
A
S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE

THE UNITARIAN AND BAPTIST CONGREGATIONS

OF

JAMAICA PLAIN,

ON FAST DAY, APRIL 5, 1855.

BY REV. HEMAN LINCOLN.

John Doe

MEMORANDUM

TO :

FROM :

SUBJECT :

DATE :

RE :

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to inform you of the results of the recent survey conducted in the department.

2. The survey was conducted from January 1st to January 31st, 1954, and involved a total of 100 employees.

Doing Good.

A

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BY

REV. HEMAN LINCOLN.

BOSTON:

GOULD AND LINCOLN,

59 WASHINGTON STREET.

1855.

JAMAICA PLAIN, APRIL 7, 1855.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

At a meeting of the members of the Church and Society over which you are Pastor, held last evening, it was unanimously voted, that the undersigned be a Committee to request, for publication, a copy of the discourse delivered by you on Fast Day morning.

It affords us great pleasure to communicate to you this request, and we feel confident that your compliance with it will gratify, not only your personal friends, but your fellow citizens generally.

With great regard,

Your friends and parishioners,

N. P. KEMP,
E. D. CASSELL,
CHARLES MANNING,
L. J. BRADISH,
GEORGE JAMES.

REV. HEMAN LINCOLN.

JAMAICA PLAIN, APRIL 14, 1855.

To Messrs. N. P. KEMP, E. D. CASSELL, CHARLES MANNING, L. J. BRADISH,
GEORGE JAMES.

GENTLEMEN :

I have delayed an answer to your kind note of the 7th inst., from an extreme reluctance to yield to its request. The sermon was hastily prepared for the occasion on which it was preached ; but if you think the impression of its delivery can be deepened by a private perusal, you are welcome to the manuscript.

Believe me, gentlemen,

Yours in Christian affection,

HEMAN LINCOLN.

John M. Hewes, Printer,
81 Cornhill.

D I S C O U R S E .

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**Acts x. 37.**

WHO WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD, AND HEALING ALL THAT  
WERE OPPRESSED OF THE DEVIL.

So was Christianity inaugurated in the life of its Founder as the religion for mankind ; teaching, not in abstract theory, but with practical power, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself.” “He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil.” This short record of the life of Jesus brings into bold relief the contrast between Christianity and Paganism ; the one inspires to benevolence, the other ends in self-culture. Literary men, whose cheek should mantle with a blush at their want of discernment, have sneered at the bald simplicity of the Gospels, in contrast with the ravishing eloquence of the Platonic Dialogues. But one need not ask a higher tribute to our religion than is spontaneously paid by skeptical critics, who compare Socrates, as delineated by Plato, with Jesus, as delineated by Matthew or John. Grant to the Athenian philosopher all the personal nobleness and virtue which his admirers claim, what did he do for the welfare of his race ? We read,

with keen intellectual zest, those brilliant dialogues in which Protagoras and Hippias were foiled with their own weapons, but a severe analysis reduces them to word-victories, mere passages-at-arms between intellectual masters of fence. Socrates taught virtue by subtle speculations; Jesus taught it by holiness of life. Socrates spent his days in public discussions with the Sophists and fruitless contests for rhetorical triumphs; Jesus went about *doing good*, even as “He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

I often grow weary of the blind adulation of the ancient Philosophy. Here, as elsewhere,

“Distance lends enchantment to the view.”

In the mirror of the Past we can see that it nurtured magnificent genius, and originated brilliant theories, and set apart a peerage of intellectual nobles for the homage of their fellow men: but it relieved no human suffering; it ministered to no human wants; it made few contributions to human happiness. It lavished all its sympathies upon the high-born and the great; on statesmen and scholars, and artists, and reserved only averted looks and words of scorn for the toiling masses of men. Plato thought it degrading to descend from the gorgeous cloud-land of metaphysics to the practical details of life. He rebuked his friend Archytas sharply for belittling science by inventing powerful machines to facilitate labor. Seneca disclaimed indignantly the practical uses of knowledge. “No philosopher,” he cries, “will invent useful things, this is only drudgery for slaves.” Such idolatry of intellect has its root in self-worship, and the lover of his race turns gratefully from Plato,

revelling in his dreamy air-castles, or from Zeno, contemning with proud scorn both the joys and the sorrows of life, to the apostle Paul, who teaches by example as well as precept,—“ Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

I would not undervalue the past, or despise the teachings of its great men. Honor to whom honor is due. But they were only heralds of the day. As the light floating softly through space, like the volatile aurora, was on the fourth day of creation gathered in a brilliant canopy around the sun, and made the source of life and beauty to the planetary system, so the scintillations of wisdom in the past, its dreamy yearnings for a nobler life, its glimpses caught of duty to God and man, were all concentrated in the Sun of Righteousness, and found an authoritative utterance in Christ Jesus, the incarnate Son of God. “ He was light, and in Him was no darkness at all.” “ He was the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”

A profound significance lies hidden in our text. It proclaims the divine wisdom in providing for man the very Saviour he needed. “ He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil.” Men have always longed for a Redeemer, and the religions of heathendom are full of unconscious prophecies of a deliverer, mighty to save from the sorrows and woes of this present life, no less than from the defilement of sin and the retributions of guilt. The early poets, the exponents of the deep yearnings of humanity, have given many examples of this general expectation. Are not those old myths of Osiris and Ormuzd and Hercules and Gaudama, so many utterances wrung from the human heart, for a Redeemer mighty to save? Scholars may carp

with a narrow criticism at the miracles of the New Testament as idle fables, illustrating human credulity and love of exaggeration; but they have learned a profounder philosophy of religion and humanity, who recognize in the gospel miracles the highest divine wisdom, appeasing those intense yearnings of the heart which demand that the appointed deliverer should attest his power to save in the future life, by averting the woes of sin in the present life.

Some of the early fathers discovered in these miracles suggestive emblems of the great changes to be wrought in our world by the diffusion of the Christian faith. They would find in the walking on the water a type of that wonderful power by which man makes the elements tributary to his will, as in the great discoveries and inventions of our age. The feeding of the multitudes indicates, they say, that the natural returns of Christian thrift and intelligent labor will provide food for all earth's hungry ones, and banish famine from our world. And in the healing of the sick they discover a foreshadowing of the truth, that in Christian communities the wise practice of the healing art, and charitable provisions for the invalid and the unfortunate, almost unknown elsewhere, will mitigate the woes of humanity and soothe its keenest sorrows.

Men may smile at such emblems as the coinings of an active fancy, but they must admit that the benevolent life of Jesus, his tender sympathy with human sorrows, and his omnipotent power to relieve suffering, invest his religion with a peculiar charm, and win it ready access to the human heart with its wild cravings for a great deliverer. Nor can we doubt, that much of the expansive power of the Christian church, in the early ages, was



derived from the imitation of its Founder in doing good. Pagan nations looked with wonder upon the spectacle of Christian love for others ; of genial sympathy with the suffering ; and unwearying toil and liberal charities ;— and their hearts opened involuntarily to welcome a faith so humane. But when, in the gradual corruption of the church, philanthropy was exchanged for asceticism ; when men, forgetful of the Divine model, aspired to grow holy in solitude instead of in society ; when they forsook the cities, as a field for beneficence, for the deserts, as a school for sanctity ; the sceptre passed from Christianity, and it woke from slumber, like Samson, only to find its power departed. The rise and spread of Mohammedanism, which almost obliterated the eastern church, is strangely coincident with the spread of monasticism.

We need no apology for presenting to-day the human side of Christianity ; for dwelling on the angelic message, “Peace on earth and good will to men.” On the hours of the Sabbath, we are wont to incite you to serious thought by the unfolding of duty to the great Creator ; to-day we bid you recognize your duty to your fellow men. When we meet as religious societies, holding peculiar views of doctrine sharply defined and clearly discriminated, it is fitting to present some great doctrine of our faith, in its proper relations. Meeting to-day, as a community, we may overlook all points of difference, to enforce great practical truths in which we cordially agree.

Yet we would not forget, that a profound theology must underlie all valuable practical piety. The first table of the law establishes and confirms the second. The tree lifts its stately trunk from the earth’s bosom,

and throws abroad its sturdy arms to defy the tempest, and its luxuriant foliage to gambol with the breeze, only when its branching roots strike far and wide beneath the surface. A fountain sends forth unfailing streams when its sources lie far away in the everlasting hills. In like manner religious emotions spring from a "life hid with Christ in God," and genuine philanthropy in the daily life is the natural outflow of strong faith in the heart. What God hath joined together, man may not put asunder.

Our text may be considered to-day in two aspects; It suggests a noble aim for life; and it establishes a standard of true greatness.

1. It suggests a noble aim for life.

"He went about doing good." No man liveth to himself; nor can one wrap himself in a proud isolation, and evade responsibility for others by the cowardly plea, "Am I my brother's keeper?" God has united men in a common brotherhood; and as the ultimate particles of matter act and react each on the other by the common bond of adhesion, and the heavenly bodies are interlocked in a great system by the common law of gravity, so are all men controlled by mutual influences springing from a universal brotherhood.

"Do good unto all men as ye have opportunity," is the essence of Christian ethics and the noble ambition of Christian manhood. It gives dignity to human life, and redeems it alike from *ennui* and dissipation. Yet men often forego all thought of usefulness, and contract the circle of their sympathies within their own petty natures, caring only, like the mole, to burrow in a quiet nest, or, like the bald eagle, to live on booty gained by others'

toil. Self-worship is the most fatal idolatry of our race, and numbers more disciples than Buddhism or any system of Pagan error.

Multitudes make amusement the great end of life, and if the pleasures coveted are in themselves innocent and lawful, they repel indignantly any charge of wrongdoing. They say, with Heinrich Heine, the oracular poet of young Germany, "I do not regard myself as a sinner, and have nothing to repent of, since I have only rejoiced as a child in every thing beautiful, chasing butterflies, picking flowers by the way-side, and making a holiday of my whole life." If the light in us become darkness, how great is that darkness. Alas! if a gifted mind have no higher aim on this great battle-field of life than chasing butterflies and plucking flowers, he has not learned the alphabet of Christianity. Horace Walpole was esteemed in his day a finished gentleman, and prided himself on his elegant taste and courtly manners; but, tried by the Christian standard, this literary gourmand is a capital offender, for he made frivolities the serious business of his life, and abandoned men of noble genius, like Chatterton, to despairing suicide, when a few generous words of brotherly sympathy might have saved him from the dreary gulf.

Fashionable society is compelled to record of many of its favorites—"They went about doing evil." Men who make a boast of gentility and a refined sense of honor, sip honey from the fragrant blossom, and fling it carelessly away, to be trodden under foot by passing cattle; men, who claim a home in the higher circles of the fashionable world, rob beautiful woman of her most precious jewel, and leave her, helpless and desolate, to the fatal plunge from the "Bridge of Sighs."

I have read the autobiography of Goëthe, the idol of German literature, with a cold shudder creeping over me, as if an iceberg drifted by, or I passed behind the sheet of Niagara, where not a green blade or blooming flower relieves the desolateness. In those fascinating pages one finds himself in the presence of a man of comprehensive genius, who, like his own Mephistopheles, looked on nature and life and men as finding their highest end in self-culture, and who embodied his theory in a heartless life. For the amusement of the passing hour, he won, with cool forethought, the tender and strong love of woman, and threw it from him as a worthless toy when his curiosity was sated. He mingled with literary men, not to concert noble plans for the elevation of the race, but to stimulate his own activity and enlarge his own resources. A magnate in the State by virtue of intellectual peerage, and hailed by acclamation as a leader when Europe was rocked wildly by revolution, he refused to lift a finger to secure his country's freedom. The Christian moralist weeps over Goëthe as a literary prodigy, groping in darkness like the blinded Cyclop, and missing wholly the Christian end of life, to do good.

Men of business persuade themselves that gain is godliness, and success the end to be attained at all hazards. Poor emigrants are defrauded of their last penny in a strange land. Tender children droop and die, poisoned by adulterated milk and bread. Valuable lives are lost by the score, because adulterated drugs are powerless to cure. Counterfeits prepared by men of high standing in every department of commerce, open the door for counterfeits in coin, and the *ne plus ultra* in this direction is certainly reached, when men glory in their shame, and impale themselves before the world, exulting in the clev-

erness with which they have deceived others by unblushing lies. I read, not long ago, an able work of fiction, depicting, with fine touches, the varied phases of Norwegian life. A shrewd merchant undertook an exposition of Paul's idea of brotherly love. "Paul," he said, "was too wise a man to utter impracticable maxims. His whole advice may be summed up as follows: 'Keep your eyes and ears wide open; hold fast to what you have and take care to increase your possessions.' This is the only sound morality. Life is a game which all seek to win, and a prudent man will keep his wits about him, lest he be overreached by better calculators."\* I smiled at the picture as a coarse caricature of the morals of commercial life, but the self-told and jubilant stories of Barnum and Burnham, with the commendations of their shrewdness by the daily press, indicate that this gospel of the market-place has many disciples. The echo of the sad "Song of the Shirt," is heard from many humble homes, and bears swift witness against capitalists in the factory and the warehouse, who ruthlessly coin money from human brains and souls.

Men, covetous of power, wade through seas of human blood, looking with unblanched cheek on hecatombs of victims slaughtered to feed their petty ambition. The history of royal courts, whether we read it in the pages of Niehbuhr or Grote or Gibbon or Macaulay, is a record of subtle intrigues to supplant equals or superiors, of heartless oppression of the masses of the people, and of wholesale butcheries, whose infamy is disguised under the name of war.

For eighteen centuries, the leaven of the gospel has

\* Afraju, translated by E. J. Morris, vol. i. p. 102.

been working in the heart of humanity, but the renewing process is yet incomplete. The pure example of Jesus has not inspired men with the noble aim of living to do good. Progress, cheering and hopeful, has been made in Christian lands. The poor are cared for, the hungry fed, the naked clothed. Noble asylums open their doors to welcome the blind and the dumb, the lunatic and the idiot. Man's heart throbs with a brother's sympathy for the unfortunate children of his heavenly Father. Even the popular literature, which scoffs at the piety of the Bible, borrows its philanthropy. Those mournful ballads for the people, "The Song of the Shirt," and "The Bridge of Sighs," are only a distant echo from the Sermon on the Mount; and the graphic pictures which Dickens sketches by the bedside of "Poor Joe," or in the desolate home of honest Stephen Blackwell, who, though the world seemed to him "aw a muddle," trusted in the love of an unseen Father, have stolen their brightest colors from the Great Teacher, who recognized in the outcast leper, and in the woman taken in adultery, his brother and sister—noble, though fallen, because endowed with immortality.

"He went about doing good." That brief record is the seed for a great harvest. It is prophetic of a golden age, when wealth and genius and power shall be valued, not as ends, purchased cheaply at any cost, but as means of inestimable worth for achieving the great purpose of life, to do good.

2. Our text institutes a standard by which to measure human greatness.

"He went about doing good." Here is Christian greatness, ability to do good. We accord the primal

place in the solar system to the sun, not because of its huge mass of inert matter, but because it gives order to planetary motion, and by its light and heat becomes a fountain of life and beauty to other worlds. God is supremely great, with reverence be it uttered! not by virtue of His absolute sovereignty, but because His wisdom and power, guided by beneficence, have filled all space with organized worlds and intelligent life, and from His infinite fulness every creature draws, each receiving his portion in due season.

For such greatness men have an inborn reverence; it is the ultimate ground of all hero-worship. The very word *king*, which marks official rank, in its old Saxon root, denotes ability to lead, and elevate, and bless. This instinct for hero-worship has been perverted by human sin, even as the instinct to worship God has been debased to idolatry. Men have mistaken the elements of greatness, as they have misapprehended the character of the Deity, and have paid homage to birth and rank and wealth and power. But, though often deluded, the human soul, struggling towards a clearer light, utters an earnest protest against such counterfeit standards. Carlyle gives an unconscious utterance to the spirit of the Gospel when he says, "Oh, it is great, and there is no other greatness. To make some nook of God's creation a little fruitfuller, better, more worthy of God; to make some human hearts a little wiser, manfuller, happier, more blessed, less accursed, it is a work for a God."

He has been called a benefactor of his race, who makes two blades of grass grow where but one grew before; and, measured by the Christian standard, the inventor and discoverer, the legislator and philanthropist, the teachers of inspiring and elevating truth, are the real

nobles and monarchs of earth. Conquerors and despots are great, only as the flood and pestilence are great—for mischief. Maury, shortening distances for the mariner; Davy, shielding the miner by the safety-lamp; Whitney, cheapening human clothing by the cotton-gin; Howard, alleviating the miseries of the prisoner; Clarkson, striking the fetters from the slave; Martyn and Judson, bearing the light of life to the Pagan,—these, and such as they, are earth's great ones, the constellations which shall shine for ages, when glaring meteors, like the Tamerlanes and Alexanders, have gone out in darkness.

Adjusted by this Christian standard, how mean and paltry are the factitious standards current in social life. Women, gifted and beautiful, aspire only to be leaders of the *ton*, and achieve distinction by costliness of silks, and elegance of furniture, and sumptuous entertainments. Young men of family and wealth promenade Broadway and Washington streets, inspired with a lofty ambition to rival D'Orsay and Beau Brummel in the tie of a cravat and the faultless fit of a glove or a boot. Eminent merchants vie with each other in palatial residences and luxurious equipages, and the pomp and show of life. Statesmen of profound insight stoop to the low arts of demagogues, and renounce their high office of elevating nations to larger views of justice and truth; and even Genius lays aside its seraph wings, and, losing sight of the pure empyrean of thought and goodness, becomes a hewer of wood and drawer of water, chaffering for gold.

But through the darkness in which perverted public opinion and bad social customs have enveloped true greatness, men instinctively recognize real worth, and pay it homage denied to the spurious counterfeit. The



lip which curls with scorn over the coarse pages of the showman of Bridgeport, speaks with subdued reverence of the self-denying charity of Miss Nightingale. Truxton and Maury, starving themselves in the wilderness of Darien, to save their exhausted comrades, are confessed to be nobler heroes than Napoleon at Lodi. The toils and sufferings of Grace Darling or Miss Dix to relieve the unfortunate, will preserve their memories fragrant, when the Lady Blessingtons and other cynosures of beauty and fashion have been long forgotten. We coin strong words to convey our abhorrence of the Czar who watches by his "sick" neighbor only to clutch valuable booty ; but we accord hearty praise to the efforts of Chalmers to purify the purlieus of Glasgow, or to the labors of Pease in renovating the Five Points of New York.

A strong faith in the gospel and in man can look forward to a Paradise regained, in which greatness will be measured no more by extensive conquest or consolidated despotism ; nor by the possession of brilliant genius, wasted, like Poe's or Alfieri's, in dissipation ; or like Coleridge's, in dreamy indolence ; but by actual service rendered to man, in improving his social condition, or opening new spheres of thought, or stimulating to a higher mental life, or alluring to pure morality and to personal godliness. The noblest epitaph on the tombstone of the great man of the future shall be comprehended in the words of our text, He went about doing good.

It is natural to inquire how we stand as a community and a nation, if measured by the standard of our text.

Never were such magnificent opportunities of doing

good granted to any people. With a broad ocean severing from the corrupting influences of the old world ; unfettered in natural development by venerable institutions, involving in their fall perils only less fatal than in their continuance ; with a territory needing no enlargement for the growth of centuries, and provoking no lust for conquest ; with resources varied and expansive as human wants ; with prosperity to mellow, and education to enlighten, and religion to control the national character, the American people were called by God's providence to exhibit to the world the Christian ideal of integrity and justice, of good government at home and honorable diplomacy abroad. Could any nation covet a nobler *role* in history ? The world looked on with eager interest, for the under swell of our Revolution shook the thrones of Europe, and the friends of freedom in other lands predicted glorious results to the race from the spectacle of purity and justice in self-government. Has the issue met the expectation ?

We may thank God to-day, in all humility, fellow-citizens, that we have little reason to blush for the history of our Commonwealth. From the hour of the dreary landing on Plymouth rock, the Pilgrim race, though compassed with infirmities, have cherished noble aspirations and earnest endeavors. Foremost among her sister States in industrial thrift, in education, in philanthropy, in literary achievement and Christian nurture, Massachusetts has rarely been called to mourn the loss of deserved respect abroad, or of substantial influence at home. We should be grateful for the heritage of so fair a fame, and transmit the sacred trust unimpaired to our children.

But over our common country we must sing the dirge, “How art thou fallen, Lucifer, son of the morning.” We may boast of unexampled social wealth and prosperity, of wise laws and liberal institutions, of great cities and States, born almost in a day. We may boast of a national stability, so elastic as to receive annually an Exodus of emigrants more numerous than the northern hordes under which Rome succumbed, and yet so powerful, as to incorporate these thronging strangers into the body politic with little detriment. But can we boast of national honor and justice which put the cabinets of despots to the blush? Alas! alas! for us, flotillas of buccaners put out from our ports, like the old pirates from Mediterranean harbors, to make forays on neighboring nations, and our government winks at the crime, or is too weak to prevent or punish it. But this weak government, so blind to the beam in its own eye, is keensighted to discern and eager to pull out the smallest mote in the eye of others. It sends out Hotspurs to a sensitive and jealous court to foment dissensions instead of wooing to peace; and when a nation twice invaded and threatened by a new conspiracy, guards its shores from suspicious craft, it utters great swelling words of menace and of anger. Alas for our national honor! Cuba and Sonora cry out to a listening world, “See the great nation that mocks at God’s law,—‘Thou shalt not covet,’—the rich nation that would steal the ewe lamb from its poor neighbor, while it has countless flocks.” The smoking ruins of Greytown cry out, “Behold the magnanimous nation, which shrinks from lifting an arm for oppressed Hungary, but sends its brave navy to batter down a helpless antagonist.” The statesmen of the old world exclaim in bitter mockery, “Admire and emulate

the pure morals of American diplomatists, who invoke the world's attention to Ostend conferences, to inaugurate the infamous code of Ahab as part and parcel of modern international law ; that if any Naboth is reluctant to sell his land or his harbors to a powerful and covetous neighbor, the neighbor, under the plea of necessity, may take forcible possession." Even the despots of the world cry out, "Shame on the false beneficence of this free government ! Its constitution, like the hypocrite's conscience, is elastic to gratify personal aims and secure partisan supremacy, but is unyielding as adamant to claims of mercy. It can lavish without a scruple fifteen millions of money to buy a tract of wild desert, but is unable to expend a few thousands for the removal of obstructions in Western waters. It can bestow millions of fertile acres upon the greedy speculators, but is forbidden to grant a few hundreds to secure asylums for the insane. It solicits, with alacrity, the privilege of paying many thousands of dollars for the rendition of one trembling fugitive to Southern jails, but interposes a stern veto to prevent widows and orphans from recovering a righteous debt for French spoliations, waited for eagerly these weary years. It attests its sincere devotion to freedom by inviting to the virgin soil of Kansas the clank of the chain and the music of the lash ; and under the miserable pretext of granting to new territories the right of self-government, suffers the importation of hordes of ruffian voters to control the ballot-box and give laws to actual settlers."

Fellow-citizens, are these the grand achievements of a Christian nation claiming to be the light of the world ? We need a *National Fast*, to deplore the errors of this

noble land, which has dishonored the memory of its martyred founders, and has betrayed the hopes of humanity in the nineteenth century.

Nor is the prospect cheering when we turn from statesmanship to literature. American literature should be the spontaneous utterance of large hearts, summoning the world to earnest thought and noble endeavor. Do we find in the volumes that cover our tables and crowd our libraries, such living books, alluring men, like the ravishing strains of Orpheus, to freedom and holiness? One sturdy Quaker poet has sung inspiring songs of labor and freedom; but he has found more willing auditors in the hovels and by the wayside than in the palace or the boudoir. An eloquent preacher has honored religion and ennobled literature by combining the large sympathies and elevating aims of the gospel with the elegance of letters, and the name of Channing is identified with the hopes of humanity the world over. One large womanly heart has found an audience among all nations by her indignant protest against human bondage. But many brilliant names in American literature are obnoxious to Carlyle's stern criticism of Walter Scott; "The sick heart can find no healing here, the darkly struggling heart no guidance." What elements of Christian manhood can be nurtured by the pap drawn from our parlor literature? The Barnum autobiographies stimulate to falsehood; "Ruth Hall" incites to filial ingratitude and mockery of parents; Omoo and Typee, like the mermaids of the Sicilian coast, allure to sensual indulgence; Thoreau, in his Walden hut, a second Diogenes in his tub, deifies self-culture and scouts philanthropy; Haw-

thorne, in the Blithedale romance, rails with keenest irony at enthusiasm for social reform ; and even the later exquisite melodies of Longfellow often lull to Epicurean repose instead of stimulating to Christian labor. American literature is abjuring its grand vocation to do good.

Our discourse would fail of its purpose, if we did not urge you to apply the standard of the text to the measurement of your lives as individuals. Is there no danger, in the general prosperity of our land, of forgetting the admonition, "Freely ye have received, freely give?" Is there no subtle temptation, after the wearisome toil which modern civilization imposes on men of business, of seeking a Sybarite ease in our homes, losing sight of others in the quiet enjoyment of the domestic hearth, and the exhilaration of social intercourse, and the genial charms of literary culture. The Great Founder of our faith has made it the duty of life and the crown of greatness, not to be ministered unto but to minister ; and wealth and position and genius and influence are of small worth except as they endow us with power, like God, to relieve the unfortunate, and cheer the desponding, and reclaim the fallen. Our lives should be no dreary marsh, receiving large supplies, and sending forth no fertilizing power, but only chilling damps or the fatal miasma ; they should be rather, joyous rivers, spreading beauty and fruitfulness along their whole course.

Nor let us flatter ourselves that we meet the claims of Christian beneficence by feeding the body while we neglect the soul. Our Saviour went about doing good, not alone healing the sick and feeding the hungry, but rebuking sin and winning the offender to the love of holiness. It is not true benevolence, but a refinement of cruelty, to rear a foundling in the bosom of a wealthy

home, and after a delicate nurture which has quickened his sensibilities and created a multitude of wants to be gratified only in such a home, to thrust him out into the cold world, to buffet the storms and endure the hardships of a life of toil.

Nor can that pass for true benevolence which provides only for the physical wants of this life, and leaves uncared for the spiritual needs of the life to come. If we aspire to imitate the example of our great Pattern, we must remember that all men are sinners, exposed to eternal ruin, and the gospel alone provides an adequate Saviour. As in Jesus, so personal piety must shine in our daily lives, while we make it our meat and drink to do the will of our Father in Heaven. Like Jesus, we must strive to pluck men as brands from the burning, and make them pillars in the temple of our God.

Then shall each of us know by personal experience the joy of the patriarch, who testified, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness unto me. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."









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