify a mother's affection a thousand fold, and then you have only a very feeble representation of the love of God to His children. The prophet Isaiah says, "But Zion said, the Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she shall not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Isaiah xlix. 14, 15.

He who forbears from sin, simply on account of sin's penalty, has not far advanced in Christian experience. Paul's words are again in place, "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto Him which died for them and rose again." 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" This is a startling question, but it is followed by an emphatic, "*God forbid.*" It could not get any other answer. If any other answer were given it would upset the whole divine arrangement for man's recovery. Sin is that one thing in all the universe which is abhorrent to God, and on which He has *stamped* His mark of displeasure, hence the frequent warnings in Scripture against it.

"Go not in the way of evil doers." Prov. iv. 14. "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Prov. i. 10. "Fools make a mock of sin." Prov. xiv. 9. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Eph. v. 11. Reprove them by your words, reprove them by your actions, smile not when they are named, but *frown* upon them, with all the firmness you can command.

Remember "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven

against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Rom. i. 18.

It is astonishing what excuses will be made for going to very questionable places of amusement by those who are inclined that way, and in this the deceitfulness of sin is manifested. Dancing for example, some will call "an innocent amusement." Surely they do not reflect on what innocent means. That which is innocent is *pure, spotless, harmless*.

Bear in mind that "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lust we should live *soberly, righteously, and godly* in this present world looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, *zealous* of good works." Titus ii. 11-14. According to Christ's ruling sin is disobedience of the divine command either in *purpose* or conduct.

Of all things in the world there is nothing to be dreaded like sin. Men fear public opinion, dread social ostracism, poverty, sickness, pain and death are all dreaded, but any one of these or the whole combined is not to be dreaded like sin. Nothing so much to be ashamed, and abhorred.

O sin, how hast thou marred this fair earth, at whose birth the morning stars sang together, without one discordant note, and all the "sons of God shouted for joy." Job xxxviii. 7. Thou hast broken the world's sweet peace, and destroyed the harmonious chords to which the angels sung. Instead of peace, thou hast planted fear in the human heart, with all its cruel images and attendant horrors.

By sin, Adam lost his primeval home in the paradise of God, came under the penalty of death, and was excluded from the tree of life. It caused the blessed Savior a life of sorrow for sin, but not His own. The crown of thorns, the cruel, scourging, the scene in sad Gethsemane, the accursed tree, the nails driven into His hands and feet, the spear which pierced His side, are the outcome.

What means that bitter wail of sorrow going up from millions of hearts? What mean those desolate homes, those fevered

brows, those aching hearts, those agonizing cries? They have all one answer. The fruit of sin! "And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James i. 15.

Who wants to continue in sin, and reap the bitter fruit, and go *down, down*, to the blackness of darkness forever?

"Hear me now, therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth, remove thy way far from evil doers, and come not nigh their habitation, lest thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me." Prov. v. 7, 11. Sin must be conquered, or we never can become with

CHRIST A PRIEST AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHISEDEK.

It is argued that inasmuch as Psalm cx and Zech. vi. speak of Christ's Priesthood being of the Melchisedek order in connection with His millennial reign, and inasmuch as Heb. vi. 20, says, He has been made a priest for the age, after the order of Melchisedek, and furthermore inasmuch as Melchisedek held the double office of priest and king, therefore, on that account Christ is not now an High Priest after the order of Melchisedek, and cannot be until reigning on His throne in Zion.

This may appear sound argument to some, but I for one, fail to see it.

Psalm cx. is not limited to the millennial reign by any means, but on the contrary the Psalm commences with these words. "Jehovah said unto Adoni, sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." And Paul, who fully comprehended the subject, speaks of Christ again and again as being a Priest of this order while in this expecting condition. Heb. viii. 1.

But in reply to this, it is asserted that the apostle is speaking prophetically of things to exist in the future as though they already existed.

If this is not begging the question, it seems approaching very near to it.

We know that some of the Old Testament writers, Isaiah,

especially being the most poetic, indulges in this strain, speaking of the passion of Christ before He was born, he says, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities," etc. Isaiah liii. 5. Again, "Unto us a child is born" etc. Isaiah ix. 6.

This prophecy has peculiar and direct reference to the millennial age. Are we therefore to deny the first part of the prediction, as to the child born or demand that it be transferred whole and entire to the age to come?

But this, you observe, would involve a manifest absurdity. The child had to be born, grow up, and be matured under certain influences preparatory to the high position of having the government resting upon his shoulders. In like manner the law had to be done away to give place to grace and truth.

Aaronic priesthood with the blood of bulls and goats and its weak and beggarly elements had to give way to a more perfect order, which brought a better hope along with it, having been established upon better promises. A body having been thus provided as the last and most perfect victim to be offered on account of sin. No priest of Levi's tribe was worthy of presenting such a sacrifice. But a priest as well as a victim had been provided. "Then said I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of me." Heb. x. 7. On Jordan's banks was this High Priest conserated, Heb. v. 5, when the Father proclaimed from the vaulted canopy, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Hence, when the proper time came He could say (John x. 18), "I lay down my life that I *might take* it again. No man taketh it from me, I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again." Hence also He offered Himself without spot to God. Heb. ix. 14. Otherwise, and I desire you to mark it well, Christ would simply have been a *martyr*, not a *sin-offering*.

But here we are met by the objection, How could the power of an endless life be characterized as pertaining to this priesthood? Let Peter tell (Acts ii. 24), "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was *not possible* that He should be holden of it." Why not possible Peter? Because God had sworn with an oath unto David that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on

his throne, therefore, being a Prophet and knowing this, He said, thou wilt not leave my soul in hell neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

This same Priest, thus consecrated, and having once for all presented a sin offering, acceptable to God, passed into the holy place not made with hands, there appearing in the presence of God for His people, from whence He will come out and bless them, not a different Priest, of *another order* to the one who entered heaven, for, says the apostle, He hath an *unchangeable* Priesthood.

If we reflect calmly and without prejudice on the plan of salvation, we will see not only the propriety, but the *absolute necessity* of Christ entering upon His priestly office before the time for Him to officiate in a kingly capacity, and this is by no means strange, but on the contrary, in perfect harmony with the whole plan. Christ was given as a *witness* to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Isaiah lv. 4.

Is He, therefore, not a witness *now*, because the time has not yet come for Him to be a *commander*? Again, He was given for a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of His people Israel.

Is He, therefore, not a light to lighten the Gentiles *now*, because He is not yet the glory of His people Israel?

We must all be conscious of the fact that there are stages in this development.

So in like manner with the new covenant as related in Heb. x. 8, and this is the most serious aspect of the whole question, because the most *vital*. The question is asked, Has this new covenant yet been made?—Brethren, what do we assemble around this table for, week after week? Is it not to partake of the wine symbolic of the blood shed to ratify and confirm that covenant? Did Christ on the night of His betrayal not say: This is my blood of the new covenant? Mark xiv. 24. Does not Paul say, For this cause He is the Mediator of the new covenant or testament, for where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator. Heb. ix. 15. See Diaglott. Of course, the benefits resulting from the ratification of this covenant, are largely to be developed, among which is the writing of Jehovah's law in the hearts of the multitudinous seed.

TABERNACLE SERVICE.

According to God's appointment the tabernacle consisted of three departments.

1. The enclosed uncovered space or court.
2. The sanctuary or holy place.
3. The most interior part, called the holy of holies. No access to which could be had without passing through the court and the sanctuary.

In this first apartment, or court, was the altar of burnt offering, representing Christ crucified, as the world's sin-offering.

A little beyond this altar and before coming to the door of the sanctuary stood the sea of brass or brazen laver, implying sin and defilement, and no doubt intended to teach that the sinner must be cleansed as well as pardoned, as Christian baptism follows belief of the Gospel, and that *pardon* and *cleansing* are necessary to fit anyone to be a true and acceptable worshipper in the sanctuary of God. Exod. xxx. 18.

In the holy of holies was the ark of the covenant and the seat of Mercy. There were the cherubic figures, and the shekinah or visible presence of the Lord, which shadowed forth the celestial tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, into which Christ has gone as our great High Priest and Mediator. .

But between the outside court and the Most Holy Place stood the sanctuary in which was the candlestick and the table and the shewbread. Heb. ix. 2; Matt. xii. 4. For description of this lamp see Exod. xxv. 31-37. This candlestick, you observe, had three branches on the one side of the perpendicular shaft of beaten gold, and three branches on the other side, making seven lamps or lights. Now we cannot help associating this in our minds with what Christ said to John in Patmos (Rev. i. 20), "The seven stars (or lights) which thou sawest in my right hand are the seven angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks *are* the seven churches.

I am the light of the world, said Jesus, and all His people are children of the *light* and of the day. "I am come a light into the world that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness." During Christ's first advent we read (Matt. iv, 13), He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast in

the borders of Zabulon and Naphtalim, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias, the prophet, saying: "The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up."

There were no windows in the tabernacle, consequently the golden candlestick and the pure olive oil of the sanctuary supplied the light. In like manner the Christian's light must emanate from the Living Oracles of God, not from nature, human reason, or philosophy, which, however useful in their own places, are unsafe guides in matters of religion.

We have this divine light now, as a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path, amid surrounding darkness, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise; and then the Redeemer shall come to Zion, from whence shall be issued the glad proclamation, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (Isaiah lx. 1), and thus in bright effulgence o'er Moriah's golden summit will be seen the full orb'd blaze of millennial day, compared to which how faint and glimmering was the golden candlestick and olive oil of the sanctuary service. To return to which, our attention is called to another item of interest, namely, the shewbread. This consisted of twelve cakes baked of fine flour, arranged in two rows on a table of gold in the sanctuary. These were to be renewed every Sabbath. See Lev. xxiv. 5. And with our advanced light we turn from the shadow to the enduring substance, and hear Christ exclaim, "I am the bread of life (John vi. 35), he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst. This is that meat which endureth unto everlasting life. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give, is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world." Afterwards explained by Christ in this way: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing, the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." How important, then, to have a correct understanding of His words, otherwise they cannot be Spirit and life to us. But if we have a clear conception of the work of Christ in His official capacities (some of which He is now exercising, and others upon which He has not yet entered), we can then look back on the tabernacle and sanctuary

service with their handwriting of ordinance, and see the object and design of Jehovah in introducing the same as a rudimental and supplemental system of religious worship, never intended to be permanent but shadowing forth good things to come, of which Christ was the substance and the body. Then we can understand why His first advent is designated the time of reformation (Heb. ix. 10), because He abrogated the law contained in ordinances, took it *out of the way*, and nailed it to His cross, as we read in Col. ii. 14-17.

What was it in the way of? It was in the way of carrying out the Abrahamic promise, and consequently had to give way to a fuller development of the plans and purposes of God correlative with that covenant, and if we have profited by our researches so far, we must by this time, have arrived at certain conclusions among which may be enumerated the following:

1. That the promises made by God unto the Fathers of the Hebrew nation, and afterwards designated the covenants of promise (because having reference to future blessing) were ratified and confirmed by the blood of Christ, He being appointed by the Father as the Mediatorial Testator. Heb. ix. 15, 16; Heb. x. 20; Gal. iii. 15; Matt. xxvi. 28.

2. That the law given through Moses, was supplemental in its nature, restricted in its operation, and limited in its duration, having reference to present blessings and never intended as a life-giving instrument. Gal. iii. 19-21.

3. That the promise to Abraham having been made before the law and not affected thereby, it was meet and proper that the high priest pertaining to the same, should be of an order different from, and more ancient than the high priests under the law, hence, for good and sufficient reasons, He is called an High Priest after the order of Melchisedek.

4. That in and through Christ's mediatorship, and having such an High Priest over the house of God, we thereby have access to the Father, and are invited to draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith. Heb. x. 21.

Thus we see that all the promises of God converge in one center, and that center is Jesus the Christ. He is the Alpha and the Omega of the Christian's hope.

Have we a confidence of sin pardoned? It is in and through the pardon proclaimed in *His* name.

Have we a hope blooming with immortal life and vigor?

That hope has for its basis the glorious assurance, "Because *I* live, ye shall live also."

Are we looking for regal and priestly honors in the age to come?

There is no such thing unless associated with *His* name. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne." "Hast made us unto our God *kings* and *priests*: and we shall reign on the earth."

Do we expect these blessings, combined, life and regal honors? They are *suspended* on the coming of the Son of Man. The throne is His and the kingdom is His, and He will share them with His tried and faithful followers.

In Him the promises of God are all yea and amen, (2 Cor. i. 20) unto the glory of God. Rom. xv. 8, 9.

How important, then, to see that our union with Him is *indissoluble*, or in the language of the apostle, that "nothing can separate us from the love of Christ." Rom. viii. 35. A certain writer, whose name I cannot remember, once said, "I have seen a branch tied to a bleeding tree for the purpose of being engrafted into its wounded body, that both might be one, yet no incorporation followed; there was no living union. Spring came singing and with her fingers opened all the buds; and Summer came with her dewy nights and sunny days, and brought out all the flowers, and Autumn, brown Autumn came, to shake the trees, and reap the fields, and with dances and mirth to hold *harvest home*, but that unhappy branch bore no fruit, nor leaf, nor flower, just held on by dead clay, and rotten cords, it stuck to the living tree, a withered and unsightly thing." What a sad picture to behold; and so alas it with every one who has a name to live, while they are dead.

We must be *vitally* joined to Christ, partake of His life, drink deep into His Spirit, and put forth in His strength and by continuing to do so unto the end, and we shall have an abundant entrance into His everlasting kingdom, and with Him shall become the executors of the judgments written and the dispensers of heaven's blessings to the nations of the earth, in

the front ranks of which shall stand the multitudinous seed of Abraham. Psalm cxlix. 9; Micah iv. 8.

Let us then, brethren and sisters, in view of such a glorious consummation, divest ourselves of every opposing principle, be clothed with humility, cultivate a meek and quiet spirit, and may the love of God rule in our hearts, and continue steadfastly in the hope of the Gospel, and not ANOTHER, or

LARGER HOPE.

“Continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine.”—Acts ii. 42.

There is a publication called “The World’s Hope,” which for perversion of the Scriptures, under pretense of rightly dividing the Word, exceeds anything I have ever seen. I will give you a few quotations. “The Fatherhood of God teaches these three things. Human responsibility, that shall lead man to be worthy of his high origin; universal brotherhood, and the indebtedness of each to all others for all that He can give; divine responsibility that pledges God’s being for the ultimate success of all humanity.”

Think of it, God’s being pledged, mortgaged, for the ultimate success of all humanity! What blasphemy!

“The gracious purpose of the Lord is stated in various ways.” Peter calls it the restitution of all things. Acts iii. 21. Restitution means restoring. Peter says this restitution of all things was not a new doctrine, but was spoken of by “all the holy prophets since the world began.” Now we all know Peter says nothing of the kind.

“What a grand purpose! To bless all can mean no less than to remove the curse from all. Here the Lord was telling the end of the last things first. “There shall be no more curse.” Rev. xxii. 3. How clear and strong John’s statement. Nothing could more clearly state the idea of universal freedom from sin, pain and death. If even one were to suffer either endless pain or death, it would prove John a false prophet, and the original promise a failure.” This is a dreadful alternative! Again he says, when Paul says, “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” To say that men are to be

judged after death, is to say that they are to be *saved* after death, because judgment is to be unto victory.

“We find, he says, that what we call this larger hope is permeating the sects. We find Methodists that believe it, Congregationalists that believe it, members of all the Churches that believe it. It was encouraging to know that “The World’s Hope” had contributed to this result, and if this paper is doing that work, then everybody who helps to sustain the paper is helping to do the same work.”

Are any of us in this business? Charging God with being *unfaithful*, and the apostle John a false prophet if one solitary sinner suffers eternal death, the penalty of sin, as revealed in God’s Holy Word. What profanity and audacity these men have attained to, in an incredible short space of time. The editor is right, in saying that this new doctrine is permeating all denominations. It is a sweet morsel to the unrenewed mind, very captivating to the thinking of the flesh, but utterly opposed to the whole tenor of Scripture.

I find in the Chautauquan, the following: “Some prefer the bare contentment of the Circean island to the uncontended toil of Ulysses on the wandering sea. To those I do not speak to-day. The time will come when God will speak to them in pain, and horror of themselves, and plague them with sore despair, if not here, at least in that *undiscovered* country where the inevitable law of progress will force them forward till they begin to enjoy the self-development they hated, and growth becomes delight, not pain.” . . . There are some who fall so hopelessly from this ideal that there is nothing more for them in this life. They must wait till transferred to a fairer clime, they have, so to speak, another chance. A beautiful prospect this for the debased sons of wickedness and crime.

Another chance in a fairer clime, where they will be forced forward by the *inevitable* law of progress, and this under the head of “Christ in the 19th century.” Christ has changed wonderfully since He taught among the hills and valleys of Judea. He is no longer Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Oh, no! Christ of the 19th century and Christ of the 1st century, are entirely different persons. Their teaching is different, their object and aim different.

The Bible says, "All the wicked will God destroy," but those Universalists say, He will destroy their wickedness, but save the wicked. The Scriptures nowhere says so, but the very opposite. Jude says, "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth *for an example*, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." If they are set forth for an example, how did God deal with them? Did the fire that came down from heaven devour their wickedness, and leave them a purified, happy and prosperous community? That is what ought to have taken place if they are an example of the system advocated by teachers of the "Larger Hope."

But they claim Sodom will be restored, certainly, God will leave no foul blot in the renewed earth, but He will never restore the men and women who perished in Sodom, if Jude holds true, for they have suffered the vengeance of eternal fire. Their doom is *irrevocably* sealed.

The phrase, "Larger Hope," is a comparative phrase, and indicates a plurality of hopes. There could not be a larger hope unless there was also a lesser hope by which it could be compared. The Bible teaches but *one hope*. See Eph. iv. 4: "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in *ONE HOPE* of your calling." This hope is the hope of the Gospel. See Col. i. 22, 23: "To present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight: if ye continue in *THE FAITH* grounded and settled, and be not moved away from *the hope of the Gospel*." "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach *any other* Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

What folly to talk about "the world's hope," when the world has no hope, it is only those who come into harmony with God's plan and purpose which have any assurance of hope. See Eph. ii. 11, 12: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, . . . that at that time ye were *WITHOUT CHRIST* being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having *NO HOPE*, and *without God in the world*."

Now, just as long as a person remains a "Gentile in the flesh," he is an alien from Israel's "commonwealth," and a

“stranger from the covenants of promise,” and while thus remaining an “alien” and a “stranger,” the apostle says, such an one is “without Christ,” “having no hope,” and “without God in the world.” This being the case, please tell me where the “world’s hope” comes in. The “world’s hope” and the Christian’s hope are not the same. The “world’s hope” is wrapt up in this present *Kosmos*, and the Christian’s hope will be realized when this *Kosmos* shall have passed away.

When the Christian comes to the end of this mortal existence, he falls asleep in hope, but all others have no hope. See 1 Thess. iv. 13: “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” Why this contrast between those who have hope, and “others which have no hope,” if all have hope? The Christian the lesser hope, and the worldling the larger hope.

Says Paul: “The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Rom. viii. 2.

Scripture study reveals the solemn fact, that the entire race of mankind are subject to either one or the other of these two laws.

In the first place all did pass under “the law of sin and death,” and “judgment came upon ALL MEN to CONDEMNATION.” Rom. v. 16, 18. The court has rendered judgment and all are condemned under the “law of sin and death.” There can be no escape from the condemnation except by a compliance with the terms of “the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.”

It will be seen that under “the law of sin and death,” that “sin” and “death” sustain the relation to each other of cause and effect. This will be observed in Rom. v. 12: “Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

See also James i. 15: “Sin when it is FINISHED (and not before) bringeth forth death,” (“the second death”) which is not the natural death common to all.

Rom. vi. 23: “The wages of sin is death.”

When “the law of the spirit of life” is complied with, we

read that "SIN shall NOT have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Rom. vi. 14.

When the Scriptures speak of death as resulting from sin, it signifies something more than *natural death*, because we all experience that death just the same, without any regard as to which law we are under.

Jesus says: "If ye believe not ye shall die in your sins." Believers and unbelievers both experience natural death alike. Hence the words "die in your sins," means something beyond that. With regard to believers Jesus said: "He that believeth in me though he were *dead*, yet shall he *live*." The phrase "yet shall he live," is not affirmed of those who die in their sins; their death is said to be "like the beasts that perish," which is permanent in its effect.

Thanatos (death) is the antithesis of *zoen aionion* life eternal. The condition of those under "the law of sin and death," is expressed by the words *aionion thanatos*, but those under the "law of the spirit of life," by *zoen aionion*. Herein is the difference.

When the New Testament refers to the future life of the blessed, that life is *never* described as the *psuche*—soul or animal life, but is always *zoen aionion*. Jesus said, "I am the (*zoc*) life." He is certainly not the *psuche*—soul or animal life, because that has its origin with Adam, and cannot abide, because it is merely animal life. If a person expires, having only the *psuche* life, he expires "like the beast," which is not the case with those having the *zoen aionion* in Christ Jesus.

Jesus says: "If a man keep my sayings, he shall never see death." Is that true? Yes, strictly true. He will see natural death equally with all those who keep not His sayings." Those who keep His sayings, has the *zoen aionion* life as well as the *psuche* life, but those who keep not His sayings has only the *psuche* life, and when that life goes out, it is all he possesses, and consequently his death must of necessity be "like the beast that perisheth."

Psalm xlix. speaks of the death of such people as being "like the beast that perisheth." But those having the *zoen aionion* in Christ Jesus, is secured from the death which is "like the beast that perisheth." Hence in that sense, "he shall

never see death," that is, the death which is "like the beast that perisheth."

Again, see Prov. xii. 28: "In the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof, there is no death."

Is that a fact? Are not the righteous of all ages unto this day, in the grip of death? The text says, "the *way of righteousness* is life," yes, even a life which knows no end, consequently in that life "there is no death." Apart from "the way of righteousness," the "law of sin and death" is in force; and it is also a truth that in it there is no life.

James says: "Let him know that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death." From natural death? No, the converted and unconverted both die alike, as far as the *psuche* life is concerned, none are saved from that, be they converted or unconverted. But the Bible does speak of the unconverted as going "to the generation of their fathers," they shall never see light, "shall remain in the congregation of the dead" "shall be as though they had not been." This is the death which a sinner who has been converted from the error of his way shall be delivered from. He is saved from this, because when he is soundly converted, he has the *zoen aionion* in Christ Jesus, and death can never hold dominion over such an one.

See John xii. 25: "He that loveth his life (*psuche*) looseth it, and he that hateth his life (*psuche*) shall keep it unto (*zoen aionion*) eternal life."

Now, it is only those people who have the *zoe* life hid in Christ, that are assured of a resurrection at the last day. See John vi. 53, 54: "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life (*zoen aionion*), and I will raise him at the last day." The opposite of this must be the case if he has NOT *zoen aionion*, and that is he will not be raised up at the last day, but as the Bible says they shall be "laid in the grave" "like sheep," and death shall feed upon them, the same as it does upon all animals.

The contrast is forcible, when one who is under "the law of the spirit of life," shall surrender his *psuche* life, he shall not be laid away "like sheep," because "the spirit of life" is his life policy, it is an assurance, which guarantees a revival

from the dead. See Rom. viii. 11: "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies BY HIS SPIRIT which dwelleth in you." "His Spirit" is the vital life-giving force, which "sheep" and those under "the law of sin and death" have not.

Christ is the great magnet, and the magnet will attract to itself only that to which it has an affinity. "The SPIRIT OF LIFE because of righteousness." When a person comes under "the law of the spirit of life," a great affinity exists between such an one, and the One who is "the (*zoe*) life," and if we continue to "walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit," that affinity grows stronger, and stronger, and in the event of the surrender of the *psuche* or soul life, He will "quicken your mortal bodies by His spirit which dwelleth in you."

When a person who has not this life-giving spirit within, when he shall cease to be, there can be no affinity or power of attraction existing between such an one, and the One who is "the resurrection and the life," consequently the death of such an one must of necessity be "like the beasts that perish."

Natural life is the effect of natural law as a cause, and death results from "the law of sin and death," and the new or spirit life, from "the law of the spirit of life," and the quickening power of that law is the "spirit." Will "quicken your mortal bodies by His spirit, that dwelleth in you." The result of this quickening by the spirit, is the birth of the Spirit. If the quickening power of our mortal bodies is the spirit dwelling within, I will ask by what other power can our mortal bodies be quickened if that quickening life-giving spirit does not dwell within? This quickening spirit can never dwell within unless we unreservedly comply with "the law of the spirit of life." We must cease to be in the flesh. Says Paul (Rom. viii. 8): "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

We must all recognize the fact that in order to receive the promised future blessedness it is necessary to "please God," and as those who "are in the flesh cannot please God," it will be necessary to cease to be "in the flesh." How can this be accomplished? See Rom. viii. 9: "But ye are NOT in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you,

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His," consequently He cannot be the resurrection and the life to such.

The word "spirit" in the Scripture under consideration, relates primarily to a spiritual condition of the mind. See Rom. vii. 25: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the MIND I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." See Rom. viii. 6: "For to be CARNALLY MINDED is death; but to be SPIRITUALLY MINDED is life and peace."

In order to cease to be "in the flesh," we must be governed by the "law of the Spirit of life," and this requires two things mentioned in Rom. viii. 1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are IN Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

1. "In Christ Jesus."
2. Walk after the Spirit.

When these are accomplished we cease to be "in the flesh," but are "in the spirit," and have the "spirit," which will "quicken your mortal bodies."

Those two points involve much more than that which appears upon the surface. Space will not permit to enter upon those points in detail at present. I will give a point which will show who are NOT in Christ. There can be no avoiding the conclusion that all who are "without Christ" (Eph. ii. 11, 12) cannot be "in Christ," (Rom. viii. 1) but are "in the flesh," (Rom. viii. 8) even "Gentiles in the flesh," (Eph. ii. 11) "having no hope and without God in the world."

The new life is all conditioned on having the Son, those who have not the Son are destitute of the life. See 1 John v. 10-12: "He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record that God hath given to us (*aionion zoen*) eternal life, and this (*zoe*) life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath (*zoe*) life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not (*zoe*) life." All have *psuche* life, whether they have the Son or not.

We could hardly expect those who make God "a liar," to be in harmony with God, or to merit the bestowal of the (*zoe*)

life. In what respect did they make God "a liar?" Why because they did not believe the record about the gift of (*aionion zoen*) eternal life. God says that this (*zoe*) life as yet is "in His Son," but they contradict God, and say it is IN OURSELVES personally. And in another respect they make God "a liar," they say all men have eternal life without regard to whether they have the Son or not. God's Word says, "he that hath NOT the Son of God hath NOT (*zoe*) life." And furthermore, (John iii. 36) "he that believeth not the Son shall NOT SEE LIFE; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

When those people die who "hath not life," and "shall not see life," in what respect does their death differ from the beast, seeing that they possess only the *psuche* life, like the beast? If people expect the life apart from "the law of the Spirit of life," they deceive themselves, because they are still under "the law of sin and death," and must experience the penalty of that law, as long as they remain subject to it.

