

The Life and Works of  
Rev. Charles S. Albert, D.D.

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EDITED BY  
REV. EDWIN HEYL DELK, D.D.



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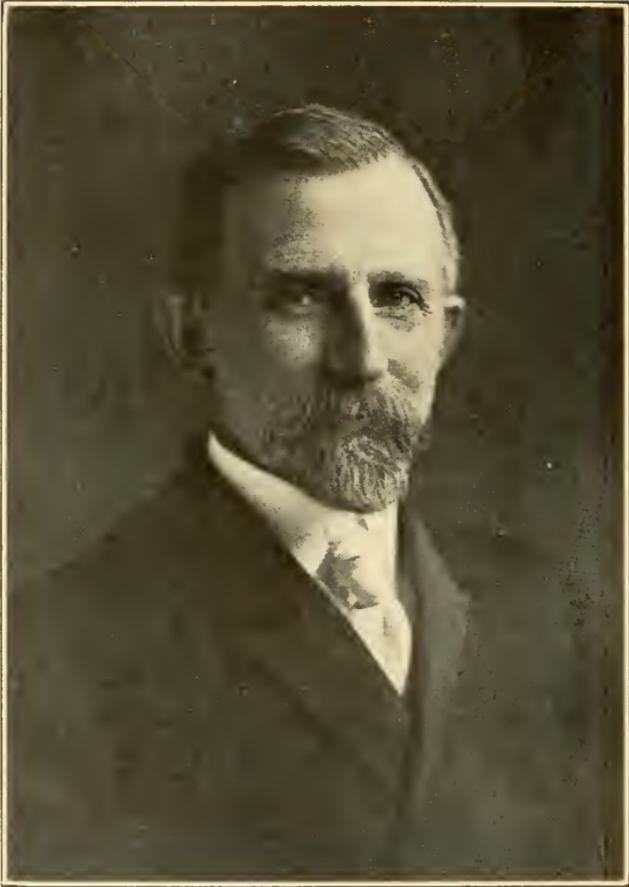
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The life and works of Rev.  
Charles S. Albert, D. D.









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PHILADELPHIA, PA.  
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## PREFACE

There is no volume in your library bearing the fragrant name of Dr. Charles S. Albert, though he was a voluminous writer. He prepared sufficient manuscript to fill not one book alone, but a whole shelf of books. Once or twice he was about to set his pen to the task of book-making, but other duties seemingly more important claimed his time, and he was forced to relinquish his earlier purpose. When it is remembered that during the eighteen years of his editorship, our publications increased in number from three to eighteen, it will be seen that the task devolving upon him was herculean, to say the least.

Notwithstanding this fact, the wish persisted that we might have a book from his hand. And there are scores and hundreds who joined in this worthy wish, but the sudden taking off of Dr. Albert shattered temporarily all hopes of its realization. However, a few of his friends, encouraged by his family, suggested that selections be made from all his writings and put in permanent form. The Board of Publication heartily approved the project, and the work was placed in charge of Dr. Delk, who, for many years, was Dr. Albert's pastor and close personal friend. Mrs. Albert and her family turned over all the material in their possession. A number of the articles in the memorial volume never before appeared in printed form. The work of selecting and preparing the manuscript for the press has been faithfully and cheerfully done. As the pages lie before us, the last one having been read, we are impressed anew with Dr. Albert's powers of mind and heart. For elegance of diction, simplicity of style, depth of spiritual insight and power of illustration, our Church may have had his equal but never his superior.

The volume is in four parts :

- I. "THE LIFE OF REV. CHARLES S. ALBERT, D.D.,"  
by Rev. Edwin Heyl Delk, D.D.
- II. "SERMONS AND PAPERS."
- III. "ARTICLES ON THE WORK OF THE SUNDAY  
SCHOOL."
- IV. "ARTICLES ON GENERAL RELIGIOUS THEMES."

Some of the statistics have been revised. In other cases where the figures have been woven into the texture of the article and serve the purpose the writer had in mind, no attempt has been made to bring them up to date.

We covet for this volume a place in every minister's and layman's library. It has a message of truth, cheer and hope for men and women in all walks of life. Dr. Albert did not write for literary effect. He was a man of conviction, and because he believed he has spoken to the thousands who are bearing the responsibilities of the kingdom in home and Church.

One will not go far in these pages to find that Dr. Albert was a Lutheran. He loved his Church and was loyal to her institutions and interests. Only upon such an one would the General Synod confer so many honors and ask such large service.

This volume is not sent forth primarily to perpetuate the memory of Dr. Albert. His name will not soon be forgotten. Our purpose is the rather to give to the Church the rich fruitage of his rare spiritual powers and to advance that kingdom to which he gave the last full measure of his devotion. The first purpose will be accomplished in the second.

May the Holy Spirit, who called and plentifully endowed Dr. Albert, making him such a force for righteousness and truth, own this volume and use it for the furtherance of the kingdom of God's dear Son.

CHARLES P. WILES.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

# CONTENTS

## I. LIFE OF REV. CHARLES S. ALBERT, D.D.

## II. SERMONS AND PAPERS

	PAGE
FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.....	29
THE DIET OF SPEYER; THE RISE AND NECESSITY OF PROT- ESTANTISM .....	61
SERMON BEFORE THE GENERAL SYNOD .....	87
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH.....	110
THE CHANGED CONDITIONS OF EDUCATION .....	129
THE GREAT CONFSSION .....	144
OUR LUTHERAN CHURCH AND HIGHER CRITICISM .....	152
WHAT DOES LUTHERANISM STAND FOR?.....	157

## III. WORK OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

HOW CAN THE TEACHER BECOME MOST PROFICIENT IN THE USE OF THE BIBLE?.....	167
THE DISCOURAGED TEACHER; OR, SOWING AND HARVESTING	174
IMMEDIATE AND LASTING RESULTS .....	179
"LEST WE FORGET".....	183
A LITTLE CHILD .....	187
THE SEED AND THE SOIL .....	191
AVOIDING DISPUTES .....	195
THE TEACHER'S SIN .....	199
SUMMER WORK .....	203
DECISION FOR CHRIST .....	207
THE MASTER'S METHODS WITH MEN .....	211
"HEADS OF FAMILIES" .....	215
VISION OF THE SPIRITUAL .....	219
THE CATECHETICAL CLASS AND THE TEACHER .....	223
LOOKING AT TEACHING IN A LARGE WAY .....	226
IS ONE-TRUTH TEACHING IDEAL? .....	230

	PAGE
THE LAW OF CHRIST .....	233
HIDDEN BUT LIVING .....	236
THE TEACHER'S PREPARATION .....	239
THE UNSUNG POEM .....	242
UPLIFT IN OUR WORK .....	245
A TIME OF DECISION .....	248
"DISCOVERING A GENIUS" .....	251
WHAT INFLUENCED YOU MOST? .....	254
WHAT THE COMMON SCHOOL HAS DONE .....	257
TEACH RIGHTEOUSNESS .....	259
VACATION AND RETURN TO WORK .....	262
WEAKNESS OF THE NEW EDUCATION .....	265
UNPROMISING MATERIAL .....	267
OCCASIONAL TEACHERS .....	269

#### IV. GENERAL RELIGIOUS THEMES

THE KINGDOM AND THE CHURCH .....	273
PERSONAL PERSUASION .....	278
EASTER JOY .....	282
INTERESTING TO GOD .....	287
IMMORTALITY .....	291
PRESUMPTION .....	295
THE IMPERFECT CHURCH .....	299
WELLS IN THE WILDERNESS .....	303
SIGNS OF THE INDWELLING SPIRIT .....	307
EMOTION AND ACTION .....	311
THE CHOICEST GIFT .....	315
THE CERTAIN FUTURE .....	320
THE DEEPEST HELP .....	324
"BACK TO CHRIST" .....	328
SPIRITUAL POWER .....	332
POWER .....	336
PLEASING GOD .....	340
FISHERS OF MEN .....	345
GIVING .....	350
RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION .....	354

	PAGE
UNKNOWN RESULTS .....	358
THE HIGHEST THINGS .....	362
PATIENCE .....	365
POSSIBILITIES .....	369
DISCOURAGEMENTS .....	373
COMFORT IN CHRIST'S KNOWLEDGE OF US .....	376
RIGHTEOUS LIVING, THE CRYING NEED OF OUR DAY.....	379
BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE .....	383
A REVIVAL OF INTEREST .....	386
"I GO TO PREPARE A PLACE FOR YOU".....	389
A CHRISTMAS MEDITATION .....	393
THE HIGHEST MINISTRY .....	397
ENCOURAGEMENT .....	401
FAITH AND FEAR—A LIFE CONTRAST .....	404
WHICH—REPUTATION OR SIMPLICITY?.....	407
JOYFULNESS .....	411
OVERSTRESS .....	414
THE UNIVERSALITY OF CHRIST .....	417
WATCHWORDS .....	420
THWARTED PURPOSES .....	423
PERSONAL WORK .....	426
JUDGMENTS .....	429
THE TRUTH IN LOVE .....	431
TALENT AND EQUIPMENT .....	433
MANLY MINISTERS .....	436
LIFE MORE THAN WORD .....	438
SOME DAY, SOME GREAT SERVICE .....	441



I

LIFE OF REV. CHARLES S. ALBERT, D.D.



# Life and Works of Charles S. Albert

LIFE OF REV. CHARLES S. ALBERT, D.D.

BY EDWIN HEYL DELK

## EARLY DAYS

Character and achievement root themselves in heredity and environment. It is true, as Emerson has said, "Nature delights in surprises," but if we knew all the facts and forces at work in individual careers, much of the surprise would be translated into delightful explanation. Individuality is too subtle and potent a thing to be accounted for on purely hereditary and circumstantial combinations of parental traits and neighborhood customs, but we must never relinquish the clue which heredity and early surroundings give in forming the background of a biography.

The father of Charles Stanley Albert, the Rev. John Jacob Albert, was a preacher of more than average ability and attainments. He was a robust, industrious, devoted pastor, who, nevertheless, found time to do some reading as well as attending to horse and garden. His training had taught him to appreciate the value of a liberal education. His personal piety was his chief asset, however, and his intense desire to have his three boys enter the gospel ministry is a revelation of his own convictions and character. His humble

but tireless devotion to those committed to his pastoral care was a ceaseless memory in the mind of his more able son. His various pastorates were situated among the hills and valleys of eastern Pennsylvania.

Julia Diehl, the mother of Charles, was a Christian woman, ambitious for the education of her children and devoted to their highest interests. If the secret of most boys' ideals and careers is the outcome of a mother's influence, then we must forego a full and satisfactory delineation of the dominant influence in the life of Charles Albert. Twelve children were born to these two faithful servants of God—of whom Sarah, Julia, Luther, Allen and Charles lived to maturity. Charles, the youngest, was born at Hanover, Pa., August 17, 1847. The following letter, written by his sister, Julia—Mrs. Quay—who is still living, gives a graphic picture of her youngest brother.

“You know I am thirteen years older than Charles, and I was married and left home when he was not quite ten, and, excepting one visit of about six weeks, when he was sent to me to be on a farm, on account of overstudy, I never saw him but for short visits at long intervals. He learned to read by going with a public school teacher, of whom he was very fond, to school just because he begged to go and the young man who taught liked to have him. He never disturbed anyone, and the teacher just let him sit with him at his desk, and made no attempt to instruct him, as he thought he was too young, but Charles watched and listened to the rest, and the teacher was just as much surprised as anyone when he found that he could read, and knew more of history and geography than pupils three times older. This was the winter when he passed his fourth birthday in August. One reason why he was allowed to be with the young teacher so much at the time was because mother had typhoid fever and was confined to her bed for nine weeks, and I was glad to have him out of the house, as I nursed

mother the most of the time. I am sorry, but I cannot recall the teacher's name. It was while we lived in Bellefonte, and the next spring we moved to Salona, where Charles at once commenced going to school regularly to a Mr. Daniel Herr. He was only six when he commenced to read Latin. As father had a number of congregations, and, of course, went from one to the other with horse and buggy, he delighted in taking the boys, and often me, along, and many a tale he told us. Charles would take his books along and father would talk over his lessons with him, and tell him things from his own experience and observations. I do not think Charles ever forgot anything he ever tried to remember. Father was very proud of Charles's precocity and retentive memory, and often told us how surprised his brother ministers were when, in the course of conversation, Charles would strike in with some fact or comment which they thought he could not possibly understand. I remember once when father was going down to Gettysburg he stopped with Dr. Hay at Harrisburg. He had Charles with him, and as they were sitting in the library Charles went to the bookcase and got down a book, and, after a little, called out to father, 'There, papa, I knew I was right,' and read out something in Greek history. Dr. Hay could not believe that Charles really understood it, and asked father how old he was, and proceeded to ask Charles a number of questions, and when Charles read some Latin to him and translated it, thought that father must have taught him a little just to show off. Charles was then not much over seven and small for his age. When he was sent to me that summer, I was instructed not to let him have any books, but many a time he would procure some and creep under my bed and lie there reading. He always had a religious vein in him, and even when quite little would get on a chair and preach. Once, when mother asked him how he got the knees of his pants so dirty, he said he 'Guessed it was be-

cause he prayed so much.' Now do not think that I consider that an instance of 'early piety,' but it shows the bent of his mind. Then you must remember, too, that his mother's influence had much to do with it, and many a fervent prayer did I hear when she lay sick so long, that her boys might devote their lives to God. There were years that I heard little of my young brothers, but just through father or sister, and that, too, just in the formative period of their lives. After my husband's death my brothers were unfailing in their kindness to me. I always felt as if Charles was a little nearer to me than Allen, because I had the care of him so much in his babyhood on account of mother's invalidism. Allen was more of an outdoor child, but Charles would leave his play at any time for a book."

His father drove over the roads of Northampton and Northumberland Counties to preaching points long distances apart. Charles was so young at that time that the little fellow was stretched out in the front pews of the church and went calmly to sleep, while his father warned and comforted his hearers. This close association with his father did two things for him. It cultivated the social instinct and unconsciously prepared him for those various personal contacts of later life which called forth his eminently democratic manner and spirit. This itinerant pastoral experience gave him those glimpses into human nature which made him throughout life a keen observer of the common foibles and trials of every-day living. They were years also when the country lad came into contact with nature which awoke that interest in and love for the trees and skies and homely beauties of the farm which became a part of his emotional inheritance. It is a good asset in any boy's life to have grown up in the midst of the woods and fields, to know the habits of the birds, the rotation of crops and the mastery of the animal life about him. The city youth who is out of touch and sympathy with the great agricultural class has lost a

point of view that cripples his appreciation of the primal sources of health and wealth.

### COLLEGE DAYS

Charles, next to his parents, owed more to his own industry in acquiring a preparation for college than from any other source. His older brother, Luther, had gone to Pennsylvania College, at Gettysburg, Pa., and was in the ministry. His mother's dying prayer was that her youngest boy might also have as good an education as circumstances could afford. His father, after the lapse of several years, married a second time. This foster-mother was good to the bereaved boy, but she did not quite appreciate the desire of young Charles for a college training. The hope, however, was never relinquished and the preparation went on. At Turbotville the final lessons were learned that fitted him for the course at Gettysburg. He left home at sixteen. That was an eventful journey for the young boy. The college was not the only educational force at Gettysburg, especially at the time of his matriculation. He went in the midst of the great Civil War. To those who came in later years to college and seminary the spirit and deeds of those great days still were potent in arousing a sense of obligation and courage to face the foes of human liberty and leading. It was doubly so for the boys of '65. Out of the college had gone a company of students to give themselves for the defence of the Union. This young stripling, with the big mind and heart, felt the thrill and pressure of the great duty. Life with its pain and loss, its need of courage and consecration, was looked at face to face, and something of its blood and iron went into his resolution and character.

It was a typical classical college in those days. Mathematics had been one of his strong points, and together with his unusual wide reading and studious habits, he soon took first rank among the boys of his class. He

quickly developed a love of sport and athletics. Though unfitted for the more violent contests of a later day, his strong, wiry body lent itself to old-fashioned baseball, the high jump and running. He became a leader in these sports, and until the day of his death took keen delight in baseball and the League games played throughout our country. He had a group of scholars and gentlemen as his teachers and examples. President Baugher (Sr.), Dr. Frederick N. Muhlenberg, Prof. M. L. Stoeber, Prof. Michael Jacobs, and men of like quality, were his constant monitors and guides.

Money was too scarce and time too precious to waste, and our young scholar, beloved and admired by all, pushed on through his four years of work and play and carried off the first honors of his class when he was graduated in 1867. Dr. Edward T. Horn, his college-mate, writes of Charles at that time: "He was a conspicuous refutation of the oft-repeated maxim of the indolent, that you seldom hear much in after years of those who were at the head of the class in college. The newcomer to Gettysburg forty years ago looked with wonder at the lad whom everyone pointed out as 'the leader of the college.' He was first-honor man, the captain of the nine, famous as a batter, a swimmer, or pitcher, a favorite with all; one of the famous few who never was guilty of dishonesty in the recitation room; truthful, manly and affectionate. And it will be the testimony of all who remained in close friendship with him that Dr. Albert fulfilled the promise of his youth." Until this time, he had fully intended to become a civil engineer. His talent for mathematics, his love of outdoor life and his own inclinations all centered on some pursuit which would furnish a field for the exercise of his native powers. Still the father's ambition and the mother's prayers hovered in the background. After his graduation Charles stood resolved to go on with a civil engineering course, but his father

had set his heart upon his boy entering the Lutheran ministry.

#### SEMINARY DAYS

At the earnest solicitation of his father, though Charles had not relinquished the determination to study civil engineering, he consented to go to the Lutheran Theological Seminary, then opposite Franklin Square in Philadelphia. Here the young man of twenty commenced his technical studies for the ministry. It was the old-fashioned course in Hebrew, dogmatics, church history, exegesis and symbolics. He evidently made an honest study of Lutheran Church history and dogmatics. There never was anything of the revolutionist in him, and he accepted without question the theological tenets that were inculcated. It was an age when the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures and the confessional principle were unquestioned in the average seminary. The doctrine of organic evolution, the problems of the higher criticism, and comparative religion had not touched, as burning questions, the seats of theological wisdom. All of these problems were later to arouse the interest and antagonism of conservative teachers in our denominational colleges and seminaries. No doubt our young theologian had his hours of doubt and intellectual difficulty as he sought to solve the problems which vex every man seeking adjustment between theological theory and life. His scientific training at Gettysburg had been slight and his faith was strong. But whatever else he may or may not have secured at his seminary, he acquired the tools and material for working out an effective body of religious belief which made him a dependable and irenic preacher and pastor in the Church which honored him with her highest offices. It was not, however, until the middle of his second year in the seminary that he made up his mind to become a minister. No doubt his growing interest in his theological studies, and, above all, the ambition and prayers

of his parents, were operative. But one cannot help but wonder what would have been his career if he had followed his inclination of college days to become a civil engineer. It looks as though one did not always know one's truest powers. For who can think of Dr. Albert as aught else than a Christian pastor and preacher? He was graduated from the Theological Seminary in 1870.

#### HIS MINISTERIAL CAREER

His first work as a minister was as assistant to Dr. Greenwald, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pa. The young and enthusiastic sub-pastor projected mission work in that city, and several congregations have been the outcome of his foresight and devotion. It was a happy and fruitful association which he enjoyed with Dr. Greenwald. The older man was a careful writer and sympathetic pastor. There was an air of dignity and cheer in the congregation, and the young pastor was warmly welcomed in the old historic church. Soon he met the young, vivacious woman who shortly afterwards, in 1872, became his wife and true helpmate. Mary W. Baker was the daughter of William S. Baker and granddaughter of Rev. John C. Baker, D.D. They were married in April; the same year he was called to the General Synod Lutheran Church of Carlisle, Pa. Here he had full opportunity to express his convictions concerning the forms of worship and pastoral activity which he had acquired in Lancaster. The congregation had been without any liturgy in its form of worship and the catechisation of the children had fallen into disuse. The hortatory note in religion had been the dominant reliance in building up the Christian life of the congregation. Dr. Albert felt the need of a more systematic and historic method of instruction and worship, and tactfully adapted these measures to the congregational life. Soon the students of Dickinson College learned

that a young preacher of culture and wide human sympathies occupied the pulpit in the old Lutheran Church. From the first he caught the ear and won the hearts of the young people of the community. The congregation grew in numbers and prestige. The reasonableness and effectiveness of the new régime was recognized by the older people, and the ten years he spent in Carlisle were happy years of his ministry. Children came to bless the growing family circle. In turn three daughters and two sons came to cheer and honor their parents. Here Dr. Albert commenced afresh his reading and careful preparation of sermons. The material and impetus gathered at Carlisle stood him as a valuable asset in his more exacting ministry in later life. He entered into the sports of the gentleman friends he made, and became a factor in the higher literary life of the college town. The friends he made he never lost. He was called in 1881 to the pastorate of St. Mark's Church in Baltimore, on Eutaw Street. This church was situated in the down-town district and the congregation was widely scattered. Here for twelve years he labored with might and valor. He succeeded a prince of preachers, Dr. Charles A. Stork, who was a man of remarkable culture and literary ability. Dr. Stork had neither the inclination nor strength to perform the work of pastoral visitation. It was at this time that Dr. Albert was able to gratify a longing for foreign travel which had been aroused and stimulated by his historical and biographical reading. Dr. Albert had a strong strain of the esthetic in his nature. Noble scenery had always had charm for him, and his retentive memory fitted him to enjoy the scenes and memories of the old world. He made a most affable and entertaining traveling companion. Through the generosity of a member of St. Mark's, he made his first tour of Western Europe. He was a member of the Home Mission Board. His active mind and wide sympathies made him a good counselor and force in the work of

placing missionaries in the home land. His balanced judgment and conciliatory spirit made him the reconciling center of divergent ecclesiastical views. He was President of the General Synod from 1893 to 1895, and President of the Home Mission Board for eighteen years. He was made a member of the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. When the National Home for the Aged of the General Synod was established, he became a director. He was also a member of the Common Service Committee, and wrought with great satisfaction to form a historical Lutheran service. These were busy years in his life, and they took their toll of vitality from an overworked physique. He still found time to do general reading and some technical study of the new, scholarly Biblical literature which had appeared since his seminary days. That an impression was made by the critical writers of the English and German schools was apparent in his conversation, but in his public utterances and written articles he was content to restate and illuminate with his catholic spirit the conclusions of the older school of writers in theology. One who knew him intimately and sat for years under his pulpit ministrations in St. Mark's, has this testimony to offer:

"First. In the pulpit his sermons were always practical and never beyond the depth of the average congregation, but, nevertheless, they were scholarly, polished and carefully prepared, avoiding all tone of mere routine talk and showing throughout an excellent command of English, and that exact choice of words which indicates a student of the classics. His manner was very earnest and free from any affectation whatever.

"Secondly. In his pastoral work he was kindly, sympathetic and gentle. In a call of condolence and ministration in time of trouble he never jarred on one, and his words were free from any evidence of a desire to impress his own personality, but came from a sympathetic heart and left a pleasing memory.

“Thirdly. In his personal relations he was a charming conversationalist, well posted on current events and with a most accurate memory of all experiences in his travels and of the contents of the books he read. Rather slow and deliberate in his manner of speaking, he was ready to discuss any subject that seemed to interest his companion, and, although his own convictions were clear and uncompromising, he nevertheless had the widest tolerance for other people’s views, and even when the difference in point of view extended beyond a mere question of orthodoxy and into the realm of fundamental conceptions and beliefs, he never lost patience or failed to give the other party the fullest credit for sincerity and an absolute right to that point of view. He was not a man of detail, and his wonderful memory rendered apparently unnecessary certain systematic practices which other clergymen cannot get along without. For instance, I recall that after he left Baltimore, the writer had charge of *St. Mark’s Quarterly*, and knowing that a considerable amount of postage had been saved by distributing a number of copies to the congregation and only mailing a small number, Dr. Albert was communicated with and asked for his mailing list. I remember his reply very well. He said, ‘My method of distributing the *Quarterly* was *sui generis*; I would first go through the Sunday school and hand copies to the teachers and to some of the children to take to their parents, then at the close of the church services I would hand copies to any of the congregation whose families had not been represented in the Sunday school, and on my return to my study, or even that night, I would mail copies to those who had not been reached in church.’ Of course, the kind of memory that could carry that plan through did not exist with the editor *pro tem*. Similarly, I believe he could have told you at almost any time whether an individual in his congregation had been to communion on the last occasion or not, so that it is not surprising if

he sometimes was found to be somewhat beyond the keeping of records involving close clerical work."

He delivered one of the Holman Lectures on "The Augsburg Confession," and the Baugher Lecture on "Christian Worship" at Gettysburg. Shortly after his Baltimore residence began he was elected President of Pennsylvania College, but felt he was not able to undertake the great task, and his heart was in the pastorate with its close human touch with all sorts and conditions of men.

#### AS EDITOR

In 1893 the Lutheran Publication Board, wishing to create the office of Literary Editor, Dr. Albert was urged to give up the active pastorate and devote his accumulated skill and knowledge to the work of preparing the senior grades of the Sunday school Bible lessons. This appeal was at first rejected, but as he thought and prayed over the urgent and reiterated pleas of the Board, he finally consented to relinquish St. Mark's parish and go to Philadelphia to take up a work for which he was particularly well fitted. For twelve years he had given brawn, brain and heart to the arduous Baltimore work. It had told on his naturally good constitution.

The change to a less strenuous work, no doubt, prolonged his life. The official position and the rather mechanical tasks which attend upon lesson preparation, proof-reading and editorial management claimed more and more of his time. He often regretted his lack of freedom. There is a price every man must pay for officialdom in denominational life. He is no longer at intellectual liberty or enjoys freedom of action. He stands as the conservator of what was and is, and must leave to other men the adaptation of the progressive scholarship of a new day to the ancient faith. He was treasurer of the Editorial Association of the International Sunday School Lesson Committee, and was a

strong advocate of the idea of international lessons. His policy and management of *The Augsburg Teacher* placed it in the forefront of teachers' aids. Its circulation was not limited to our General Synod Sunday schools. The hack-work of lesson notes he accepted as part of the important work he was doing as editor, but his task was too great for one man to carry. Always willing to help every other man who came to him requesting his services, he drew heavily upon his physical vitality. He enjoyed, during the Philadelphia residence, two European trips in company with old friends. His delightful private letters and instructive articles from abroad appeared in various publications, and especially in *Lutheran Young People*, of which he was the editor. His artistic and musical ability made him a competent critic of European art, and he shared his enjoyment of his foreign travel not only with the children of our Sunday schools but also with his numerous friends. Articles typical of all phases of his varied interests and appreciation make up the body of this book. He transferred his church membership to St. Matthew's Church, of Philadelphia, while Rev. Dr. William M. Baum was still pastor. He cared for the pulpit and pastoral work for three months after the death of Dr. Baum and before Rev. Dr. Edwin Heyl Delk was called to the pastorate in 1902. He was made a member of the church council and served most acceptably. No pastor could have had a more loyal friend than Dr. Albert. For years he had been working, unknown to himself, but to a few in his family, with a weakened heart. But his ambitious generosity and sense of duty kept him at his tasks. He enjoyed preaching. For many years he had written no sermons, but prepared them at odd moments on the street cars or in the slight intervals of rest in his home. This is why so few worthy sermons can be found for this collection of his writings. The best have disappeared. Though he did not strive to prepare

great sermons, his pulpit work had a directness and charm due to his manner, temper and personality which made them great in effect.

Dr. Albert had the intellectual and moral equipment to have made him a forceful leader in the theological thought of our age, but whether it was due to his official position or his temperament or disinclination, he was content to state his view and let affairs take their course. When, however, some important principle or privilege was at stake, he took his defensive position and held it firmly. Dr. Albert, if one dare to put a theological tag upon such an eminently religious nature, was a conservative General Synod man. If I should attempt to summarize his life-attitude, I would say it was one of service for Christ's sake. I never knew him to refuse a service to the Church or an individual if he could possibly perform it. All his time was consecrated. His occasional afternoons off at the League ball-ground, the mountain walk, the hour with some bit of fiction, were but preparation for the waiting task upon his desk. Steady, generous, beautiful service in many ways was the outstanding characteristic of his life.

The secret of his work was a deep and intimate communion with and love for his Lord. As his inner life was revealed, the profound reverence, the mystical union with Christ he enjoyed stood forth in beautiful simplicity. Those who heard his public prayers will confirm this fine note in his spiritual life. As he would humbly kneel within the chancel rail, after assisting in the celebration of the Holy Communion, his act seemed to bring still closer the risen Christ. If a man was united in a living, obvious communion with Jesus Christ as divine Saviour and King, then a difference of theological interpretation in other matters did not vex or estrange him. This was made patent in the choice clerical club, Phi-Alpha, to which he belonged. Because he was so sure of his own convictions

and faith, he was genuinely tolerant of the convictions and faith of other men. Indeed, in the last analysis, it is neither traditional orthodoxy nor a radical progressiveism, but a life constrained by the love of Jesus Christ which makes a minister a power for righteousness. Dr. Albert's tolerant spirit, his pacific temper and commanding poise were based on a Christlike love and likeness to his Master. His wide and critical reading may have aided him in this catholic vision of dogma, but, after all, it was his freedom from vanity and self-will and his vital relation to God that gave him that self-mastery and gracious address which will linger forever in our minds and hearts.

The close of his earthly career came quickly. He was confined to the house only three weeks. On Sunday afternoon, January 28, 1912, at three o'clock, when all over the United States the teachers and scholars of thousands of Lutheran Sunday schools were studying the Bible lessons prepared by him, his spirit took its flight into the bosom of the Great Teacher, Jesus Christ. The "Golden Text" for that Sunday's lesson was, "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast prepared before all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel."

As son, as brother, as friend, as pastor, as churchman, and as husband and father, his life was one long shining pathway of light and honor and love. Other ages would have raised him to sainthood, but he walked and stood so close to us as a human helper and aspiring disciple that our rough hands must leave to God Himself the giving of that final, rightful crown which awaits those who serve and honor Him. At the funeral services, held in his once happy home in West Philadelphia, representatives of many Boards and the several churches with which he had been connected gathered to express their sympathy with the bereaved family and honor for the departed friend.

The hushed voices, the quiet tears, the floral tributes, the words of admiration and eulogy were tokens of the love and honor brought to him whose body lay so white and still in his flower-decked casket. It was Dr. Albert's request that only a simple and brief service be held at his funeral and that in his own home. Dr. Dunbar and Dr. Delk made short addresses. We carried his body, on Wednesday morning, to his old home in Lancaster, Pa., and laid it to rest beside the boy who had gone before; but his spirit is still abroad upon the earth, his memory enshrined in our hearts, and his soul awaits the new tasks that never tire in the heavenly home—for to serve Christ will ever be his heart's joy.

PHILADELPHIA, July, 1915.

II

SERMONS AND PAPERS



## FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP\*

Worship is characteristic of humanity. Wherever man is found, he is a worshiper. This worship in its purity and truth, varies with his conceptions of his relations with the superhuman and mysterious powers on which he believes himself to depend. Worship is a necessity of his nature. There is a worship of man which illustrates the divine worship. Wherever and whenever man meets another nobler and stronger than himself, he naturally reverences the superior. It is the source of hero worship. Divine worship arises instinctively whenever man conceives himself to be in relation to superhuman and mysterious powers on which he believes himself to depend.

It was at one time supposed that there were savages so degraded as to be without religion and worship. A more accurate knowledge and a more familiar acquaintance disclose the rudiments of both. The "Black Fellows," of Australia were supposed to be without religion and worship. After their confidence was won by a friendly Englishman, they gave a statement of their belief, which they had hitherto concealed from the white man for politic reasons. Worship and religion are correlated. The essence of religion will be the essence of worship. The profounder the religion, the profounder will be the worship. In worship religion finds fittest expression, for the inward faith must express itself in outward act, and the highest of all religious acts will be the worship of God; and it is this which God Himself desires, even as Jesus said,

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\*Lecture on the Baugher Foundation, delivered June 7, 1893, in the Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, Pa.

"The Father seeketh such to worship Him." (John 4 : 23.)

We are confronted to-day by two theories of religion. The one is the theory of evolution, the other of revelation. The former divides into two schools. The one claims the emotions as the source of religion, the other the reason. "According to the one view man instinctively attempted to put himself into relations with the superhuman influences by which he felt himself surrounded, and it was only subsequently that he thought of defining them. No one in our day has formulated this thesis with more eloquence than M. Renan, who compares man's religious impulses to the instinct that makes the hen-bird 'sit,' which instinct spontaneously declares itself as soon as the appropriate stage is reached.

"Others, on the contrary, maintain that before worshipping his gods, man must have had some conception of their nature, and that the sentiments he entertains toward them must of necessity flow from the ideas he has formed of their character and workings."\*

It is evident that whether we take the one standpoint, or the other, or combine them, religion is altogether subjective, dependent upon man and his thought. There is and can be no certainty of God, for the development of religion proceeds in the same manner as it began. Man creates his god and creates his worship. God does not reveal Himself that He may be truly known and truly worshiped.

The other theory is the theory of the Scriptures, of revelation, God made man in His own image, entered into communion with him, so that man originally possessed a partial but true knowledge of God and His will. This relation was broken by sin, but was not altogether destroyed. Man, though fallen, has retained some knowledge of God and His will. God

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\* Hibbert Lectures, D'Alviella. 48.

is not even known by the natural man objectively, but subjectively. Objective knowledge of God comes to man through revelation.

Worship has been similarly affected with religion. It was pure and true before the fall. It was perverted through sin. It became subjective, resting upon the conceptions and reasonings of men. "They sought the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him." (Acts 17 : 27.) There were no divine channels ordained of God by which man might approach Him or receive His gifts. God, indeed, graciously accepted their adoration and prayer and service and gave them blessing, but they were in the shadow of darkness waiting for light. Yet let it be remembered that they that use imperfect means faithfully may be more acceptable than those who formally use the revelation of His will and the means of grace.

"There is in the Mennevi Sherif of Jelahi-d'-Din, the illustrious saint and doctor of Islam, a striking and pathetic story in which this great lesson is powerfully inculcated. Moses, we read, in his wanderings in the wilderness came upon a shepherd, who was praying to God in the fervor of his soul, and saying, 'Oh, my Master, my Lord, would that I knew where I might find Thee, and become Thy servant. Would that I might tie Thy shoe latchet, and comb Thy hair, and wash Thy robes, and kiss Thy beautiful feet, and sweep Thy chamber, and serve the milk of my goats to Thee, for whom my heart crieth out.' And the anger of Moses was kindled, and he said to the shepherd, 'Thou blasphemest. The Most High has no body and no need of nourishment, nor of a chamber, nor of a domestic: Thou art an infidel.' And the heart of the shepherd was darkened, for he could make to himself no image of one without bodily form and corporal wants, and he gave himself up to despair and ceased to serve God. And God spake unto Moses, and said, 'Why hast thou driven my servant away from me? Every man has

received from me his mode of being, his way of speech. What is evil to thee is good in another. What is poison to thee is honey to him. Words are nothing to me. I regard the heart. The compass serves only to direct those without the Kebeh, within no one knows the use of it.'” God deals in love with all men and judges them by their opportunity and their spirit.\*

True worship in the Christian sense is communion between God and those who worship Him. It is not merely communion of man with God in praise and prayer, but of communion of God with man. It is fully established by the Mediator Christ Jesus, through whom God is reconciled to man and man is reconciled to God. By Him sin is forgiven, sonship restored and the joy of fellowship given. Whilst men approach God in His name, in praise and prayer, so also His word and sacraments are the divine channels by which God can confer His grace upon men. Worship is thus both objective and subjective.

The worship of Judaism was true and real because God constituted it and He took part in it, but it was preparatory. Around it were the national limitations, the exclusiveness of set laws for a particular period. It was, indeed, a true communion of the only true God with men and of men with God and a communion of men with each other in this fellowship, but it was partial and temporary, shadow more than substance, much of its service being typical looking forward to its fulfillment in the complete redemption and revelation of Christ Jesus.

Christ is both the founder of the Christian Church and also of its worship. He is not a new lawgiver, however, or a prescriber of ceremonials, through the observance of which men can alone participate in salvation. He has given the essentials of worship, out of which the Church under the guidance of the Holy

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\* “On Right and Wrong,” Lilly.

Spirit develops its forms. Christianity, restoring through Jesus Christ the communion of God and man, accomplishes this by the heart and life fellowship of believers with their Saviour and through Him with God. It is essentially spiritual, and, therefore, its worship in its innermost essence is spiritual. It is in the heart and from the heart. Our Lord has strictly defined worship as spiritual: "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth." (John 4 : 24.)

Spirituality is therefore fundamental, but the question remains how shall this spirituality manifest itself? It has been held that spirituality needs no outward and visible forms, that these detract from it and materialize it. Or that there should be no fixed forms, that liturgical worship tends to formalism and spiritual deadness. It is rather remarkable that the example of our Saviour should be so ignored. The details of the last Passover indicate that He observed the ritual of the Jews, to the minute observances then in use. The hymn (Mark 14 : 26) was most probably the second portion of the Hallel.\* He thus indicates that when He spoke of spiritual worship, he did not mean that spirituality should be without form, but that it should guide us in the use of form.

The view that spirituality and fixed form are opposed is "the view of a false spiritualism which ignores the nature and the multiplied needs of the religious life. We are never so spiritual as to live out of the body. The more refined the mind is the more refined will be a man's conversation, but the mind does not so refine that words become too gross a medium for it." Max Müller insists that there is no thought without language. Paul declares, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness: but with the lips confession is made unto salvation," the audible and out-

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\* Edersheim, "Life of Christ," Vol. II, 533.

ward completing the inward. "To be absolved from bondage to the bodily is not to forego the uses of the body which God has ordained. The visible and audible are not antagonistic to the spiritual, but its genuine organs and the last condition of perfected man is that in which the glorified body is to be the instrument of the soul.

The more spiritual the soul of religion is the more glorious and heavenly, but not the less real is the body with which it is invested, for that soul also desires not to be unclothed but clothed upon. Inasmuch as religion is neither a mere matter of the intellect nor of external acts, but a thing of the whole inner man, and has its deepest seat in the emotions of the heart, cultus cannot exclusively nor primarily consist in instructions nor in exhortation to duty, but it must aim at reaching the inmost life of man. Worship though without the form of instruction is profound in instruction. In nothing which we find in the house of God are we so dependent on the house of God as in worship. We can measurably find in our homes what the sermon supplies, but to lose the worship is to sustain what is humanly an irreparable loss. Whilst worship calls forth the religious emotions, or helps them to give themselves expression, it will of itself react upon the religious thought and upon the moral sentiments, and thus with the religious esthetic aim, it also fulfills the moral aim. So far as the church is a place of worship we do not go there to learn new things or even old ones. We worship best when all the forms are stamped upon the memory. Nevertheless in that deepest and rarest instruction which writes upon the heart what men have been vainly imagining they knew because they could repeat its phrase, cultus teaches."\*

We must not be led astray by the phrase simplicity

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\* Krauth, "MS. Lectures on Worship."

in worship, as though simplicity were spirituality. As Dr. Rowland justly says: "It deserves also to be said just here, that what is called simplicity in worship is oftentimes only another name for the grossest irreverence and slovenliness. Time-honored customs and prejudices are frequently covers for ignorance, rudeness or parsimony. The plea of a severe spirituality enables men oftentimes to treat God with a discourtesy which would not be allowed in human society. 'Worship,' says Dr. Allon, 'has its beauty as well as its holiness, and we must not make it repulsive under the pretence of making it devout. What special spirituality can there be in the pious doggerel of hymns, or the ruder incongruity of tunes? Why should it be necessary to abjure all culture and excoriate all taste in order that piety may have its supreme enjoyment? No genuine piety can excuse negligence. Everything pertaining to worship should surely indicate a reverent solicitude to bring to God the best we can proffer—an offering perfect in every appliance that can give emphasis to its adoration, intensify its rapture or beautify its love.' 'Excess of material circumstance in spiritual worship, whether of architectural ornament, ritual ceremony, musical elaborateness, or even intellectual fastidiousness, is as injurious to it as is over-cumbrous machinery in manufactories, excess of ceremonial in social life, superfluous raiment to personal activity, or gaudy ornamentation to personal grace. But equally so, on the other hand, is perniciousness and nakedness. If we may not overlay spiritual life, neither may we denude it.'"\*

That which must regulate worship founded on Scripture is edification. This is, after all, the test. That which tends to build up the religious life with God and man best, this will be the best and highest form of worship. Whether it have much or little form

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\* Rowland, "The Worship of the Church," *Bapt. Rev.*, 1883.

it will foster spirituality. Here is the sphere of Christian liberty, a liberty which is not license; rather the liberty conforming itself to the great thought of worship—communion with the Lord and communion of His members with each other to edification.

Christian worship was founded by the Lord Jesus Christ. He gave the following elements:

1. Assembly in His name. (Matt. 18 : 20.)
2. Prayer in His name. (John 16 : 23, 24.)
3. Common prayer. (Matt. 18 : 19.)
4. A form of prayer. (Matt. 6 : 9-13.)
5. The Holy Supper was instituted and its observance commanded. (Matt. 26.)
6. The office of the ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the sacraments was established. (Matt. 28 : 18; 18 : 18; Luke 24 : 47, 48; John 15 : 27; 20 : 21-23.)
7. The use of the Holy Scriptures was enjoined. (John 5 : 39; 8 : 31; Luke 16 : 31; Matt. 4 : 4-10.)\*

He did not give Christian worship in completeness, but establishing these primal features permitted it to be developed by the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Church. The Church of Christ is divine, and, therefore, it has a divine growth. There can be no question but that the worship of the early Christians was at the first largely influenced by the worship of the synagogue, and, to a certain extent, modeled after it. It differed, however, both in principle and import, and had from the beginning new features. These marked differences are noted in Acts 2 : 42, where it is said, "They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

Under the leadership of the apostles there was gradual development of public worship. Dr. Schaff enumerates the following parts of public service under the apostles :

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\* Consult Horn's "Handbook of Liturgies." Harnack in "Theologischen Wissenschaften."

1. "The preaching of the gospel. This was missionary in its character."

2. "The reading of Scripture with practical exposition and application. The lessons were from the Old Testament (Parashioth and Heptharoth) transferred from the synagogue: later from the gospels and epistles, the latter sometimes serving as sermons."

3. "Prayer in various forms of petition, intercession and thanksgiving (1 Tim. 2 : 1), likewise descended from Judaism. Prayer was made freely from the heart as they were moved by the spirit according to circumstances. There is no trace of a uniform and exclusive liturgy." Still he adds, "The frequent use of psalms and short forms of devotion, as the Lord's Prayer, may be inferred with certainty from the Jewish custom, from the Lord's direction concerning His model prayer, from the strong fellowship among the first Christians, and, finally, from the liturgical spirit of the ancients, which could not have so generally prevailed both in the east and the west without some apostolic or post-apostolic precedent."

4. "The song, a form of prayer in the festive dress of poetry and the elevated language of inspiration. The Lord Himself inaugurated psalmody into the new covenant at the institution of the Holy Supper, and St. Paul enjoins the singing of 'psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.' But to this precious inheritance from the past, the Church in the enthusiasm of her first love, added original, specifically Christian psalms, hymns, doxologies and benedictions which afforded the richest material for sacred poetry and music in succeeding centuries; the song of the heavenly host, for example, at the birth of the Saviour: the 'Nunc Dimittis, of Simeon; the 'Magnificat' of the Virgin; the 'Benedictus' of Zacharias; the thanksgiving of Peter at his deliverance; the fragments of hymns scattered through the Epistles, and the lyrical and liturgical passages, the doxologies and antiphones of the Apocalypse."

5. "*Confession of Faith.* The first express confession of faith is the testimony of Peter that 'Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God.' The next is the trinitarian baptismal formula, out of this gradually grew the so-called Apostolic Creed."

6. "Finally the administration of the sacraments."

As we descend to the age which immediately succeeded the apostles, we have every reason to believe that there were fixed forms of worship. Time will not permit us to quote the evidence drawn from the *Didache*, or the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, from Ignatius, Justyn Martyr, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the *Ancient Liturgies*, all indicating fixed forms of service and participation in worship by the people. There is a liturgy of the Apostolic and Early Church simple, but ample and sufficient. It has been contended with great strength that the best form of service is that of the second or third century, when the Church in her freedom, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, had developed the elements of worship left by Christ Himself.\*

After this period worship was unduly elaborated. False views concerning the priesthood and sacrifice expressed themselves in the service, worship was considered more and more as meritorious, a work of man before God, which man offering to God thereby secured His favor.

Ceremonial and pomp intruded themselves, worship appealed to the senses and not to the intelligence and heart. The sermon dropped out, the selections of Scripture were in an unknown tongue, the Lord's Supper administered by a divine order, the priesthood, became a propitiatory sacrifice.†

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\* See Stapfer's "Life in Palestine."

† Schoeberlein. Ueber den liturgischen Ausbau des Gemeinde gottesdienstes.—*Höfling, Liturgisches Urkundenbuch.*

The Reformation, both Reformed and Lutheran, necessarily dealt with this perversion of worship. At first the Reformed Churches retained a portion of the old order, and were decidedly liturgical.

But the Puritan, in his indignation against the abuses which had crept into public worship, threw out with the errors the treasures of the past. Fanatically he relinquished part after part of the service till little was left but prayer and exhortation. "He showed the reach of his self-denial in respect to worship by putting away the public reading of the Scriptures as he showed the pathos of his self-denials by the burial of his dead in silence—his protest against the burial service of the Established Church."

It was remarkable how far this was carried. How beautiful is this collect: "Lord of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of Thy name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of Thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ." It was this which provoked Jenny Geddes to cast her stool at the Dean of Edinburgh's head; she intelligently regarding these precious words as popish. Her words are historical: "The Diel colic thee in thy wame! Dost thou say mass at my lug?" The intensity of religious conviction and abhorrence of papistic evils enabled the Puritans to endure a worship that was shorn of all connection with the historical past. His descendants impressed that baldness of service on this land of ours and their ideas still control multitudes and even members of churches with a past of richer worship. It is hard, however, to be told that fixed forms of service are unspiritual because of this repugnance when the post-apostolic Church and all the Church in all ages has worshiped God under fixed forms. There is true worship, it may be justly conceded, without a fixed form of service, but in fact the elements of a liturgy are in every church. The baldest

service may have its fixed form, oftentimes as harassing to the soul as iron fetters upon the limbs. It often reduces itself to hymn, prayer, reading of the Scriptures, the sermon and the benediction. The hymns are fixed and not infrequently poor and egotistic, man more than God the center; a light, frivolous ditty displaces devout and majestic music; the prayers are formal to such an extent that after hearing a minister a number of times, it is easy to know his method and the sequence of his petitions. So meager and weak oftentimes are the petitions that the soul of the worshiping believer does not find them the upbearing wings to bear it reverently in adoration and supplication to the throne of God. The human and the earthly conceal the divine and the heavenly.

The Scripture lessons and the sermons are intensely individualistic, the minister apparently oblivious to the fact that he is set apart from the congregation to conduct its worship and to bring to them the fullness of the gospel.

There are fixed forms which become formalistic by the method of use, but formalism is as easy to what is called the simple gospel as to the fixed service. That which tests both is edification, the building up in faith and life of the congregation.

Dr. Rowland, of the Baptists, wisely says: "For both individuals and churches there is but one valid law; namely, that as far as practicable each shall embody its own worship in such modes and forms as are best adapted to its own life. Of worship itself there is but one great use and end, that it brings a brotherhood of men to the feet and heart of the Great Father in heaven, there to speak to the eager sympathy of His love all their adoration and all their desire."

The Lutheran Church would not cast away the treasures of the past. It purifies the service, Luther declaring that the old service must be the basis of the new. He retained all that was directly from the word

of God. He retained those portions which breathed the spirit of God's word, as the Gloria Patri, the Gloria in Excelsis, the creeds and the like. He rejected whatever was not in accordance with God's word. Agreement with the Scriptures and edification were the tests applied. The Lutheran Church purified the service even as it had reformed the teachings of the Church, preserving truth, eliminating errors.

The Lutheran Church teaches that there are two factors in public worship, the divine factor, the human factor.

Worship is two-sided, that which men bring to God, and that which God imparts to men. Melancthon, in the Apology, 253, says: "Theologians are rightly accustomed to distinguish between sacrament and sacrifice. A sacrament is a ceremony of work in which God imparts to us (*nobis exhibit*) that thing which the promise annexed to the ceremony offers (*offert*). As, for example, baptism is a work in which we do not offer to God, but in which God baptizes us, to wit, the minister in God's place (*vice dei*) and God offers (*offert*) and imparts (*exhibits*) remission of sins, according to the promise he that believeth and is baptized is saved. On the contrary, a sacrifice is a ceremony or work which we render to God that we may give Him honor. The direct species of sacrifice are two only. The first is propitiatory sacrifice, that is a work with which satisfaction is made for sin and penalty, meriting for others the remission of sins; the other species is the eucharistic sacrifice which does not merit remission of sins or reconciliation, but is offered by those who are reconciled, so that we render thanks for the remission of sins and other benefits received. In very deed there has been but one propitiatory sacrifice in the world, to wit: The death of Christ. The rest are eucharistic sacrifices which are called sacrifices of praise, preaching of the gospel, faith, invocation, giving of thanks, confession, afflic-

tions of the saints, nay, all the good works of the saints."

Out of this has come in the treatment of public worship the designations of sacramental and sacrificial elements, meaning thereby that the sacramental element is that portion of worship where God offers through the word and the sacraments the blessings of salvation, that the sacrificial element is that portion of worship where man offers something to God, in prayer and praise. Only as these two elements reciprocally appear have we the truest worship.

Some have objected to these terms, but none have been found which are as satisfactory. The words, it is claimed, have a Romish tendency, but this must be proven, and not simply asserted. The Lutheran has never taught that public worship is a means of grace; it is a means through which the means of grace, word and sacrament are brought to men. Rome says the public service is an institution appointed by God directly conditioning salvation. The Lutheran Church says public worship in itself does not convey the forgiveness of sins and the blessings of salvation. These are found only in the gracious assurances of the Gospel, which must be appropriated by faith. It insists on public worship, because in it the Holy Spirit comes to men as the word and the sacraments are administered; and that men, in turn, through the Holy Spirit attending word and sacraments, receive what the Holy Spirit offers. Romish worship crowds out the sacramental by the sacrificial, and this the propitiatory sacrificial. The mass is a sacrifice of expiation. The word is in an unknown tongue.\*

Further, the Lutheran Church teaches that public worship should harmonize with the confession of faith of those who employ it. Every religion has developed

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\* Cf. Jacob's "Lutheran Movement in England," Chap. on Service.

its own distinctive worship as it has had distinctive being. Just so far as it has had deep distinctive religious ideas, has it had a distinctive form of worship. A Christian cannot worship like a Jew, or a heathen, because he is no heathen or Jew. The religious ideas peculiar to him will find expression in public worship and separate him from the Jew or the heathen.

“Christian worship can borrow nothing from the most exquisite forms in which purely pagan ideas were embodied. So far, indeed, as paganism involves the generic idea which makes religion religion, it is worthy of Christian study. There is a sense in which Christ is the end of the pagan system as He is of the Jewish. Paganism was the instinctive struggle; Judaism the divinely-guided one, and Christ is the fulfilling of what is truly human and truly divine in both. Whatever is distinctive of either system, apart from the great generic character, Christianity must reject; to accept it would make it pagan or Jewish. Hence its churches cannot be reared on pagan models, nor its art be shaped by distinctively pagan ideas. Neither is Christian worship to be an imitation or echo of the Jewish. The Church of Rome has sinned grievously in respect to her conformity to pagan and Jewish ideas. The traveler who visits Rome sees there the links not broken and hardly covered which unite at many points the worship of pagan Rome with that of papal Rome. The battle of the Reformation, so far as it turned upon worship, was directed mainly against the Judaizing principles and practice of the Church of Rome.”

It should, however, be remembered that “the Jewish worship, embodying as it does great ideas divinely given, common to all time, is in this sphere rich in suggestions even to the Christian mind. Much of the Old Testament does not die in the New, but is transfigured in it. David’s psalms mean more to us than they meant to David.”

A true worship must, therefore, be Christian over

against all other religions, and equally it must be catholic and not sectarian. It will, therefore, be in harmony with the worship of the Apostolic Church, which was divinely guided and in which were all the principles of Christian worship. There must be in it that which will appeal to believers in all times and place, and will conform to the Scriptures, but it must not be understood that it must mechanically conform to the apostolic worship. There is a principle of growth in the Church, and the Church is not bound in matters indifferent to the apostolic usage. As she has developed in her freedom her doctrines, even so she has developed her worship. And as her doctrines are conditioned by their agreement with Scripture, even so her worship may alone be conditioned by the same. An order of public worship will, therefore, arise out of the past. It will be the living growth of the Christian communion. Orders of public worship have, indeed, been made to order by able and pious men, but they are never satisfactory. They are individualistic and not catholic, the dust of the study is upon them and not the rich breath of the life of the Church wrought by the Spirit of God. The dry bones will not live.

It, however, must not be forgotten that there will be differences in worship according to the doctrines which are taught. The Protestant cannot be satisfied with the Romish mode of worship, full of errors, nor can the Lutheran, whilst holding much in common, be contented with those portions of worship where the Calvinist ignores or denies his faith.

As an interesting example how the public worship is influenced by doctrine, we quote the following from Luckock's "Divine Liturgy": One sentence placed in the forefront of the Lutheran confession of sins was discarded by the revisers of the Prayer Book as doctrinally uncatholic and practically injurious; it was this: 'We acknowledge and we lament that we are con-

ceived and born in sins, and that therefore we be prone to all evils and abhor from all good things.' What the faithful are called to grieve over is not original but actual sin. The guilt of that nature which we received from Adam has been wiped out in baptism, and in preparation for the reception of the sacrament we must be very careful not to ignore or depreciate the blessing of another, lest we mar this proportion of the catholic doctrine."

He further adds, "Again such a confession must prove harmful in practice, for to bring into prominence the depravity of our fallen nature, is to plead some justification or extenuation of our sins, which robs the confession at once of its true value. The language of the really contrite penitent is altogether different, 'We have done amiss, and are without excuse.'"

It is readily seen that the Lutheran conception of sin, so deep and searching, is ignored in the Episcopal Confession. The Reformers taught that original sin is forgiven the baptized believer, but it remains as tendency to sin, wherefore the old Adam must be destroyed by daily repentance. It confesses not alone actual sin, but that by nature we are sinful and unclean. The confession of sin in the Washington Liturgy, beautiful in language and true concerning actual sins, is faulty in this, that derived from the Episcopal Liturgy it does not fully set forth the Lutheran idea of sin. It is true as far as it goes, but it is not as comprehensive and profound as our Lutheran doctrine.

Again it is noteworthy that the Lutheran Liturgies generally place the repetition of the Nicene Creed before the Communion. Luther retained it, and, in 1524, gave it to the people in versified form that they might sing it during the service. This is in strict accord with the Lutheran teaching of the Lord's Supper, which sets forth the divine nature of Him who is truly

present in the sacrament. The Apostles' Creed is not so explicit concerning the divinity of our Lord, and is oft repeated by those who deny His divine nature. The Nicene Creed clearly sets forth Him who is the only begotten Son, God of God, Light of Light, and thus prepares the worshiper to commune with Him.

Liturgies have doctrinal significance. They are bulwarks for the truth, full and comprehensive in their statement of the truth, wherever they have arisen in conformity to the word of God out of the life of the Church. The danger doctrinally from such a liturgy is infinitesimal, though there are those who claim that where the substance and order of worship is left to the caprice of the minister, who may be orthodox or not, the danger is less. Exposed as we are to false teaching in the homiletical part of the worship, it is well in the liturgical part, strictly so-called, that everything should not be left to the minister, but that in worship at least the congregation should set forth fully and truly their faith.

True worship should adapt itself within due limits to the national life. There are certain essential forms which are common to all nations because there is a common humanity. "If there are artificial perversions in national life which make it incompatible with these great elementary principles, Christianity must in so far break down that life and make it capable of the necessary adaptation." Holding fast to this there will, nevertheless, be adaptation to the nation and the times. The human element in the service will be adjusted to the life of the people. Rome has sinned grievously in this direction in that she has demanded an inflexible mode of worship in one tongue, and that a dead tongue, the Latin.

Luther was very careful in this matter. With delicate perception and judgment he retained some of the old Latin hymns, with their music, but he did not think, as a rule, the old Latin chants were adapted to

the German language. "I would," he writes, in 1524, "gladly have a church service entirely in German, and I am laboring for that purpose, but then it must be thoroughly and consistently German. The literal translation of the Latin text into German and the singing of the old Latin tunes is not in good taste nor is it right. The words, the note, the accent, the mode, the movement, must all come out of the right mother's speech and voice, otherwise it is a mere imitation, such as monkeys make."

One of his old biographers says of him, that "One time he came into the church at Eisenberg on Easter Day, and they were singing the Introit in German with the old Latin tune, whereupon he turned up his nose and looked very sour. When he returned to the inn to dine, the landlord asked him what had been the matter with him in church? 'I thought,' he said, 'I could have spit upon their ridiculous singing. If they wish to sing in German, then let them sing good German hymns and tunes; and if they wish to sing the old Latin chants, then let them retain the old Latin text for which they were made, as scholars ought to do. I hate people who are making these little puny innovations. In the Latin schools, let them sing the Latin text and tunes; and in the German churches, let them sing German words and music; then all goes right.'"

Our own experience as an English Church with some of the German hymns and music has been unsatisfactory. They are not adapted to our life. Only as hymns rise above the national and are universal, can they be handed from nation to nation. And Luther shows his good sense here. "Most of the singing of the mass is very fine and glorious, breathing nothing but thankfulness and praise, such as the 'Gloria in Excelsis, the Hallelujah, the Sanctus, the Benedictus, the Agnus Dei.' In these you will find nothing of the superstition of the sacrifice, but only praise and thanksgiving. Especially the Agnus Dei, above all hymns, is

appropriate to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; for it clearly sings and praises Christ that He hath borne our sins, and it lovingly and powerfully brings up the memory of Christ in few and beautiful words."

The Lutheran Church has cared for this principle of adaptation. It guarded jealously the freedom of worship. It enriched the service by adding to the best of the past its own hymns. "Germany has seen many vicissitudes since the tramp of battle was in her streets. The paralysis of heresy has fallen upon her churches, revolutions have overturned her thrones and storms swept over her homes, but her hymns have remained an abiding inheritance; a creed and a ritual indelibly written upon the hearts of the people, the incense of her domestic altars, the watchword of her champions, the solace of her manly hearts. Many a hero have they inspired in patriotic battle, many a saint when the shadows of death have dimmed his eye and caused his tongue to falter and his grasp to relax. The songs of men's souls, they abide still, fresh and real and beautiful, and they will abide while heart answers to heart, or God's truth speaks to it."\*

The Lutheran Church of the sixteenth century retained those great essential parts which the Church has found to best express the needs of our common Christianity. She would not deprive her people of the common heritage nor despise the work of the Holy Spirit in the ages past. The unity of the Church was dear and preferable far to the morbid individualism characteristic of later days. Therefore diverse as are the nationalities which the Lutheran Church embraces, they conform to the same general form of worship wherever that faith and worship are rightly understood.

In their recent valuable work on Christian worship, Profs. Richard and Painter conclude by reference to

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\* Allon on Hymns.

this principle of national adaptation, and speak of the worship which the American life will produce, and rather give their verdict against the present liturgical forms of worship in the Lutheran Church as too elaborate. It is too soon to predict what the renewed consideration of worship will produce. The American people educated, given to brevity, gifted with esthetic taste, will in their forms of worship, in all probability, incline to liturgical forms which are brief, comprehensive, beautiful, full of the Holy Ghost.

As the authors themselves have pointed out, the tendency is toward liturgical forms. The force of the bald and bare Puritanical worship has spent itself and there is a demand that everything be no longer left to the minister and the choir, but that the congregation audibly participate. And this means a return to the treasures of prayer and praise in the Church, the slow accumulation of the centuries.

Whatever may be the result in our general American Christianity, it is reasonably certain that a genuine American Lutheranism will conform itself closely to the fixed forms of the worship which grew out of the doctrines of the Lutheran Church and express its truth, faith and life. Eventually there may be modifications adapting it to certain phases and needs of the national life of this people, but it will remain faithful in essentials. There may be some who have been trained otherwise, to whom all fixed forms are distasteful, who may not agree with this position, but such appears to be the movement of the Church. Conscientious in their opposition and true to the doctrine of the Church, they are to be respected. But there is another class to whom no such respect can be accorded. There are errorists who intensely dislike fixed forms because they express the doctrines of the Church which they do not receive. This is strikingly manifested by Harnack and his followers, who desire to excise the Apostles' Creed from the liturgical forms of the Church, as they

no longer subscribe to the saving doctrines and historical facts of our common Christianity.

In the present condition of religious life the wisest course apparently is to adopt and use our own Lutheran service with such modifications as peculiar surroundings may demand, and through its use come at last to the ideal national service for the Church.

For a proper understanding of public worship it is necessary to consider for a moment the relation of the ministry to the congregation. The universal priesthood of believers forbids the teaching of Rome, that there is a divinely commissioned order through whom alone the believer can come to God in public worship; that the priest alone can present the prayers and praises of the congregation, and becomes the mediator of the grace of God through prayer and the sacraments.

We teach that the ministry is a divinely instituted office. He is called of God to this office, which call is mediated by the Church. The minister is one selected out of the Church and called and ordained by the Church to the ministry of preaching, to administer the sacraments and to conduct their worship decently and in order. Protestantism acknowledges merely the official fitness of the clergy to conduct worship. On the one hand, called of God the minister represents God as His ambassador, officially speaking and acting for God. On the other hand, he represents the congregation to lead them in their worship.

As such the minister should realize that he is to represent the congregation and conduct their worship not according to individual fancies, but according to the needs of the congregation. He may not officiate in an unknown tongue. He may not assume the portion of the service that belongs to the congregation. He may not arbitrarily change their worship.\*

The worship must be in truth. "They that worship

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\* "Christian Worship," Richard and Painter.

Him must worship Him in spirit and truth." The audible word, the preaching of the gospel, must be understood by the hearer so that he may intelligently and devoutly draw near to God, and in the visible word, the sacrament, the believer must actually be a participant.

The demand is, therefore, that in everything the ministry must provide a true and proper use of God's word. Where there is freedom to the minister, as in preaching, it must conform to the Scripture. Preaching is not all of worship, it is a chief part alone, when it is legitimately drawn out of God's word. A great deal of preaching is neither worship nor gospel.

God's word appears sacramentally chiefly in the Scripture readings, the Sermon, the Absolution and Benediction. The Scripture lessons may be free, chosen by the pastor, but they are presented to us by the Church through the Scripture lessons adapted to the Church Year. These lessons are not faultless, but they stand for the judgment of the Church as containing the essence of the word, a hindrance to that excessive individualism which too often presents a fragmentary conception of the truth to the people.

The general Church must not deprive the local congregation of liberty, but, on the other hand, the local congregation is bound to conform to the principles of the general Church. The local congregation may not interpret Scripture as it pleases, or change the creed, neither has it a right to define for itself its own worship. It has a relation to the general Church. It is not an independent entity. There is a communion of the saints. There is a law of liberty in worship as well as in duty. There is a fellowship in worship which should be observed as well as fellowship in doctrine. A congregation is not the sole source of authority or wisdom.

It is on this principle that the advocates of the Church Year declare that the general Church is better

adapted to select the Scripture lessons than the individual congregation.

It is sometimes urged that the use of the Church Year is opposed to true freedom and destructive of spirituality. It is true that where it is used mechanically and formally this is the result, but this is equally characteristic of the individual use of the Bible, which will also depend upon the spirit in which it is used.

The Church Year is based upon the life and person of Christ. It sets Him forth not in snatches and fragments but in fullness. The minister who follows the Church Year wisely will bring before the congregation the complete work and life of Christ. Merriam, a Congregationalist, says, "Christianity, both as a creed and as a life, depends absolutely upon the personal character of the Founder. As the chief attack of criticism (and so necessarily upon theology and upon the actual Christian life) is more and more concentrated upon the story of the Gospels and upon the Divine Man therein set forth, such an annual following of that life in study, worship and practical application to our own conduct as the felicitous ordering of the Church Year affords, becomes more attractive and useful. It tends to fix attention on that which is simple, primary and essential to the faith. It incites personal affection and loyalty to Jesus and lifts Him up as an example and inspiration in daily conduct. In this way the Church Year tends to bring Christians out of the abstractions of theory and opinion into the region of life."\*

In all this it is not to be understood that Christ is not savingly set forth where there is no observance of the Church Year. He has been truly set forth and is now without such observance, but in how many cases in a hapless fashion. Some of the great features of Christ's work and life are ignored or overlooked. The

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\* Merriam, *Andover Review*, "Use of the Church Year."

Scriptures are used in the most arbitrary and capricious manner. The preaching is desultory, sensational, incomplete. Or the dogmatic side of Christianity is overworked and the pulpit becomes the arena for theological subtleties. In Germany I was much impressed by the sermons drawn from the gospels of the Church Year. They were in touch with Christ, and, therefore, practical and spiritual. In Heidelberg an advanced theologian in handling the gospel for the day, because he followed it in an expository way, brought his congregation face to face with the divine Christ in strong helpfulness.

The worth of the Church Year is great to those who devoutly follow it—Advent, Incarnation, Epiphany, the temptation, the preparation for the cross, the Holy Week, Good Friday, Easter, the forty days, Ascension, Whitsunday, Trinity, here are the great themes to set forth Christ, the great redemption, the glorious promises, the Church, the Holy Spirit, the deep mystery of the Godhead; whilst the Sundays after Trinity cover the Christian life in its fullness. It can only be appreciated when it is followed in devout and humble fidelity to present a complete and not a partial Christ to the people, a complete and not a partial Christian life to the believer.

Above all let it be remembered that with the liberty that belongs to the preacher, it serves him as guide and is not a tyrant. He can vary with judgment, following the spirit of the Church Year. There will arise circumstances which will justify him in his leading of the congregation to deal with other topics and themes. If the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, even so the Church in these selections meant this order to be followed for the edification of her members and as a guide to her ministry, but does not desire her members and ministry to be slaves to this order.

Through the sermon, the ministry as ambassadors

in the name and place of God, offer God's grace to the congregation. As a Church, we have ever regarded it as of the highest importance. Luther said: "Where God's word is not preached, it were better that there were not singing, or reading, or assembly. The greatest and the principal part of the worship of God is the preaching and teaching of God's word." He did not mean by this that the other portions of worship were not of the highest importance, as his Formula Missae well shows, but it was his indignant protest against that worship which had ignored the preaching of the word.

In the sermon there will always be the personality of the minister, though influenced by the churchly faith and conversation of the people of God. It will be the utterance of his personal experience. It is this which gives peculiarity to the preacher and influence over men, but that is alone a true sermon where these gifts are subjected in humble submission to God, and where the Scriptures are the quickening soul and directing norm of the sermon. The sermon will thus declare God's forgiveness to men and bestow upon them His grace.

There must also be the administration of the Lord's Supper, in which we are united to the Lord Jesus, the holy and blessed sacrament of His body and blood. It is, with the word of God, the means whereby God imparts His grace to us in Christian worship.

It must be observed, as He commanded it. There must be the consecration or words of the institution, the distribution and the reception. Here, in every age where worship has been true, the Christian congregation finds supreme nearness to the Lord, enjoys His comfort and receives His life, and therefore concludes with it the service in order that the believer may depart with joy and thanksgiving from the house of God.

On the other hand, the sacrificial acts in worship

are through confession, praise and prayer. It will be impossible to treat of all these, of the value of the creeds in worship, of the Introits, the formula solennes, the church hymns, as time forbids.

We will but consider prayer, which is so prominent in all worship. Our whole life ought to be a continual prayer, but that devotion may be strengthened and fellowship with God be living, prayer must be expressed. Consciousness of guilt will cause man to confess his sin and ask for forgiveness; consciousness of forgiveness and of the received grace of God will be expressed in thanks and praises to Him, whilst his needs within and without will ever move him to supplication and intercession. The believer will show forth his faith in words of prayer. As he belongs to the congregation, such prayer will be common, even as Christ enjoined. Prayer must be true, from the heart, in the name of Christ and with filial confidence. By these last is it distinguished from the prayers of other religions. The prayer of the Christian is the prayer of a child of God, justified by faith in Christ Jesus.

Should prayer be free or written? Ought not the believer to approach God, speaking freely out of need, seeking guidance from the Holy Spirit? Are not the formal prayers of the service, the confession of sins, the collects, the general prayers, detrimental to spirituality, fetters upon the free spirit? There are those who honestly believe this.

It ought not to be overlooked that the public prayer is the prayer of the congregation, and the minister the mouthpiece of the congregation. In free prayer they are helplessly in the power of the minister. The sole security lies in the good sense, good taste and devout feeling of the minister. It is true that by the help of an unwritten liturgy, and a canon of unwritten law in the methods and mode of prayer, that the minister generally fairly fulfills his duties. But how often does prayer fail, because of the peculiarities, self-seeking

and thoughtlessness and even lack of spirituality in the minister. Prayer is an opportunity to display the man. "He delivered an eloquent and impressive prayer." "The most eloquent prayer ever addressed to a Boston audience." What an incongruity to speak thus of prayer and what a criticism on the officiant!

Boyd, of Scotland, says: "How often has everyone been annoyed by the minister in prayer giving information to the Lord, or using it as a means of reproof, or an opportunity to air the speaker's views, or to estimate his opponents.

"Thus prayer as information. 'Bless each one of the thirteen hundred and forty-five communicants who received the sacrament last Sunday under this roof.'

"As reproof: 'Have mercy on them who present trifling excuses which would not for a moment be suffered to detain them from any engagement of business, or of amusement, to keep them away from the places where God has recorded His name and promised to meet with His people.'

"As expressive of the speaker's views: 'Lord, have mercy upon the magistrates of Drumsleekie, such as they are, make them wiser and better.'

"As estimate of opponents: 'Lord, have mercy upon that miserable man who was lately pouring forth blasphemies against Thee.' The blasphemy consisted of declaring that there was no harm in taking a walk in a Botanic Garden on the Lord's Day. Some are hard to classify, as in an extempore marriage service, the prayer had the following: 'We thank Thee that Thou hast given us wumman to make us kounfortable.'"

Prayer is to be edifying, building up the faith of the congregation by expressing their wants and thanksgivings unto God reverently, fully and helpfully. A provided form will do this as adequately as free prayer and oft better. The truth is that "as certain as two and two make four," as Dr. Boyd, a Presby-

terian, says, "that so far as concerns the congregation public prayer is always of necessity a provided form. It is never the extemporaneous, or free prayer of the congregation: it is a form provided and imposed upon them by the officiating minister. The congregation cannot even (as with a prayer-book) look at the service beforehand and resolve whether it be such as they can, in conscience, in feeling, in good taste, join in and accept as their own. Nobody knows what the form is until it is actually produced; not even the man who is to produce it. Often from sentence to sentence he is groping his way. Often he knows not what is to come next. Often he feels deeply that he has not said what he desired, and wishes he could withdraw or amend the words. *That is to say*, and *By which I mean*, Principal Tulloch told me, were words familiar to him in the prayers of a fine old professor of the university in his youth.

"The question is not form or no form. The only issue is, Shall the form be provided deliberately, calmly, with serious consideration and by the combined wisdom of a company of devout and earnest men? or shall it be provided in great haste, nervous trepidation and utter blankness, without a vestige of devotional feeling, by some youth without religious experience and quite unable to interpret and express the needs and feelings of good old Christian people tried in ways of which he knows nothing at all? Lord Campbell tells us that the morning he had first to pray in the Divinity Hall at St. Andrews, 'I heard the bell cease and my heart died within me.' Is that a fit mood in which to extemporize a form of prayer? We know, God be thanked, it is not always so. It is not even commonly so. The form is provided by a good and experienced minister, well knowing the case of his congregation, tolerably free from nervousness, and with his memory stored with decorous sentences, the traditional liturgy of Scotland; he can hardly go wrong.

Not merely upon the minister's spiritual frame, but upon the humblest details of his physical nature, the congregation are helplessly dependent for their prayers. 'The Spirit is not in this place,' said an emotional evangelist, preaching for good Dr. Craik, of Glasgow; one of the best and most cultivated of Scotch ministers in his day. But Dr. Craik told me, with much indignation, 'I said to him after church that the Spirit would not be in any place if a man ate two pounds of beef-steak at breakfast that morning!' The statement was humbling, but it was true. A physical miracle need not be looked for."

The Lutheran Church has provided forms of prayer, but has not made them compulsory. She acknowledges both free and written prayer. There are times when the minister will be desirous to lead the devotion of his people in special needs. There is also provided in the general prayer a place for special petitions conveying desires which are not satisfied by the written prayers. There are thus direction and freedom. Personal experience has taught us the worth of this. There have been times when to extemporize a suitable prayer has seemed impossible, just at other times it has been a delightful and unspeakable privilege. However, the best of free prayers do always lack the terse, full and complete character of those glorious prayers that the Church has crystallized out of her life, the result of devout communion with God, that glow, jewel-like, with the brilliant colors of faith and hope and love and praise and adoration.

The fundamental elements of Christian worship are in the service of the Lutheran Church, every portion being full of precious meaning, deep with the truth of God. The congregation first approach God with the confession. They humbly confess their sins and receive the declaration of grace in the gospel promises to the penitent and believing. Pardoned, they are prepared out of grateful hearts to adore and praise God.

The Glorias, the Gloria Patri and the Gloria in Excelsis, bound together by the Kyrie, pleading for mercy, exultantly rise. The Scriptures are then read, in which God speaks through His word to His people, the Gospel tells of Christ the Saviour, and in the mighty consciousness of their trust and love, the congregation joyfully confess their glorious faith in the creed. The hymn is now sung, and the sermon, to which all these have led, brings the message of Christ's minister to the people. The congregation then lay their offerings before the Lord, symbol of their consecration to Him. The general prayer then follows, for the teaching should lead men to know God and themselves, and thus in fellowship with one another, in trusting faith, they are fitted to pray for all men, the Church of Christ and for every good. The communion follows. In lofty adoration and praise they draw near. The exhortation searches the heart. The words of the Master are heard; the tender words of love, the gracious command, with its wondrous promises, fall like music upon the believing heart.

The Lord's Prayer tells of the common filial relation to God the Father, the Agnus Dei so rich in the presentation of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, calls forth grateful and adoring love. Then follows the distribution, the thanksgiving, doxology and benediction. As Lutherans, we have the most appropriate and beautiful communion service of all Christian churches, as is meet for those who hold the true and precious doctrine of the Lord in this most holy ordinance.

It is well, therefore, to prize our heritage. There are in it eternal riches. It is not perfect. Perhaps no service on earth ever will be. All our worship is affected by the sin of man and the presence of the world about him.

Worship must ever have its sad side, because it must set forth the life of the Church, whose silver is ever

mixed with dross, its wine with water. It must have its glad side, looking beyond this life to the true life of the Church, as it should be and is to be. It confesses sins, it urges to sanctification and lays hold upon the glorification which shall be. It is the bond of earth and heaven, as has well been said. "The Church triumphant must lend part of her treasures to the Church militant to help her upward to the triumphant. Worship is a thing both of the cross and of the crown; it could not be without the bloody sweat in Gethsemane nor without the scepter at the right hand of the Father. It needs the litany of the Church in the dust, and the Gloria in Excelsis which came down in its first words upon angel lips out of heaven. Nothing is so deep, nothing so high, nothing so sad, nothing so exultant as true worship. To go beneath it belongs only to the lost, to rise beyond it belongs not even to the angels and the glorified. It is heaven's supremest height perfectly to rise to it."\*

Therefore, whilst in our worship here earthly infirmities remain, there is also in the true worship a heavenly ideal, which the exultant soul in its flight of adoration, praise and prayer can never pass beyond. Worship abides in the Church here, and will abide in the heavenly Church, for there as here must God and man draw near each other in fellowship. And in the ages to come, that form of worship will abide in the Church where, crystallized in her hymns and chants and psalms and prayers, the child of God, believing, needy, loving, finds spirituality and truth wrought out by the struggles, sorrows, aspirations and victories of the children of God, who now in heaven worship before Him who sitteth upon the throne and the Lamb forever and ever.

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\* Krauth, MS., "Lectures on Worship."

## THE DIET OF SPEYER; THE RISE AND NECESSITY OF PROTESTANTISM

The instinctive good sense of men in the consideration of history finds certain epochs wherein the race was advanced in truth, wisdom and goodness, and equally finds certain men who, greater than their fellows, were the efficient cause of this advance. It therefore justly honors them at the first, and, as the centuries roll by and by their results attest favorably the quality of their work, extends to them an ever heartier and more reverential honor. It is the characteristic of the great that they are better understood by later generations than by their contemporaries. They are too near their own age. Trivial faults are dwelt upon more than excellencies. The ordinary, that which they have in common with others, is more conspicuous than the extraordinary, which often their fellows cannot comprehend. As time removes them from us, we reach the true view-point and the great character is revealed in its due proportions. All of us will recall the peculiar effect which a towering mountain has produced upon us. As we were near to it, its majesty was dwarfed, the foot-hills were almost its equals. Then as we receded from it, how it lifted itself up, rising in serene sublimity whilst the foot-hills were lost in the dim distance. Never will we forget how a towering crest of the Rockies thus conveyed its majesty to us. We had looked up to it from the base, and it had not seemed great, but when the swift-moving train had carried us a score of miles away and still the stainless snowy crest against the deep blue of the sky seemed as near as when we left its foot, the majesty of the monarch revealed itself and at last we felt how immeasurably great it was. Thus has it been with Martin Luther. The centuries

have not diminished the lustre of his genius, the nobility of his character, the surpassing excellency of his work. They have given us the true view-point, and, as the towering peak, so he rises above his contemporaries and reveals his greatness. Nor can the favorite doctrine of the day, that of Zeit-geist, the spirit of the age, account for him. It teaches that circumstances make the man, man does not shape the circumstances. It is the age which produces, not the individual. There are no longer on this theory great, constructive, creative men, children of the dawn, bringers of the light to their fellows lying in the darkness of ignorance, but empty vessels which are filled with any sort of spirit indifferently as the age may furnish. They have the capacity, but the age furnishes all the material of thought and goodness which they display. It is, it may safely be granted, quite true that there are men who are representative of their times, in whom the inarticulate thoughts of the age are first clearly comprehended and plainly set forth in articulate words. In them the smouldering embers flash into a bright, steady light. What the mass felt, and struggled after and vainly tried to tell, in them finds expression and through them in turn all the people come into the knowledge of truth. We may not clearly understand the nations or the times without these characteristic men. They are the mirror of their age. To study such individuals intelligently until they live again in our minds is to obtain a vivid conception of the people and their period. Their emotions, passions, thoughts, words and deeds will give us the key and unlock the past in which they lived better than any array of dry facts and philosophical histories. Man alone can explain man. It is the never-failing charm of biography.

The age of Pericles, we say, not the age of Athens, for in Pericles that portion of Grecian history is best known. "Wonderful," says one, "is this power which

an age has to select one of its men and crowd itself into him and hold him up before the world and say, "Know me by him!" Scottish life and religion of the sixteenth century is best interpreted by stern, grim, conscientious John Knox. Carlyle with shrewdest penetration fastens upon Cromwell as the embodiment of that Puritanic life which hated the rule of kings and loved freedom, yet, amazingly inconsistent, despotically crushed all who disagreed with it.

Few men so richly set forth this truth as Luther. In him all that vast movement called the Reformation comes into clear, distinct, articulate life. The forces which accomplished the Reformation were already at work when he appears. The longing for a better, purer, more satisfactory faith, the hatred of hypocrisy and unrighteousness, horror of false doctrine and of a corrupt Church, the detestation of Romish abominations. His rich nature compasses all these. His inner religious life is the practical exemplification of the Reformation doctrines, the deep sense of sin, justification by faith, child-like trust, love and fidelity to the word of God. He lays hold upon these great fundamental truths more nearly than any man before or since. He gives them voice. Others may formulate; he first speaks. The Augsburg Confession is from the pen of Melancthon; the thoughts are Luther's.

How eloquent is the testimony of Döllinger, the Old Catholic: "This force and strength of the Reformation was only in part due to the personality of the man who was its author and spokesman in Germany. It was Luther's overpowering greatness and wonderful many-sidedness of mind that made him the man of his age and his people. Nor was there a German who had such an intuitive knowledge of his countrymen and was again so completely possessed, not to say absorbed, by the national sentiment, as the Augustinian monk of Wittenberg. The mind and spirit of the Ger-

mans were in his hand what the lyre is in the hands of the skilled musician. He gave them more than any man in Christian days ever gave his people—language, popular manuals of instruction, Bibles, hymnology. All his opponents could offer in place of it, was insipid, colorless and feeble by the side of his transporting eloquence. They stammered; he spoke. He alone has impressed the indelible stamp of his mind on the German language and the German intellect, and even those among us who hold him in religious detestation as the great heresiarch and seducer of the nation, are constrained in spite of themselves to speak with his words and think with his thoughts.”

Therefore, from such considerations, we do well as Protestants to honor Martin Luther, for all who love the Reformation must ever find in him its greatest and truest embodiment.

The man who believes in the providential guidance of this world cannot explain history by the spirit of the age, the *zeit-geist*. He does not simply accept great men as the exponents of their age. He believes that God expressly sends forth such men and that He fills them with wisdom. They become teachers not alone for their day, but for all time. They are creative as well as receptive. They rise higher than their age. On their faces shine the glory of the light of knowledge which comes in its fullness to after ages.

When men discuss great questions which are the subject of controversy, they investigate and examine the truths involved with untiring industry and under the white heat of intense conviction. Under such influence men see into the heart of these truths better than their successors. The later thinkers simply speculate with languid interest. Rigid dogma is reached. Definitions made with precision. They do not create. Sometimes they fail even to make the truth live.

There is a plant which is dry and dead in appearances which the careless looker-on might throw away

as worthless. Placed in water it changes, its dry petals open and reveal the inward hidden beauty. So truth wrought out is seemingly dead to the scribe and Pharisee. The prophet's words are dissected, analyzed and dogmatized. It needs the atmosphere of intense conviction and love of truth to make them live and disclose their beauty.

There is an immense amount of foolish talk to-day. Great thinkers of the past are despised. It is asserted that a child on the shoulders of a man is taller than a man. The common man of the nineteenth century understands their peculiar truths better than the giants of the sixteenth century that wrought them out with toil of brain and heart-blood, because he has their knowledge to stand upon. Ah! there 's the rub. Does he stand upon their knowledge? It reminds one of the old Scottish woman. She accused her minister, a young man, of preaching works. He took refuge in the sermon on the mount. "Ow, ay," answered the partisan, "but He was a varra young man when He prechet that sermon." Our modern partisans are as bad when they try to underrate the great thinkers of the past by saying, "Then the world was young."

Always and ever are these men worthy of study. They, in their loving trustfulness and loyalty to the truth, were led by the spirit of God, who guides into all truth. Succeeding study may modify, cast other light upon these truths, and thus remove the human imperfections which cling to the essentials, but these men will ever be masters of assemblies and from their storehouses the Church will draw its wealth. The masters of Protestantism are not yet outgrown, nor are their contributions to truth to be lightly cast away.

It is not so much our purpose to dwell upon Luther as to call to remembrance these princes and laymen without whom the Reformation would not have been established, who are great also, but not so pre-eminently great as this colossal Luther. It has seemed

good to us on this anniversary to take for our subject, The Diet of Speyer, where men were first called Protestants, to study what sort of men they were, why they felt it necessary to protest, and then ask ourselves whether Protestantism was needed in those days, and is it needed now? The theme is therefore, "The Diet of Speyer; The Rise and Necessity of Protestantism." Two Diets are pre-eminent in the Reformation era, the Diet of Worms, the Diet of Augsburg. These overshadow the others. The Diet of Worms is the most attractive, for the central figure is heroic in utterance and bearing, Luther, the monk of Wittenberg, solitary, against emperor, ecclesiastics, potentates and princes, yet fearless to utter words of truth that may cost him his life, loyal to conscience and the word of God. It is the man on whom we look. "Here I stand, I can do no other, God help me." Principles find voice in the man. The Reformation, humanly speaking, depends upon the loyalty of Luther to the truth. Unquestionably great! A hero.

At the Diet of Augsburg there are men, but no central, overpowering person. Here principles precede men. Confession is made of doctrines and interest centers in that immortal document, the Confession of Augsburg. Truth has been proclaimed and taught so clearly that she no longer depends upon one man to vindicate her and in so doing be forever heroic and sublime. She has spoken, and princes and common people have heard and understood her message.

In between these two great Diets, the product of the first and the parent of the second, is a third, the Diet of Speyer. D'Aubigne eloquently says that "Speyer and Augsburg are names that shine forth with more immortal glory than Marathon, Pavia or Marengo. They open a new era in the history of mankind. The transition from the middle ages to modern times is *here*."

It will be needful for clear comprehension to hastily

review the events between the Diet of Worms, 1521, and the Diet of Speyer, 1529. Luther, after his magnificent confession at Worms, is declared an outlaw. The friendly capture and subsequent imprisonment in Wartburg Castle preserve him from arrest and violent death. In this brief period of captivity political complications arose which gave the nascent Reformation cessation from oppression and time in which to extend itself and gather strength for battle.

The age of the Reformation is the age of great men. Seldom has there been a period in which so many splendidly endowed men have been grouped together. Charles V, Francis I, Henry VIII, Solyman the Magnificent, Leo X, are the prominent rulers. Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli, Œcolampadius, Erasmus, Cranmer, the theologians. It is the era of great artists, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and a host of others. Navigators and discoverers, like Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Cabot, penetrate with their frail shallops across the untraversed deeps to unknown worlds. Inventors abound, whilst a host of men who would have been considered great at any other period crowd the stage of action.

The great monarchs were so evenly balanced by their abilities and resources that in their wars they needed the goodwill of all their subjects, and thus perforce protected even the adherents of the Reformation. Under this enforced protection they increased mightily. After the Diet of Worms, 1521, Luther was indeed under the ban of the empire, but upon his return from the Wartburg, remained peacefully in Wittenberg, where he continued his herculean labors as a preacher, teacher, author. "The Council of Regency, who managed the government in the absence of the emperor, steadily declined to adopt measures to extirpate the Lutherans. The ground was taken that the religious movement was too much a matter of con-

science; it had taken root in the minds of too great a number to allow its suppression by force; an attempt to do so would breed disturbances of a dangerous character."

The arms and policy of Charles V were, however, successful. In the disastrous battle of Pavia, February 25, 1523, Francis, his great rival, was captured and his army almost annihilated. Francis, captive in Spain, anxious to return to his beloved France, concluded (with mental reservation however) the peace of Madrid with the emperor, and thus Charles, freed from entangling wars, could devote his attention to the religious condition of Germany. A Diet was called at Speyer, June 25, 1526, through which Charles, a haughty victor, determined to crush, using his own words, "the abominable pest of Wittenberg."

To the astonishment of all, the evangelical princes showed unexpected firmness and strength. They came forward, cheerful and composed, surrounded by the ministers of God's word. They asked for places of worship, and when indignantly refused by the Bishop of Speyer, held services in the halls of their palaces. These were attended by immense crowds. The cathedral, despite the attractions of its imposing services and the presence of King Ferdinand and the Catholic potentates with their gorgeous retinues, was deserted by the common people.

The result of the Diet after months of deliberation, was the promulgation of a decree by which the ban of the empire was put upon the Reformers, their writings and their adherents. But the hour of persecution was not yet come. Pope Clement VII, hardy, warlike, ambitious, formed the Holy League against Charles. He drew into it the Venetians and Francis of France, and immediately declared war. Charles at once counseled mildness, and approached the evangelical princes with great promises, that he might secure their support. The first Diet of Speyer, therefore,

ended in a decree of toleration whereby each State was permitted to behave on its own territory in such a manner as to be able to render an account to God and the emperor. On June 25, 1528, a treaty between the emperor and the pope was concluded at Barcelona, based on the destruction of heresy, and in November a Diet was convoked to meet at Speyer on February 21, 1529. The Catholic princes, both spiritual and lay, were equally determined to crush the Reformation. They preponderated in the Diet. Out of nine electors, five spiritual and three lay were Catholic. The greatest of all in power, John the Constant, of Saxony, was the only elector in favor of Luther's doctrine. It may be said, however, that what they lacked in numbers was made up by the character of the men who were Lutherans.

They were men grounded in the faith, noble in their lives, ready to yield all, riches, power, position, life rather than the truth. It was at Augsburg, a year later, that the Elector of Saxony replied thus to Melancthon's objection to his signature to the Confession, lest it should bring him into danger: "God forbid that you should exclude me. I am resolved to do my duty without being troubled about my crown. I desire to confess the Lord. My electoral hat and robes are not so precious to me as the cross of Jesus Christ."

Philip of Hesse, ardent, bold, intelligent, a man of the sword, thus declared the depth of his convictions when he said to the Elector John, "As for me, I would rather die than renounce the word of God and allow myself to be driven from the throne."

"If the honor of my Lord Jesus Christ requires it I am ready to leave my goods and life behind me;" and wrote his name to the Confession of Augsburg, Wolfgang, Prince of Anhalt. "Rather would I renounce my subjects and my states," he added; "rather would I quit the country of my fathers, staff in hand; rather would I gain my bread by cleaning the shoes of for-

eigners, than to receive any other doctrine than that which is contained in the Confession."

Such men are not easily defeated. They must be exterminated to be beaten.

Intense and bitter hostility was displayed by the Catholics at Speyer. John of Saxony was visited by none of the chiefs of the other party. The Elector and the Landgrave Philip of Hesse were forbidden to have the gospel preached in their palaces. Faber, the Catholic, preached, "The Turks are better than the Lutherans, for they fast and these do not." He even went so far as to say if he had his choice he would rather throw away the Bible than the ancient errors of the Church. A sentiment in substance repeated by eminent prelates of the Roman Catholic Church in late years.\* The Roman party determined first, to revoke the decree of religious liberty that had existed for three years and revive the ban of 1521. It was effected by the imperial commissioners declaring that the emperor annulled it by virtue of his supreme power. The act was arbitrary, without precedent, contrary to the laws of the empire, despotic. When this was referred to a commission, the majority brought forward a resolution virtually forbidding the progress of the Reformation in the States which had not accepted it, and at the same time giving liberty to Catholics to celebrate their rites with freedom in the reformed States amenable to no authority in them. If this became a law, the Reformation could not be extended, the truth no longer be preached, no further conversions made in the States that were Catholic, nor could the Reformation be built upon solid foundations in those States where it already existed.

The evangelical princes might have accepted the decree, as they were apparently left free in the exercise of their own faith, but, should they suffer the word

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\* See "Our Country." Strong. P. 53.

of God to be bound? Should they legalize the scaffold and the stake for their brethren in the faith in Catholic countries? "Let us reject this decree," said the princes. "In matters of conscience the majority has no power."

The majority pushed forward regardless. A vote was reached. By threats and bribes twenty-one free cities voted for the resolution, fourteen boldly voted against it. Said one, "We must either deny the word of God—or burn." They chose the word of God, even if they burned. Ferdinand of Austria hastily and haughtily pushed forward the matter. He announced to the Elector of Saxony and his friends that they must submit to the majority. He did not even give them time to deliberate. When the evangelical princes, according to custom, retired into an adjoining chamber to consult, he rose with the imperial commissioners. They tried to detain him. His reply was, "I have received an order from his imperial majesty, I have executed it. All is over. Submission is all that remains."

It is well to recall the arbitrary and despotic conduct which produced the great Protest. It was when law was despised, the precedents of the empire set at naught, the rights of conscience trampled under foot, that the Protestants stood forth for law, justice, conscience and the faith once delivered to the saints. When naught else was left against arrogant strength, they resolved to appeal. Therefore the elector and his allies returned to the common hall of the Diet, bringing with them the famous protest which has given the name Protestant to the Church. If this be the beginning of schism, the fault is with Rome and not with us.

The Protest is as follows:\* "Dear lords, cousins, uncles and friends! Having repaired to the diet at the

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\*A protest of the laity, it is not quite certain whether a theologian assisted in its construction. Melancthon was present, and these clear sentences may have been his.

summons of his majesty and for the common good of the empire and Christendom, we have heard and learnt that the decisions of the last diet concerning our holy Christian faith are to be repealed, and that it is proposed to substitute for them certain restrictive and onerous resolutions.

“King Ferdinand and the other imperial commissaries, by affixing their seal to the last *Recess* of Speyer, had promised however, in the name of the emperor, to carry out sincerely and inviolably all that it contained and to permit nothing that was contrary to it. In like manner, also, you and we, electors, princes, prelates, lords and deputies of the empire, bound ourselves to maintain always and with our whole might every article of that decree.

“We cannot, therefore, consent to its repeal. Firstly, because we believe that his imperial majesty (as well as you and we) is called to maintain firmly what has been unanimously and solemnly resolved.

“Secondly, because it concerns the glory of God and the salvation of our souls, and that in such matters we ought to have regard above all, to the commandment of God, who is King of kings and Lord of lords; each of us rendering Him an account for himself, without caring the least in the world about majority or minority.

“We form no judgment on that which concerns you, most dear lords; and we are content to pray God daily that He will bring us all to unity of faith, in truth, charity and holiness through Jesus Christ, our throne of grace and our only mediator.

“But in what concerns ourselves, adhesion to your resolution (and let every honest man be judge!) would be acting against our conscience, condemning a doctrine that we maintain to be Christian and pronouncing that it ought to be abolished in our states, if we could do so without any trouble. This would be to deny our Lord Jesus Christ, to reject His holy word, and thus

give Him just reason to deny us in turn before His Father, as He has threatened.

What! We ratify this edict! *We* assert that when almighty God calls a man to His knowledge, this man cannot however receive the knowledge of God! Oh! of what deadly backslidings should we not thus become the accomplices, not only among our own subjects, but also among yours! For this reason we reject the yoke that is imposed upon us.

“Moreover, the new edict declaring the ministers shall preach the gospel, explaining it according to the writings accepted by the holy Christian Church: we think that, for this regulation to have any value, we should first agree on what is meant by the true and holy Church; how, seeing that there is great diversity of opinion in this respect; that there is no sure doctrine but such as is conformable to the word of God; that the Lord forbids the teaching of any other doctrine; that each text of the Holy Scriptures ought to be explained by other and clearer texts; that this holy book is in all things necessary to the Christian, easy of understanding and calculated to scatter the darkness; we are resolved, with the grace of God, to maintain the pure and exclusive preaching of His holy word, such as is contained in the biblical books of the Old and New Testament, without adding anything thereto that may be contrary to it. This word is the only truth; it is the sure rule of doctrine and of all life, and can never fail or deceive us. He who builds on this foundation shall stand against all the powers of hell, whilst all the human vanities that are set up against it shall fall before the face of God.

“For these reasons, most dear lords, uncles, cousins and friends, we earnestly entreat you to weigh carefully our grievances and motives. If you do not yield to our request, we **PROTEST** by these presents, before God, our only Creator, Preserver, Redeemer and Saviour, and who will one day be our judge, as well

as before all men and all creatures, that we, for us and our people, neither consent nor adhere in any manner whatsoever to the proposed decree, in anything that is contrary to God, to His holy word, to our right conscience, to the salvation of our souls and to the last decree of Speyer."

Such are the admirable words of these defenders of the truth, weighty in wisdom and far-reaching in results beneficial to the world. They breathe throughout unaffected piety, devotion to God, faith and consecration, deep knowledge of the truth, rich comprehension of doctrine. They protest against two abuses of man in matters of faith; the first is the intrusion of the civil magistrate, the second the arbitrary authority of the Church. Instead of these abuses, Protestantism sets the power of conscience above the magistrate; the authority of the word of God above the visible Church.

We must obey God rather than man. The Lord Jesus rather than lords of the earth. All human teaching must be subordinate to the Holy Scriptures.

There has arisen in our day the question whether Protestantism was necessary *then*. And many, lamenting schism in the Church, are convinced that it was entirely unnecessary.

It depends upon the reply we are ready to give to questions like these. Were there evils of practice and errors of doctrine then? If there were, was the Romish Church willing to correct these? If there were and she protected and nourished them, Protestantism became a necessity. Against evil and error protest must ever be made. Every prophet of the Jewish Church was a protestant against the corrupt practices and false teachings of the priesthood. Our Lord was emphatically a protestant, for it was His daily work to protest against the evils which the traditions and teachings of the scribes and Pharisees had brought upon the Church, to denounce their lives and their corruption, and, as a protestant, positively to explain the

Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets. Paul, the greatest apostle, was a protestant against the Judaism of some of the early Christians, and under his leadership the Christian Church came out out of the Jewish, for truth confessed is better than uniformity. Him Luther followed, and out of the storehouse of his epistles drew the doctrines against that Church which had almost stifled Christianity by its legalism, Judaic spirit and dreadful corruptions.

These men of Speyer could do naught else. There was no other resource, if they would be faithful to the word of God and their conscience. They were asking that a General Council might be convened, which should consider the state of the Church. This was steadily denied them. Then, as ever since, Italy, one land, ruled the Church which claims to be Catholic.

In the diet we consider they were robbed of their rights, arbitrarily and despotically. Would any sober-minded man claim that they were to yield everything to the Catholics, to act against their conscience, to condemn a doctrine that they maintained to be Christian? Were they to desert shamelessly their brethren in the faith, permit their own dominions to be filled with a designing and crafty priesthood, amenable to no law? They could do nothing but *protest*.

Otherwise, it would have meant that they acknowledged the right of the civil power to exalt itself above God, to stifle the voice of truth and the dictates of conscience. Religious freedom would have been impossible and religious corruption the inevitable consequence.

It would have meant that God's word should be bound, that human traditions and errors, with all their dreadful train of evils, religious ignorance, false methods of salvation, legalism, should be permitted to rest their unbearable yoke upon men.

Therefore, they could say no other than they did

say. If you do not yield to our request, we *protest* by these presents before God that we neither consent nor adhere in any manner whatsoever to the proposed decree in anything that is contrary to God, to His holy word, to our right conscience, to the salvation of our souls. Liberty of thought and conscience were then conquered for ages to come. Men in every quarter beheld in it not a mere political event, but a Christian action, and the youthful electoral prince, John Frederick, in this respect the organ of his age, cried to the Protestants of Speyer: "May the Almighty, who has given you grace to confess energetically, freely and fearlessly, preserve you in that Christian firmness until the day of eternity."

It has, however, been maintained that Protestantism is negative and its tendency is to skepticism. It is crafty warfare to seek thus to blind men to the real issues concerned, to represent Protestantism as protest perpetually against truth, not as protest against error. Protestantism is positive, aggressively so. Without it skepticism, then abounding among the dignitaries of the Church, would have pervaded all Christendom. It saved even the Catholic Church, reformed that and raised up in its ranks men loving righteousness.

It is pre-eminently positive and aggressive in this famous protest of Speyer. It offers truth to build upon. It laid down positive principles. It places before all men the word of God, as it is contained in the biblical works of the Old and New Testament, maintaining that it is the sure rule of all doctrine and of all life and can never fail us or deceive us.

On this it stands, securely and firmly over against human additions to the word as in the Romish Church, on the one side; over against all rationalism that would make the word of God a human book, on the other. It rests on the promise of the Lord with quiet confidence, "Heaven and earth may pass away, but my words shall never pass away." The present necessity

of Protestantism lies in the truth that is its own, in the saving doctrine it confesses. So long as the Roman Catholic Church does not admit these, so long is it vital that Protestantism be maintained and that it be active and aggressive.

Its past history declares this. The era in which Protestantism appears is significant to the believer in God's providence. The hand of the Lord fosters it that through it the world might be lifted up and the kingdom of Christ extended.

Protestantism comes when the world is to be doubled in extent. The discovery of America was as though communication with another planet had been established and its territory acquired. This new world is to be the outlet for man's energies, the home of a new humanity, the theater for new governments which could have been established in Europe only by blood after centuries of struggle. This land is kept in darkness until the Reformation. Its fairest portion was given to Protestant thought and life. Its government founds itself on the cardinal principles of the Reformation. It has remained Protestant to this day, and under that rule has become the nation of the world. A portion of this new world was occupied by the Catholics, as though to emphasize the necessity of protestantism for the prosperity and well-being of mankind. Macaulay, who certainly may not be charged with undue love to the dogmatic system of Protestantism, wrote: "The loveliest and most fertile provinces of Europe have, under her rule, been sunk into poverty, political servitude and in intellectual torpor, while Protestant countries, once proverbial for sterility and barbarism, have been turned by skill and industry into gardens, and can boast of a long list of heroes, statesmen, philosophers and poets. Whoever, knowing what Italy and Scotland naturally are, and what, four hundred years ago, they actually were, shall now compare the country round about Rome with the country round

about Edinburgh will be able to form some judgment as to the tendency of Papal Domination. The descent of Spain, once the first among monarchies, to the lowest depths of degradation; the elevation of Holland, in spite of many natural disadvantages, to a position such as no commonwealth so small has ever reached, teach the same lesson. Whoever passes in Germany from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant principality, in Switzerland from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant canton, in Ireland from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant county, finds that he has passed from a lower to a higher grade of civilization. On the other side of the Atlantic the same law prevails. The Protestants of the United States have left far behind them the Roman Catholics of Mexico, Peru and Brazil. The Roman Catholics of Lower Canada remain inert while the whole continent round them is in a ferment with Protestant activity and enterprise. The French have doubtless shown an energy and an intelligence which even when misdirected have justly entitled them to be called a great people. But this apparent exception, when examined, will be found to confirm the rule; for in no country that is called Roman Catholic has the Roman Catholic Church, during several generations, possessed so little authority as in France." "Exception," says Fisher, "may be taken to some particulars in the foregoing extract; but still the spectacle of the physical power, the industry and thrift, the intelligence, good government and average morality of the Protestant nations is in the highest degree significant and impressive."

"In our country," writes Freeman Clarke,\* "the cities most difficult to manage are those where the Catholic population is most numerous, for it is the principle of the Church to deny her members education, and they lack the intelligence which is so neces-

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\* "Christianity and Modern Thought," p. 45.

sary to the continuance of our free government. We do not make the charge wantonly, but simply point to Ireland, Italy and Spain as witnesses to the ignorance which she imposes upon her people." In Italy 73 per cent, in Spain 80, in Mexico 93 are illiterate. "Her theology teaches that education might lead them into heresy and so take them out of the true Church, and that ignorance *in* the Church is infinitely better than any amount of intellectual and moral culture *out* of it."

There can be no question that the doctrine of Protestantism of the right of private judgment is favorable to civil liberty. It is this habit of mind which is productive of personal independence and self-government without which political freedom is impossible. The results of these centuries declare that the free nations were first Protestant nations. With them constitutional freedom was first inaugurated. They have shown the highest self-restraint in political affairs and have grappled with intelligence the government by the people for the people. To name the freest nations of the world would be to name almost without exception the Protestant nations, and from them has the influence gone which now leavens Catholic lands, and inspires them with desire for constitutional freedom.

Towards this the desire to educate the people has been a great factor. Education was absolutely necessary as Protestantism seeks to put the Bible in every man's hand and train his faculties so that he may rightly judge its teachings.

The marvelous advances of knowledge in our modern times date from the Reformation and are most conspicuous in Protestant lands. "Modern science, with the great names of Bacon and Newton, Descartes and Leibnitz, Goethe and Humboldt, is the legitimate child of Protestant theology." It would be valuable to trace, had we the time, the fatal blight which under

the Romish Church has fallen upon the literature of Spain and Italy. Were we to give\* the list of the books which are in its *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, we would be astonished at the names and works there recorded, and discover how careful Rome is to give her people nothing which may enlarge their ideas, or permit them to consider the claims of Protestantism. On the other hand, wherever there is a Protestant country, there literature has flourished, there thought has been quickened and the people inspired with desire for knowledge. Let me quote from Döllinger,† the Old Catholic: "Meanwhile, speaking of Germany, the numerical proportion of the members of the different Churches is not the main point. Far more important is the relative proportion of powers and capabilities which can neither be counted nor weighed; and this leads to the observation that in Germany the overwhelming preponderance, or rather domination, in science and literature, is on the Protestant side. Our belles-lettres and nearly all our scientific literature, if we except some medical works, is almost entirely Protestant. In theology especially the disproportion is so great that the Protestant theology is at least six times richer than the Catholic in quantity and quality. The main cause of this is unquestionably to be found in the former condition of the Catholic schools and univer-

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\* On the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (1870) are the names of such historians as Hallam, Burnet, Hume, Gibbon, Mosheim, Sismondi, Bayle, Prideaux, Botta, Sarpi, Ranke; of such philosophical writers as Malebranche, Spinoza, Kant, Locke, Bacon, Descartes, Whately, Cousin; of publicists like Montesquieu and Gutius; of eminent poets as Ariosto and Milton. The writings of the Reformers, Protestant versions of the Bible, all Protestant catechisms, creeds, publications of synodical acts, of conferences and of disputations, liturgies; also dictionaries and lexicons—like the lexicon of Stephanus—unless they have been previously purged of heretical passages, are prohibited *en masse*.—Fisher, "*History of Reformation*."

† "Lectures on the Reunion of the Churches," p. 36.

sities; in the oppressive Latin influence fatal to intellectual life, which lay like a dead weight on the culture and education of Catholic countries, and the defective character of the schools entrusted to a foreign and essentially un-German order, which through its systematic neglect and contempt of the German language, its inadequate classical teaching and its formal method, failed to implant in its scholars either the capacity or the materials of thought, either style or power of expression, thirst for knowledge, or perseverance in seeking it."

We may rest upon this testimony and find necessity for Protestantism in the world to-day, wherever men value free government, education and knowledge. That we may rivet this more firmly, the final proof is found in the famous Encyclical Syllabus of Pius IX, December 8, 1864. Gladstone has clearly shown how incompatible its declarations are with constitutional freedom, if its principles would be enforced, whereby allegiance to the pope is held to be higher even in civil affairs than to the powers that be of the country. In that Syllabus the pope anathematizes, "that the Church has no power to employ force." He anathematizes, "that men emigrating to Catholic countries should be permitted the public exercise of their own several forms of worship." He anathematizes, "that the Roman Pontiff can and ought to reconcile and harmonize himself with progress, liberalism and modern civilization." Under these and similar premises, we perceive that civil and religious freedom would be impossible, and that had the Romish Church the power, it might be necessary once more, as at the Diet of Speyer, to protest against her injustice and tyranny.

Protestantism is better fitted to maintain the religion of Christ to-day, in this age of search, inquiry and discovery of new truth, because of its superior adaptability. It has been held significant of the divine character of Christ that His teachings are neither local

nor temporary. They do not belong merely to His country or age. The centuries have passed and He is as real and living to the men of our day as He was to the Jew who saw Him in the temple at Jerusalem, or by the sea of Galilee. He is for every age and all men. We weary not of the sky with its changing clouds, its alternations of day and night, the deep blue over which the soft sunlight glows, or the brilliant firmament with the gleam of the stars. The infinite is there, the same, yet ever new. Christ rises thus before men, ever the same, yet ever new. Near to every man, yet beyond every man, depths below his deepest thought, heights above the imagination's utmost flight.

So it is with the word of God. It has a local coloring. It is for all time. It remains the one book which has never been outgrown. Interpretations change as knowledge advances, but, it is seen, the book was true, the interpreters were mistaken.

Herein is Protestantism strong. It builds upon Christ, divine-human, the only mediator. Its material principle is Justification by Faith. Its formal principle, by which all doctrine and every confession must be tested anew from generation to generation, the word of God. It demands of every Christian, right relation to God in Christ. It rests upon doctrines that are wrought out of the word of God alone. In these are both its conservatism and progress, its adaptability, whereby it retains the truth of past ages, and yet may modify itself to harmony with knowledge gained through research and study of science and philosophy.

The Roman Catholic Church is not flexible to the same extent. It has a tremendous weight to carry in its traditions, in doctrines without basis in the word of God, but alas! to be held to the bitter end because of its doctrine of Infallibility which has sanctioned them. It cannot change or modify the imperfect utterances of

past centuries, and men, who love truth, either cannot remain, or only remain by suspension of judgment and reason, which is fatal to religious life and progress.

The necessity of Protestantism is manifest when we consider that through it largely since its existence the kingdom of Christ has been spread. There is forgetfulness on the part of many concerning the advance of Christianity since its beginning. At the commencement of the fifth century there were 15,000,000 of Christians. About that period papal domination begins. After five centuries, in the year 1000, there were 50,000,000 of Christians. In the year 1500 it is estimated there were 100,000,000 of Christians after ten centuries of Rome, 85,000,000 of an increase. Of these, 80,000,000 were Catholics, 20,000,000 adhered to the Greek Church.

A little more than three centuries and a half have elapsed since Protestantism began, and in 1887 the number of Christians in the world are 450,000,000, more than four times as many as in the fifteenth century. Of these the Roman Catholics have 210,000,000, the Protestants 150,000,000, the Greek Church 90,000,000. The Catholics have increased 130,000,000, but wherever they are their increase has not kept pace with the Protestant Church in this nineteenth century.\* The successful and abiding foreign mission work of the world is Protestant more than Catholic. Protestantism possesses the fairest of the nations, and she rules much more the millions of the earth. There are 180,000,000 under Roman Catholic rule, over 400,000,000 under Protestant. The three great branches of Christianity control half the population of the world, but the most powerful and progressive nations are Protestant—England, Germany and the United States.

Therefore, we say, that for the spread of Christ's

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\* Dorchester. "Religious Progress.

kingdom Protestantism is necessary. It has quickened even Rome. It has possessed the earth, and opened doors for the gospel into heathen lands. It lavishes treasures and men for their conversion. It assimilates the culture and knowledge of modern times and yet brings it into obedience to Christ, and, therefore, we say that naught would be more disastrous to the spread of Christ's kingdom than the decline of Protestantism and the rise of Catholicism as it is today.

Once more, Protestantism is the truest exponent of Christianity. It is not said that Rome does not possess fundamental doctrines and is not Christian. She has great truth and is a Church of Christ, but she combines this truth with dangerous errors. And so long as these errors are held a man cannot find satisfaction in her teachings and peace with God, save as he is inconsistent with her doctrine, whilst her errors unchecked would again bring the corruptions of the era preceding the Reformation.

That there are members who pass from the Catholic Church into the kingdom of heaven, God forbid that we should deny, but there is not there the higher truth, the deeper understanding of the word of God which Protestantism has. Well has it been said the Reformation, viewed in its most general character, was "the reaction of Christianity as gospel against Christianity as law." The Reformers could find no satisfaction or peace in penances, mortifications of flesh, scourgings and works of their own righteousness. Sin crushed them to the earth. There was no hope before an angry God. Then, to Luther came the word of truth which removed the darkness, brought him into personal relation with Christ the Saviour, and filled his soul with sweet peace, "the just shall live by faith." They were rescued from the yoke of tradition by the clear teachings of the word of God, and from the unbearable tyranny of Rome by the doctrine of the true

Church. We may not yield these precious truths which are the very heart of the gospel.

In vain they urge that Protestantism is skepticism. Protestantism, with its claim of the right of private judgment, does appear at first sight to put the interests of religion in peril. "But this right is, in another aspect, a duty; this freedom imposes a responsibility; and in relegating religion to the individual Protestantism does not call into question the validity of religious feelings and obligations. Protestantism fosters a spirit of inquiry; but a religion which, like Christianity, relies upon persuasion and appeals to the reason and the conscience, is in the long run profited by the full investigation of its claims and doctrines, whatever temporary evils may arise from the perverse or superficial application of the understanding to questions in the solution of which moral and religious feeling must have a part."\*

A close examination fails to disclose Protestant nations more skeptical than Catholic, but reveals a vigor and strength, a breadth of knowledge which ever triumph over the adversaries of faith.

There is no time to speak of other things. Three hundred and seventy years ago the monk of Wittenberg, Martin Luther, began the Reformation, when he protested by his theses against the abuses and corruptions of the Romish Church. The sound of the hammer which nailed the theses to the door of the Castle Church still reverberates throughout the world. The truths he proclaimed are as essential now as then. We may not yield them. It would be, to use the language of the protest of Speyer, "to condemn doctrines we maintain to be Christian. This would be to deny our Lord Jesus, to reject His holy word, and thus give Him just reason to deny us in turn before His Father, as He has threatened." Like them, "we neither consent

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\* Fisher, "History of Reformation."

nor adhere in any manner whatsoever to anything that is contrary to God, to His holy word, to our right conscience and the salvation of our souls."

Beautiful as Christian unity is, ardently to be desired, we must obey God rather than man, the truth must be cherished before aught else. Like Luther, we must say, "Away with all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, Peace, peace, and there is no peace". We may cease to be Protestants when in the Romish Church errors are banished and the truth of Christ as written in God's word accepted. Then and only then.

## GENERAL SYNOD SERMON

HAGERSTOWN, MD., JUNE 5, 1895

Seventy-five years ago, in this city and in this church, the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the United States had its birth. All the Synods of the Church in this country, with the exception of Ohio, were represented by delegates—the Synods being the Synod of Pennsylvania, the Synod of New York, the Synod of North Carolina, the Synod of Maryland and Virginia.

The Lutheran Church at this period was not a strong body, the estimate of its strength in 1820 being 170 ministers, 850 congregations (many of them mere handfuls) and 35,000 communicants. It was surrounded by other bodies, strong and influential, whilst its own power was weakened because of its language, and, to some extent, by its religious customs, which differed from its dominant religious neighbors. This, together with the prevalent skepticism at the close of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century, had caused the Lutheran Church to decline in its fidelity to its confession of faith. There had also developed a Socinian tendency in the churches of the New York Synod. It was felt that the laxness in doctrine, the preponderating influence of other religious bodies, the overtures for union from the Reformed and Episcopal Churches, threatened the very existence of the Lutheran Church in America, unless its scattered bodies could be drawn into closer union, and assert their faith in clearer and more unmistakable fashion.

This conviction caused members of the Pennsylvania Synod, in session at Harrisburg, in 1818, to adopt measures looking toward a general body, and to solicit

co-operation on the part of the other Synods. At the next meeting of the Pennsylvania Synod, in Baltimore, 1819, there was, in answer to its call, but one delegate from other Synods, Rev. Gottlieb Shober, from the North Carolina Synod. There was also a communication from Pastor Quitman, favoring a more intimate union of the Synods. A committee was appointed, including Rev. Gottlieb Shober, to examine the matter, and outline a plan as early as possible. The report of the committee was accepted and adopted, and was ordered to be submitted to the different Synods, with the understanding that if three-fourths of the Synods adopted it, "at least in spirit and essentials," the President of the Synod, Rev. George Schmucker, D.D., was authorized to call the meeting at such time and place as he should determine, in order to frame a constitution and complete the organization. This convention met in Hagerstown, Md., October, 1820, and agreed upon a constitution, substantially the same as the plan proposed by the Pennsylvania Synod. The constitution was then returned to the several Synods for ratification, and the chairman, J. D. Kurtz, D.D., was authorized to call the first meeting of the Synod under the constitution, at Frederick, Md., October, 1821, provided it was ratified by three-fourths of the Synods.

The men who composed this first convention were men worthy, by their scholarship, devotion to the Church, wisdom and piety, to inaugurate this momentous movement, whose far-reaching consequences they themselves imperfectly realized, some of which have developed themselves in the three-quarters of a century across which we look back, some of which are yet to be unfolded in the centuries to come.

The General Synod then formed has not been permitted to realize the union contemplated, by which "the members of the Lutheran Church in the United States of North America were to be brought to walk in the

spirit of love and concord, under one rule of faith," but it has been a mighty factor in the development of the Church toward a strong, consistent and essential Lutheran character, both in doctrine and worship. It has stimulated even the Lutheran bodies opposed to it, and has, in various directions, been a model to them. It has apprehended, more and more clearly, the treasures of Lutheran doctrine and life, ever growing into surer consciousness of them, whilst it has kept itself upon the Augsburg Confession, best adapted to meet the issues of this land and era, steadily declining to be bound confessionally by more than this. With all this, it has maintained a high ideal of piety, conscious that that doctrine is alone powerful that sways the heart, leads to personal life with God, and is known by the activity manifested in the benevolent and mission works of the Church.

It has also sought to maintain a friendly relation with those not of its own name, without sacrificing its own conception of the truth, which it firmly believes represents the truth of God in accordance with the Scriptures more nearly than the doctrines proclaimed by others, a truth for which the Lutheran Church is set, for which it is responsible, without which the whole religious world would be poorer in the blessed knowledge of God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

The time in which the General Synod was founded was one of laxity in doctrinal fidelity, and, in this respect, apparently one not favorable to the union of the congregations and pastors, since this would, naturally, affect the doctrinal purity of the foundation. On the other hand, it made the attempt at union all the more necessary, as it would tend to curb individualism, and enforce a church consciousness favorable to a hearty acceptance of the truth for which the Lutheran Church is set. Nevertheless, it should be said that in the proposed plan, which eventually be-

came the basis of union, it was expressly stipulated that "the General Synod, however, has no power to make, or to demand any alteration whatever in the doctrines hitherto received by us." Nominally, at least, the churches were faithful to the Confession of the Lutheran Church.

The life of the Church evidently demanded this formation of the General Synod. It was made at a crisis period in the history of the Church in this country. It was made in humble faith, and in reliance upon "God, our Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit in the word of God." It at once began to outline a vigorous, systematic and intelligent course of action, which was absolutely necessary to the great and increasing future which we have inherited, a course of action which for highest efficiency demanded a united Church.

Committees were appointed to form a plan for a seminary of education, to form a plan for a missionary institute, to form a plan in aid to poor ministers and ministers' widows and orphans. Thus a new impetus was given to the educational, benevolent and missionary activities, which are absolutely essential to the development and spiritual power of the Church.

Though, on account of complications arising out of the peculiar conditions of its congregations, and oppositions of many of its ministers, the Pennsylvania Synod withdrew, yet the weakened General Synod went on steadily with its work, and established the Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa., where should be taught "in the German and English languages the fundamental doctrines of the sacred Scriptures, as contained in the Augsburg Confession." What the importance of this seminary has been to the Church in this country is beyond estimation. For many years it was the principal training school for ministers of the Church.

It may be said that it is the mother of many like institutions, and it has been a mighty power in the development of Lutheran consciousness and faith.

There are those who talk disparagingly of those fathers, because they wavered at times in their fidelity to the doctrine. Their lives fell in a trying age. Their Church was a feeble folk. The world about them was ignorant of Lutheran life, thought and spirit. Against the prejudices they encountered sturdy souls well grounded in the faith could present an unmoved front, but weaker ones sought compromises. Increasing knowledge of our Church, resort on the part of others to our treasure-houses, have brought honor, and made it easy for many who might have been cowards in the hour of trial to vaunt their Lutheranism.

We have no time to trace the checkered fortunes of the General Synod, but we can say that it has been the most potent factor in the development of the Lutheran Church in this country.

These years have developed within the General Synod an increasing appreciation and fidelity to Lutheran doctrine, life and worship, whilst, at the same time, there has been a wise apprehension of the truth, which has avoided narrowness of construction and that Lutheranism which cultivates fidelity to the past by stifling the present.

It has seemed wise to us to take these words of the Lord as the basis of the Synodical sermon:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”

Jesus is considered by some a radical, destroying mercilessly the past. He here puts Himself forward as a conservative of the conservatives. He fulfills with reverence the past. He does not destroy.

These words of Christ are, therefore, rich in meaning for all the ages, and are to be observed by all those who would truly move in God's ways.

A momentous change is about to pass over the religious expression of faith. He has come whom all the past teachings and rights and ceremonies foreshadowed. He is the fullness of that which was in part. All that was in it was precious to Him. How could it be otherwise? The religion of Judaism was the work of God, the Word, not as yet incarnate, as the religion of Christianity was the work of God, the Word incarnate in Jesus. He manifested His truth then through lawgivers and prophets. He manifested His truth at last in Himself, Christ Jesus, Son of man and Son of God. He could not stultify Himself by destroying the old to make place for the new.

The Old and New Testaments are but one scheme, and not two. The one is preparation, the other is completion. Through the one the world is made ready that the other may be understood and received. The Old Testament in its rites and ceremonies foreshadows that which He shall do and be. The Passover typifies Him, the true Passover. The mediatorial types, in tabernacle and priesthood, the writer of Hebrews cogently shows, are fulfilled in Christ, the High Priest, who enters, not without the shedding of blood, into the Holy of Holies, the very presence of God, where He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

His teachings, whether His own or those developed by the apostles, are rooted in the Old Testament. Justification by faith and atonement may be taken as examples of those developed by the apostles. The two covenants are from the same blessed God. He founds them on the same eternal truths, and He cannot destroy the one to honor the other.

He comes to fulfill. The old is, indeed, in one sense, to pass away; but how? By being caught up into the higher, as the child's life passes away by being caught up into the richer, stronger, profounder life of manhood; as this weak, burdened, earthly life passes away by being caught up into the glorious free

heavenly life hereafter. The child is in the man, the earthly life in the heavenly life.

How then does He fulfill? By unfolding the deeper meanings of the teachings and rites of the Old Testament, of its Sabbath, purifications, sacrifices, worship, righteousness, faith. The form changes, but the principle remains. Righteousness is unfolded in the Sermon on the Mount. The righteousness and the Commandments are not another righteousness or other Commandments. The least Commandment is precious to Him. He does not abrogate the Commandments. He discloses the spiritual conceptions that are within them, the priceless jewels of truth, which flame and burn in the setting of these Commandments. Thou shalt not kill remains as obligatory as ever, but He discloses that the heart of it is not to give heart-room to the angry, vindictive and murderous thought. He truly keeps the command who loves his neighbor and seeks his well being. Righteousness becomes spiritual and inward. True religion is heart religion. Whoever has it will express it right along the line of these old Commandments.

He, by life and death, gives fullness, richness and tenderness of conception to God as Father, wins them to God by His love, grants them His Holy Spirit, makes possible by His sacrifice the righteousness of faith, "whereby God can be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." But when men are thus changed, then along the line of these Commandments in reverent love they please God the Father, for the children of the kingdom can show or develop their inner good along the line of the Commandments in reverent love.

It is in this way that the Saviour teaches us our relation to the past and our attitude to the present. If the past of the Old Testament was from Him, and could not be destroyed, but must be fulfilled, then how much more essential must be the past as imbedded

in the New Testament and developed in the Church in accordance with the Scriptures, be precious to Him, not to be destroyed, but to be fulfilled constantly by His followers?

That is no true Christianity which breaks with and scorns the past. The men who despise the work of the Church, though they profess to fall back on the New Testament in its simplicity for their guide, do but cast contempt on all the workings of Christ through the Holy Spirit in the Church, and, whilst professing themselves to be wise, do but confess that they are fools.

In Christ's time there were such, the Sadducees, who, in the pride of worldly wisdom, sought to deny the truths of God's word. He condemned them sternly, and publicly silenced them when they sought to confuse Him with a difficulty to them in the resurrection. On the other hand, Christ did not hesitate as openly to condemn the Pharisees, those who had concealed the word of God under a load of traditions and explanations that did not explain.

Through this word and example of Christ, do we not see our course marked out? There is a past that has authority. Christ is a historical Christ, springing out of a historical and developing religion, Judaism. All the past wrought that it might prepare for Christ, and since Christ has come, He is moving through the centuries, unfolding His truth in larger measure, in and by and through His Church. It is matchless folly to discard the Church of all the ages, and cry, "The New Testament alone. Give me a Bible Christianity. Away with creeds and doctrines." The true Bible Christianity is that Christianity which has been developed in and through the Church; which is, indeed, to be verified by its agreement with the Scriptures, but which, without the stress and struggle of the Church seeking to apprehend the Master's teaching, could not be known either in the doctrine or the larger Christ.

It may, indeed, be urged that dogmas "are more or less characterized by relativity and transitoriness, that as they originated in the midst of great movements, in particular periods, in various ways they exhibited the traces of the peculiar theological culture, the peculiar needs and defects of the times." Allowing for this they do contain the truth, and the fundamental conceptions of the Church; and alone from a true understanding of the Old can the Church go forward to express its conceptions in fresh forms and richer knowledge.

The old doctrines and creeds, brought out of the Scriptures by godly men, are as truly the product of the blood drops of the minds and souls of Christians as this land is of the blood drops of the patriot heroes. They were men of extraordinary intellect, of deeper research in some religious lines than men of to-day, of profoundest piety, and they deserve both for themselves and their teachings the profoundest respect. Truth is there. It may not have been in some places fully apprehended, and, therefore, only partially expressed, but with these allowances their work is eternal.

If we ask the question what doctrines that express to us powerfully and with some measure of completeness the glory of God, the Father, the Son, the Spirit, are the developments of this boasted nineteenth century, what answer can we give? The most vital, most precious doctrines of the Church were wrought out in the early centuries; whilst there is another effervescence in the sixteenth century, the period of the Reformation. That which our century has contributed has been the historical way of considering Jesus, and giving Him to us in lifelike portraiture, but it has not contributed either a saying or a fundamental doctrine.

Two principles must, therefore, guide us:

First. A profound study and reverence for the old

which is drawn out of the word of God. Professor Freeman sagely says, "There is no cleft between ancient and modern life." "In the story of man's existence

"There is no far or near,  
There is neither soon nor late.'"

It is one unbroken and still unfinished web of interlaced cause and effect, influence and reaction. Therefore are we urged to the study of history, that record of men's efforts to master the problems of social and political life. If this be true in history, how much more in the Church.

Novelty is, indeed, attractive. It has all the glamor of first impressions. A land which we first see on a sunshiny day has all its charms set forth in highest liveliness. The eye, enraptured, wanders rejoicing over its beauty until it rests on the distant hills, where they fade away into the stainless blue of the soft atmosphere. We will need to modify that impression. Life there may reveal an ague-breeding or pestilential air. Dry statistics may give us points about climate, health, mortality, which may cause us to pitch our tents again on the old home ground. The boasted new of the day is often nothing but the forgotten graveyard of the past, that has been cleaned up and artificially garnished to hide its hideousness from those whom it would betray to death.

The old can be precious and lifegiving alone as it is justly apprehended. Jesus, seeing what was in the old, made it lifegiving, the foundation of all progress. Modern criticism may sneer at the Old Testament. The Old Testament was to Him the sword of God, by which He overcame the devil; it was the storehouse from whence He learned and taught how Christ ought to suffer and then enter into His glory.

To be among the old is not to know it. To have the words by heart is not to understand them. Even

to live among things is not to understand them. The dwellers in Alpine scenery place their windows in such fashion that they may view their cabbages and not the glorious prospect of stainless snow and mountain crags in all their awful loveliness.

There is such a thing as formal orthodoxy, when doctrines which are true are held, but the truth is not active. Men are content to hold the form of words, but are dead to the spirit thereof. Congregations and bodies are formed whose symbols and dogmas are correct, but whose Christian life is a minimum. Then follows deadness of religious life, for which orthodoxy is cursed, though the curse rightly belongs to its slothful adherents. Then reaction sets in. The conscientious seek other foundations, the evil-disposed attack the Church with bitter gibes. It is despised and shorn of power.

Such is the course of history, as it has been only too sadly shown in our own Church and in England. Power has come back to them because they truly returned to the old truths, grasped them livingly and applied them in living fashion to the wants of their age. Pharisaism was very orthodox in its way in Christ's time and rather read Him out of the Church, but Christ, despite their persecution, did not give up the old, but showed forth its regal life, tearing away the bandages of their traditions, which, like mummy bands, swathed the living truth and caused men to think her dead.

We need the old—we need to study it profoundly; but to know the old we must have the spirit of Christ. He can only comprehend the teachings of our creed who, whilst he intellectually grasps its doctrines, comes to them in his religious experience as Luther did, a poor sinner, justified by faith, who knew Christ as his Saviour and lived in his precious companionship. The doctrines shall be soul-satisfying to the reverent searcher guided by the Holy Spirit. We shall find

in them the sure and lasting foundations built on God's word, through God's Spirit.

Second. Fulfillment means the unfolding of the old. Christ was progress. There was newness of thought and life under Him. He has so made man that progress is essential to his joy and strength. There is despair to men where there is no outlook. We must grow, or die while we live. Such is the law of life everywhere in this world, and so it is in the Church. There are creeds of other faiths that are worn out. We look curiously at them, but do not retain them. They are exhausted, as the gold mine out of which long ago the treasure was dug. The old shafts are curiosities, but no more. Christianity is divine, because, whilst ever old, it is ever new. The old Bible is divine, and it ever yields new treasures. Christ is divine, and who has ever exhausted Him? Our creed, to be divine, must have ever the possibility of the new as well as the old; it must have capacity for development and adaptation to the wants of the age. But ever out from the old that abides in the Scripture we must move to the new. The new must harmonize with the old.

The past must not so tyrannize over the present as to exclude from it independent investigation. There is a traditionalism in doctrine that is like Pharisaism in the Mosaic law. Each age must set forth the ever-abiding truths in its own way. Each nation must restate its faith, not by changing it, but by grasping it lovingly; just as it is not the truth about Christ that is salvation, but Christ Himself, apprehended and made precious through faith to each one. We must welcome heartily the developing new. We need it to keep us from stagnation.

The new is an evidence of thought, and, as such, a gain. Combine with it the thoughtful faith that penetrates into the depths of the old, and we shall hold the truths of our Confession in deed as well as in ap-

pearance. We shall possess them and they shall possess us.

"A truth that costs no thought yields no power. Religion has more to fear from unthinking acceptance than from hostile criticism. When faith is too familiar to be thoughtful, it lives by help of the accidents, rather than through possession of the essentials of truth. There are men who believe more strongly in miracles than in God. Were there no miracles, there would be for them no God; for them law only exists by virtue of its violations. But the great miracle is the absence of miracles. It is the universal order that most speaks to us of a universal will, so reasonable in its action as to be everywhere capable of rational interpretation. So we need to become less familiar with the accidents of our faith, that we may the better comprehend its permanent facts, its fundamental and eternal truths. We need to see them out of the setting of custom and commonplace, standing out, as it were, sharp against the background of eternity. To changed minds, things have changed meanings. Day by day the Italian goatherd may drive his flocks across the old Campagna and rest under the shadow of some mighty aqueduct, or on the base of some fallen column, without ever asking whence they come or what they signify; or the Roman monk may sing his matin or his vesper hymn within hearing of the ancient Forum or majestic Coliseum, and catch only the echoes of his own song; hear no voice speaking out of a vanished and glorious past. But let a man laden with the treasures of ancient culture cross the Campagna and stand among the ruins of the once Eternal City, and his imagination is thronged with the voices of long silent orators, the songs of long dead poets, visions of the greatest empire that ever aspired to control the destinies of men and nations. Day by day the Arab merchant or the Jewish trader may cross the brow of Olivet, see the sun gleam on the

minarets of Jerusalem, and yet only ask, 'What is new in the bazaars?' or 'What goods for sale?' 'What persons likely to buy?' But let a man fresh from the Christian West, immersed in its deepest faith, cross for the first time the same hill, and, as the Holy City breaks upon his view, what thoughts, what visions possess him! Is this the city, loved of God, where David sang, where Isaiah preached, where Jehovah reigned? And Bethany, where art thou, the sweet place where my Master tasted one blest hour of human love, ere He entered the valley of the shadow of death? And Gethsemane, may I visit thee and see where His sweat fell in great drops to the ground? The scene is to him transfigured; the land is made holy by the light under which it lies; the history which it once beheld suffuses its face with imperishable glory.

"So the facts of our religion must be ever and anon illumined, if they are to be the vehicles of grace and symbols of the light of God."

Let us not be afraid, then, of progress on the basis of the old. If we thoroughly study the old, so that we know it, before we attempt to condemn it; if we look for progress that fulfills the old; if we demand harmony of old and new, we need have no fear of the future of the Church. In it will be the truth of God, satisfying this and future generations of men.

It was with these principles that Luther began the Reformation. He honored the old and retained that which did not conflict with the Scriptures. The Reformed iconoclasts rejected it where it was not found in the Scriptures, and their descendants are now painfully trying to reinstate what, in their rashness, those cast away. From the old Luther went forth to the new, which, therefore, has endured.

Let us, from such principles, consider our Church on this occasion. There are two extreme tendencies; the one that would cling to the past in its anxiety not

to destroy, watchful of the minutiae of doctrine and practice; the other that would scorn the past, that has no use for the sixteenth century and the doctrines and usages of the past, seeking to fulfill, but not over-careful not to destroy. There is a word that is often used that shows this—"American Lutheran." The first tendency lays all the emphasis on Lutheran, and forgets that this land of America must express Lutheranism and its doctrines according to its own needs and the questions of the age; that a religion which has no flexibility, no adaptability, is a losing faith. The faith that has no development is preparing its own grave, for it is a dying body. The second lays the emphasis on the word "American," forgetful of Lutheran in its distinctive doctrines and peculiarities, in the anxiety to accommodate itself to the prevalent sentiment of the American community, and thus forfeits its right to bear its name, and can have no development, because it is a branch severed from the stem which gave it life.

The General Synod, rightly apprehended, stands for the truth, which includes both. It does not destroy, but, in large development, it would fulfill. The past is precious, but the past must be transmuted into the living present, in which every doctrine of our beloved Church is understood with reference to present life, and fulfilled by being used in the unfolding of Christ to the believer and sinner.

This appears to be the reason why it so stoutly holds to the Augsburg Confession, but has not, whilst it accords high honor to the Formula of Concord, made it the basis of confession. It will study and apply that livingly to the Augustana, but it will not bind itself to a body of theology whose tendency is to narrow and limit the life which justly belongs to her, and which must have liberty to develop, if it is to accomplish the God-given work of the Lutheran Church.

Sometimes, no doubt, many, weary of the conten-

tions concerning doctrines, impatiently cry, "We are tired of strife. The doctrines of salvation are simple. I will hold forth Christ, the Saviour, simply; that is all men need. These wordy battles I hand over to the contentious, who, in their strife, show little of godliness. I will be practical." But, as Dale well says, "More than once in the history of the Church it has been seen that a pietism, lofty as well as devout in its origin, by disparaging intellectual activity in relation to faith, has encouraged feeble religious sentimentalism, has been fatal to masculine robustness of Christian character, has made Christian men ineffective in the practical duties of the Christian calling, and has enfeebled and impoverished their whole spiritual life."

The good fight of faith is our lot. It includes the intellect as well as the heart. Christianity deals with the whole man, body, soul and spirit. We cannot escape these contentions, for the true expression of a doctrine is vital, and is worth fighting for as much as an honest administration of a great city or the overthrow of a great vice, and even more; only let us see to it that we contend for the faith in charity and justice to our opponents.

Neither must it be overlooked that every true Christian faith is a system. Accepting its cardinal principles to be at peace, we must move in step with the development of these principles. Calvinism finds itself on the Divine Sovereignty, and no man can be contented in Calvinism who does not heartily accept this doctrine and follow out resolutely its conclusions. He may get along with it by a series of skillfully adjusted intellectual compromises, but he is not a tower of strength as a Calvinist.

The Lutheran has a central principle, "Justification by Faith." It has come to be the possession of the Lutheran Church, because its founder, Martin Luther, under the overwhelming consciousness of sin, fought

his way upward to God through Christ Jesus, until his storm-tossed soul, justified by faith in Christ, entered the haven of God's peace. He came from the human side, just as Calvin came from the divine with his thought of the sovereignty of God. And that doctrine colors all the thought of our Confession. "The other doctrines are not developed out of this doctrine, but they are stated so as to harmonize with this doctrine." In a very vigorous article by Dr. Richard, this is strongly set forth. "The doctrines of man, of God, of the Trinity, of the person and work of Christ, of regeneration, of sanctification, of the means of grace, of good works, of the Church, all these are shaped both in their formal statement and in their practical use, by the doctrine of justification by faith."

Our body of doctrine, as set forth in the Augsburg Confession, is a consistent whole. And it has not been, therefore, a mere desire of orthodoxy that has caused the defenders of the Church to contend for a faithful, unqualified acceptance of the Augsburg Confession, but the consciousness that it is vital to her very existence, and absolutely necessitated by the divine value of the truth the Church confesses.

It is remarkable that the doctrine of the means of grace, specially in the Lord's Supper, has ever been the most difficult one to accept. It is not to be wondered at, since the mysterious, supernatural impartation of the body and blood of Christ with the bread and wine is beyond our reason. The Lutheran Church here has been compelled to maintain her doctrine against a majority of Protestants of other names, who, for the most part, had robbed the sacrament of all its divine content, and reduced it to a mere human ordinance. It is not to be wondered at that many should have been bewildered, and felt as though in the Confession of the Lutheran truth there was weakness, and that it was akin to the sacramentalism of the Roman Catholic Church. But the defenders of the

Confession have instinctively felt that it was fundamental, wrought out of the truth, a truth needed for our own practical edification, a truth based on a consistent apprehension of the doctrine of Justification by Faith.

It is remarkable that this intuition of the Reformers has received abundant justification by the results of the centuries. Says Fairbairn, in "The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Theology," in speaking of the controversies that arose among the Lutherans themselves as to the Redeemer's presence in the Lord's Supper, and the question of the *communicatio idiomatum*, and the apparent bitterness and fruitlessness thereof: "Things are not always as they seem. The question represents the great contribution of the Lutheran Church to constructive theology. The Incarnation has been its problem as it has been the problem of no other Church, not even of the ancient Greek. In the nineteenth century, as in the sixteenth, it has travailed at a scientific Christology, though from the opposite end of the scale. It labored then by endeavoring to make the manhood capable of receiving the Deity; but now, by reversing the process, at making the Deity capable of losing itself, though only anew and more gloriously to find itself in the manhood. In all the Kenotic theories there are exaggerations and suppressions and mysteries that grow more mysterious by being looked at; but one thing they have done—they have made men to see that the Incarnation is the symbol at once of the highest mystery and the highest truth. It holds the key to the problem of the relation of God to man; it is that problem summarized, recapitulated, impersonated. The philosophers who have most strenuously handled and most nearly solved the problem, have been sons of the land and the Church of Luther, and the theologians of other lands through the Incarnation to vivify theology and relate it to modern knowledge, are only paying uncon-

scious but deserving homage to the faith and insight of the Reformer and his sons."

In the development of the General Synod, even great and good men have not been absolutely true to the standards of the Church. But the General Synod has never recorded itself against the Confession. Nor are we to judge men hardly in a transitional period. Theirs was a time of storm and stress. They led the way. They did good service, and if their vision was not as clear as it should have been, yet they saw and made it easier for those who followed to see more clearly the treasures of the Church.

Perhaps one of the most trying ordeals has been the subject of worship. Unfortunately the Lutheran Church has never had a form of worship adopted by all. The petty kingdoms, principalities and free cities of the sixteenth century militated against uniformity of worship. Whilst there was a substantial agreement in the form of worship, there were divergencies. Transferred to this country amid puritanical surroundings and uncongenial atmosphere, the liturgical life pined away. The return to the original forms, especially when the Lutheran Church has permitted liberty in the use of forms, has been a momentous matter. Yet the General Synod has striven to this end, and her hymn books witness to the fact that she is Lutheran in worship.

In all this matter we must wait with patience for the final result. Moderation must be the watchword on both sides. "The kingdom of God is not meat nor drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." The appeal must be to the Lutheran life of our people. If our service be a true historical outcome of the religious thought of the Church, then, when we rightly apprehend such a service, as truly setting forth the inner life. Nor must it be overlooked that any form which is unhistorical, and does not express the truth of our faith, is a weakness, and will

eventually be disastrous to the growth of the Church, if retained.

Let it not be forgotten whilst Lutheranism rests on the individual judgment, places each man face to face with God, makes every man a priest unto God, it does not depart from the vivid conception of the solidarity of the Church. It has ever been conservative. In the state it inculcates obedience to lawful rulers, in the Church it recognizes that we are one body. As in the state the citizen yields his rights and sacrifices for the good of the community, so in the Church the individual or congregation must not merely consider what is pleasant or agreeable to him, but, where it is not a matter of conscience, yield individual preference for the good of the whole. To do otherwise is to simply weaken the activity and strength of the Church at large, bring in elements of discord, instigate fruitless contentions, to the destruction of much good.

There can be no question that if the Lutherans of the General Synod had but one mode of worship, based upon her doctrines, the outcome of life, so that wherever one of her members entered a church of his body the worship would give him the sense that he was at home with brethren, a worship that fitly expressed the life and doctrines of his Church, it would be a vast gain in holding our members faithful to their own Church. Neither can it be doubted that if we were to have one form of worship in all the Lutheran churches of the land, it would be a bond of union, mighty and powerful, helpful in the maintenance of our beloved Church, and in the furtherance of her God-given mission.

As we look back over the past and mark what has been accomplished in these seventy-five years, a throb of gratitude must move every heart. Wonderful has been the growth! Then the whole Lutheran Church of this land numbered 170 ministers, 850 congregations, 35,000 communicants; now the General Synod

alone numbers 1127 ministers, 1505 congregations, 180,000 communicants; the whole Lutheran Church, 5554 ministers, 9376 congregations, 1,330,442 communicants. If the foundations were laid by worthy men, the sons of the General Synod that are here to-day are as richly cultivated, as profound in scholarship, as fervent in piety, as abounding in good works; whilst I cannot but feel that in responsiveness to the issues of their age, in sympathy with every godly movement, they exceed the fathers in the exhibition of such qualities to their own age.

As the reports of the various Boards will be read, you will receive tangible evidences of the vigor of the life that is in the General Synod. India and Africa will send their voices of grateful love to us for our noble men and women who carry to them the Lord Christ, who are supported by the prayers and offerings of our people. Churches all over this land, some born in a day, will, trumpet-tongued, declare that since the Lutheran Church accepts her divine mission, God is crowning her labors with rich and even unmerited returns. Side by side with the men of the Church toil the women, abundant in labors, patient in trial, devout in spirit. The young people are working in the ranks as never before, their very work arousing deeper devotion to our noble Church, their mother in the faith.

The years show a growing liberality on the part of the membership, not merely in money, but in that greater liberality, the offering of themselves, and in the gifts of their sons and daughters for the Master's work. Our colleges and seminaries have an increasing host for the home and foreign fields, whilst the young women of the Church are being enrolled as deaconesses, ready for every call for duty and compassionate love.

Our gain in power has kept pace with our realization of and fidelity to our Lutheran treasures. As we have sought to fulfill, and not to destroy, the bless-

ing of the Lord has crowned our labors. We are heirs of great names, living ideas and a noble creed. But

"Those who on glorious ancestry enlarge  
Produce their debt instead of their discharge."

Immense responsibilities attach to us that we faithfully make known what God has entrusted to us.

Rich in heroes of the faith, men like Luther, whose faith, words and deeds changed the world, inaugurating a new era, it is ours to be heroic in the faith. Rich in precious doctrines, whose truths are more than ever needed by the world, it is ours faithfully to proclaim them to the waiting peoples. Rich in the preaching of the gospel wherein, with the affectionate confidence of children in a father, the ministers of our beloved Church have proclaimed the love of God in Christ Jesus, it is ours, more than ever, to preach the word of God with the confidence of childlike faith, with the conviction that through the word we shall prevail, and with the joy that rings in the hymns and words of the fathers. Rich in a faith that lovingly lays hold on the Fatherhood of God, as children justified by faith in Christ, it is ours to show forth that faith unto a world alienated from God, lost and despairing through sin, until they receive Christ, and become sons of God, to live henceforth according to the purpose of God, growing in holiness and likeness to Christ. Rich, indeed, but responsible, indeed, let us be worthy of the trust.

Gathered as we are in session, whose decisions, if wise, may have large issues for good, or, if unwise, large issues for evil, it becomes us reverently to gather in the spirit of the Lord Jesus. He is in His Church, a living presence, who knows all that passes and will pass here, a potential presence in and through His Church. He is ready to guide, hallow and control our actions, and inspire the thoughts and desires out

of which right actions come. Let us live and act in that presence. Let us be men "in whose wisdom there is no haste, in whose sympathy there is no harshness, in whose judgments there is no bitterness, whose honor is careless of popularity," whose great object is to further the truth, and the kingdom of Christ, through our beloved Church.

Let us strive to be faithful to the old, which God wrought by the mighty dead, and seek to destroy naught thereof; but, like the Master, let us fulfill it by seeking its inner meaning, unfolding and enlarging it to meet the wants of our day and our nation.

## THE LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Lutheran Church is an historic Church. It has a great past. A greater present demonstrates the vitality of its religious life. To a large portion of our American Christians its history, its numbers, its strength, its resources, its theology, its temper and spirit are known in a superficial way, because they are, for the most part, not English and are concealed in other tongues and nationalities. Study is required, sympathy that rises above national customs and judgments to appreciate the marvelous contributions the Lutheran Church has made toward Christianity.

When we say that the Lutheran Church numbers 2,225,000 communicants in the United States, representing 10,000,000 possibly of our population, then we begin to realize what a potent factor the Lutheran Church is in these United States to the maintenance and advancement of Christianity. Its life, furthermore, is intense and aggressive, its ratio of increase in late years having been among the greatest of all Protestant bodies. It must be reckoned one of the great religious forces of our republic.

Nor should it be overlooked that the Lutheran Church ranks third in numbers of the Christian bodies of the world. The Roman Catholic, the Greek Church, then the Lutheran Church, representing nearly 60,000,000 of Christians, nearly as large as the other Protestant bodies combined, the dominant body of Germany, almost exclusively the religion of Denmark, Sweden and Norway, with millions in other lands. It is an historic Church, but it is more, a living Church.

The subject assigned is a great one, "The contributions of the Lutherans to the cause of Christianity," for to the Lutherans belongs the honor of originating the Protestant Church. All that vast and noble presen-

tation of Christianity called Protestantism has its roots in Luther, the founder of the Lutheran Church, in which Church his characteristic teachings are preserved.

Luther is, indeed, one of those colossal men whom all the world claims. A man whose personality, genius and works influence all time and create new epochs. Three men after the apostles were creative in the highest sense and influenced the Church's doctrinal development and permanent progress for all time—Athanasius, Augustine, Luther. Athanasius contended for the doctrine of the Three in One, for he saw that only where the true knowledge of God is there is life and salvation. Augustine's great task was to show what God is and what life and salvation the soul requires. Luther's work was to show how life and salvation are made certain to men by the certainty of the forgiveness of sins to those who believe in Jesus Christ.

We do not mean to say that there were not other men that had great conceptions of religious truth, nor that there were not many who did not live by faith. There were those in every century, but it was not given them to disclose the primal truths of religion, which once disclosed became the property of all and enter into every development of the religious doctrine and life, either by acceptance or rejection. It is the province of these great religious thinkers to make clear and distinct those basal truths which others had groped after and held partially, but could never express with certainty.

All these great men were dependent upon others. They needed all the labors and thoughts of those who preceded them. They had not been possible without these. But in them that which generations had struggled with came into clear expression and was made plain. Beautifully says one, speaking of Augustine: "A great, epoch-making man is like a stream; the smaller brooks, which have their origin, perhaps,

farther off in the country, lose themselves in it, having fed it, but without changing the course of the current. Not only Victorinus, but ultimately also Ambrose himself, Optatus, Cyprian and Tertullian were lost to view in Augustine; but they made him the proud stream in whose waters the banks are mirrored, on whose bosom the ships sail, and which fertilizes and passes through a whole region of the world."

To Luther was given the capacity to grasp and understand the thoughts of others, appropriating the true and eliminating the false. There stands in the city of Worms a colossal monumental group, erected by thoughtful nineteenth century men, men who had deeply pondered the lessons of the past. Luther, with the Bible in his hand, is the central figure. Waldo of France, Wiclif of England, Huss of Bohemia, Savonarola of Italy, are grouped at his feet. In symbol it teaches that throughout all Europe there was unrest, struggling for truth, that Luther had not been possible without them, but also that Luther, with his profound and comprehensive nature, his deep German heart, could grasp all the truths they taught. Each of the four had stood for a great truth; Waldo for the right of the laity as priests before God; Wiclif for the supremacy of Scripture; Huss for the majesty of conscience; Savonarola for the purification of priestly and political life. Luther combined all these truths, whilst his deeper apprehension of Christ and of the saving relation to Him by faith, his profound understanding of God's word, enabled him to place them upon the foundation Christ Jesus and His word, which abides forever.

To understand Luther aright, one must consider the conditions of the Church in his time. The Roman Catholic Church had subjected all western Christendom to its sway. The pope, the vicar of Christ, was its head, divinely established, the mouthpiece of that Church to which alone Christ had given the grace that

saves. It claimed that as the spiritual outweighs in importance the earthly and temporal, the claims and authority of the Church were superior to the state. It was a wonder of organization. Its priests and monks and nuns were celibate, cut off from ties of home, bound to their orders and superiors, who, in turn, were controlled by the pope.

No one could expect salvation who was not a member of its communion, who did not participate in its sacraments, confess to its priests and obey its commands. If any dissented from its teachings, it could not only excommunicate them and declare them outcast, even to friends and home, but punish them and compel the civil authorities to torture them and put them to death. Even death did not free the soul from its power. By the doctrine of purgatory it followed them into the other world and claimed even to open and shut the doors of heaven itself.

It closed the Bible to the layman, and over against its authority elevated tradition and the decrees of the Church and of the pope, as equal authority to guide the Church.

Christianity under it became a new law, and Christ a new lawgiver. God was a severe Judge, to be placated only by utmost effort. Christ as a Saviour, who obtained for the sinner a fresh opportunity to win God's favor. The soul was driven to seek the mediation of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and of the saints, who could be more loving than God the Judge. There was salvation for men, but no one could ever be sure of forgiveness, for righteousness was dependent on the goodness wrought out, indeed, by the help of grace bestowed through Christ, but none could tell when he had attained this goodness. Therefore prayers, penances, fastings, works, were prescribed that God might become gracious to them. The sacraments were means by which men were enabled to fulfill the law of God and acquire the merits that are requisite for

salvation. These were mediated through the priesthood. The mass became a veritable sacrifice to take away sin, but offered through the priesthood, intrusted with miraculous power through the grace of ordination.

In regard to penance, God indeed could alone pardon the eternal condemnation deserved by sin, but the temporal consequences could be repaired by disciplinary good works done in this life, or by disciplinary sufferings here or in purgatory. Yet, the sinner need not perform these good works himself. The Church has a treasury of good works, the merits of Christ and of the saints, from which transfer can be made by the properly constituted priesthood, and especially by the pope, to the needy sinner. This transfer was made by an indulgence, granted on such terms as the priest might impose, on condition of a pilgrimage, prayers or of money.

#### LUTHER AND TETZEL

Briefly, in review, the Scriptures had lost their supreme authority, the gospel had been obscured, the priesthood and the Church stood between man and God, salvation was the result of good works wrought by the individual through grace given of Christ, but in the keeping of the Church; its authority was absolute, reaching beyond the grave; obedience to its teachings and priesthood was the condition of salvation. And out of these came corruption inconceivable.

Luther was a faithful son of the Church. He tried all Rome had to offer, that he might find a gracious God. He became a monk, he abounded in the prescribed prayers, penances, fastings, scourgings. He failed.

But through the hints of friends, the creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins"; above all, through the Scriptures, he came to know the truth and the power of the gospel. He saw that God had revealed

Himself as the God of grace through the gospel, that is, through the incarnated, crucified and risen Christ. He saw that all outward works to win righteousness before God are valueless. By his own merits or works no man can be justified before God. Man is justified by God freely for Christ's sake through faith. Justification is a divine gift laid hold upon by faith that rests in humble trust upon God, who hath given us Himself in Christ. A faith that trusts that for Christ's sake God forgives us our sins, beholding us in the righteousness of Christ, which He imputes us. When he thus believes, he is received into favor with God and his sins forgiven for Christ's sake, who by His death hath satisfied for sin. This faith is a personal and continuous surrender to God as the Father of Jesus Christ, which transforms and renews the whole man. Faith is a living, busy, *active* thing, a sure confidence, which makes a man joyous and happy toward God and all creatures; which, like a good tree, yields without fail good fruit, and which is ready to serve everyone and to suffer all things.

This is the great doctrine of justification by faith. It was a new view of religion. It restored the personal relation to God. The repentant sinner came through Christ into direct, immediate, loving relation with God, his Father. Salvation has its source in the paternal love of God, but men are saved through Christ, the divine Son. Christ is thus made the center from which all other doctrines are conceived. Justification by faith alone means nothing more than justification by Christ alone through faith, which clings to Christ as its Saviour. "Twice only," says one, "in the history of the Christian Church has the appeal been taken (to justification by faith) in order to new and higher stages of human development—those movements which produced St. Paul and Martin Luther. The one opened the doors of the Church to the Gentile world and undid Jewish legalism; the other, alone and

single-handed, resisted the most powerful religious organization the world has ever seen, and led forth the people that were able to follow. Both of them underwent a trial of religious experience threatening to rend their inmost being, before they struggled out of darkness to light, the sword piercing their hearts, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed. This doctrine still remains what it was when it first took shape in Luther's soul, the last refuge of the individual soul, the hope and the inspiration of man in his deepest moods, the highest consolation in life, the surest support in the hour of death."

Luther expressed the doctrine of the atonement as none before him had expressed it. Not that he solved its mystery, none has done that. But he seized it on its practical side. He believed that Christ has taken upon His heart the whole burden of man as a sinner, has taken us up into His heart, making our case absolutely His own, has bewailed our sins before God, and died as if He had been Himself a sinner. How boldly Luther talks: "The believer can say, 'I am Christ; not personally, but Christ's righteousness, victory, life, and everything which He has, is my own.' So Christ says, 'I am this poor sinner; that is, all his sin and death are my sins and my death, since he hangs on me and I on him.'"

The doctrine of sin was also changed. No one before Luther took so serious a view of sin as he did, because he measured it by faith; that is, took a religious estimate of it. He did not graduate sins into greater and less. He did not look on virtues as manifold forms of worldly morality. He saw with Paul that whatsoever is not of faith is of sin. The supreme test of sin is the want of fear, love and trust in God.

Every man by nature is a sinner. He is guilty before God, which is proven by his dread of God, whom he should love and trust. It was a new view of religion. The Christian religion is living assurance of the liv-

ing God, who has revealed Himself and opened His heart in Christ—nothing else. On the one hand, Jesus Christ, His person and work; on the other, faith, which is our life, for it lays hold upon the God of grace, and, therefore, has the forgiveness of sins, which includes adoption as a child of God and blessedness.

Zwingli did not have this central thought, but received it through Luther. Calvin also was indebted to him for it and other doctrines which he passed through that splendid, clear, logical and devout mind of his, and changed to what he conceived was the truth. It has been so with all religious thinkers since. It ever modified the theology of Rome. It is still the root of Protestantism. No man can search and reason deeply concerning the Christian religion without reckoning with Martin Luther and the doctrine of justification by faith.

By this faith the believer is brought into intimate union and fellowship with God in Christ. As the branch is united with the vine, draws its substance and life from the vine and is part of it, so is the justified united with Christ and Christ with him. Horace Bushnell, "*Luther vivet, vibet!*"

As the justified is certain of the forgiveness of sins and of union with Christ, he acquires a personal certainty of peace toward God, which is the source of joy. He becomes filled with the spirit of love in proportion as he actualizes his union with Christ. There is a new obedience which springs out of love to Christ, therefore cheerful and willing. He obeys God and does good works, not because he must, but because he wants to.

Arising logically out of this was a new view of the Church. "By the Catholic, the highest Christian duty was seen in obedience to the infallible voice of the Church that claims to be the depository of the truth, the dispenser of the sacraments, with which alone all

certainty of salvation is conjoined, the possessor of a true priesthood of divine appointment, intrusted with miraculous power through the grace of ordination. A Church characterized by unity expressed in allegiance to a single earthly head."

"To the Protestant, the profoundest obligations were to use his divinely given faculties to ascertain for himself what is the truth of God as contained in His infallible and absolutely authoritative word; and to enter through faith into immediate and personal relations with his Saviour."

Access to God is alone through one mediator, Jesus Christ, through whom he cries, forgiven and accepted, "Abba, Father." He needs no priest as mediator. He is himself a priest before God, to offer praise, prayer and thanksgiving. There is, indeed, a ministry, appointed of God, but it is an office, not an order standing between man and God. To this office men are set apart, men gifted and endowed of God to teach and preach; called of God, but whose call must be attested by the voice of the congregation.

The Church is divine, but is not to be judged by external signs and outward and derived apostolate. The Church is the congregation of saints and true believers. It is invisible in this sense, that God alone knows who these believers are. It has, however, external marks whereby it may be known, namely, the right preaching and teaching of the gospel and the right administration of the sacraments.

It is to be observed that the Lutheran has never laid stress on forms of church government. The external Church must have an order of government. The form of government is not essential, so long as not contrary to the gospel. The Lutheran has episcopal, presbyterial and congregational constitutions. All that he contends against is that in behalf of these orders it shall not be demanded that these are *in the name of the gospel*. They are to be determined by circumstances,

necessities of time and situation, but the word of God does not establish any order, nor does it sanction any priesthood through whom believers are to approach God and whom God makes the organs of His grace and mercy.

The next great principle insisted upon is that the Holy Scriptures are the only source and authority for revealed doctrine. The appeal was taken from the authority of popes, and even of councils, to the Holy Scriptures. In other words, whilst creeds are of value, the testimony of the Church, the experience of the common Christian consciousness are to be carefully heeded. All these are subordinate to the Scriptures and must abide the test of its truth. They are the only rule of faith and practice.

Who, then, shall decide the meaning of the Scriptures? The answer is boldly made that as every man who believes has the faith, the Spirit, the mind of Christ, he is entitled to interpret the Scriptures for himself. The right of private judgment is frankly conceded. The freedom of conscience is thus proclaimed.

There was a day when Luther stood alone and faced the stake. It was one of the few dramatic moments of history. He, the peasants' son, was on one side—the emperor, prelates and princes on the other. He was asked to recant his teachings and submit to the authority of that revered assembly. He replied, in ever memorable words: "Unless I am refuted by Scriptural testimonies, or by clear arguments—for I believe neither the pope nor the councils alone, since it is clear they have often erred and contradicted one another—unless I am conquered by the passages of Scripture which I have cited, and my conscience is bound in the word of God—I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is unsafe and dangerous to act against conscience."

Great was the excitement in the Reichstag. The

emperor and his followers were scarcely able to believe that anyone could be so rash. Then, in the confusion, was heard those great words: "I cannot do otherwise. Here I stand, God help me! Amen." Since that brave and unheard-of stand, liberty of conscience, the right of private judgment, the authority of the word of God abide and gain dominion with each passing century.

Naturally it followed that the Scriptures should be in the hands of the people. There had been translations of the Bible ere Luther's translation, but, without exception, translations of a translation; they were made from the Vulgate. Luther's translation of the Bible is the greatest single work ever accomplished in the department of theological literature. It raised the German language from a barbarous jargon into a language flexible in beauty, with power of internal combination, paralleled alone by the Greek, and with a massive vigor that has no superior but the English, whilst for fidelity and true spiritual insight it has never been surpassed. Because of this and other translations, the Reformation and Christianity have ever possessed the sword of the Spirit and rejoiced in the open Bible.

There was another truth that he proclaimed, that there is no distinction between the spiritual and temporal estates. Rome had made a broad distinction between the spiritual—meaning thereby the clergy, the religious orders, the Church and the laity, the secular callings and the state. Worldly calling and daily duty it had looked upon with distrust. The doctrine of celibacy, so much lauded, was held to be necessary to the higher moral perfection, and the family and marriage were belittled. Marriage was a kind of ecclesiastical concession to the weak. He taught that it is instituted of God, the school of the highest morality. The family and the home were again restored to their God-given position. The kingdom of God was made as

broad as humanity. Religious things were the province of no one order of society. "All Christians," Luther declared, "are truly of the spiritual estate, and there is no difference among them, save of office alone." "The civil calling, the simple activity amidst family and dependents, in business, in every state, was no longer to be viewed with suspicion, as an occupation withdrawing the thoughts from heaven, but is the true spiritual province, the field in which proof is to be given of one's trust in God, one's humility and prayerfulness—that is of the Christian character that is rooted in faith." The ideal of religious perfection was thus changed. It was no longer monkish and ascetic, but confidence in God manifested by faithfulness to Him in one's calling, which is God's appointment. *Care for the poor and active charity* were still inculcated, but not, as before, with an idea to securing one's own salvation, but as the free service of one's neighbor, which sees in the real giving of help its ultimate aim and its only reward. Modern humanitarianism and the ennobling of home, occupation, the love of country, were thus given their initiative; a change of moral perfection, with the deeper righteousness.

Nevertheless the Lutheran Church has ever been sober and conservative. It did not yield to unbridled private judgment. It gave heed to the consciousness of the Church. It would not grant that God deals immediately with each individual soul without regard to established means. He deals mediately with men through the word of God and the sacraments, which are the means of grace.

It teaches that the Spirit and the word of God have an inseparable relation to each other. The Holy Spirit or His grace, God bestows through the word and along with the word. It is not God's will to transact with us except through the word and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Issue is taken with those who boast that they have the Spirit without the

word, and accordingly judge, trust and pervert Scripture, or the spoken word, as they please.

The Holy Spirit works through the word and the sacraments for the regeneration, salvation and sanctification of men. Through them God assures man of salvation. It is fanaticism to claim that assurance of salvation rests in one's own consciousness and inner feelings, or that the Holy Spirit without God's word communicates to men directly assurance and salvation.

Baptism is a sacrament and not a mere rite. By baptism grace is offered. By it children are received into favor with God. The mode of baptism with the Lutheran is non-essential—immersion, pouring and sprinkling are all valid forms of baptism, the water being but the sign of the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Children who are thus received into favor are to be trained and nurtured by parents, pastors and churches into full knowledge of Him, and thus enable them later, with intelligence and conscious faith, to confess publicly in the church Christ their Saviour, who hath covenanted with them in baptism.

To assist in this Luther wrote the *first* Protestant catechism, a wonderful summary of the Christian doctrine. The Lutheran Church has become an educational Church, has its young people gathered for instruction under its pastors, indoctrinating them, so that whilst deeply emotional, it is deeply educational, seeking the head as well as the heart.

Its doctrine of the Lord's Supper is peculiar. To the Lutheran the Lord's Supper is the sacrament wherein Christ constantly imparts Himself to the believer, to sustain and strengthen him. He does not agree with the Romanist, who believes that the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ, nor with the Reformed view, that denies the real presence of the body and blood of Christ. He believes that the spiritual body and blood of Christ

are truly present under the bread and wine, and are there communicated and received. He abides by the words, "This is my body," and will not refine them away to suit the demands of the understanding concerning this mystery.

To those who have never studied theology and have only considered their own opinions, this may not seem to have been important. But this doctrine was the source of one of the most fruitful contributions of Lutherans to Christianity. It caused their great thinkers to study the doctrine of the two natures of Christ, and how in the union of the divine and the human the attributes of each are given one to another. Behind this was another profound question, the relation of God to nature and man.

"The incarnation, therefore, has been its problem as it has been the problem of no other Church, not even of the ancient Greek. In the nineteenth century, as in the sixteenth century, it has travailed at a scientific Christology, though from the opposite end of the scale. It labored at it then by attempting to make the manhood capable of receiving the Deity, but now, by reversing the process, at making the Deity capable of losing itself, though only anew and more gloriously to find itself, in the manhood. In all the kenotic theories there are exaggerations, suppressions and mysteries that grow more mysterious by being looked at; but one thing they have done, they have made men see that the incarnation is the symbol at once of the highest mystery and the highest truth. It holds the key to the problem of the relation of God and man; it is the problem summarized, recapitulated, impersonated. The philosophers who have most strenuously handled and most nearly solved the problem have been sons of the land and Church of Luther; and the theologians of other lands and Churches that have to-day attempted through the incarnation to vivify theology and relate it to modern knowledge, are often paying

unconscious but deserved homage to the faith and insight of Luther and his spiritual children."—*Fairbairn*.

The Lutheran contributed the first great creed to the Church, the Augsburg Confession. It preceded all others and has modified all other creeds since, not excepting that of the Council of Trent. Especially may its influence be traced in those of other Protestant bodies. Creeds it is the fashion now to cavil at, but a creed is the answer, frank, unequivocal, of man to God concerning that which he finds in His word. God speaks to us in His word, the Church speaks to Him and to men by its creed as to what it believes it has discovered in His word. It gives clearness to thought, stability, and is a deadly foe to evasions and hypocrisy.

The Lutheran Church has contributed to Christianity greatly in public worship. There is always danger in every great movement that in the correction of evil good will be sacrificed. The early Christians found beauty of art enlisted in the service of paganism, ministering to luxury and lust. In their strenuous pursuit of righteousness, they sacrificed the beautiful in art, ready to deprive themselves of it rather than subject their followers to the temptations which surrounded it. In the Reformation, in the correction of the abuse of worship, many Protestants thought the only safety from Romish errors was to sever themselves from all that the Church had wrought out in the ages. Their principle was, whatever was not in God's word should be rejected. Lutherans held whatever was not contrary to God's word could be retained whenever it tended to edification. Luther, therefore, retained much of the old order and ceremony of the mass, rejected its sacrificial elements. He gave large place to the preaching of the gospel, observing the Church year, to the people's participation in song. He demanded that worship should be in the common tongue. But he retained the historical service, with

the great treasures of prayers, chants and sentences which the Church had gathered in the ages. The order of worship of the Lutheran Church became the foundation of the liturgies of Protestant bodies, and was one of the great sources of the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church.

Nevertheless, in accord with his principle of Christian liberty, he did not insist on one order of worship everywhere, but placed worship on the ground of edification. The Lutheran Church has, therefore, in its worship liberty and historical service. In our day there is a demand in the Protestant churches for a service that shall be participated in by the people, and not dependent upon the minister alone. The Lutheran has such a service, as, we believe, the richest and best of all services, truly Scriptural.

One of the great contributions of Lutherans to Christianity has been its hymns. "The Reformation is the mother of true evangelical song. The messenger of God's free grace put a new song into the heart and mouth of the believer." Luther saw that hymns to be sung by the people in the services of the Church and in their homes were a primal necessity of spirituality and worship. He called for poets and composers. He himself wrote matchless hymns. He was a true poet, a great Christian. They are fresh from the heart, trustful, grateful, hopeful, courageous, full of divine fire. Of all his hymns, "A Safe Stronghold is Our God," is the most famous. The power of these hymns was amazing. The Jesuit, Conger, writes: "The hymns of Luther have slain more souls than his writings and sermons." Carlyle says, "There is something in it like the sound of Alpine avalanches or the first murmur of earthquakes; in the very vastness of dissonance a higher union is revealed to us. Luther wrote this song in a time of blackest threatenings, which, however, could in no wise become a time of despair. In these tones, rugged,

broken as they are, we do but recognize the accents of that summoned man (summoned not by Charles V, but by God Almighty also), who answered to a friend's warning not to enter Worms, in this wise, "Were there as many devils in Worms as there are roof-tiles, I would on."

The Lutheran Church has been distinguished for the number and excellence of its hymn-writers, and also for the splendid musicians who have worthily set these hymns to melody. Over 30,000 hymns have been written in Germany alone.

The Lutheran Church is characterized by a rich and profound type of piety. The Lutheran approaches God through Christ in childlike confidence. He magnifies the love of God, God is his Father. He accepts the good things of this life frankly. He loves music, the arts, innocent sports, the society of friends, the joys of home. He is no ascetic. He excels in honesty, kindness, affection, cheerfulness, and that *Gemüthlichkeit* for which other nations have not even a name. His piety is profound, meditative, mystical, with a rich, inward life. Therefore the hymnology and devotional literature of the Lutheran Church are abundant and fervent, and "her charm the charm of Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus." Out of this piety has come some of the richest devotional literature Christianity possesses.

In works of charity she has been pre-eminent. Hospitals, homes, orphanages abound. In the foundation and support of these Christianity has witnessed marvels of faith. George Müller's work at Bristol is justly celebrated, but he was from a Lutheran land, trained in her faith. Long before him, in 1695, Francke began the orphan home at Halle. He implicitly trusted to God for its support and that of kindred institutions. He never asked anyone for money, and yet, in answer to his faith, means to support several thousand persons were forthcoming.

In foreign mission work the Lutheran Church has more than 300,000 members under her care. It has one congregation of several thousand members, on the heath of Lüneberg, that alone supports, in South Africa, two missions, with 35,000 members, and one in Persia, a singular example of the self-sacrifice and depth of Lutheran piety.

It is to the honor of the Lutheran Church that she began, in 1836, the restoration of the deaconess office, which had been lost, except among the Waldenses and Bohemian brethren. There are now 15,000 deaconesses at work in every land, consecrated, devoted women. This movement has now become general among Protestants.

Time would fail to tell of the other movements which characterize the Lutheran Church or her manifold activities.

The Lutheran Church has been the Church of theologians and philosophers and scholars. Döllinger, the old Catholic, frankly concedes it. Germany has been a name synonymous with some of all that is terrible. She is the seat of all heresy. But these questions were bound to arise. Cowardice concerning them will not win the victory for the faith.

If Germany has at times furnished poison, she has also given the antidote. Nowhere has profounder, wiser and more Christian scholarship been shown than in Germany. After all, we sit at the feet of her princely intellects. The observer discovers that the battle for the faith is being won by the believers. And when won, Christianity will be more richly and profoundly conceived than ever. To the sons of Luther, much of that victory will be due.

Once more, there can be no question that when the counter reformation arose, the Lutheran Church, in the Thirty Years' War, bore the brunt of the conflict. On the bloody field of Lützen that great hero, Gustavus Adolphus broke the power of the Roman League,

although at the cost of his life. Holland deserves praise for her noble struggle, England for her stalwart fight, but the dispassionate observer of history will concede that the cause of Protestantism was saved in this struggle by the great Lutheran, one of the world's six great captains, Gustavus Adolphus.

Sound in doctrine, broad in its conceptions, teaching freedom of conscience, yet conservative in tendency, flexible in government, rich in worship, calmly Scriptural, devoutly spiritual, with trust and love in God, joyful and courageous, this great Church will yet contribute inestimable results to Christianity.

## THE CHANGED CONDITIONS OF EDUCATION

"The nineteenth century," says Alfred Russell Wallace, "marks the beginning of a new era of human progress." And surely to the observant this claim is substantiated when its achievements are considered. Its discoveries have changed the outward conditions of life. Its larger knowledge has destroyed the very conceptions of the world and its growth which our fathers held. The directive principle of its thought, evolution, is masterful and antagonistic to much that the men of other centuries considered axioms. It is a new world in which we live, and this world has largely come into being during the last fifty years.

A few considerations, briefly stated, will more clearly indicate this.

President Taylor, of Vassar College, in "A New World and an Old Gospel," has pointed out that these years have added immensely to the knowledge of the universe. "It was in 1845 that Neptune was discovered, extending enormously the limits of the known universe, and most of the measurements of the stellar spaces have taken place since then. Over 400 small planets have been discovered since 1850, and as late as 1892 the fifth satellite of Jupiter was brought within reach of the telescope. The vast spaces of the solar system are found to be filled with solid bodies, streams of which, as meteors, pass through our orbit, and before them the old nebular hypothesis seems to be giving way to a theory of the stellar universe formed of solid particles, united by impact and heat."

The world has been changed historically and temporally. The world period of six thousand years since man's creation is no longer tenable. Archaeology in Babylon and Egypt has revealed that historically man

was there, perhaps, from 5000 to 10,000 years B.C., and that back of this was an age not historical.

Geology, by its discoveries of the immense periods of time, has changed our vision of the past. But what is more important to thought, it has shown that the same forces which built up the earth are still at work. The unity of the power to create and to preserve is one. This is another world, and requires different thinking from the old world of our fathers.

Again, invention has almost annihilated distances in the world. Steam and electricity have nearly banished space. Friend speaks with friend a thousand miles away. The Transvaal and the Philippines are nearer to us than Europe was to our fathers. What is of more consequence, these conditions have affected all our social, industrial, economic, political and spiritual life. They bind nations together as nothing ever did before. They lessen world-spaces and make its distant points near. Interests hitherto diverse and isolated now intertwine and have common relations.

Inventions have changed the world industrially, until we are confronted by the most serious problems of labor and capital, gigantic in their combinations and involving the well-being of millions. Industrial questions are new and strange.

Politically and socially vast changes have occurred. The people have come into power, slavery has disappeared. The ancient East is no longer sealed; the nations are in contact as never before; vast aggregations of people in cities bring distressing social conditions. Problems our ancestors had, but never handled, vaster and profounder, are studied. Political economy and social problems must be considered and weighed.

Again, we are confronted by the discoveries of biology. Biology is the science of the phenomena of life. It has traced all life back to protoplasm, "the cell." Beginning with this the biologist traces the structure, physiology and growth of the human nervous system.

He deals with facts. And so psychology has come to be studied on the basis of physiology. Sociology must consider it in its investigations. Ethics, morality as a science, is profoundly affected by its discoveries. Yet biology was born as a science in 1860.

A new theory, at least in its scientific aspect, has come to stay in these last fifty years, the theory of evolution, which is dominant in many departments of knowledge, and affects all. It has brought modifications and changes. We may not concede the claims of its advanced advocates, but we cannot hide from ourselves that it has affected our views of creation, of history, religion, the Bible and the Church.

It follows from these data that the scope of education has been vastly enlarged. Objects of study, departments of knowledge, of which our fathers either knew nothing or but vaguely, are now embraced in the curriculum of the educators. They have seriously affected educational methods and schemes which heretofore have laid down the preliminaries for the professional man. The classical course, so long unchallenged and dominant, is sharply criticised. Assault has been made on the study of Greek in particular and the classical languages in general as educational values and forces. Germany, the home of the idealist and dreamer, has felt the modern movement and the trend to the practical, and is being induced to rearrange its estimate of fundamental educational values.

The conditions of education have been changed both by the vastness of modern knowledge and the clamant demand of this practical age with its industrial victories and problems. There is a marked tendency to specialization which seeks to begin in the preparatory stages of education even in those of our common schools, and to grow more intense as it ascends to the higher stages of the college and university.

Under such conditions there must be an insistence on the true meaning of education. It must be allowed

that the earlier schemes of higher education were largely in the interest of the clergy and of the men of literary leisure. The insistence put upon the classics was in their behalf, preparing them for their profession and a liberal education.

Underneath it all, however, there was a grasp of the fundamental meaning of education. The object of the collegiate education was the making of a man, by the development of his intellectual powers, and the formation of a moral and righteous character. There was, therefore, a broad and comprehensive training in disciplinary studies, in the classics, mathematics, history, moral and mental philosophy and the principles of science. The outcome was a balanced mind, master of its powers, taught to reason and judge, possessed of general information. "The college teaching was inadequate in quantity to enable a student to pretend to the mastery in any department, but adequate, both in quantity and quality, to enable even the less able students to estimate justly the world in which they lived and their capacity for usefulness in it." Above all, the college of fifty years ago in our land had a high sense of its responsibility to so influence men morally and religiously that they should go forth from its walls men capable of justly estimating the value of work done by others in widely different spheres, men aware of their obligations to society, to their land and to their God, men of tough moral fiber, with high ideals of a noble life, determined to be of service to their fellowmen. Educated men were then looked up to as the champions and defenders of truth and right.

How deeply ingrained was this conception, the words of Prof. Huxley on a liberal education beautifully express, though, because he did not lay hold firmly on God, he fails to recognize the part which God should have in the educated life:

"That man, I think, has had a liberal education, who has been so trained in his youth that his body is the

ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that as a mechanism it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logical engine, with all its parts of equal strength and in smooth working order; ready, like a steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of nature and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of nature or of art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself.

"Such a one, and no other, I conceive, has had a liberal education, for he is, as completely as a man can be, in harmony with nature. He will make the best of her, and she of him. They will get on together easily; she as the ever beneficent mother, he as her mouth-piece, her conscious self, her minister and interpreter."

After the college had laid the foundations of intelligent and moral manhood, the student was regarded as prepared for special work, for university work. He would ever carry with him into the particular province of knowledge he had selected as his own the conception of the largeness of the vast domains of knowledge in general. It curbed conceit. It balanced his judgments. He did humbly his particular work, readily acknowledging that there were other fields, as important as his own, concerning which he was not authority.

Special work from the beginning, the work which ignores the broader liberal education, has the tendency to narrow men, to warp their judgment, to make them incapable of putting a correct value on other departments of knowledge. This is most true of those who delve in the material. They lose their sensitiveness of mind and spirit to the spiritual. The eye of the soul

films, its ear grows dull, just as the great English scholar, Darwin, devoted to science alone, died at last to the sweetness of music, to the thrill of poetry. No voice of singer could charm, no verse of Shakespeare stir response in him. His finer perceptions were atrophied from lack of use.

The college, the American college, therefore, stands for foundations; the university, for special work. Broadly stated, the function of the college is the development of manhood; of the university, the enlargement of the boundaries of knowledge.

But another changed condition is apparent. The university has made the college curriculum a part of its course, and claims that it can lay better foundations than the smaller college. We may be sure that this claim is not made recklessly. Its advocates produce strong arguments in justification. The university being richly endowed can enlarge its curriculum. It can call into its service a body of teachers and professors, each one of whom is a master of his department, competent to instruct; it claims that it is impossible that one man should successfully teach several departments, as the small college, limited in endowment, makes obligatory on its professors. It commands the services of young men full of the enthusiasm of youth and in touch with the most modern methods, while at the same time it retains the services of the older men, ripe in learning and experience. The aggressiveness and dash of youth, so potent to kindle a like spirit in young men, is happily wedded to the caution and wisdom of riper years.

The small college has its distinct advantages, however, provided it is well-equipped for its particular function, and possesses men of learning, who are true teachers, able to impart knowledge and stimulate students. In the small college the student comes into direct contact with his professors. The professor and the student meet together and know each other. The

young man regards the older as a friend, counsels with him about his studies and his future. The professor becomes interested in the man and the development of his character. He has time and opportunity to know his student. In the university much of this is lost. The unformed tutor is too often the instructor of the student. The professor and the boy do not come into constant and intimate personal contact.

There is, too, a distinct advantage to the student of the smaller college in the field it gives him for the development of individuality and personal power. One has well said: "As numbers diminish, individual responsibility increases. Few things are of more importance for an American boy than that he should early come to feel a degree of personal responsibility for the organic and social life about him. It is a great injury to a boy and to public interests that he should grow up content to be 'one of the mass,' to have his thinking done for him, and to take no part and feel no obligation in relation to what affects the common welfare. In the small college the individual counts for the utmost. His influence is at its maximum. Others find him out, he finds himself out and he finds his own place. In the organizations of the college he finds the freest scope for whatever talent he has for leadership, counsel or helpful co-operation. The college is thus a gymnasium for the development of individual manhood."

Perhaps here is the reason why so large a proportion of the masterful men in literature, statesmanship and religion have been the sons of the small college. But we come now to a graver consideration, namely, the consideration of moral and religious influence. The undergraduate days are those in which a young man is most sensitive to influence in manners and morals, faith and character. Dr. Patton says: "A father may well feel that his son's refined demeanor would be a poor offset to his loss of religious faith, and that great

attainments would not atone for bad habits. A young man would do well to consider the moral as well as the intellectual influences that surround a college or university. His undergraduate life will certainly not be a conspicuous success if he fails to acquire as the result of it that discipline of his powers and that degree of knowledge necessary for independent inquiry. But it will certainly be a conspicuous failure if he does not learn to scorn everything that is base and mean; if he does not come into possession of high ideals of conduct, and, above all, if he ceases to maintain a reverent attitude toward the spiritual side of life.

"The first thing to be considered in regard to an institution of learning, whatever be its size and wheresoever it be situated, is, what is the moral tone of the place and what efforts are made there to keep the students under the best influences?"

The instinct of the Church has been correct when it provided the denominational college, with professors decided in Christian life and doctrine. It was the instinct of self-preservation, but also the perception that its peculiar life could only exert its strongest influence where the conditions were favorable to that life. It had regard for the young man as well as for itself.

Such colleges have in the past wonderfully won men to Christ. There the religious life has become precious to many. These colleges, through their instructors strong in intellect and devoted to God, have often been the means of salvation to thoughtless young men. It is remarkable that with a few noble exceptions our educated Lutheran laymen, who are of untold value to the Church, were educated in our Lutheran denominational colleges.

There is a distinction from the beginning between colleges. Some are founded from convictions, convictions of their absolute need as educational and moral factors. All over this land there are found colleges built to exploit a town and add to its attractions. But

others have been founded on conviction, have been begun in sacrifice and continued in sacrifice. Carthage and Midland, as well as Hartwick, Gettysburg, Wittenberg and Susquehanna, stand for conviction and sacrifice by self-denial and high ideals. The moral atmosphere thus engendered remains to invigorate the pulses of the spiritual life.

The state universities are the outcome of our educational system. We do not condemn them, but they are not distinctively Christian, either in the selection of professors or in their influence. They cannot be, when the demand is that there shall be no distinctive religious teaching, when many who occupy chairs are either indifferent to or openly antagonistic to Christianity. Religious influences there are, but they are not dominant.

The same conditions prevail in others of the universities not supported by the state. The moral and religious influences are not dominant. How true this statement is, the following, quoted by Dr. Ray before the Presbyterian General Assembly, substantiates:

"President Holden, of Wooster, has just made an exhaustive study of the catalogues of all theological seminaries in this country. They contain 1915 theological students who are college graduates. Of these 1915 theological students 1805 come from Christian colleges and universities, and the remaining 110 from non-Christian (secularized and undenominational) colleges.

"I find by a careful collation of the last report of the United States Commissioner of Education, the following facts: There are about 54,000 youths in college classes in this country, about 28,000 of them in Christian, and 25,000 of them in non-Christian colleges.

"So there is at present one college graduate theological student for every 16 students in Christian colleges, and one college graduate theological student for every 230 students in non-Christian colleges."

Whilst it is true we do not wish our colleges to be mere preparatory schools for ministers, we do desire that out of them our ministry should come. We do demand that the religious influence shall be such that not only men may be led to the ministry, but also that other educated men, lawyers, doctors, men of science, engineers and the like, be established in the faith, their religious convictions deepened, and they be men with a deep sense of their obligations to their fellow-men and God. Nevertheless we cannot appeal to the loyalty of our people alone to sustain the denominational college. Lutheran is a great word wherewith to charm, but it will not charm parents to send forth their children imperfectly equipped for life's strenuous struggles. There must be more than the name. In the chairs there must be men able and trained to teach, there must be equipment fitted to the requirements of the advanced demands of knowledge. It is not to be expected that parents will handicap their children in the strenuous race of the present life by sending them to Lutheran colleges which do not afford an education equal to that given by other colleges.

The Church, if it would keep its young men under its influence, can only do so by strengthening the college faculties. Men can no longer instruct students in several branches and teach each branch well. That is, in these days of specialization, the student can gain inspiration for study in a special branch alone from those who are masters in the department with which they deal, enthusiasts themselves, because they do original work and by independent study gain that mastery and love for their work which brings the breath of life and enthusiasm to others.

But this means a large corps of instructors even for the small college, fifteen to twenty-five professors. It means thorough equipment, good libraries, scientific apparatus, and—as it has come to be a truism that the body as well as intellect and spirit must be cared for,

that intellect and spirit may have strong bodies to respond to their demands—there must be abundant opportunity to build up the body.

The best instructors must be adequately supported if they are to be at our command. This means money. Equipment means money. Physical appliances mean money.

Contrast on this Western field what the State Universities spend in a year for maintenance. \$180,000 in Nebraska, \$120,000 in Kansas. Iowa as much, if not more. Then contrast our own colleges on this territory and understand the fearful odds with which they contend.

The following, which appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post*, in an article entitled, "Recent Gifts to Colleges," by James Melvin Lee, indicates how rapidly colleges and universities are increasing their endowments and multiplying their facilities and attractions:

Mr. E. L. Godkin, in retiring from the editorship of the *New York Evening Post*, published his recollections of nearly half a century of journalism, in which he took a pessimistic view of the press and the pulpit; but he thought that the progress made by colleges, big or little, both in the quality of instruction and in the amount of money received from personal gifts and bequests, was something unparalleled in the history of the world.

Though this is an era of large gifts, small ones are so numerous that in the aggregate they rival the former. One denomination has raised, chiefly by small subscriptions, nearly \$5,000,000 for its schools, as a twentieth century thank-offering. The endowment of Brown University has recently been increased by more than \$1,000,000; the complete list of the subscribers to this fund, published in the *Brown Alumni Monthly*, numbered, by actual count, 176 persons, and, deducting the \$250,000 from Mr. John D. Rockefeller, it was for the most part given in fairly small amounts.

One of the most remarkable bequests of the past year was \$1,500,000 left by Mrs. Josephine L. Newcomb, of New York City, to Tulane University. According to information received from the secretary of that institution she had also given \$300,000 just before her death. Fifty thousand dollars has been received to found the library. Large gifts have been hitherto confined to Northern colleges—a fact which the South has lamented—but, perhaps, the tide is now turning.

Cornell College, of Mount Vernon, Iowa, through two of the trustees, Senator Allison and Governor Shaw, has secured the promise of \$40,000 from Mr. Carnegie. Of course it is for a library, and the conditions are that it shall be free to students and to citizens, and that the sum of \$4000 shall be guaranteed for its maintenance. Other gifts amount to over \$200,000.

Cornell University, of Ithaca, N. Y., has received \$75,000 for enlarging the Sibley College of Mechanical Engineering. Other donations foot up \$141,953.

The principal gift to Syracuse University the past year was for a "College of Applied Science," by Mr. Lyman C. Smith. He believes that it will cost not less than \$725,000 before it is finished. Mr. John D. Atchbold has promised \$400,000 for endowment, provided an equal amount is raised by other friends of the institution.

Amherst has raised \$100,000 to increase the salaries of its professors, has added \$50,000 to its endowment, and has raised \$5000 for various purposes. A promise of \$25,000 has been announced to be added to the fund for a new observatory building in case a like sum can be procured.

Oberlin has received \$120,000 for a gymnasium and a chemical laboratory. In addition, Mr. John D. Rockefeller has made a provisional offer of \$200,000 for general endowment, provided the college raises \$300,000 before January 1, 1902. According to official

information \$150,000 has already been provided for.

Exclusive of the gifts made to the Bi-Centennial Memorial Fund, which now amounts to more than \$300,000, Yale has received over \$145,000 since July 31, 1900. An anonymous gift of \$96,000 for building a dispensary under the charge of the medical department has also been received. Harvard is reported, though not officially, to have received \$735,000.

Other donations and bequests received by American colleges are as follows: Lafayette, \$84,500; Princeton, \$250,000; Pennsylvania, \$540,000; Clark, \$3,000,000; Dartmouth, \$210,000; Western Reserve, \$150,000; University of Michigan, \$39,900; Ohio Wesleyan, \$600,000; Union, \$55,000; Columbia, \$492,000; Allegheny, \$170,000; American University, \$130,000; De Pauw, \$242,500; Dickinson, \$51,500, and Wesleyan, \$70,000.

Thirty years ago our Lutheran colleges, in endowment, equipment, number of instructors, compared much more favorably with the leading colleges of the land than they do now. There is before us no more necessary work, nor one that our wealthy men should more earnestly sustain with large benefactions than the increase of the endowment and equipment of our colleges. If it be neglected, the future of the Lutheran Church will be meager in results. The Church, shorn of strength, vitality and aggressiveness, will have little influence as a religious factor in the land.

Such are the facts. What relation has our Board of Education to do with these facts? The Board of Education enables us to found, maintain and strengthen the colleges just where our Church is now weak, but when it has every promise of a glorious future.

Long ago it was seen that if our Church was to supply the needs of its membership, and retain its educated young men and women, it must have its own institutions right here on this western soil. Splendid Gettysburg and Wittenberg could not draw those seek-

ing higher education to their walls past colleges at their very doors. They went to these nearby institutions, but they failed in many instances to return Lutherans. Young men trained in our seminaries East were not in touch with the life of the West, and soon grew weary of work here and returned to the East, where they felt more at home. Our ministry was peripatetic, our congregations languished. It was absolutely necessary to found Midland and strengthen Carthage, to build on western soil a seminary whose young men knew the great people of the Western States, thought their thoughts, lived their life and were proud of their States and thrilled with fiery pulsations of love for their honor and glory. The few years of work which have given us the noble men who are doing splendid work in these Western States have proven the wisdom of all this thought.

But the Board of Education stands for more. It stands for practical endowment. The money the Board receives is for direct expenditure, not for endowment. If the Church gives it an income of \$15,000, it is equivalent to \$300,000 endowment, \$25,000 to \$500,000 endowments for the colleges it aids. It makes the college financially strong until the institution's constituents endow it well, that the Board may found other institutions needed in other portions of our vast country.

The ministry and membership of the General Synod should intelligently grasp the situation. This is necessary work, missionary work of the highest order. Colleges to the Church are like West Point and the Naval Academy to the nation. The Church is militant before it is triumphant. The Church is engaged in the fiercest of all wars, wars waged not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Every member of the Church is or may be a soldier in this glorious war, but these soldiers of the Church need leaders and trained

leaders. Captains of the Lord's hosts, under captains of that Great Captain of our salvation, Jesus Christ. Our colleges and seminaries train them to lead the membership to victory. The Church, therefore, that has the eye to see, the brain to conceive, the will to act, will put its training schools just where they are needed and when they are needed. To this end it will not count the cost of sacrifice and gifts; for here, under God, it realizes is the way to victory.

## THE GREAT CONFESSION

Cæsarea Philippi was a town of some importance, beautifully situated at the source of the eastern or longer branch of the Jordan. "It had formerly been called Paneas, from the heathen god Pan, who was worshiped by the Syrian Greeks in the limestone cavern nearby, in which Jordan's fountains bubbled forth to light. Its name was given to it by Philip, tetrarch of Trachonitis, in honor of Cæsar Augustus; his own name being appended (*Cæsarea Philippi*, or, Philip's Cæsarea) to distinguish it from the other town of the same name on the Mediterranean coast."

Jesus came into the neighborhood of this city that in this seclusion He might spend a season in secret prayer and prepare His disciples for the beginning of the end of His earthly ministry. The Christian Church was to take up His work in the near future; that Church was to be built upon Him as the Messiah, the Saviour of mankind, and as the divine Son of God. When the apostles believed and confessed Him thus, the Church could be entrusted to them. He could go up to Jerusalem to be crucified that He might thus set forth the power and wisdom of God, conquering sin and death for men, triumphantly sealing the victory by His resurrection. He could thus lay the foundations of the Church and build through the apostles and their successors, proclaiming this faith, the Church against which the gates of hell should not prevail.

To draw from them a profession of their own faith, our Lord asks the apostles concerning His Person, "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" As Bruce well says, "This question He asked, not as one needing to be informed, still less from any morbid sensitiveness, such as vain men feel respecting the opinions entertained of them by their fellow-creatures. He desired of His disciples a recital of current opin-

ions merely by way of preface to a profession of their own faith in the eternal truth concerning Himself." They must know Him as *Messiah* before He could talk to them plainly of His *death*.

They, in their answer, convey to us the impression which Jesus had made upon the people. To them He was more than the ordinary teacher of the Jews. His strong personality reminded some of John the Baptist, others of Elijah, others of Jeremiah, others of other prophets. To them He was of God, like yet unlike those that had made the nations glorious by their greatness and nearness to God. The many-sidedness of Christ, in His inflexibility, His devotion to truth, His miraculous power, His tenderness, the wisdom and beauty of His words, made him now like this one, now like that prophet. But they did not realize Him as He was in His own Person.

He now searches the apostles with the personal question, crucial in its character, testing the knowledge they had gained of Him in their intimate fellowship with Him, "Who say ye that I am?"

Simon Peter, quick and ready, answers, as their acquiescent silence shows, for them as well as for himself, in the memorable words, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." In this answer are found two distinct acknowledgments. *First*, that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, foretold by the prophets, appointed of God, and, *secondly*, that He was the divine Son of God. It is not merely a confession of a Messiah, such as the Jews expected, a man of men, but a distinct acknowledgment of the divine nature of Christ, a truth which was contrary to Jewish thought, and opposed to the monotheism in which Peter had been bred. On this faith the Church of Christ has been built and abides even to this day, and must ever abide. Jesus the Saviour from sin, Jesus the only-begotten Son, in essence one with the Father, is the comfort, strength and foundation of the Church.

The words of Peter are aflame with the light of truth and alive with the deepest convictions of a heart and mind lifted out of the commonplace into the higher realms of the supernatural. Christ responds to these passionate words with a counter-utterance which almost seems to lift Him out of that singular calmness so conspicuous in all His words and deeds. But, as has been intimated, as the Church first made confession in Peter, so here the Lord confesses the Church in words of approving love. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." We pass by the mystical interpretation that Simon Bar-jona means Simon, son of the dove, that is, child of the Spirit, the heavenly Dove, and rather consider that the Lord addresses Peter by his original name, Simon, son of Jona. Our Lord indicates in the words spoken to Peter that the man who has faith in Him as the Christ, the Son of the living God, is blessed. He has become a child of God. He also sets forth that this insight into truth is the work of God. This truth so marvelous and faith were not reached by Peter's wisdom or through the teaching of others. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." God doth work with men to enkindle faith, and revealeth the truth. This insight was from above, even as Paul later explains when he writes, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

May we not learn that we may never be blessed until we know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God? Whatever we seek, or learn, or gain, still will the soul be unsatisfied. There will be sadness. No fact is more apparent in modern life than the sadness and unrest of the thinkers and the doers outside of Christ. Whatever they may gather or win, still they are not blessed. Blessedness is not in ourselves, but in God, to whom we cannot come except through Christ Jesus. Without Him, we know not God; without Him,

sin is unforgiven; without Him, there is no sonship with the Father; without Him, there is no certainty of victory. He is blessed who hath found the Father through Christ: to him is knowledge, forgiveness, peace, sonship, victory, now and hereafter.

And may we not also see how the Holy Spirit will reveal Christ unto those who, like Peter, are with Jesus, studying Him and His words? Peter could not make this confession at once. Slowly he was lifted from one truth to another, from the teacher to the earthly Messiah, and then the Spirit opening his eyes, he saw Him, the Christ, the Son of the living God. Even so we, with Him in His word and life, will reach the conviction wrought of God, my Saviour and my Lord, God manifest for me in the flesh.

The words which follow have been bitterly contested. To them the Romanist refers to establish the primacy of St. Peter and of his successors, the popes. Protestants differ in their interpretation of the passage. By some it is maintained that our Lord meant by this rock Himself, and upon Himself He builds the Church. Others interpret the rock as meaning the faith confessed by Peter, whilst others that it was upon Peter confessing the faith that the Church was to be built. The Romanist view is untenable, having no foundation in the saying itself, no warrant obtained from the after-history of the apostles, no support from the words and deeds of Peter himself.

Either of the two interpretations that the rock is the faith confessed by Peter, or Peter confessing the faith, may be accepted, for they agree in asserting the supreme important nature of the truth confessed. Luther held that it was the confession, the rock on which Peter, and all Peters (that is, all Christians), are built. As one well says, "Peter is called the foundation of the Church only in the same sense as all the apostles are called the foundation by the Apostle Paul (Eph. 2 : 20), viz., As the first preachers of the true

faith concerning Jesus as the Christ and Son of God; and if the man who *first* professed that faith be honored by being called individually the rock, that only shows that the *faith*, and not the man, is after all the true foundation. That which makes Simon a *Petra*, a rock-like man, fit to build upon, is the real *Petra*, on which the Church is to be built." Yet, truth is realized in men. We have learned the worth of personality. The Lord Himself is the strength of Christianity. His words and His works are not without Him, but live because He lives. Faith confessed must have confessors. It becomes vital when the man is possessed by it. Justly, therefore, does Christ say that upon Peter, confessing the faith, is His Church to be built, the Church which is not a structure of senseless stones, but of men who believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and confess this truth with the heart.

In words which declare the essential and supreme character of the Church, the Lord speaks of it. "Upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He refers but seldom to the Church, but this reference is enough, for the Church is *my* Church, precious. It is, moreover, indestructible and invincible, a refuge against evil and the pledge of safety against all the hosts of hell and death. These words rightly read are a protest against the depreciation of the Church and the exaltation of the kingdom of heaven, as has become the fashion with many in our day. The promise is to the men of good confession in the Church, and unto them are given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which can have but one meaning in this connection, the Church of Jesus Christ, *my* Church. Let us see to it then that we despise not the Church, but magnify it, be of it and in it, that unto us may pertain the promise of the Lord, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

It is not merely meant by these words that the Church built upon Jesus the Saviour, the Son of the

living God, shall overcome all opposition of evil in this world. She indeed is the anvil on which all hammers are broken, but the Lord not merely sets forth that He builds that which shall abide in all time (wonderful prophecy!), but that the gates of Hades, the prison of the dead, shall have no power over the members of Christ's Church. They shall be rescued from the power of death by His redemption, and be united with Him in His heavenly kingdom. The victory is not of this world alone, but of the world to come. Blessed are they who are in the "congregation of faithful men."

To Peter, as the believing confessor of the truth, the Lord is grateful, and shows this "gratitude by promising first to him, individually, a power which He afterwards conferred on all His chosen disciples." "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The kingdom of heaven means evidently the Church of Christ. The power of the keys is thus given unto Peter and to all Christian believers; the power to admit the penitent and believing into the Church, the power to reject the impenitent and unbelieving, the power to declare the forgiveness of sins, the power to discipline the erring and to suspend the reprobate, a power given only to men believing. Peter, remaining true to his confession, had this grant, but when he wavered or declined from the truth, he lost it. Gerlach has wisely spoken, "The Christian Church possesses this power of the keys, not in its outward capacity of organization, but in so far as the Spirit rules in it. Hence, whenever it is exercised as a merely outward law, without the Spirit, the Lord in His providence disowns these false pretensions of the visible Church."

The time had not come to openly avow that He was the Messiah. His life must be completed ere the apostles could go forth to proclaim Him the Saviour,

the Son of God, preaching Him crucified for sin and risen again for the justification of men. How little men were prepared for the Messiah who should die, the remaining verses fully set forth. "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." He had hinted at His death before, but He had never spoken plainly of it. They were not prepared. Their faith was not clear concerning His Person. Now, at length He might prepare them who believed for what must surely come. He unfolds to them the sad future. At Jerusalem, the holy city, He must suffer many things, the foul betrayal, the indignities, the mockery, the sufferings unutterable He did but hint at. Those who should inflict these nameless horrors were the religious leaders, whose hatred would only be satisfied by His death—"He should be killed." Then, to comfort them, He adds, "I shall be raised again the third day." Out of all this suffering and shame and death there should come victory at last. He would prevail, not as an earthly king, by a victory of this life, but of the eternal life, overcoming death itself.

Even this was more than the faith of the apostles could bear. Peter, ever impetuous, took Him either by the garment or by the hand, and began to rebuke Him, whom he had just confessed as the Son of God. "Be it far from Thee; this shall not be unto Thee." His attitude is amazing in its presumption and irreverence, contradictory of the faith he had just so nobly expressed. But the Lord who commends can also correct, and the scathing words are spoken to Peter: "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence, a stumbling-block unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men." Peter was here the instrument of Satan. He used him to dissuade, if possible, Christ from the way of the

cross—to choose man's ways to prevail, even as he had offered them to Christ in the temptation in the wilderness. Therefore He answered Peter so sternly. Peter, in the confession of the truth, had been the rock on which the Church would be built. Peter, as the instrument of Satan, was an offence, a stumbling-block, a rock of offence. Stern are the words, but merited, for he sought to turn the Lord from the way marked out for Him, and to lead Him to the way of self-pleasing, the way by which Satan tempted the first Adam to his ruin. He rebuked him justly, and to his eternal profit.

May we not learn that our faith, which the Lord may honor, is yet full of human infirmity? Easily we may be tempted. Easily we may become an offence unto the Master. We ought to pray, "Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief."

Again, every word of Christ, however hard it may appear, is full of truth, and its acceptance is our comfort and salvation. It was hard to think that Christ must suffer and die, yet it was the only way to save Peter, the apostles, the world. Its humble acceptance was the right thing for Peter. There are words of Christ at which we stumble, beyond and apparently contrary to our wisdom. But accept them and it shall be well. Is He not divine, the Son of God? And who art thou?

Again, how great comfort that Christ will commend and honor our faith as He did Peter's. His commendation is ever ready to be bestowed upon the believer. The Lord loves infinitely. And, therefore, too, He is quick to rebuke and correct us and so save us from our errors. We can trust Him. He will not withhold from us that which is ours, rather He abundantly rewards, nor will He hesitate to lay upon us the rod, and correct us for our faults. So, at length, we shall prevail against evil in this life. The gates of death shall not prevail against us, but we shall abide with Him in the New Jerusalem, the Church above, forever.

## OUR LUTHERAN CHURCH AND HIGHER CRITICISM

The Lutheran Church was born when Martin Luther, through the Scriptures, was led to faith in Christ. Christ and His gospel became to him the test of all truth, even the truth of the Scriptures. His faith in Christ did not primarily depend upon faith in the Bible, but upon Christ Himself, through whom he had come to forgiveness of sin and life with God. He knew the Bible to be God's word because it taught him Christ.

He no less taught that the Holy Spirit must give a man insight into the truths of Scripture. These cannot be discerned by the natural man. The true theologian is the man who has first been made Christ's and then led into riches of spiritual experiences. Here is the only key that will unlock the Scriptures. Scholarship may aid, but this is fundamental. Scholarship is vain that is not in living fellowship by faith with Christ does not interpret Scripture out of deep spiritual experience. Luther, therefore, approached the Scriptures with extraordinary freedom of criticism, for his test of the worth of the various books of the Bible was the clearness with which they presented the gospel. He united contradictory positions. "He upholds Scripture, on the one hand, as an external and absolute authority, the very word of God, the charter and constitution of the Church; on the other, he exalts the divine consciousness in man as that by which Scripture is known and judged to be from God. The Bible is divine because it is the mirror in which is reflected the experience of humanity in its highest exaltation, under the influence of a Divine Spirit. No amount of hostile criticism could shake a man's faith in Scripture whose reverence for it was based on such

a foundation. In this way may be explained Luther's extraordinary freedom in criticising the contents of the Bible. A freedom and a boldness which was a source of mortification to his successors, which they endeavored to cover over and forget.

The following specimens of Luther's biblical criticism, were their source unknown, would appear to some like the destructive attacks of modern higher criticism. In regard to the Pentateuch, Luther thought it a matter of indifference whether or not it was written by Moses. The Book of Kings he spoke of as excellent—a hundred times better than the Chronicles. Jeremiah as a prophet was much inferior to Isaiah. None of the discourses of the prophets were regularly committed to writing at the time, but were collected subsequently by their disciples and hearers, and thus the complete collection was formed. In the Gospel of St. Luke the Saviour's passion is best described; but the Gospel of St. John is the true, pure gospel, the chief of the Gospels because it contains the greater part of Christ's sayings; it is far preferable to the other Gospels. "The unique, tender, true, main Gospel." Even the Epistles of Paul are higher in authority than the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, for they deal with faith in Christ and how it justifies, while the latter are mainly occupied with His works and miracles. In a word. John's Gospel with Paul's Epistles, especially those of the Romans, Galatians and Ephesians, and also the first Epistles of John and Peter, these contain and teach all that is necessary to know, even if one were never to see the other books. Luther did not regard the Epistle to the Hebrews, nor that of James, to be of apostolic origin, and the latter he characterized as an epistle of straw, with no trace of the gospel in it. He estimated very lightly the Epistle of Jude, and thought it was a copy of the Second Epistle of Peter. He could detect no trace in the Book of Revelation of its having been inspired by the Holy

Ghost. The causes which led him to reject it from the canon were its visions, whose obscurity was in contrast with the clearness of genuine revelation; many of the Church fathers had long ago rejected it; Christ is not presented there as it was the duty of an apostle to recognize and teach Him. In harmony also with Luther's attitude to the Scriptures was his estimate of miracles. They had, to his mind, a very subordinate value as evidence of Christ's teaching. "External miracles," he said, "are the apples and nuts which God gave to the childish world as playthings; we no longer have need of them."

These startling expressions of Luther emphasize truths we are likely to forget. First, that continually the canon of Scripture must vindicate itself as God's word to the Christian consciousness of believers. Second, that criticism has its legitimate place. As Dr. Jacobs well says: "As faith is an individual matter, and cannot rest upon tests that have been made by others, as in former ages, the critical process must be repeated in every age, in order that the result attained may be a sincere conviction, without which there can be no true faith."

Third, he correctly teaches that there are degrees of worth in the Scriptures, some books being more valuable than others, and the spiritual conceptions of some much loftier than those of others.

It seems to us, however, that Luther has not laid sufficient stress upon the testimony of the Church, which has been guided by the Holy Spirit through the centuries; what it has found the word of revelation gains thereby the cumulative proof of Christian experience, which dare not lightly be cast aside.

The doctrine of the word as the means of grace gives to the Lutheran Church a foundation for the Scriptures, against which the waves of destructive higher criticism dash in vain. Luther felt this. Christ is the center, but the word the means by which man

comes to faith in Him and is built up in Him. Through the word men are brought into personal contact with God, by that word men are called, illuminated, renewed in heart and sanctified. The witnesses to this are the millions past and present who have been and are in living faith, who have leaned upon its promises and learned through its teachings the fullness of Christ. He that has the Christian experience knows that this book is the word of God, and is not dismayed by attacks made. "One thing he knows, whereas I was blind, now I see." "The Scriptures address that in man which fronts God."

The Word is ever the basis of reform and renewal of spiritual life. Its study made an Augustine, Luther, Wesley; its preaching to-day.

From this standpoint it can have no sympathy with the higher criticism that proceeds from the theory of a naturalistic evolution and will not allow the guidance and instruction of the Lord, to whom there is no revelation. It has the witness in heart and life that there is a personal God, Father, Son and Spirit. He does enter into fellowship with us now, and, therefore, must have entered into fellowship with men then.

The Lutheran Church is probably less affected than others by destructive higher criticism, for the reasons given above. So deep is its conviction that the Scriptures are the word of God that it is content to wait until the scholars have fought out the battle.

Whilst many of the scholars in Germany are higher critics, there are strong defenders of the more moderate, conservative views. Rupprecht, Zahn and others may be mentioned. In our own country, as yet but little impression has been made by the higher criticism on theologians and ministers. Those who have written have all stood strenuously for the traditional view. Schodde, Haas, Schmauk, Weidner, Jacobs, the authors of the Lutheran Commentary, writers in our Reviews, our theological professors, have all been

staunch defenders of the integrity of Scripture as the word of God.

That this will continue without exceptions is not to be hoped for. Some of our younger men who have gone to New England institutions or are diligent students of New England theology and writings, have either partially or entirely given in their adherence to destructive higher criticism. Whenever any theory is propounded that is startling and revolutionary, there are always those to whom the novelty appeals, who think it a mark of progress "to assume its truth, discuss its bearings and press its consequences." Moreover there are others who are overwhelmed by the apparent preponderance of scholarship, and who are driven reluctantly to conclusions which grieve them but from which intellectually there seems no escape.

We can be but patient, fall back on the essential truths, preach steadily the truths of revealed Scriptures and let the scholars continue their warfare until the truth is set forth. He that gave the word will, in His own time and way, confound the skeptics and raise up defenders and disclose the facts even as He has always done in the past.

## WHAT DOES LUTHERANISM STAND FOR?

Lutheranism stands for the oldest form of the Protestant Church, and for Luther, the greatest of all the reformers of the sixteenth century. The Augsburg Confession, the formal declaration of the faith of the Lutheran Church, delivered at Augsburg, June 25, 1530, is the first great "creed statement," antedating all those of the other branches of the Church, including the Romish. This statement of doctrine affected all the other evangelical bodies, whilst the Lutheran liturgies profoundly influenced the liturgy of the English Church. In the Thirty Years' War, which ended 1647, the heroic efforts of the Lutheran princes and peoples, especially of Gustavus Adolphus and the Swedes, saved Protestantism from extinction, at least on the continent of Europe. In this country the Lutheran has not been so conspicuous, but has, according to the teaching of His Church, ever been faithful and loyal to the constituted authorities, and has ever sturdily supported the cause of liberty.

The name Evangelical Lutheran indicates, also, for what the denomination stands. Evangelical is the name selected by the founders, indicating that the gospel of Jesus Christ is her glory. Her enemies gave to her the name Lutheran, which is willingly accepted because Luther confessed the pure evangelical doctrine and faithfully defended it. The Lutheran is not founded on Luther, but on Christ; he does not accept all Luther said or did, but follows him only as he rightly interprets the word of God, which is to him the rule of faith.

Doctrinally, the Lutheran subscribes unreservedly to the ecumenical creeds—the Apostles', the Nicene and the Athanasian. In the Augsburg Confession his distinctive doctrines are definitely stated. This is the

only symbol received unreservedly by all Lutherans, though in this country the General Council, the Synodical Conference, the Ohio Synod, and other independent Synods, subscribe also to the remainder of what is called the Book of Concord as a development and defence of the Augsburg Confession. The divisions of the Lutherans arise from the laxer or stricter acceptance of this book. The Lutheran is distinguished by his love for pure doctrine derived from God's word. He believes that others hold the saving faith in Christ as well as himself, but he also believes he more nearly holds the pure truth of God's word than any other body of Christians. He cannot be false to this pure doctrine which must be confessed in its fullness at any cost. Otherwise, he is a traitor to the truth. All permanent progress, he holds, must be made on the basis of truth and sound teaching.

Justification by faith is the central principle of the Lutheran Church. It looks upon sin not as a fault or disease, but as guilt. Sin is inborn as well as actual, and renders man incapable of his own salvation. He cannot even believe of himself. The Holy Spirit must regenerate and work faith in him. He is not passive, he can reject the grace offered him. The Lutheran denies the Romish doctrine that "a man's own will is able to help in his salvation. And he no less denies Calvin's doctrine that man's salvation depends on an arbitrary act of God's will." Every man may be saved, for God loves all, but his salvation is conditioned by faith. Naturally this deep sense of sin leads to a corresponding sense of holiness. The Lutheran believes that sin remains during this life and that he must daily watch and pray. He does not believe in sinless perfection in this life, but progressive sanctification into the likeness of Christ is his object through daily repentance and faith.

The Lutheran, therefore, teaches that man cannot be justified before God by his own powers, merits

or works; but is justified freely for Christ's sake through faith, when he believes that he is received into favor and his sins forgiven for Christ's sake, who by His death hath satisfied for sin. He becomes righteous before God through faith in Christ. Believing in Him, he has forgiveness and redemption. Living by faith with Him, there is given unto the believer power to live righteously before God and through union with God. The doctrine of justification by faith is held by the Lutheran as "the article of the standing or falling Church," for it carries with it the true meaning of the incarnation, redemption and resurrection of Christ—the truth concerning the work and person of Christ. This doctrine colors the teaching of the Lutheran Church on all other doctrines.

The Lutheran approaches God through Christ the Son. He repudiates the Romish idea that access to the Father must be mediated through the priesthood of the Church. Christ is the only Mediator. He rejects, also, the gloomy doctrine of predestination, which restricts God's love to the elect. God is to him the Father through the Son, not the God of absolute decrees. The Lutheran is Christocentric. He thus approaches God with the cheerful confidence of a child. He, justified by faith, is forgiven and accepted. One of the characteristics, therefore, of Lutheran piety is its cheerfulness and hearty joy. He accepts the good things of life frankly as from the Father. Where the Lutheran is true, "he excels in honesty, kindness, affection, cheerfulness and that *Gemuthlichkeit*, for which other nations have not even a name." Exalting the Lord's day for rest and worship, he does not agree with the Sabbatarianism of Puritanism.

The appointed way by which men are made righteous is through the Church, which has entrusted to it the word and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The Scriptures, with the Lutheran, are the word of

God. The Lutheran believes that in them God has spoken through the inspired writers the sure and certain facts of revelation for the salvation of men. The Lutheran Church in this land does not give any countenance to the destructive higher criticism. Everyone that desires to hear God is directed to His word. Everyone that would fully obtain God's grace is directed to the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, which offer and bestow grace. The word of God is the chief means of grace, through which the Holy Ghost calls, enlightens and sanctifies. The Lutheran believes that the Holy Spirit is in the Church guiding it in the development of doctrine and worship and government. Whilst no doctrine or practice in worship or government may be retained which is contrary to God's word, such as are not contrary to the word and are edifying may be retained.

He teaches that baptism is a means of grace. It is necessary to salvation, and "by baptism grace is offered." Three things are essential to effectual baptism—the words of the institution, water and faith. He demands faith in baptism, but does not restrict baptism to adults. The mode is a matter of indifference; baptism may be by immersion, pouring or sprinkling. The Christian nurture of baptized children is a matter of great importance with him, that the baptized child, nurtured by precept and example in holy things, may develop gradually into the fullness of Christian faith. He lays great stress on the instruction by the pastor of the children of the Church in the catechism, that they may understand their baptismal covenant, know the truth in Jesus, and accept with the heart the promises made in baptism. They are then confirmed. He insists on regeneration and conversion.

In the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, as a means of grace, the Lutheran is characteristic. "In the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine, and are there com-

municated and received." This is not the natural body and blood, but the glorified body and blood of our Lord. He denies that the bread and wine are changed into the veritable body and blood of the Lord, as the Romanist teaches. He also denies that it is mere bread and wine, and the rite a mere act of remembrance, as many teach. "This is my body"; the Lutheran reverently accepts and believes the body and blood of Christ are truly present and received in a spiritual and sacramental manner. He, approaching the table of the Lord in faith, is fed with heavenly bread, the Lord strengthening him by giving Himself.

The Lutheran holds that the Church is the communion of saints, and is found wherever God's word is rightly taught and the sacraments administered. It is not a human society, a matter of indifference, but divine, a necessity to every believer. The ministry with him is not a divine order separated from their fellow-Christians, but a divine office. All believers are priests before God. Ministers are men chosen of God, endowed with peculiar gifts, to preach the word and administer the sacraments; but they are set apart by the call of the Church which entrusts to them that which belongs to all, to be exercised in the name and authority of all.

The Lutheran Church is flexible in polity. It does not hold that any special form of government is divinely authorized, but the organization may be adapted to the peculiar circumstances of time and place. In Sweden it is episcopal, but deprived of hierarchical and unscriptural claims. In other countries it is presbyterial, or congregational. The bodies in this country are either presbyterial or congregational, largely the latter. The congregations are united in Synods, and Synods into general bodies, but the congregation is the ultimate source of power. In worship the Lutheran Church is liturgical, though it allows freedom in worship and has many congregations which are non-

liturgical. The Lutheran service retained all of the old service of the Romish Church that was in accordance with God's word and edifying. It is both historical and Scriptural. It conforms to the church year and exalts the great festivals. Of late a common service for all its English-speaking members has been adopted, which, however, has not met with universal acceptance. Even in this a congregation is permitted to use the service in whole or in part according to its judgment. Free prayer is permitted in the service, the written prayer being set aside at the pleasure of the minister.

A sprinkling of Lutherans came over to this country with the Dutch colony which, in 1623, settled New York. These were followed in 1637 by colonies from Sweden, who settled on the banks of the Delaware, fifty years before the arrival of William Penn. Emigrants from other countries of Europe, especially Germany, continued to swell the membership. The growth, however, was slow until 1820, when there were about 40,000 members in 575 congregations, with 160 ministers. Since then the growth has been very rapid through the large emigration from Europe.

The Lutheran Church is exceptionally strong in the northwest, where in eight States it largely outnumbers any other Protestant denomination, and in three—Wisconsin, Minnesota and North Dakota—exceeds the combined membership of all of them. Of the total membership, about 400,000 are English, the rest German, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, Hungarian and Icelandic.

The Lutheran Church, distinguished for benevolent work, has established in this country 92 benevolent institutions, of which 39 are orphanages, and 53 homes for the aged, deaconess institutions, hospitals, etc., with 32,146 inmates. It is also actively engaged in foreign mission work, with stations in India, Japan and Africa.

The Lutheran Church is conservative, Scriptural in doctrine, with the depth of religious feeling and consciousness so characteristic of the German at his best. It inherits, also, his tendency, steadfastness, thoroughness, profundity in thought and devotion. At least 7,000,000 of the population of the United States are Lutheran by birth, training and choice. As the Church is awakening to a consciousness of her strength and possibilities, organizing in every direction, drawing closer together in united effort through the Luther League, the future appears to hold increasing results. Under God, Lutherans, with their history, doctrine, cultus, conservatism and strength, organized and united, must, therefore, stand for a mighty force on the side of tried historic Christian life and doctrine in the thought and progress of true Christianity in our beloved land.



III

WORK OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL



## HOW CAN THE TEACHER BECOME MOST PROFICIENT IN THE USE OF THE BIBLE?

To the end of such proficiency the teacher must know God as his Father, Jesus Christ as his Saviour, Master, Teacher, Judge and Retributor, and the Holy Ghost as his Enlightener, Quickener, Sanctifier, Comforter and Guide. We insist upon an experimental knowledge of religion—upon personal piety as a primary, fundamental requisite.

He must know *himself*, his capacities, his weaknesses, his privileges, opportunities and possibilities.

He must know *those whom he is called to teach*, and know them better than they know themselves.

He must know *the Book*, and how to use it. And he cannot do this without *study*, the most careful, earnest, diligent study. He should know the Bible as thoroughly as is possible to him. We do not mean that he should be able to explain its *mysteries*. He is not expected even to *understand* them. They remain there to remind him that this is God's book, to keep him humble, and to stimulate his faith in the supernatural. The less he deals with them in his teaching the better.

But he does need the firm conviction that this is the inspired word of God. He should have no cherished doubts on this subject, and should be able to dispel any which may exist in the minds of his scholars. His success, his proficiency in using the word, depends very much upon this, both for himself and his scholars. What a miserable failure must come from any effort that lacks reverence for the Scriptures, and how can we be expected to revere them without the assurance of their inspiration? This is absolutely essential to good teaching.

God save us from the responsibility that rests upon

those who have already unsettled the faith of simple men by their unwarranted criticisms upon portions of the Holy Book. There are disciples of these destructive critics now teaching in some of our Sunday schools that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, that the story of the creation of Adam and Eve, and that of the fall, and the great deluge are *fabulous*; that Abraham did not offer Isaac as a sacrifice, that the fish did not swallow Jonah, and so on.

It is not difficult to undermine the faith of men in the entire word of God, if they can be made to believe that the books of the Old Testament are not authentic, and that portions of them are not inspired. If Christ and Paul, who quote Moses, and refer to the patriarchs and prophets in the spirit of the Old Testament record, were *mistaken*, then what remains of a divine revelation? Of course, no one can become a proficient teacher if he has no more faith in the inspired word than this. God will not permit it.

If you believe in the divine word with your whole heart, that, as David says, "it is forever settled in heaven," and that it ought to be settled on earth, then, to become proficient in its use, you must *study* it—study the *whole* of it—study it carefully, prayerfully, systematically, practically, faithfully. You should study it as a scholar, as a Christian, and constantly. You can never know too much about it. You can never exhaust this mine of truth, this treasury of wisdom and grace. It should be our aim, as much as possible, to make it the possession of our *memory*, so that we can readily command any essential portion of it in our teaching. We should remember that the Bible is largely its own interpreter. The best commentary on the Bible is the word *itself*. Study the *analogies of faith*. Take any subject which it presents, and by the use of a concordance find the teaching of the Scriptures with regard to it, and you will be amazed at the discovery of the beautiful analysis of truth which can

be made, at the light which shall dawn upon your mind and heart, at the arrows which shall fill your quiver, at the food which shall replenish your storehouse, at the precious gems which shall enrich your treasury.

Study the Book whenever you have the opportunity; make it the "man of your counsel," the guide of your life. Store up your knowledge, but *apply* it as well; apply it as you *go*. As God commanded the prophet, "Eat this roll," make it a part of *yourself*. If you have ever been regenerated, it was by its incorruptible seed; if you will ever be sanctified, it will be by the Spirit-sealed truth; if you ever become a proficient teacher, it will be through its light which is in you, and because your teaching will be a transmission of that light to the souls of others. "No man owns deeper than he plows," and no man teaches better than he knows and *is* himself. If a man is experimentally a stranger to the truth, if he does not live it in his daily life, there are portions of the Scriptures which he will not *dare* to expound to his scholars, unless he has the hardihood of a hypocrite and a perverter of the truth.

Study the Bible by the use of all the helps at your command. Despise not the learning and experience of others, but never fail to study with prayer for the aid of the Holy Spirit. Rely upon His enlightening and discerning power, *more* than upon commentaries or any other human aid.

Thus, by general reading and study of the word, and such works as will aid in its exposition, the teacher may become thoroughly furnished for his work.

But especial attention should be given to the *appointed lesson* for each Sabbath. As another has suggested in part, it should be carefully read the previous Sabbath. The context and parables, and what in our lesson books are termed *daily readings*, should be used in daily devotions. If it is possible, examine the text in the original. As time permits, gather all the information available which bears on any feature of

it. Analyze it. Try to ascertain what is the mind of the Spirit in each portion of it. Put it into logical shape for presentation to the class. Think over it at your daily work. Talk over it with other teachers whom you may meet. If there is a teachers' meeting in your school for the study of the lesson, be sure to be present and improve it to the best advantage, attentively and co-operatively. Be on the constant look-out for illustrations familiar to your scholars, giving preference to those which you may find in the Scriptures. If you have a *marked Bible*, it will serve you well. Have a note-book in your pocket and jot down thoughts that come to you by the way. Before going to your class review and arrange your preparation. Pray for the divine blessing on your work beforehand, and in spirit while you are teaching. Then utilize your time by dwelling on the most important truths contained in the lesson, and by making such an application of them as the needs of your scholars may require. When the lesson is ended review your work and see how you can improve it. And it may be well to learn from the parents and friends of your scholars the results of your efforts, and also to seek suggestions by which you may become more proficient and successful with those under your care.

Now this may appear to you like *hard work*, an exacting service, laying contributions upon your time, talents and energy, upon recreations and pleasures of other sort, and even upon your business. Just so; but it is the only way in which to become a most proficient teacher. Close application—diligent attention is of more account than special gifts, and you can no more succeed without it in this work than in your business or any engagement in life.

If you are not willing to do hard work and make this the "one thing needful," you may as well give it up. If you would succeed, your whole heart must be in it. And with this spirit and the grace of God, any-

one of ordinary intelligence may become a proficient teacher.

Let me give you Dr. Talbot Chambers's views on this subject. He says: "What is sought by a true teacher is, not simply to pass the time, or to entertain his class, or even to make an impression on the feelings by a moving story, but it is to *lodge truth* in the scholars' minds, that is, to give them a precise, clear, definite comprehension of God's will. Now, this is not easy. It requires that the teacher first know the truth himself; then, that he find out the best way of stating it; that he furnish the explanation of illustrations required, and that by questioning he discover whether he has been pouring water into a sieve or into a bucket. He has also to exercise a wise discrimination as to what portion of a given lesson he can afford to dwell upon.

"Sometimes there are questions of archæology, history, geography, manners and customs which he must touch upon, but never to the overlooking of more important things. For example, it is well to know something of the disputed question, whether Christ was transfigured on Mount Tabor or on a spur of Hermon, but what folly can be greater than to spend most of the hour on such a point? The two great things before the teacher, when preparing to meet a class in Scripture study, are: (1) *What does this passage of the word MEAN?* And then (2) *What does it TEACH?* These questions embrace all that need occupy the attention of the thoughtful student. To answer them satisfactorily involves investigation and reflection, as well as devout and earnest prayer. To get the full sense of a passage and to feel reasonably sure of it, and then to ascertain exactly what it teaches, either expressly or by fair implication; to rise from the particular to the general, to deduce from each statement its various applications, is no child's play.

"Still less is it an easy matter to select from various

contributions what is really pertinent, certainly true, and justly prominent, and then to state this so clearly, so simply, so naturally, so earnestly, that the class can hardly fail to take it in. The teacher's aim should be the conversion of his pupils, and the only conversion that is worth having is that which comes from the incorruptible seed of the word of God. Often, however, scholars are already in full communion with the church. In this case the object sought is to render them more intelligent, steadfast and consistent in their Christian life, and more useful in such methods as are open to them. And for both these ends they need to have their minds richly stored with divine truth. This is the nutriment of their growth, the measure of their progress."

I repeat it, this may be considered hard work, but there is no other way to proficiency in teaching. There are plans and methods without number, but all that are worthy of consideration can be reduced to the simple one of finding the meaning and teaching of the lesson, and none of them can be made effective without hard work.

Teaching is an *art*, and must be *learned*. There may be natural gifts which will facilitate the work, but, after all, it is the diligent student, both of the word and its exposition and application, who will be successful. Yes, it is an *art*, and if you would become a proficient artisan, you must know how to use your tools.

You have, doubtless, seen combination instruments, composed of various implements; perhaps you have tried to use them. At first it may have been awkward business, but by and by you obtained skill and praised their utility and convenience. Or, perhaps, you have seen artisans accomplish real feats of various workmanship with a single, simple instrument. That proficiency was not spontaneous. It did not come in a day. It was the result of study, instruction and patient, persevering practice.

Now you may take either illustration for your use of the word of God. It is a multi-tooled instrument. A lamp, a sword, a hammer, a mirror, and many other things, but it is *one*, single and simple. But we must know *how* and *when* to use it, if we would accomplish the purpose for which it has been provided. It is a *seed* and a *graft* for the husbandman, *milk* for the nurse, *bread* and *meat* for the householder, *medicine* for the physician, *law* for the counselor, *text-book*, *digest*, *thesaurus*, *everything* to the teacher. He will find it adapted to every peculiarity of human nature, to every want of the soul. What he needs is to know it thoroughly in all these adaptations, and then to possess the skill to use it properly.

And as for this last, can I say *more* than that, if we would become proficient, we must sit at the feet of the Great Master. Follow Him in His ministry as the Prophet of His Church, the Teacher sent from God. True, *indeed*, we cannot teach as He taught, for He "spake as never man spake." And yet, to *some* extent, He is imitable, and came to be our model. He will show us how to use the great implement, how to make truth plain, easy to be understood, attractive, interesting and profitable; how to be gentle and patient and wise; how to teach with authority and with power. Oh, how much depends upon our careful and faithful study of His example as a teacher! And what stronger motive could we give for it than that it is His own word that we teach, His own work that we are doing, and that He knows best *how* it ought to be done. Let us fellowship with Him, and He will make of us workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing, teaching and applying the word of truth. Leaning unto our own understanding, our best efforts will result in failure, but if, at His command, we launch out into the deep, and cast our net on the right side of the ship, we shall become successful fishers of men.

## THE DISCOURAGED TEACHER; OR, SOWING AND HARVESTING

A discouraged teacher was talking the other day to one in whose counsel she had great confidence. She was discouraged because the girls whom she taught were apparently so indifferent and unresponsive; indeed, at times she could not secure their attention, as they would talk about their own concerns in the midst of the lesson. When reproved, they were either sullen or defiant. Her labors appeared wasted.

Her counselor, who had seen more of life, replied that in such work patience was needed, results did not immediately follow teaching, seed sowing and harvesting were often far apart, that she was probably doing much more good than she supposed, that, in due season, the promise was that she should reap if she fainted not.

He does not know whether his counsels were of any avail, he does know she is sticking at it faithfully. He cannot tell how much good she will do to these scholars, whose surroundings are distinctly unfavorable to Christian life and progress; he is sure that this work loyally done for Christ's sake is of untold benefit to her Christian life and character, for the easy places fail to give Christian backbone and virility, whilst the hard places bring out strength and power of life.

Is there not too often a lack of patience about much of our Christian endeavor? Seed sowing and harvesting do not tread on each other's heels. There is first the seed, then the blade, then the ear, then the full golden grains in the ear. Autumn, winter, spring, summer come and go before the harvesting is possible in many a field. Singular, too, how differently we look at this matter when we consider our own souls and those of others. In our own life we claim that others should

be patient with us. "Give us time," we cry, "and I will overcome these faults, and bring these Christian graces to perfection." Indeed, we thus encourage our own spirits when we note slow advance. Patience and faithfulness, we reflect, are bound to give us the noble, beautiful and great things we strive for. The Master adds His voice: "Those that bring forth thirty, sixty, an hundredfold are they that, having heard the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with patience."

If, therefore, we ask that time be given us, should we not also be patient with others? Results may not come to-day, but in the future they will be seen. Perhaps we may be in our graves, our very sowing forgotten—God, however, remembers—when the blade, the ear, the ripened grain appear.

There are many considerations that might aid us in this work which tries our patience. Some of these we give with the hope that they may inspire.

First. It is good always to remember that God has asked us to do this work. He asks that His word be sown in the hearts of His children who know Him not, or do not know Him as they should. We have answered His call. When He puts anyone into a service He also will give grace to that one to do that service. There never has been one who faithfully and honestly attended to his Christian service that God forgot, whom He did not bless, whose work He did not make fruitful. God sends us, and we are co-laborers with Him; with such a co-worker harvest will surely be glorious. Even if there were no harvest, to the devoted Christian it is unspeakable joy that we are obeying His commands and pleasing Him.

Second. It is good to recall that we are not the only sowers. There are other teachers at work with the soul. God Himself is at work, and in His every-day dealings is teaching it. By sorrow and joy, pleasure and pain, by His daily providences, by unknown messengers, by books and society, by other Christian work-

ers, by prayers of intercession from mothers, fathers, friends, God pours upon that soul His instruction. Singular it is to observe how manifest this is in the most unexpected places. "When Paul climbs Mars' Hill he catches the echoes of 'certain poets,' who already have been singing of the Fatherhood of God." There are other human sowers whom He sends as well as ourselves. Perhaps the seed we bring is not always good seed, but others are helping. Let us be glad that we are not alone in this sowing.

Third. It is helpful to think that the vitality of the seed, God's word, is marvelous. It is marvelous to observe how long a seed will retain its vitality. Years may pass, but when the seed is given the conditions of growth, that which appeared dead germinates, grows and brings forth fruit. Sometimes men who have lived very wicked lives are suddenly converted. In almost every instance in their youth someone, a praying father or mother, a faithful teacher, pastor, or friend, dropped God's truth into their hearts. It laid there for years, retaining its vitality, and then the favorable conditions came, and it germinated and took possession at last of the heart.

Fourth. It is inspiring to think of the work we are doing. "He who helps a child helps humanity with an immediateness which no other help given to human creatures in any other stage of their human life can possibly give again. He who puts his blessed influence into a river blesses the land to which that river is to flow; but he who puts his influence into the fountain where the river comes out puts his influence everywhere. No land it may not reach; no ocean it may not make sweeter; no bark it may not bear; no wheel it may not turn. Sometimes we get at things best by their contraries. Learn, my friends, the rich beauty of helping a child by the awfulness of hurting a child. The thing men have always shuddered at most, the thing men have seemed to recognize as marking the

deepest and most essential meanness of human nature, is hurting a child; hurting a child even in his physical frame, so that he weeps, shrieks and cries; hurting him still more in soul and mind. The thing that made the Divine Master indignant was that He dreamed of seeing before Him a man who had harmed some of these little ones, and He said of any such a ruffian, 'It were better for him that he had never been born.' If it is such an awful thing to hurt a child's life, to aid a child's life is beautiful."

Once again, it is wise to remember that it is ours to plant and water, but it is God's to give the increase. A discouraged pastor recalls the kindly rebuke of his good wife, when he complained that his work seemed to be so fruitless. "You preach that all God asks is that we should be careful to do our work faithfully, and that we are not to be so much concerned about the results, for He giveth the increase. Would it not be well to apply your preaching to yourself?" This word in season is one that the Christian worker needs to carry with him always. It will give him strength to wait and patiently strive.

We might add that there are some things to do besides faithful and persistent labor for our scholars. We should trust God. The teacher should realize that, though his gifts are not great and his speech stammering, God can use him if he in humble trust permits God to speak through him. "When Ole Bull came across the sea at one time, no one on shipboard knew of his identity. He stood one evening listening to the orchestra, and said to the leader of the music that if the movement in a certain place should be accelerated the beauty of the composition would be more clearly brought out. The leader was highly indignant, and resented any interference. The next night Ole Bull stood in the presence of the musicians with a little old three-dollar violin he had secured from the steerage, and asked permission to play the part which he had

criticised. Permission was given, because the leader thought it was a rare opportunity for sport; but when Ole Bull began to play every other musician stopped, and he played on until the whole room was filled with the melody and everybody fascinated. One can easily see that the power was not at all in the violin, but in the master back of it." Our power is not in self, but in God.

Close to this is living near to Christ until He is precious to us. When He is precious, we will seek to make Him precious to others. Tholuck, the great German theologian, influenced in an unbelieving age hundreds of men to faith in Christ. The secret of his power is in these words of his: "I have but one passion, and that is for Christ."

Naturally from love to Christ there flows love to others. We come to look at others as Christ looked at them. He loved them, for He saw in the worst the possible saint, the soul that could trust God, fight sin, seek righteousness, and live a life of goodness and greatness. We, too, can love when we look at others with Christ's eyes. It is love that gives patience and power. When teaching is without love the heart remains hard, and the seed falls by the wayside. When teaching is with love, it enters the heart, because love breaks up the hard heart and prepares it to receive the seed sown. Scholars speedily detect when they are not loved, and resent perfunctory teaching, and just as quickly respond to love.

He that will live with Christ will make his own life holy and beautiful as well. It will become a living word of God. Its unconscious influence will constantly tell, and the influence that is most mighty is unconscious influence. It will proclaim Christ, and will, as a seed, be taken into the heart. Years may pass, but the seed will remain, and at last the harvest will come to the salvation of the loved, to your honor and to the praise of God.

## IMMEDIATE AND LASTING RESULTS

Results are desired by all workers, for, unless works issue in results, the life goes out of the worker. He may toil, but he toils as the ox, driven by the sharp goad or lash. All look for completion as the outcome of labor. Money is not sufficient to give zest to work. Laborers paid well would grow tired of carrying a pile of bricks back and forth from one side of the street to the other. They would rebel and seek occupation that would come to some result.

Results may be immediate and superficial, or they may reveal themselves in the future and be permanent. It is true that some results may both be immediate and permanent; but the law is that lasting results are the fruition of long-continued striving. The mushroom springs up in a night and is crushed by the passing foot. The oak takes the years for its growth, but then, with giant strength, resists the storms and calls the centuries its own.

The average man, short-sighted, demands immediate result. He is impatient over foundation work. He must see something that will prove to himself and others the value of his labor or expenditure. The true music teacher knows that the long and laborious practice of exercises will alone make the fingers strong and supple, the voice responsive to the shadings of melody and subject to absolute control. The pupil and the parents are dissatisfied because there are no immediate results and demand the set piece of the song. The exercises are often cast to the side and the lasting results never attained. Years afterward, when too late, they lament the lack of foundation work; or, if the teacher had grit and forced the exercises, thank him for the insistence of foundation work that made

them, after long years, artists, a joy to themselves and a delight to others.

Religious instructors are peculiarly liable to seek for immediate results, and slow to lay foundations upon which in the future great characters may be built. Much of our present Sunday school work is of this character. The aim is rather to stir the emotions and secure present expression of faith in Christ, or present protestations of devotion and consecration, rather than slowly to strengthen the will, instruct the conscience and teach the mind the deeper things of our religion. The outcome is that, for the most part, we have a showy, superficial piety, but not the solid, enduring, rock-ribbed and deeply-learned piety that knows what it believes and whom it believes.

Such instruction is unlike the example given us in the Scriptures. Moses, learned in the wisdom of Egypt, at the age of forty is sent to the desert for forty years more to learn by long meditation in quiet solitudes the truths that shall fit him to lead Israel out of Egypt and to give them the laws and precepts of God. Paul, by devout study of the law, by faithful observance of its demands, is prepared for his conversion. Even after conversion he must abide three years in Arabia before he may preach, the years of preparation more than doubling his capacity for labor. Even Jesus must needs wait thirty years ere His hour comes. His whole ministry is little concerned with immediate results, but devoted to preparatory work, over which He patiently toils, until, His disciples being prepared and furnished to carry on His work, He may go to Calvary and win our redemption.

The word of God is the means of grace. The knowledge thereof is absolutely necessary to a strong Christian character. Whilst we should seek decision for Christ, we should also be far-seeing and strive to make the scholar wise concerning the Scriptures and familiar with their deep truths. Modern teaching seems

to lay undue emphasis on the part of the command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and to largely overlook another part, "with all thy mind." It is, indeed, necessary to love God with the heart, with tender affection and true emotion; but none the less, with the vigor of the mind and the energy of purified thought. The noblest love of the heart must be built on the knowledge the mind has of Christ. A heart not directed by the mind becomes either shallow or fanatical. Paul, the apostle of faith, the man of tender heart, who wrote the noblest description of love, was a man who loved God with his mind and sought reverently to clearly understand the greatest truths of the religion of Christ. Coleridge was wont to say that the Epistle to the Romans is the finest piece of reasoning in the broad domain of literature. Paul never found the exercise of his mind to destroy his faith or weaken his love. It but made faith mighty and deepened his love, because it helped him to understand what God had done for him in Christ.

It has been pointed out by a thoughtful writer, to whom we owe much of what follows, that we need to-day especially "good, clear, honest, individual thinking." We do not think ourselves down into the real meaning of words, but are content with a superficial vagueness. "Take, for instance, words like life, death, sin, holiness, faith, belief, love, justification, salvation—all of which are vital terms in the Christian religion—how few of even professing Christians have any clear, forceful, transferable conception of their meaning!" They never honestly and energetically exercise their minds upon these words and search the Scriptures for their teaching concerning these living truths.

All these truths should be studied, but with a *lowly, reverent* mind. Conceit is fatal. They are not to be learned by our own wisdom, but by the Spirit of the Lord. We, indeed, should make every effort, but let

us understand that He must give the truth in its inner preciousness.

The great trouble with much study of to-day is that it has the spirit of the age. The age is trivial and worldly. It wants to put cheap and easy explanations upon everything. It thinks that it settles everything when it says, "I cannot understand it." It has no sense of mystery; though mystery is all about us, and must be so long as we are finite and God infinite. God beckons us onward by mystery. The age is trivial because, rejecting mystery, it has no strong, consistent purpose, no earnest effort to penetrate into God's wonders. Satisfied with what it can explain, it is, of course, worldly, and knows nothing of heaven, the mysterious. The true student, lowly and reverent, seeking to know God and His great truths, has a purpose that makes the mind strong and great.

We should have an *open* mind, a mind always expectant, "whose hospitable doors are ajar for any angel presence who may present himself for entertainment." We should have a "*mind set on things above.*" Loftiness of mind will be the result. Our world of thought will have a sky. We shall be lifted out of the mire of the commonplace and our feet tread the Delectable Mountains.

Therefore, let us be wise and far-sighted, and in teaching seek not only immediate results, but lay foundations, on which, in the future, the lasting results of a strong Christian character shall appear. Teach patiently the Scriptures; try to bring to scholars clear conceptions of its great truths and words. Go over them often and patiently, and years afterward your scholars will be known by their strong, clear and vigorous conceptions of truth, and noble, devoted and influential characters.

## “LEST WE FORGET”

We have observed lately in many journals sharp depreciation of Sunday schools, and especially of Sunday school teachers. The ungracious part of this is that many of these criticisms are written by men who are not Sunday school teachers themselves. It is always easy to find fault with work that one is not doing one's self.

Are there not some things we forget?

First, do we not forget that the despised Sunday school brings more young people into the church than any other agency the church has? It works with Christian families, supplementing home training and aiding their children to reach decision for Christ. Out of the Sunday school come many of the members of the pastor's catechetical class, the teachers bringing to bear the weight of their influence and the solicitations of love upon their scholars to induce them to attend. These, having little or no encouragement at home, would not be reached at all save for them. Pastors claim that often they find the Sunday school scholars ignorant of the Bible, those scholars that come to their catechetical classes from the Sunday school. Have they ever realized fully that which is greater, that they would not have many of these boys and girls at all without the Sunday school? Whatever knowledge of the Bible many of them possess, whatever confidence in and desire for the church these have, are due to the Sunday school! The truth is that the Sunday school, with its seeking out of the little ones, its attractiveness, the shepherding of them by its teachers, is the mightiest evangelizing force the church has. The ministry of many a pastor would be comparatively baren were it not for the Sunday school. Too many ministers talk about *their additions* to the church when it is permitted them to gather into the garner the

grain that has been tended by parents and Sunday school teachers. "One soweth and another reapeth" too many forget.

Second, do we not forget that the Sunday school does more to make the young acquainted with the whole Scripture than any other agency the church has, save those few favored boys and girls whose parents teach them the Scriptures? Our preaching does not do it, for our preaching is too sporadic. The catechism has another object, namely, to teach the doctrines essential to salvation. It does not deal with Scripture as a whole, with its history, its incidents, its characters, not even with the teachings of Christ in their extent. These things the pastor expects the pupil to know in some measure before they come to him. Were it not for the Sunday school there would be a deplorable want of knowledge about the primary facts of the Bible. Instead of everlastingly finding fault with the Sunday school about its poor work, ought we not to acknowledge these plain facts, and, rejoicing in the same, study how the Sunday school may do better work? There is no wisdom in discouraging your best helpers by continual fault-finding, but, encouraging them, incite to larger things.

Third, do we not forget that the portion of Christian congregations that know most about the Bible, with few exceptions, are those who have taught or are teachers in the Sunday schools? Our experience as pastor did not discover to us that teachers, who had been for some years in the Sunday school work, were ignorant of the Bible. On the other hand, many were well informed, and, because they had opportunity to put their knowledge into practice, had a heart understanding of the faith that was delightful. That you are able to rattle a number of teachers with trick questions or sudden ones does not mean that they are ignorant. It is not hard to confuse many persons. It is not easy to recollect things well known when em-

barrassed. Some persons who examine others get themselves up before examination, and often must have their notes with them, even then, to be sure of the answers to their own questions.

Fourth, do we not forget that the Sunday school workers of the past and present are the vast majority of the workers to-day in the church? Is it any marvel? There they are taught the patience, the sacrifice, the toil essential to first-class Christian service. It is not a matter of little moment to go to Sunday school Sunday after Sunday and give an afternoon to a class of trying scholars, where the sole resource is the resource of tact and love. The day-school teacher has physical suasion, the resources of the law, the backing of parents to enforce obedience, order and to exact study. The Sunday school teacher is compelled to fall back upon moral suasion and has very little support from any other source. The Sunday school teacher of the better kind is a visitor of the scholar, and sacrifices time that could be given to pleasant and attractive pursuits to make these visits. They must set the example of liberality to the class and teach by sacrifice the joy of giving to their scholars. Yes! They get training that some critics would shrink from, and because they do it for Christ's sake learn to know Him and the joy of His work and continue on long after they have left the Sunday school.

Fifth, do we not forget that the great truths of the Christian religion are the real things to be taught? The great and insistent demand of to-day is what—to require teachers to know the geography, the history of the Bible that stretches over four thousand years, the manners and customs of the orient, the critical themes so rampant, and the like? All these are valuable to put a lesson in its proper setting and thus make it attractive. But the real thing is to reveal those truths concerning Christ that are necessary to salvation, and those truths which build the scholars in the

knowledge of God and in the fullness of the Christian life. We submit that this is possible to plain Christian men and women; that this insistence on much knowledge is disheartening them, driving them out of the Sunday schools.

We are free to acknowledge that better work is desirable. But we should be wise. Let us rejoice that we have these men and women that know the vital things and lead them to study, that will teach them to know the child, the Book, and how to bring the two together. So far have some gone that they are asking for paid teachers who are adepts in the new education. But when the mercenary steps in, there is always danger of the decay of the spiritual. Even the minister, who believes he is *called of God* to the ministry, on whom rests the solemn vows of ordination, must ever fight to keep himself true to his Master and above his salary.

Once more, do we not forget that the Sunday school advances? A doctor of divinity writes that it is fossilized, that it is not in touch with the educational advances. He must never enter the Sunday school. He cannot read its journals, the long line of books written concerning methods of teaching. Give the Sunday school time. It is alive and working almost feverishly to better itself. Nor are we to forget that the new things offered have yet to be tested. Secular methods have hitherto not been very successful in doing Christ's work.

Let every teacher stand fast and not be discouraged by criticism. Let everyone be eager to avail himself of anything that may aid. But may he never forget that nothing can take the place of God's Spirit in conveying Christ's truth to another. Let him study, for God does not do what a man can do for himself, but, when all is done, let him remember, "Paul may plant, Apollos may water, but it is God that giveth the increase."

## A LITTLE CHILD

"Life," says Jean Paul, "should in every shape be precious to us; for the same reason that the Turks carefully collect each scrap of paper which comes in their way, because the name of God may be written upon it." Our Lord loved little Children, loved them for themselves, loved them for what they might become. Every good Sunday school teacher loves the child in itself, and never forgets its possibilities. A good deal of fun has been made of the old-fashioned orators who said to the scholars that one of them might become the President of the United States. Yet it was much beter to think highly of them than meanly. Angell, the devoted friend of men and children and animals, when he went to lecture in a hall in a Vermont town, on a hot night, says he found it not lighted and only the janitor and half a dozen rough boys. "'Why don't you light the hall?' said I. 'Well, I thought I'd wait and see if anybody was coming,' said he. 'Coming,' said I; 'why, here 's half a dozen boys already.' 'You ain't going to *lecture* to these boys, are you?' said he. 'Certainly I am,' said I, 'if nobody else comes. *One of them may be governor of Vermont one of these days for aught I know.*'

"So he lit the hall and gradually some hundreds gathered; and now they have a society there for the prevention of cruelty to animals."

Surely that is a better way to look at the boys than with cool contempt as a set of hoodlums. Christ never despised children, but said, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." A little child is not far from the kingdom of heaven, and even when its early graciousness has passed away, there is response, and evil habits are not second nature. The day teacher that develops the intellect of the child adds a power

that may be used wisely or become a bane. The Sunday school teacher that develops the conscience, instructs in right living, and brings a child into trustful love of God, does an infinitely better work. Hiram Powers once said, "Educate the hearts of a people and the heads will take care of themselves. Give in your schools rewards to good boys, not to the smart ones. God gives the intellect; the boy should not be rewarded for that. The great danger of our country is from smart men. Educate the heart—educate the heart. Let us have *good* men." Wisdom is in these words. Possibly too many have no consciousness of the sacred trust given them when a little child is placed under them. How delightful is the prayer of Leopold Mozart, which he offered for his little son, Wolfgang, then four years old: "O Lord, my God, Thou has given me a rare and wonderful flower; give me wisdom and patience that I may watch over it and bring it to a most beautiful unfolding. Let the glory be Thine and the happiness mine!" And God heard that prayer, and the child became the "master, the knight of harmony." The wonderful child had already disclosed a genius for music, which foretold the possibility of the future; but the father wisely prayed God that he might be given grace to be worthy of the trust reposed in him.

Every one of us should not only be alive to the possibilities of every little child, but we should take them from the Master in trust for Him, and pray for wisdom and patience to watch over them and bring them to beautiful unfolding. Not what is, but what may be, should be the way we look at a little child, and then, remembering the wonderful power of example and teaching, surround them with all the influences that will bring that possibility to reality.

In such work with little children there will be disappointment and failure in some cases, but there will be also happy results in others. There may be a decided difference in the happy results. There are chil-

dren that respond quickly and indicate very early rich capabilities for goodness. There are others who mature slowly, and in later years only disclose the fruit of the loving care of the teacher. It has seemed to me in our day that there is entirely too much stress laid upon the former class. Our organizations are hot-beds of piety. They want apples as well as strawberries in the spring, and when the apple refuses to ripen before its time, they rather doubt whether the apple is a fruit at all. One can sympathize with many children who, like Samuel, early show a godly disposition and hear the voice of God and answer thereto. Angell tells us of a bright school-girl from Hartford whom he met in the mountains and interested in his humane work. When she returned she spent the time left after school and lessons in urging this work of the prevention of cruelty to animals, first upon her own clergyman, and secured from him his church for a meeting. Then she secured the co-operation of the other clergymen. Next she went to the editors and asked if they would write something in favor of the object and the meeting. The result was a great gathering and a great society. There are just such girls and boys who respond at once and do nobly, and our temptation is to despair of others, neglect them and unconsciously make these our favorites. But there are differences of administration, and often the slower ones are the most thoughtful and conscientious in the end. They heat slowly, like the great back log in the fireplace, but when once alight, hold the fire all through the night. I was talking with a teacher the other day who gave this bit of experience: "I taught my class of girls for years, and there was no response. I almost despaired, and at last, one by one, they came forward and gave themselves to the Lord." I said, "I venture to say they have remained steadfast." "Yes," was the reply, "they have, and among the best workers in the church to-day are the old members of my class."

Would it not be well to keep these truths in mind as we teach the little children? Loving God, let us love them for what they are, for what they may become. Let us rejoice with trembling in our sacred trust. If one of our children early turns to God with the whole heart and becomes a laborer with God, let us be thankful. But if one does not respond quickly, let us reflect that God is with us, that He has given us this duty, and let us be patient and prayerful, and, perhaps, the last shall yet be first.

## THE SEED AND THE SOIL

Are there not two things to be thought of in teaching? The teacher brings the truth, the scholar receives the truth. The results will be incomplete when one or the other factor is missing or imperfect.

The parable of the sower emphasizes this. The sower sows sound and wholesome seed, the word of God. The seed fails wherever there is no proper reception. The sower may do his work well, the seed may be good, but if the soil be the hard-beaten path, or the thin covering on the rock, or the thorn-possessed earth, there is failure. There must be good ground to receive the seed if there is to be abundant harvest. On the other hand, to the good soil must be given the right seed, for it will be possessed by rank weeds if it be not occupied with wholesome grain.

As we look at one side or the other, certain truths are apparent. If the ground be prepared and good, even if a child scatter in sorry fashion the seed, it will be taken and spring up into harvest, uneven and in spots, perhaps, but a harvest. The prepared heart will receive truth from any source and respond. The prepared heart is sensitive to truth. Who has not noticed that when a fervent appeal had been made, those who were trying to do right felt that they must do more? The willing horse in the team is ever the first to respond to the crack of the whip. Someone has said, "When you want anything done ask a busy man to do it, and the chances are he will squeeze it in somehow and do it; but never ask a lazy man, with plenty of leisure—you will wait forever and never get it done." Who has not known the faithful to respond to rebuke, whilst the neglectful blandly ignored the pointed words? As a pastor, after a sharp sermon, how often did the faithful come and confess that they

needed the reproof, whilst the very ones for whom it was intended, laughing and chatting with their friends, left the church apparently unconscious that they were the sinners meant. It was the prepared soil that made the difference.

Some time ago the editor of one of our best religious papers published the substance of two letters he had received. One expressed the glowing gratitude of the writer for the help and instruction derived from the articles in its columns, and especially for the comfort and uplift the editorials had given. The other expressed the opposite sentiments, berating the editor for the general lack of finish and thought in the editorials, and intimated that unless there was improvement, the outlook for the journal was gloomy. The editor, after some judicious comments, humorously said, "Please, sir, I did the best I could."

The teacher may take a great deal of comfort out of this. Some persons with more zeal than judgment are always berating the teachers because they do not bring all their scholars to Christ. They speak of better work, more prayer, more consecration. No one will object to counsels of this kind, for everyone will acknowledge he is not what he might be. But when all is said, the fact of the reception remains to be considered.

Christ Himself could not persuade some men to receive the truth. Their prejudices, love of sin, hard-heartedness, filled Him with indignation and grief. He, the Omnipotent, was helpless, for omnipotence itself will not interfere with the choice of men. If the scholars are not influenced, the fault may lie in their reception of the truth, and not in our giving of the message. Our great concern is to bring the word of God, the seed, faithfully, in love, to the heart, the soil. The result is not in our power.

There is another thing worth thinking about. There are times when the message is received by only a few in a great congregation and becomes to them the word

of life. The sermon may interest, but not profit others, or to the bulk of the listeners be an indifferent affair, even dull. Either they are not in need of it, or not alive to it, or not ready to take it. Yet, the few will never forget the words which revealed the truth their souls needed.

In our teaching there is like experience. Some lessons will appeal to one or two at most, the others will not heed. Yet it is valuable to teach them, for they are life to a portion of the class. George Macdonald gives an instance of a woman who had committed a grievous sin. She slipped into a church in the strange city to which she had gone in shame. The clergyman was speaking of Peter's denial. How differently it all sounded to her, who also had denied the Master, than, when untempted, she had wondered how anyone could do so base a thing. Then, as the preacher spoke of Christ's tender look upon Peter, with its mingled sorrow and love, the Lord seemed to look on her. Kneeling in the pew, she confessed her sin, and peace came to her troubled soul. She was prepared to receive the truth which before she could not take to her heart.

All this will not cause us to be less painstaking in our teaching, though it may support us in failure. We are the sowers, to whom Christ has given the honor and the duty of providing sound seed, the truths of God's word, to scatter into hearts. We may not tell when the soil is prepared, or when the scholar will receive into an honest and good heart the word. Negligence may cause us to miss the precious opportunity. It would be sad for them to miss God's truth because of our negligence, sad for us not to use the opportunity afforded us.

Nor should we overlook the aid of the Holy Spirit. He goes before and prepares the heart for the truth; He is with the teacher and helps him to utter the right truth. Paul was a great teacher, but how he felt his dependence upon the Spirit. Lydia was an earnest

woman, but the Lord opened her heart to the words of Paul.

The other day a friend said, "You ministers have terrible odds to contend with. There are so many temptations to a worldly and wicked life, so many subtle oppositions young people must meet nowadays." The reply was, "Yes, but God is on our side." He is the great factor apt to be forgotten; He is with every faithful teacher, making man's words His words.

Unless we humbly let Him work through us, all our wise schemes and bright words are nothing. One word which the Holy Spirit takes is in power infinitely above our much speaking, as one seed with the germ of life is infinitely beyond a multitude of seeds out of which the life has gone.

## AVOIDING DISPUTES

The Old Testament, which we are now studying, is at present a great battle-ground. Disputes are raging fiercely over almost every portion. So little would some of the critics allow, that, unless someone disputed their statements, nothing would be left of the Old Scriptures except a few historical events, which are conceded to us, not because the Bible gives them, but because they are established by the testimony of inscriptions that have been found in long-buried cities and tombs.

The animus of certain higher critics apparently is that, in itself, the Old Testament is not to be trusted. They do not appear ever to feel that, because the Bible says a certain thing, a presumption is created that it is true; but rather appear determined, because it does say it, to show that it is the very reason not to trust it, which appears to be a singular way of acknowledging it to be the word of God. Whilst the researches of many of the critics have happily been in a much more reverent temper, yet there is unfortunately too much theorizing and guessing on the part of the majority. Good results have been obtained, but also much harm has come through the theories suggested. A feeling of uncertainty has been created as to the trustworthiness of the chronicles of the Scriptures. Curious guesses have been made, and half denials of long-accepted facts on very slight evidence have been uttered.

These theories and contradictions have been common property, and are talked about by many who know very little about such things. There will be a desire to drag them into the class-work and air them there, consuming the time to the exclusion of better things. The Pentateuch, for instance, when it was written,

how it was written, what part belongs to Moses, what to the priests, may be taken as an example. The wise teacher will firmly repress all such disputes.

He can assert the general principle that disputes in a class are, for the most part, pernicious evils. The important truths for the moral and religious lives of the scholars are lost sight of in the dispute, and, ere the noise of the wordy warriors is over, the bell rings and the time for instruction is past. Some time ago a class whilst studying one of the rich lessons in the life of Christ, was deprived of the whole lesson, because one of the bright but thoughtless girls interested in the subject of predestination, dragged it into the lesson and persisted in disputing about it with her teacher. In a church, a young men's prayer-meeting that had made a healthy beginning, was completely broken up because two or three well-meaning persons thought it was a debating ground where they could display their peculiar notions. Prayer became infrequent, their disputes taking the time. The young men soon grew tired of the wordy war, and refused to attend. The prayer-meeting might have had the epitaph, "Talked to death." So, in these disputes about the Old Testament, let the teacher firmly insist that these will not be permitted, and proceed to the unfolding of the moral and religious truths of the lesson.

If the subjects are such as can be handled, let the teacher express readiness to talk them over after the school, or at a time appointed when the teacher and disputatious scholar may meet together and go over the whole matter calmly.

The teacher again should refuse to entertain such disputes because these questions belong to learned scholars as yet. They require trained minds and peculiar acquirements. Experts in special lines are here demanded. The controversy of such points by those without any preparation in these lines is a sheer waste of time.

The teacher can safely say, We will await certain results on these discussions before we dispute concerning them. So far, little that is certain has been brought out. One theory after another has had its day and passed away. The facts that have been secured through researches into the inscriptions of the buried cities and tombs have destroyed many plausible suppositions which were put forth with much effrontery, and have verified the Scriptures.

Indeed, the amount of theorizing just now in certain lines taxes credulity to the utmost. In a recent periodical, creative motherhood is put forth to account for great changes in animals by one who, in his anxiety to establish the theory of materialistic evolution and to get rid of God the Creator, gravely offers this with no proof whatever to substantiate it. He also suggests a buried continent in the Indian Ocean to escape the fact that there is no link between man and the anthropoid apes, or no trace of a progenitor common to both. If the supposed buried continent could be examined, then he supposes the missing link or the common progenitor would be found. When men who claim to be scientific can indulge in such wild surmises, we can well afford to wait until substantial facts are presented ere we consent to accept the theories proffered.

Once more, the teacher can refuse to allow disputes on these points, because he can urge that the moral and religious truths are those which are the chief things. They can be verified by every man for himself. They are as true now as they were then. They appeal to the conscience. Experience proves them to us now just as certainly as they proved them to the Israelites. God is near to everyone that obeys Him, and reveals Himself to those who trust Him and love Him. The other questions satisfy the intellect, these the heart. They profit for a little while, these profit for this world and for the world to come.

Jesus the Lord always refused to be drawn into

perverse disputes, but ever presented the deep truth. When a man asked Him, "Whether there be few that be saved?" He did not even reply to him, but said unto them, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able." Curiosity was the cause of the question. The Lord turned from the curiosity-monger and spake a word of warning and urgent command that those who heard might give themselves to the real issue, and not miss eternal life through foolish disputes which would not and could not be of advantage to anyone.

## THE TEACHER'S SIN

David was a man so great that he was distinguished in many directions. He was soldier, statesman, musician and poet. But, after all, nothing has so endeared him to after ages as his psalms, in which he has crystallized his knowledge, faith and love in God, wrought out by trial and experience. He was a religious teacher of the highest order. He impressed upon the people whom he ruled, who had grown lax in religious worship and conduct, the need of worship, and organized their religious life and laid the foundations for a central sanctuary, the temple, whither the tribes might resort and be brought and kept in fellowship with Jehovah by its daily sacrifices and worship. This in itself marks him a great religious reformer, a teacher of high rank. Yet the psalms, in which the inner religious life is recorded, exalt him still more as teacher. His words have been chanted by the Jews in all ages to express their adoration and prayers to God; the countless millions of Christians have strengthened themselves by David's psalms in all these centuries, pillowing their heads in death upon his words; Paul finds in him the doctrine of justification by faith, whilst, most wonderful of all, on the cross itself the blessed Lord, in His supreme agony, lifts His soul to God in David's words.

This teacher so marvelous, sins—sins wretchedly. What a shock it must have been to the nation to whom he had been so great an example of righteousness and whose words had been as the words of God! He repented and God forgave him, but one sees the teacher's sin weakened his influence and robbed him of his people's confidence. It is impossible otherwise to account for the strength of Absalom's rebellion and the defection of the people.

David's transgression followed him. Men who did not know him personally, nor the sincerity of his repentance, sneered at him: "This is the saint who taught us God. He is no better than others—worse even, for he is a hypocrite." They lost respect not alone for him but for the truth, and were ready to listen to Absalom's treachery. Nor was this the only consequence. Ever since, David's conduct has been a stumbling-block to many who cannot understand how he was a man after God's own heart, and has given occasion for sneers at religion and encouraged evil-doers in evil.

Sin ever leaves its stain. Repentance may be bitter and sincere, but the sin will not be forgotten. The influence of a blameless life is forfeited. The evil-disposed gather encouragement to go on in sin. The power of teaching others is weakened. Nothing is more painful to-day, in these days of sensations, than the prominence given as teachers to gross sinners who have repented, over pure and blameless men. The glibness and apparent relish with which dissolute lives are recounted before mixed audiences to enhance God's mercy, is unhealthy. One does not find David lingering over the details of his sin, but in heart-broken petitions and thanksgiving, seeking God and not men. The sinner forgiven may teach and should teach, but in all humility and with little allusion to the details of his sin, such lowly allusion as Paul made to his public acts against God's kingdom.

The teacher whose life is upright should also learn that he must shun sin for the best and noblest work. As he values influence, as he longs to advance God's cause and the truth, he must beware of sin. With sin will come not alone the loss of power over those taught, but also they will be encouraged to go into like sin.

If one, however, has been betrayed into sin, David, the teacher, shows us what to do. There is a way of return. God is ready to forgive when the man

loathes the sin and not merely shrinks from the consequences of sin. Those penitential psalms are the cries of the heart sick of sin, crying for deliverance to Him who alone can cleanse and forgive.

Herein God, who maketh even evil to work out good, hath caused David's sin and forgiveness to be for the help of the sinful. How many, as they have read his story and marked the way he was led to repentance, the forgiveness given, have trod the same way and cried as he did unto God until they, too, have been compassed about with songs of deliverance! The teacher who has sinned, returning unto God, may still undo some of the evil influences of his sin and humbly lead others to return unto God.

Yet let us observe that David's power in this direction was gained by his patient submission to the consequences of his sin, and by the life of righteousness which he manifested ever afterwards. The notable change from the people's indifference and contempt to confidence and love occurs after Absalom's rebellion. In that flight from Jerusalem, he proved nobly his heart was right with God. He resigned himself to the rebellion as a righteous punishment for his sin. He bore the defections as justified by his conduct. He patiently endured the curses of Shimei as part of God's chastisement, not suffering his mighty men to slay the foul-mouthed. The pathetic cry in the chamber over the gate reveals that he knew his sin brought about Absalom's death, and that he and not Absalom should have died. Such patience, submission, recognition of sin and yet sublime trust as the psalms of this period manifest, caused all Israel to see the heart of the king was fixed on God. The sin had been but a lapse in a life devoted to God.

The teacher that has sinned should bear the consequences of sin submissively, without repining. When our guilt is known we are not to whine because we are not restored to favor when we have said, "I

am sorry." We should not be discouraged by averted looks and loss of confidence. Men know our sin, but they do not know our hearts and cannot tell whether the repentance be genuine. The way to confidence is the way of patient submission to God's will, brave bearing of the consequences of sin, nobility of conduct. God knows us, and in Him is our strength; to Him we can go for comfort. After awhile the victory will come, the trial be over. Men will witness by their confidence and love restored to that which God gave at once when sin was confessed, the forgiveness in which He took us back into His love and peace.

## SUMMER WORK

In summer many schools have their best opportunities. City schools dwindle until but a handful of the busy winter hive remains, but in the country, schools are full and vigorous. Indeed, in some sections the schools open with the spring and close with the autumn.

The teacher in such schools may enhance the profit derived from the lessons by using the illustrations nature gives, which every scholar may verify. The great Teacher, Jesus, was ever leading through everyday sights and events His scholars to understand spiritual truths. The sower going out to sow, the harvest with its separation of the wheat from the chaff, the grain of mustard seed, the shepherd and his sheep, the lilies of the field, were the illustrative lights by which the truths of God were seen and understood. He thus taught that the book of nature is also God's book, and through the natural we may rise to the supernatural. Paul, following Him, could find no better way to express life out of death than the grain of wheat sown, coming through death to another body.

A child is imaginative. It likes to see truth in pictures. "Pilgrim's Progress" owes its lasting hold upon so many to the fact that in it, by a series of pictures, John Bunyan has made the Christian life an abstract truth to be easily understood. The burden carried by Christian on his back, that rolls off and disappears under the cross, does make us understand sin is a weary load and that by the cross sin is taken away; though no one ever carried his sins done up in packages on his back, or saw them rolled under the cross, it is a vivid picture of the condition of the soul under sin and of the forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ.

Our summer, therefore, should help us in our les-

sons. There is, for instance, the contrast of the littleness of the seed sown with the abundant harvests. The little quantity of spiritual seed sown may be contrasted with the large spiritual harvests—as when Paul sows the seed in Philippi and other places in Europe, and reaps his own harvest of many and strong churches, whilst in these last centuries the exceeding great harvest from that seed sown in the hundreds of millions of European and American Christians. From this it is easy to lead to the thought that when we sow the seed of the word of God, there will be harvest. We must be patient and wait for it.

Or, every child sees the hen mothering the little brood, her devotion and watchful care, her courage that braves danger for these downy, helpless chicks. Paul at Corinth, refreshed by the vision of the Lord, “Be not afraid, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee,” can be illustrated by the hen and her chickens, even as the Lord used this of Himself and of His care when He said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.”

There are many places in the lessons for illustrative work, as the reference to the wolves rending the flock at Ephesus, or to those who sleep in Jesus kept by Him, just as life was kept in bulb and bud to burst forth into flower and blossom when the day of the spring came, a day of nature's Lord, as the resurrection day will be the day of the Christian's Lord.

But there is another class who will reap advantage by careful thought concerning summer work, namely, those who are away from home several or more weeks in the summer. It has unfortunately grown to be a habit with many to dismiss their regular Christian work and even worship during the summer vacations. Yet they continue to feed the body regularly, it being not uncommon for some to eat more than when at

home. The word of God, the worship of God, are the food of the soul; to do without these is to starve the soul. Wherefore many come back home very lean, whilst others are easily led into sin when away because there is no robust strength to meet temptation, just as the weakened body is unable to resist disease.

Why should the summer be passed without study and work? Life is such a rush in these days, so full of engagements, pleasures and labors, that the serious-minded might well seize gladly upon the summer's outing more diligently to study God's word. What better use of time than for scholars and teachers to take with them their "Lesson Books" and "Teachers" during the summer, with books bearing upon them, and thus, gathering stores of information, come back to classes, having kept up the study of the lessons and rich in knowledge and wisdom. Truly, this would be better than to pore over novels day in and day out. Read other things indeed, but give time also to this noble work.

There are, moreover, opportunities to do good. Many places will be glad to see your faces in their schools, and give you chances to substitute. You may interchange ideas with these Christian workers, perhaps, having had better opportunities, give hints and drop thoughts that may be of untold good. At least you can cheer your brethren by your sympathy. You can speak a word for Christ. The quiet words we speak in the Master's name may echo in eternity.

"Forty years ago two travelers stopped their horses at a brook for water; as they looked in each other's faces, one spoke to the other concerning the welfare of his soul. They parted strangers as they met; but the words of love found lodgment in the heart into which they fell. So Champion became a Christian, a minister, a missionary. He never knew his benefactor till, in a volume sent him in Africa from this country, he saw and recognized James Bayard Taylor."

There may be openings for benefactions. Some have thus used their summers, finding opportunities to aid the Master's work. They have sought out the struggling pastors and congregations, and have learned their wants. On their return home, welcome books have gone to the pastor's library, timely donations to him and the congregation. Unnoticed and burdened Christians have been discovered, and, if nothing else was done, on their return bright and happy letters have gone back, carrying sunshine to the darkened homes. Everywhere there are chances to live for Christ, to be loyal to His cause, to love in His name the worldly and those astray, to speak for Him the word revealing Him.

There is no reason that summers should be wasted. As the bees gather out of the summer flowers honey for the winter store, we may in summer days gather the honey of God's word for winter use. As the summer provides the autumn's fruits, so we may so use the summer that fruit may abound to our praise and honor and glory in the day of His appearing.

## DECISION FOR CHRIST

Everyone who reads thoughtfully the Gospel narratives must see that the teachings and miracles of Christ made a wonderful impression on the people. They knew that He was more than the ordinary man. Nicodemus expresses the common conviction when he says, "We know Thou art a teacher come from God, because no man can do the miracles Thou doest except God be with him." In the discussion that His doings and claims occasioned, this must have been freely asserted by many, and could only be gainsaid by the blasphemy, "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils"; "He is of the devil, who gives Him power that He may deceive the foolish with these works." Many were impressed, but few decided to accept His invitations and obey Him as a teacher sent from God. There were many reasons. Some loved their sins; some were afraid of the Jewish religious leaders and the persecutions that might arise if they came out on His side; some were loth to go contrary to the multitude, or to their friends, and join themselves to One who offered them a lowly lot and cross-bearing; some were not convinced that He could help them. The reasons, when examined, are pretty much the same reasons that now prevent men from deciding to cast in their lot with Jesus.

It was, however, very unfortunate for many who were moved by Christ's works, truth and love, that they could not pass out of their awakened state and decide for Him. Even if we concede to them that they meant well and were favorably disposed to Him, yet the lack of decision was bound to be disastrous.

Truth, if it is to be ours, must rule us. It cannot rule us unless we decide that it shall. To long and yearn for truth is not enough; we must do it. We may, in-

deed, be ready to listen, but we do not possess. Christ could give rest, but alone to those who decided to obey His invitation, "Come unto me." If we have heard of some place that offers us joy, it is not enough to think well of it, but we must decide to go. If I am offered a trip to the Paris Exposition next summer, I must not only be pleased with the kindness of him who invites, but must decide to go. It is the sole way by which I may possess its joys and benefits.

There is another side. Impressions when first made are strong and enticing. When they are not followed by decision, other impressions are made, and the first lose their attractiveness. Our Saviour alludes to this when He speaks of the birds of the air picking up the seed from the wayside. They that will not decide and take the truth into the depths of the heart will find other thoughts and plans coming to pick up the seeds of truth and destroy them. To put off decision, in many cases, is to decide against Christ, verified by many instances that everyone knows.

There is a very sober consideration which is oft overlooked. God wants us to decide for Christ. When we fail to decide, we disobey and sin. The force of the parable of the wicked husbandman lies in this, that the Lord of the vineyard expected obedience and return of fruit. They decided against His messengers, against His Son, and killed Him. Practically, the man that decides against Christ returns no fruit of holy living and obedience, is a rebel against the just claims of God, and eventually destroys, by his example and conduct, the kingdom of God.

Decision, again, puts us squarely on the side of right. It is an act of righteousness, for this is the right thing to choose, the right thing to do, the right thing to continue doing. Decision invigorates. It is the step that makes Christ's strength ours and gains for us ability to go on doing the right. When Christ was baptized, He made open confession that He stood by God's mes-

senger, John, and acknowledged his baptism to be God's appointment. He thus fulfilled all righteousness, and immediately there came the Father's approval and the full indwelling of the Spirit. Just as surely, when we decide for and confess Christ, there will come God's blessing and grace, and in no other way. God's way of salvation and His appointments must be acknowledged if we would be righteous and obtain prevailing grace.

Lay it down as an unchangeable truth that self-surrender precedes moral ability. He that would have Christ must decide for and surrender himself to Him. The experience that follows is proof of this. "I remember distinctly one experience in my own life, when I had been very rebellious, and when I said to myself, 'I will not do what I know I ought to do.' Then I remember how, after I had been carrying on the struggle for a long time, I broke down and I said, 'Lord, I give it all up; I make a full surrender; I will do what is right.' Light and peace and power came to me then, and the things I said I could not do were the things I found I could do and have done ever since."

Decision, moreover, cuts off temptation. He that decides crosses from the debatable territory into the land where Christ is. He is at once freed from many temptations. As long as a man is undecided, he is beset by solicitations from all sides to remain where he is, to go against Christ. The moment he decides, they lose their force.

Once more, decision brings fellowship with Christ. He is able to show Himself unto us. When Andrew and John decided to accept Christ's invitation, "Come and see," it was not long before they knew Him to be the Messiah. They learned of Him day by day. They were taken by Him away from the crowds and in some quiet place taught greater and greater truths. They deepened in faith and love. They learned of Him;

not always easy truths and duties, but truths and duties so precious and great that in the very nobility of them they found His yoke easy. "A teacher's yoke is easy when his doctrine commends itself to reason and conscience. An easy yoke does not necessarily imply a low, accommodating ideal of life. On the contrary, the teacher's ideal may be lofty, exacting, apparently unattainable, yet the reverse of burdensome because sweetly reasonable and true to the deepest instincts of the soul." It is ever thus with the decided soul. In fellowship with Jesus, it learns from Him the truths and duties which satisfy, and in whose possession and performance the soul finds its joy and the way to the stature of Christ.

In these days many of our scholars are facing decision for Christ. These words are written with the hope that they may aid teachers to counsel them wisely. They are also written to remind everyone that decisions are to be made even after the first great decision for Christ, and that the reasons here set forth are ever the weighty ones for the decisions of our whole Christian life. Our safety and happiness depend upon straightforward and immediate decisions for Christ and His commands.

## THE MASTER'S METHODS WITH MEN

Jesus Christ was the supreme Teacher. His matter and method outrank those of all teachers before Him and after Him. His matter is both simple and profound. The common people hear Him gladly, yet the students and wise men of all ages have never fathomed His sayings.

But our concern in this article is with His methods rather than with His matter. In the discussion of His methods we shall take our examples from John. From such study we ought to learn that we must vary our methods of reaching others with the truth in accordance with the character and circumstances of the individual.

Jesus did much individual work. He was not unduly exalted or inspired by a crowd. His teachings to the multitudes are, indeed, wonderful. He could speak plain thoughts in a plain manner, as in the Sermon on the Mount. He could formulate an entire new way of presenting truth, as in the parables, whose beauty and effectiveness are unique and unapproachable. But great as was His power with multitudes, three-fourths of the wise and exquisite sayings, which are reported to us by the evangelists, were uttered to individuals or to little groups of men and women in familiar conversation. He seemed to prefer face-to-face talks. He wanted to get to close quarters and bring the soul, stripped of excuse, to face the truth and Himself.

He does not care whether His scholar is influential or despised. He is just as much concerned for the ruler of Samaria, of shady reputation, as for the ruler of the Jews, of unblemished reputation.

He puts first things first. There is probably nothing that is more fatal to true instruction than undue em-

phasis on the less important things. This seems to be the glaring fault of modern education, which seeks to cover the whole field of knowledge for a child, and it results in a smattering of almost everything and real knowledge of nothing. Little children are burdened with a load of books and taught almost every conceivable subject and then cannot spell or read correctly.

A good deal of our Bible study is being guided in the same direction. A large mass of matter, geographical, historical, archæological, critical and the like, is to be drilled into the scholars. So much time is taken up with secondary things that first matters are neglected, the saving truths and the moral truths of the Scriptures. Christ knew the Old Testament, but we do not find Him settling erudite questions. When the woman of Samaria would have changed the searching personal conversation to a discussion of the fiercely debated question whether Mount Gerizim or Mount Moriah was the place to worship God, He refused to be drawn into controversy and put a first thing before her, namely, that God is a spirit and must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. Take up the teachings of Jesus and observe how little He deals with the questions which interest so many to-day, such as the authorship of the different books, or what Moses wrote or did not write. He always puts first things first.

His method with the Samaritan woman emphasizes the truth that the first thing needed is to gain the goodwill of the scholar, if instruction is to be made possible. He and she, according to the status of Jews and Samaritans, are enemies. She knows the Jews despise Samaritans. The first thing to do is to remove the ill-feeling and gain her goodwill. He does it by asking of her a favor, a drink of water. How simple and yet how effective! To get another to do you a service is to soften him at once. Here is the principle. The means to gain the goodwill of the scholar

will vary, and, therefore, they must be sought out by us.

If we turn to the incident of the washing of the disciples' feet we will find Jesus dealing in quite a different way with the disciples from that in which He dealt with the Samaritan woman. They are at bitter odds, contending passionately for the first place. They are not fit to receive those last precious discourses. How shall He bring them to a sense of their wicked pride and soften their hearts toward each other. He utters no word of rebuke, for that would have angered them still more or made them sullen. He sets before them the greatness of humble service by Himself washing their feet. That melts their hearts, and, repentant, they are ready to hear His last words. There is a time not to rebuke. There is a time to do a service which shall rebuke more than words.

We have but space for one more illustration. It sets forth how we should treat the penitent. Peter had denied the Master with curses, but he had also repented from the heart. The risen Lord and the sad disciple are together. Mark how gently and yet how firmly Jesus demands a public confession of love after the public denial. Thrice he had cursed, thrice Peter is made to say, "Thou knowest that I love Thee." With it all, the Master restores him to full apostleship and gives back to him his work. He does not forgive without marking the sin. He does forgive utterly. One of the great secrets of character-building is to make a man clean and honest in dealing with himself. That is absolutely necessary if victory is to be won.

Generally speaking, then, Jesus studied the individual, what he most needed, how he could best be approached. He kept main issues to the front, and did not permit the soul to shift the conversation to trivial things that it might not face the truth. He went from some common ground to other things, from water to quench the thirst to the water of life, from the wind

in the street, coming and going no one knew whence or whither, to the work of the Spirit. He had complete understanding of the primal law of education, so strenuously insisted upon by the wise educators of to-day. Find out what is in the mind of the scholar and from common knowledge lead on to what you wish to teach.

His manner toward others was not patronizing. He knew all things. But He was attentive, sympathetic, patient with every inquirer after truth.

Yet, when all is said, we must not forget that His personality told most in all that He said and did. He met someone, like the woman of Samaria, perhaps but for a few moments. He uttered a few words and they altered life forever. Our personality will be the greatest power in influencing others. Cultivate personality, for that will give life to method.

Moreover, whoever puts himself in God's hand to be used, will be guided by the Holy Spirit both how to approach others and how to convey truth to them.

## “HEADS OF FAMILIES”

Did you ever read in the church papers any announcements like the following? “On last Sabbath eighteen persons were received into church fellowship, of whom *all but four were heads of families.*” “On last Sabbath twenty-three new members were received, of whom *all but five were adults.*”

Why state the fact that the majority were “heads of families,” or that the greater number were “adults”? The reason is evident. The fact stated is regarded as a cause for special congratulation and rejoicing. The assumption underlying the announcement is that the coming into the church of the head of a family is more important than the coming in of a child of the family, and that the addition to the church of an adult is more desirable than that of a youth. Both of which assumptions are false in philosophy and at variance with the facts of experience.

But why should anyone be led to make such an assumption? Is the soul of an adult more precious in the sight of God than that of a child? Is there more promise for the church in the life that is nearly “burned out” than in the one that has before it a whole lifetime of possibilities? Why rejoice more in limited possibilities than in unlimited? Why rejoice in the fact that a man is “born out of season” rather than that he is born in season? Why pay premium to duty long delayed and reflect upon service promptly offered?

Observation reveals the fact that the great majority of those in the church entered before they were twenty-five years of age, and of these the great majority before they were twenty years of age, which indicates that youth is the time in which the heart most naturally turns to God. If it is the time most natural,

then it is the time ordained of God, and is, therefore, the best time. But some of us have not yet come to understand this fact.

"How many did your pastor receive into church at Easter?" "Forty-three, but *they were nearly all children.*" Yes, "just children"! No old, withered, leafless, fruitless trunks, just some straight, healthy, young trees from the nursery planted in God's vineyard, to be watered by the Spirit and to grow and develop and bear fruit for a lifetime. What would you think if a man should point to a hundred men, and say, "There are a hundred honest men, and the thing which especially pleases me is the fact that eighty of them were not honest until they were past middle life"? You would at once say, "I would rather see a hundred men who were honest from their youth; I would have more confidence in both the character and the fruits of their honesty."

Underneath the above-named assumption is a lack of appreciation of the importance of early Christian culture, and out of this comes a lack of appreciation of the importance of that department of the church which has most to do with the religious training of our children, namely, the Bible school. It is to call attention to this fact that this article is written.

That there is need of turning attention in this direction no one who has thought seriously on the question will doubt. A few in the church believe in the mission and influence of the Bible school; a great many do not. They would regret to have the school abolished, but they are doing nothing to make its continuation possible. They do not know who are the teachers thereof nor the character of their work. They are rather particular as to who shall preach to them from the pulpit, but indifferent as to who shall teach their children in the Bible school. They never require their children to study the lesson. When their children are small they send them to the school. When they get

larger, if they choose to absent themselves they are permitted to do so on the most insufficient reason or for no reason at all, save that they do not want to go.

There are church officers—not a few—who never attend the Bible school of the congregation whose spiritual interests they have been elected to watch over. They could not name half the teachers in the school; they know nothing of the character of the teaching; they could not tell you what system of lessons is used; they could not tell you whether the school is larger or smaller than last year. They would sincerely regret to learn that the school was on the decline, but they are doing nothing to prevent its declension. They have been in office for years, but have never paid the school the small courtesy of even an “official” visit.

There are pastors who, while they are not indifferent to the Bible school, do not adequately appreciate its value and importance to the church. They do not give to it the time, thought and personal attention it so richly deserves and which its possible outcome would so fully justify. Being myself a pastor, I do not hesitate to speak plainly, and all the more so because I feel that my own practice merits, to some extent, the condemnation of my own preaching on this point. It is true there is a limit to what one man can do. The mistake which the busy pastor sometimes makes is not that he does not do more, but that he does not wisely distribute his labors. Prevalent notions of his work have led him to believe that his chief duty is with the adult portion of his congregation. So prevalent is this notion that the interests of the child, without intention on his part, have been neglected. Not only has the child suffered by reason of this neglect, but the church has also suffered in this that it has not reached its possible growth and efficiency. The energy of her ministry has not been placed where it will yield the largest return.

The writer, after a number of years of observation,

having given two years to the exclusive study of the work of the Bible school, is convinced that there is no department of the work of the Church that is more Scriptural in method and character than that of the Bible school when rightly conducted; none that will yield larger results in personal salvation and church growth; none that will more naturally and effectively develop the spiritual life and power of the church; none that opens up such a direct way to succeeding generations; none that will bear such multiplied reach of power. Conversion at the end of life means one soul saved; at the beginning of life it means one soul saved to save many others. He who would multiply his labors must point those to Christ who will lead others to the cross.

In the work of the Bible school we touch life at that period when the soul is as "sensitive as wax and as retentive as granite." We touch character in its foundation processes. We set in motion forces which will deepen in strength and multiply in power.

In all that we have said there is nothing that is new, but much that is important. It needs to be repeated and repeated until its truth crystalizes into conviction and conviction speaks in action.

## VISION OF THE SPIRITUAL

In the reasonable demand that methods of teaching should be bettered, and teachers taught how to teach, it must not be overlooked that the matter to be taught is, after all is said, the important thing. It is a curious feature that a large part of the criticism to-day of the Sunday school teacher, and the demand for pedagogical teaching, comes from men and women who have practically surrendered the distinctive religious teachings of Christianity, and now offer to teach instead facts, so-called, and give information concerning the Bible. It is a case of giving stones instead of bread. The teacher that has a vision of the spiritual may be imperfect in method, but is infinitely better than the teacher, perfect in method, who has never caught a vision of the spiritual truths of Christianity.

What do we mean by a vision of the spiritual? We mean the vision of the saving truths of Christianity, a vision that has been actualized by acceptance and confirmed by precious experience.

What are these saving truths? We have not space to specify all, but only some of the most important.

*First of all*, we place the truth that Jesus Christ is the divine Saviour. This is fundamental, just as we learned in the lesson on Peter's confession at Cæsarea Philippi. It includes the conviction that Jesus is divine, the only-begotten, that it was necessary for Him to die that He could save sinful men. Jesus, the Saviour, my Saviour, the teacher must know personally. For He alone can deal with the problem of sin which, with all sincere souls, is the distressing problem until settled through repentance and faith in Christ. "How can I, a sinner, meet a just God?" This is the question forced home upon every honest, deep-thinking soul.

It must be settled. The knowledge of sin carries with it, too, a right comprehension of righteousness and holiness. The man that has a low sense of sin has a low sense of righteousness, and a man that has a low sense of righteousness has no need of a Saviour, and scoffs at the idea that God needed to send His own Son to put away sin and make men righteous.

The teacher that can present Jesus as the divine Saviour so that the scholars accept Him as Saviour, and follow Him as Saviour, may not be conversant with modern methods, but will be right in the central teaching, without which knowledge is vain.

The next spiritual truth of which there should be vision is, that in the Scriptures and in Jesus Christ there is light on all the perplexing questions of the moral and spiritual life. For that reason we study Christ and the Scriptures as interpreted by His teachings and life. In Him and them are the great truths that give light concerning God. Do I want to know God? I find Him a Father in Jesus; I find His character, heart, purpose, set forth in Jesus and the Scriptures. Do I want to know myself? There is the answer: a son of God fallen, but who can, through Christ, be pardoned, and can become like Christ. How shall I live? The example of Christ, the teachings of the Bible, these will give light as to conduct. The Holy Spirit will use these to give us light.

The next spiritual truth necessary to be known is this—that power is given us to become the children of God. It is not enough to know that there is forgiveness, not enough to know to what we are called as children of God, but we must have power to overcome sin and live righteously. That is what God does. He not only forgives those repentant for Christ's sake, but puts within them a new life principle, which changes the heart and gives grace to overcome. He gives this power through the means of grace, the word and the sacraments. He does this in the Church,

where the Holy Ghost sanctifies the believer and preserves him in union with Jesus Christ in the true faith.

In other words, here is the gospel of hope to sinful ones. There is power sufficient for everyone. We need but observe the conditions and we will prevail. He that will pray for grace and obey will overcome.

Another spiritual truth is the realization of God's fellowship and sympathy in our life. This is most clearly shown in Christ Jesus. His life on earth, His promises, His fulfillment of these promises, as witnessed in the Apostolic Church and since, all show that we are not to struggle alone or toil alone. "He is with us always." Every Christian that lives unto Christ soon realizes His fellowship and sympathy. All men may forsake us, but the Lord stands by us.

The vision becomes reality. It is a most precious truth to bear to others, a truth which comforts, inspires, encourages. When we know it, we can speak with a joy that carries conviction.

Then there is the vision of the certainty of victory through Jesus Christ our Lord. His resurrection and ascension confirm this to us. God will raise up all the dead at the last day, and will grant everlasting life to all who believe in Christ. There is no such thing as failure. There is more. There is the realization of our longings. At last we shall be without spot or blemish, and be holy and happy.

These are essential things. They demand a knowledge of Christ and His word, full and large, for the best and most effective teaching. But it is not a knowledge beyond the capacity of any teacher. Unless he has the vision and knowledge of these truths, he will be a miserable failure as a Christian teacher. He may know all the facts and history contained in the Bible, be skillful to interest and hold the attention, know all about the ways of conveying knowledge of the outward things of the Bible, and even of morality, but he will be an utter failure as a Christian teacher

if he knows not these spiritual truths, and has no help from the Spirit in his teaching.

It is not intended in these words to convey the impression that methods are not good, and that we should not seek to know the art of teaching. All these will help make teaching effective, strong, illuminating and fascinating. But it is meant as a note of warning, that the men that forget the spiritual essential truths will not lead scholars to Christ, will not build them into personal life with Him. Devotion to methods cannot replace Christ as the Divine Saviour.

## THE CATECHETICAL CLASS AND THE TEACHER

We as Lutherans are in the season of catechetical instruction. The pastor has gathered his class and is instructing them week by week, in the doctrines of salvation. He teaches them the law summarized in the Ten Commandments; the gospel summarized in the Creed; the approach to God in prayer as set forth in the Lord's Prayer; the means of grace, as given in the explanation of the third article of the Creed, the word of God preached, taught and read, and the sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

It is very needful that this instruction should be given, patiently and thoroughly. For the catechetical class is the place to teach the great doctrines of the Church, to teach them systematically and plainly at the period when such teaching makes deep impression and when the memory is most retentive. We teachers may do something in the way of doctrine, but we cannot do it systematically, and we lack, many of us, the thorough mastery of doctrine which the pastor has.

Besides, there is in this systematic, week by week, instruction, the value of repeated instruction, of instruction, too, that leads from one thing to another, from a sense of sin to what God has done for us in Christ, then it leads us to lay hold on Christ, then to the work of the Holy Spirit, then to the knowledge of how we may be kept faithful to Christ, then to the need of the Church, prayer, the sacraments, obedience. So, step by step, the catechumen is led on, until he makes his decision to openly confess his faith in Christ, in His Church. He does it understandingly, provided he has paid attention to what he has been taught. He knows what he believes.

If he commits the catechism he stores his mind and

heart with the great truths of redemption and salvation. They will abide with him for his comfort and strength. They may be forgotten for a time, but, even though one may wander, in days to come they will return to him and may lead him back to fellowship with the Lord he has denied.

The catechetical class gives the pastor an opportunity to meet in the most loving and intimate way with his young people. Dealing with the very heart of Scriptural truth, he can press home upon them the need of a Saviour, the need of faith, the loveliness of Christ, the worth of the Church, the beauty of a life lived with Christ. Coming to them after prayer for wisdom, his heart on fire, he can fire their hearts in turn. Conviction and decision for Christ almost always follow.

It is difficult to estimate how much impression is being made. I had a letter from a devoted Christian worker, but a short time ago, thanking me for the instruction of twenty-five years before and the inestimable benefit it had been to her. I have observed, also, the peculiar and abiding affection given to the faithful minister by those whom he catechised and confirmed. He is to them precious as one that showed them the King in His beauty.

We need at this time to recall that our age especially needs sound doctrine. The tendency is to every vagary under the sun. The *Sunday School Times*, in an article headed, "Our Willful Religion," speaks of "the baneful tendency of our age to cut loose from all leadership in spiritual things and set up to become one's own guide. It is evident that one pope is better than for every untrained mind to become its own pope." We need to sit at the feet of those who have made a study of doctrine and to learn what the Church has believed. When we have learned that, we have learned what the Lord has blessed and what the Spirit unfolded. To me it has ever been a helpful rule not

to diverge from what the Church has taught, unless thoroughly convinced that there was error, and because I have learned the larger truth. As the Spirit guided the Church in the past, I am very suspicious of all who claim that now, at last, after nearly twenty centuries, the Spirit has spoken through them, and all the good of the past neither knew their Lord nor their Bible. This is not consistent either with sense or the teaching of Christ Himself.

Those thoroughly indoctrinated are apt to be stable Christians. A Roman prelate once said to a Lutheran pastor that the only churches with a future are the Catholic and Lutheran Churches, because they take great care in educating their children. Whilst this is an over-statement, it is fair to say that thorough religious education makes a stable Church and stable, steadfast believers.

If these things appear just and reasonable, then, as teachers, we ought to cordially support the pastor in his catechetical work. We should use our influence with our scholars to persuade them to attend. We should take the deepest interest in them whilst they attend, indicating by word and look our pleasure. We should urge them to be present regularly. We should counsel, even urge them, if we have opportunity, to choose Christ as Saviour and Lord. Lessons like Abraham's Call, Lot's Choice, God's Covenant with Abraham readily lend themselves to this purpose. As the day of decision approaches, we should earnestly pray for them. We should urge them to attend the church services regularly, encouraging them by our example.

Then you may, at the Eastertide, rejoice in your scholars confessing Christ and entering upon the Christian life of goodness, usefulness and love.

## LOOKING AT TEACHING IN A LARGE WAY

Our interest in instruction will depend upon our conception of its seriousness, desirability and necessity. The enthusiastic common-school teacher does not take either lightly or indifferently the branches he teaches. He will permit no trifling on the part of his pupils. The knowledge he seeks to convey he sincerely believes to be both desirable and necessary to them. He impresses upon them the seriousness and importance of their studies to fit them, in the best and largest sense, for the duties and pleasures of life. Both teachers and scholars, under such convictions, are in earnest to acquire and are serious in their work.

Possibly one great weakness of the Sunday school is that its teaching and study are not considered serious, desirable and necessary. Of course, there is a general idea of this kind, but as applied it is not in evidence. What day teacher would stay away from the school on any pretext? Or would come to the class without any preparation? Or would be indifferent as to whether the scholars knew or did not know the book they studied? Or would not care whether they attended school or not? Or would never review them to find out whether they understood those things and principles which in after life were to be used to win a livelihood or enable them to play a splendid part in the world? Or would never try to inspire them to master the knowledge offered?

On the other side, what parents are willing to keep the children home on any pretext from the day school? Curious that the children can face any kind of weather to be at the day school, whilst the least rain is reason enough on Sunday to keep them at home. Or what parents are really concerned that their children are securing a knowledge of the Bible, so that their lives

may be guided by its precepts?

The children themselves are often most indifferent, because the Sunday school does not appear to them to offer anything that repays them for coming. There is pleasant music. Friends attract. The teachers are winning. But the real purpose of the Sunday school, to give a knowledge of God's word, as desirable and necessary for the welfare of all their life, is not perceived by them definitely.

Perhaps one great cause of this lies in the over-emphasis of one noble idea that has possessed all Sunday school workers. The idea that *the* object of the Sunday school is to bring the scholars to decide for Jesus Christ. Now no one would lessen the effort to accomplish this, but, underneath this object is the religious education of the scholar, an education which precedes the decision, an education which follows the decision. Before the decision is made, instruction in Bible truth should make clear what is involved in that decision, what kind of a choice is being made, what kind of service Jesus requires, what kind of a person Jesus is, and what faith really means; in short, some knowledge of what the doctrines of salvation are. After the decision is made, instruction in the Bible should be so enlarged that its precepts and principles to be applied to life should be plain; that the duties of a Christian, individually, socially, as a church member, should be made known; that the means by which the life of fellowship with God are maintained should be set forth. All these directions are in the Bible, enforced by example of men and women who succeeded or failed, by the great movements in the history of God's people, by the plain precepts or frequent prophetic sayings; above all, by the life and words of Jesus Himself. For the complete Christian a full knowledge of the Bible is required, or he will be more or less imperfect as his knowledge is more or less imperfect.

We need, therefore, a broader idea of religious education, as the object of the Sunday school, an education which includes decision, but one which would thoroughly furnish every scholar unto every good work, and to a well-rounded Christlike life in service and character.

If the teacher could realize this broader conception, then teaching would become serious, desirable and necessary. It would be serious because of its high aim, namely, to lead the scholars to the very noblest life possible, a good life, a life of righteousness and service for Christ. It would be serious, because there would be realization that the truths taught, being so far-reaching, must be carefully taught, and great care must be observed that no erroneous doctrines or plausible half-truths be given the scholars, to their unspeakable harm. It would be serious, as the work of the day teacher is serious, not somber, but joyful, because it is so great and so noble, fitting the scholars for the future.

It would be desirable, because there is nothing to be desired so greatly as to lead another to see the beauty, the truth, the joy we see. That is the teacher's delight in any school or profession. It would be desirable, because we know what we teach will never bring sorrow or ruin, but peace, joy, helpfulness, the beauty of the Lord God to those we teach.

It would be necessary, because the salvation of the scholar depends upon seeing the truths as they are in Christ, because his future worth and usefulness will depend upon his knowledge of the Scriptures and of Jesus Christ.

Nor can there be any doubt that when such ideas of the seriousness, desirability and necessity of the Sunday school guide pastor, superintendent and teachers, that the whole school will come, more or less, to be governed by the same principles. Sunday school will cease to be merely a pleasant place to spend an hour

or meet the others in the class, or be attended to please the teacher, but there will be a perception that the purpose is to gain a knowledge of that word which fits men and women for life, and to gain a just idea of the Saviour and what He wants His disciples to do.

## IS ONE-TRUTH TEACHING IDEAL?

In a couple of brilliant articles on Sunday school teaching, recently read, great stress was laid on selecting one truth of the lesson that should be central, and which should be driven home at all cost.

Men's minds and their ways of looking at things differ. It may be that this is best for many. But we seriously question whether this is the best. This kind of teaching is topical, a theme or thought being taken which is made prominent by sacrificing the other truths that are in the passage selected. There is another kind of teaching that seeks to unfold the portion of God's word under survey in its entirety as far as possible, and believes that in this way a better, because larger, knowledge of God's word is gained, to the richer instruction of the class. The first method is brilliant and often effective. The second is not so striking, but opens the whole Scripture and stores it in the mind and heart for future use.

Perhaps one of the secrets of the lamentable lack of knowledge of God's word to-day is due to an over-emphasis of the first method, which has its rightful place and can be used at times. It is bound, where followed exclusively, to slur over large portions of God's word in its effort to drive home a particular truth that has appealed to the teacher. Every such teacher becomes a sermonizer rather than an educator. He does not seek to find out where the scholar's mind and the Scriptures meet on common ground and proceed from that to develop and cause the scholar to understand the larger truths. The tendency is to superficial knowledge of the passage and not to its comprehensive and particular knowledge. The scholar gets a distinct impression sometimes of one moral or religious truth to the exclusion of other truths. Oftentimes he gets not even this, because he is unprepared

to receive the truth so ably and earnestly proclaimed, no common ground of truth already known by him having been secured from which to advance to the new truth presented.

There is, I fear, on the part of many, too little confidence in the Scriptures themselves. These earnest teachers are sometimes impressed that they are the power to move, and they must make the truth live by their own wit, shrewdness, learning, illustration and fervor. These things have their place, but, if they are out of place, they work oftentimes more harm than good. The human is thrust to the front, the divine is relegated to the background.

We ought to see that the Bible is living, that there is in it a divine energy that makes it a means to bring God's grace to the heart. The Bible is not a dead book. "Its inspiration is not something lying far back in distant centuries when its different parts were first written. It is a fact in the present tense! It is a force affecting the readers of to-day as well as the writers of yesterday. For the man who reads it with believing eyes the Bible is still flooded from cover to cover with inspiration. It thrills in every syllable with more than elemental forces; forces which penetrate to the heart of the reader and stir all its deeper emotions as the moon stirs the sea tides." "The words that I speak unto you," said Jesus, "they are spirit and they are life." "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth." What we want to do is to get before the scholars the Scriptures, to get behind them, not in front of them, to make clear from their standpoint, the truths that are in them; these first, and our own brilliancy and wisdom second, and then only in all humility, to be used and blessed by God's Holy Spirit.

It does not make any difference whether the results are immediate or not. Much that is best must have time for growth. Many of the best girls and boys mature slowly. Hothouse culture often unfits them

for the days when they must live out in the open. Get into the heart and mind the Scripture truths, the gospel, the Christ, and the Lord will see to it that in due time you will get abiding results.

Besides, when you unfold the whole lesson, not mechanically, but in a living way, I know nothing that is more interesting as well as helpful. One gets very tired of set themes when they are served up Sunday after Sunday. But if you set yourself to making clear, as in these lessons of John, what Jesus meant to teach and how He taught them, or, how John saw the meaning of what Jesus said and did, there is a fascination which all human presentation cannot attain unto. "What was it Jesus wanted to do? What did He say?" This has far more chance of reaching the heart than anything else.

Now, I do not mean to say that when you have gone carefully over the passage, that you are not to say, "The lesson that impresses me most is this, and for this reason." That would be all right and be most effective. But it might be more helpful, if you could get a response, to ask of your scholars, "What is the lesson that impresses you most?" for that would develop their thought.

Above all, do not think because you have not been able to drive a nail of particular truth with mighty blows home to the heart, that your labor of teaching has been wasted. If you have interested them in the Scripture itself, the living word will be powerful. Behind the careless faces of youth is the tender conscience, the fresh, unspoiled nature, the retentive memory, and you can leave God's word, God's means of grace, through which the Spirit works, to awaken this conscience, to lay hold on this freshness of nature; perhaps at once, perhaps later when the hour of decision or opportunity comes that gives memory the chance to bring back the truth that enlightens, quickens and saves.

## THE LAW OF CHRIST

The Apostle claims in these words that Christ controlled Himself by a law, which He implicitly obeyed. He still further demanded that every follower of Christ must fulfill the same law to be worthy of the name. Therefore, we ask, what was "the law of Christ"? The answer is, "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."

The law was essential to Christ, of the very essence of His being, without which He could neither be Himself, nor accomplish His work. On His human side, without fulfilling this law, He never could have perfected Himself to be the Saviour of mankind, never have fulfilled the purpose of God with Him as Son.

His whole life was one of burden-bearing. The Gospels are full of the gracious examples of His fidelity to this law. They brought to Him their sick and diseased and He healed them. They brought to Him their troubles and sorrows and He took them upon Himself. They came to Him with their doubts, with their desires for the truth, and He answered the one and satisfied the other. Above all, He took upon Himself the burden of our transgressions, as St. Peter so strongly puts it, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness."

In fulfilling this law of burden-bearing, He did so at cost to Himself. When the woman touched His garment secretly, He said, "I perceive that virtue has gone out of me." There was an output of power, which told upon His strength in every miracle He did. Oft worn and weary from a day's healing and teaching, He sought the seclusion of the mountain side, or of the lonely desert, that He might rest and refresh Himself by prayer unto the Father, so that He might

return renewed in strength to His burden-bearing.

What it cost Him to bear the burden of our sins upon the cross—only when we can comprehend the suffering, shame and misery of the cross, will we understand that cost! When God made the world He spake the word and the world stood. When God would redeem sinful men, it cost His Son suffering and shame unutterable. For physical power can never equal the energy of love. Righteousness is the inner nature of God; love of Himself; the making of a world is but as a very little thing to His omnipotence.

It is remarkable how the ordinary affairs of life, to be done well, must be controlled by abiding laws. It is a little thing to guide a shipload of oil across the Atlantic, but it must be done by the compass, the needle of which is controlled by the abiding law of the magnetic currents of the earth. Nothing less than this great law will suffice to ensure safety and direction. Even so, the ordinary acts and duties of life to be done surely and wisely must be controlled by abiding principles.

Every man realizes that as he comes into larger manhood, there arises a demand upon him to bear the burdens of others. One never knew a large-hearted business man upon whom did not come the financial troubles of others. They seek his advice. They lay upon him their affairs. He is their burden-bearer. The elevation of a competent man to a high office in the community brings to him the burdens of the people. For them he must think and toil. He must protect them from iniquity and oppression and justly administer the laws. In other spheres it is so; the parents are the burden-bearers of the children; the teacher, of the ignorant; the minister, of the congregation.

In our work as Sunday school teachers the same law holds good. At first with enthusiasm the labor may be undertaken, but, in a little while, it is soon evident that it is burden-bearing. The scholars lay

upon us their doubts, struggles, willfulness, shortcomings, desires for truth, and we must bear them. The work wearies, for burden-bearing takes "the virtue" out of us also.

It is possible to shirk the law of burden-bearing. Men do it everywhere. They never do it without loss. For to become Christlike one must obey the law of Christ, "Bear ye one another's burdens." They flee the law and become selfish, unlike Christ.

Into these ordinary things we must bring for guidance and inspiration the abiding law of Christ. In our hours of depression and weariness, let us recall His law. It is His way in which we must walk. We cannot be His and desert our posts, fling away our burdens. As loyal followers, we must mold our doing by His great law.

Nor must we overlook that Christlike character can be formed in no other way. If we are to realize ourselves nobly, righteously, we must bear the burden of others. As we bear them we grow stronger, we learn to know Him better, we gather the sweetest and most satisfying rewards. Life not only strengthens, but nobly accomplishes God's purposes, becomes as sunshine in this dark world, and makes us fit to enter with Christ into His glory, where life's burden-bearing shall be ended.

## HIDDEN BUT LIVING

Men are impatient for results, so impatient that when they do not immediately obtain them, they despair and cease to labor for them. The best of things are of slow growth. A mushroom grows up in a night, but it is a mushroom and soon perishes. The oak germinates slowly, takes years to gather to itself girth and size, but it is an oak, strong and sturdy, defying the storm. Character is slowly evolved. The years go into the making of it. We ought not to be impatient and dissatisfied if we do not succeed in developing at once the character of those taught.

It is a singular fact that often men who have been growing up to a truth by years of God's training are impatient, because others do not see it immediately as they do. As well ask a little child to look over a high fence just equal to your stature, which came to you by years of growth.

Indeed a well-grounded suspicion ever attaches to the character that is speedily realized. Involuntarily we think will it stand the day of testing? Self-complacent, but untried, Peter went down before the assault of Satan to his shame, but to his blessed realization of self and of the forgiving Christ. There should be no surprise that many children, shielded and nurtured carefully, go down oft in the early manhood when fiercely tested by the temptations of active life, of which they had heard but knew not the strength. They were innocent, but it was the innocence of the untried, not the sinlessness of those who, tried, gave not place to the tempter.

The question comes to the active worker, whether labor spent upon those who fall has been in vain. Decidedly not. The vitality of truth is remarkable. The

seed that has life often lies dormant under winter's cold, but given the balmy sunshine and the penetrating rains, the warm earth, it shoots forth, and, as though the dead had come to life, appears in glory of flower and fruit. Truth may be hidden for a season, but it is still living.

Some time ago a number of men who had led the worst of lives, men who had apparently lost manhood, had been tramps and drunkards, gave the story of their rescue. Devoted Christians had toiled with them, given them home and work, set before them, with word and prayer and song, God's mercy for the sinner, and rescued them from sin, and brought them to accept Christ. The remarkable truth, however, in the testimony of these men, was that every one of them had received good religious training at home or in church and Sunday school. The seeds of truth had been hidden, but not dead, and when the favorable opportunity came, had shown their vitality and had come to fruitage.

An observant writer declares that a community is often startled by the sudden conversion of a notoriously wicked man. If, however, they would trace back the man's life, they would find somewhere in childhood there had been gracious seed-sowing. There would be the remembrance of a mother praying with tears for her boy; a father seeking by example and precept to bring his son to God, or a Sunday school teacher who, with deep desire for this scholar's salvation, had implanted the truths of God. The conversion flames out suddenly, but the spark of that flame was kindled in the bygone youth.

Many of us can recall, if we but take the trouble, that the truths that are guiding our lives were instilled years ago. Personally I find myself in many directions influenced by the example and words of a godly father, whose life was beautiful in simple devotion to the Lord and deep understanding of the personal truths of life in Christ.

On the other hand, those who have labored much with adults who have whilst young acquired but little knowledge of God's word, or the ordinary truths of Christian life, have found the greatest difficulty to influence them toward Christ's kingdom. There is so little in common. Much time must be spent in inculcating the first principles of Christian knowledge, which are realized but slowly. Old habits of thought are deeply imbedded, and yield slowly to that which is better. A few of these respond, but for the most part effort is thrown away.

In the face of these facts, let us not be discouraged if results come slowly. If the work does not at once return fruitage, the seed-sowing is not in vain. In the years to come, after bitter experience of sin, the truth sown and hidden may assert its life, and the soul be begotten unto life. It is the duty of the Christian worker to sow the seed—God giveth the increase. Patiently bide His time. Eternity alone will disclose the results that the faithful teaching of God's word made possible.

## THE TEACHER'S PREPARATION

It is a good thing to have a good purpose. In this life, however, purpose alone will not accomplish the end desired, unless a man be prepared for the purpose. Study and drill precede purpose performed. A purpose to be a musician is worth nothing without the steady drill that makes the fingers or the voice obedient to the spirit of harmony in the soul.

The Lord was not satisfied to call out in men the purpose to serve Him, but He prepared them to carry out the purpose. He sent Moses to the desert for forty years, John the Baptist to the wilderness. He Himself, when they purposed to be fishers of men, trained the apostles for three years to fit them for their office. Nor can anyone say how deep was their study of the law and the prophets in conjunction with His teachings and life, after His death, which made their work effective and opened their minds to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, until they were able to give us Gospels and Epistles. I think they prepared themselves more than once for sermon and teaching as diligently, and more so, than we do now.

The teacher must prepare to do his work well. His head and his heart need preparation. In spiritual work, the head has its part as well as the heart. There is a sanctified intellect as well as a sanctified affection. The mind of God is everywhere manifest as well as His love. Christ spake as never man spake, as well as loved as never man loved.

The teacher should thoughtfully study the lesson first without any help whatever. He should try to bring out of it all that he can in his own study. He should read what goes before and what comes after, that he may know just how the events and teachings came to pass. He should reflect upon the words until

to him there comes something for himself and class.

He should next take up his lesson helps for larger knowledge and doctrine. The first study will give individuality, the second breadth and connection of views and ideas. His own Lutheran helps should be first with a Lutheran. In a measure he is a sub-pastor, set by his church to teach the scholars of his Church the way of salvation as taught by his Church. He has no more business to be teaching the views of another church than his pastor has to use his pulpit to teach his flock the doctrines of another denomination. Therefore, he will want to know what his Church teaches, and that he will get in the lesson helps of his own Church. He may use with them other helps and gain the additional light and knowledge they furnish, but the use of his own helps will help him to avoid their errors and use those things which will harmonize with his own faith.

After this let him study the lesson with reference to his own class, taking out of it those practical points which the class, as he knows it by contact and observation, will need. He will also ponder how he may best do this. The how of putting truth is essential, as well as the truth itself. The how of putting truth in Christ is as exquisite as the truth itself.

If a teacher will make such preparation his head will be thoroughly prepared. As he thus studies, he will come to see his weakness and ignorance, and it will lead him to heart preparation. He will cry unto God, who has honored him by giving to him so noble an office, to help him understand and give him wisdom to discern the truth and how to teach it.

He will also perceive that his own heart must be given to the Lord. Without such surrender he may teach some truth, but the better and higher truths, which are spiritually discerned, he neither perceives nor can he communicate to others. He will seek fellowship with the Lord, that out from His presence

he may come with knowledge of Him and of the exceeding greatness of His love, grace and truth.

He will find, also, that he cannot bear the trials upon his patience made by his scholars, be devoted to their spiritual well being, be filled with joyous hope in his message and conviction that his work will surely not return unto him void, unless his heart, fixed upon the Lord, glows with faith and love.

Again, experience will teach him that he must first answer the Lord's question, "Lovest thou me?" ere he is really worthy to receive the command, "Feed my lambs." Love must be in him for the truth, for the scholars, so that the truth will ring with sincerity and the scholar will feel that because he is loved this truth is brought to him as the best treasure his loving friend and teacher can give him. Back of it, too, shall be the power of the Holy Spirit, who is always given to those who obey the Lord.

And this will lead him to see that there cannot be the fullest heart preparation without a life devoted to Christ. In trust and obedience he will learn the certainties of what Jesus says, his salvation, goodness, comfort, love, the joy of righteousness, the worth of living for God, and out of this his words shall be words of conviction and power. His heart shall be in these ways prepared. With head and heart thus prepared, none may estimate what a teacher may accomplish in the noble work he has received from the Master. Time will reveal some of the results; eternity alone disclose them.

## THE UNSUNG POEM

There is a feeling of disappointment with many that they never realize their aspirations. Life seems a failure. "The good of which I dreamed, the nobility of life I longed for, the lofty purpose I held, all these I have not realized," they say sorrowfully. But there is another side. The better desires have made life nobler and richer by their presence. The men are greater because of them, higher in the scale.

Says Boyesen: "I know a middle-aged engineer, now far past the meridian, who has been walking about for twenty years with an immortal epic in his brain, and will be walking about with it till the day when he will be confined within a narrow rosewood box, from which no epic, even if ever so immortal, can escape. But I verily believe that that epic (which, on account of family necessities, he never will get a chance to write) has benefited its author more than it ever would have done if it had appeared in cold print. It has redeemed his life from the commonplace. It has given him the precious feeling of being exceptional, of being something more than the world gave him credit for being; and, finally, it has lifted his existence to a higher plane by giving him sympathy with lofty though futile endeavor."

How true are these words! There are many who redeem their lives from the commonplace and gather strength to resist the crushing burdens of life from some noble, but unrealized ideal.

Indeed, there are those whose purpose of achievement has bettered their daily life, for they knew that out of an unworthy life their great achievement could never come. The words of Milton are memorable: "And long it was not after when I was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his

hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem; that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honorablest things; not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men or famous cities unless he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that is praiseworthy."

There are many who have placed before them noble lives. The Sunday school teacher plans to win many to Christ and be strongly helpful in building the character of others into complete likeness to Christ. Others outline unselfish endeavor for the poor, the sick, the stranger, the home-circle, the associates of church and daily life. But how keen are the disappointments, not alone that the efforts bring so little result, but that the doing is so poorly done.

After all, the desire for such noble deeds is helping one's own life. When the painter strives to place on the canvas the picture of beauty, or the vision of the tragic, pathetic, or heroic, he paints within his own soul a fairer picture. There is realized the beauty, the truth, the heroism he portrays without. The truest work is within, not without. The picture is the reflection in the mirror, the soul wrought out in such work the living form that is reflected by the mirror.

The striving after goodness, the effort to do good, is not measured alone by what is accomplished, but also by the influence upon the life, which in such atmosphere of heroic and Christlike endeavor, becomes Christlike, a joy unto the Lord.

Probably there is nothing so troubles the conscientious as their imperfect realization of the Christ they follow. A sin gives them keen sorrow, but the one sin is little, in their thoughtful moments, in comparison with the failure to reach the life they know ought to be theirs. They cannot be uplifted in their own righteousness, however it may be commended by others, for they are so far from Christ's righteousness.

Yet, is not this their salvation? Does it not keep

them out of commonplace goodness which satisfies the unthinking? Does it not prevent self-righteousness, the guilt of Pharisaism, in whose evil atmosphere the finer virtues die, and love to God is set aside for love of self?

There is another characteristic of faith in Christ that ought not to be overlooked. He that has learned the truth in Jesus has found a center around which his whole life revolves. There is no part of him, no activity, no result, which does not center in Him. His treatment of the body, his affections, his moral nature, his studies, his will, his heart, are all centralized in Christ. "The Intellect says, 'Lord, teach me'; the Heart brings its tribute of loyalty and love; the Will, with bowed head, echoes the first Christian question, 'What wilt Thou have me to do?' Sorrow seeks for comfort, Faith for a resting-place, Hope for an assurance in the Immanuel, the visible Deity, who came to save our race."

It is just this which makes it so difficult to realize our faith, for it dominates the whole of our life. The true Christian knows he must apply its principles to his business, however hard it may seem to reconcile them with the hard, grasping, pushing laws of trade. His social life must be in subjection to the truth in Christ, no matter how society formulates its amusements and rules.

He fails, to his shame, to be what he knows he ought to be. Yet, as he keeps Christ before him, the unsung poem of life is more and more realized. He is lifted into the finer harmonies of truth and nobility of life, and saved from the dull, disappointing prose of the world, which brings sadness, then despair that oft seeks relief in self-inflicted death. He, looking unto Christ, cries, "I have not attained," but those around him know the loveliness of the life which, though not perfect, is as a poem full of the charm and harmony of life lived with God.

## UPLIFT IN OUR WORK

When a work is begun there is the charm of novelty. For awhile it is continued with zest, but after it has lost its novelty it grows wearisome. The young bride, who enters into her new home filled with dainty remembrances of her friends, rejoices in her ownership and thinks she will never tire in her care of her home. But after awhile she is oppressed with the insistent demands incident to the life of the housewife, the constant recurrence of the same trivial things, the cleaning, the sweeping, the dusting, the cooking, and the like. The novelty goes, the drudgery remains. And then, too oft, the petty round ends in depression. Yet there is escape from the depression. It is to take the commonplace and recurrent trivialities and put them in the light of great thoughts. If they are looked upon in the light of duty that must be done, much is gained. She that can say, "This is the thing I ought to do," lifts the common task out of triviality.

If to this is added the thought that thus love can be shown, love, that by the skill and daintiness of the common life, gives pleasure and comfort to the loved, the common task becomes glorified.

But if, beyond this, there is the conviction that God has entrusted to her this task, insignificant as it is, bringing under her special guardianship this particular portion of His work, the uplift that will follow will carry her through it with constant cheer. If anyone is sure that his work is the work which God has appointed to him, at once that work is dignified and ennobled. What God appoints cannot be common. Out of the task will come the enrichment of our own character and the betterment of others.

John Tauler, the mystic preacher of the fourteenth century, said:

“Every art or work, however unimportant it may seem, is a gift of God; and all these gifts are bestowed by the Holy Ghost for the profit and welfare of man. Let us begin with the lowest. One can spin, another can make shoes, and some have great aptness for all sorts of outward arts. These are all gifts proceeding from the Spirit of God. If I were not a priest, but were living as a layman, I should take it as a great favor that I knew how to make shoes, and should try to make them better than anyone else, and should gladly earn my bread by the labor of my hands. There is no work so small, no art so mean, but it all comes from God, and is a special gift of His. Thus let each do that which another cannot do so well, and, for love, returning gift for gift.”

There can be no question that many a Sunday school teacher finds teaching at times a depressing drudgery. It repeats itself practically Sunday after Sunday. Attention is hard to gain. There is a constant struggle to maintain order. The scholars are irresponsive and show little, if any, growth in knowledge (true knowledge of God) and character. All the sacrifices made seem valueless. Teaching loses its zest after the novelty has passed, and, if we are honest concerning it, becomes more or less of drudgery.

There is escape from it, not by giving up the task, but by uplifting it. This is done when we hold fast to the conviction that this is the work which God has called us to do. This is not our choosing, but our calling. He has asked us to do this for Him. The Master first gave us our talents, and then entrusted this part of His work to us. When the work goes hard, let us sturdily recall, “This is my duty, the thing I ought to do,” and duty will be our hard-featured friend to lead us along the difficult places and take us over the hill of drudgery to the pleasant places beyond.

Nor is it the least to recall that He has entrusted to us this work. The apostle speaks of “the gospel

committed to his trust." He could not but preach it that he might be worthy of the trust reposed in him by the Master. One of the deepest appeals to every noble heart is the appeal of trust. The engineer dies at his post rather than fail those who have entrusted themselves to his care. And shall the Master entrust these His little ones to us and we fail to be true to His trust?

Again, we rescue ourselves from drudgery in our work when we recall His love for us. He also out of love lived our common life and bore its burdens, hopefully and happily. He also taught and had our experiences, yet fainted not. He died for us that we might live. When, therefore, He who loved us gave us this work it must have been out of love, because it was best for us. When He asks us to do this, should not His love uplift us when the work grows hard? Is it not comfort to say, "Lord, I do this for Thee, who loved me so greatly, because Thou desirest it. Give me patience and strength"?

The Master gives us this work to do that we, by seeking the salvation of others, may learn what He did and does to save, that we may know the gladness of helping others to a larger knowledge of the kingdom, that we may be fitted to enter into His joy hereafter. We are not to forget that the servants who did His work entrusted to them alone entered into the joy of their Lord.

Surely we shall escape depression and drudgery in our work, and gain uplift for our work, when we recall these things: This is my calling of God, this is the duty given me by Him, this work of His, He has entrusted to me, by this I can show my love to Him, by such work I learn the joy of saving others and am prepared to enter into His joy hereafter.

## A TIME OF DECISION

During this month of April, decision for Christ will be placed before a great many of our young people. It is the time-honored, God-blessed custom of our Church that, after months of patient catechisation by the pastor, the young people about Easter should make open confession of Christ Jesus before men. Those who were baptized in infancy then publicly acknowledge their faith in the Saviour, and take upon themselves the vows to forsake all evil, to cleave unto the Lord and lead the Christian life.

It is at this time of decision that the influence of fellow-Christians, especially of parents and Sunday school teachers, is a mighty force for Christ. To us, it has always seemed the privilege of parents and teachers, from the time a young person begins to go to catechetical instruction, to pray for him, to embrace every opportunity to reinforce the teachings of the pastor, to show a genuine interest in him, and a desire that he should share the blessings of church membership and of open confession of Jesus as Saviour. When, however, the time of decision comes these efforts should be redoubled.

One never can tell what the expression of a loving desire that another should share with you discipleship can effect. We have noticed teachers intensely anxious concerning their scholars at such a time. Almost invariably it has resulted in leading their scholars to the open choice of Christ. Nothing has proved a greater hindrance to the pastor's work than indifference on the part of the teacher. It chills the young heart. The reasoning readily arises, "If decision for Christ was important, my teacher would be anxious that I should make it. On other occasions, about other affairs, my teacher has been so anxious that I should

join with the rest of the class. Now nothing is said, no interest expressed. This decision for Christ is not important."

Is not this well illustrated by the following:

"A young woman went to a college where for six months she was one of a group of students who spent their social as well as student hours together. A religious meeting was held in the college, where the question was asked, 'Will all Christians rise?' This young woman arose.

"The President of the Christian Association was asked by one of the group who was not a Christian, 'Now, honestly, do you wonder that we were surprised? How could we know that she *was* different from us? *She never said anything about it.* One night we were making fun in a way that might have shocked Christian girls, I am sure, because it came very near to irreverence, and she joined in it all. She never said the least thing that might cause us to think that she was a Christian. Besides, when she loses her temper, she talks dreadfully, the same as I do, and I always thought Christians were different from that.'"

The teachings of the Bible in a formal way is one thing. The loving desire for another's salvation is quite another. Scholars are observant. They are on the lookout as to the agreement of our life with the teachings of Christ. They expect that we shall express our desire that they, too, should serve Christ. They want those words of invitation to come sincerely from a warm heart.

We ought, therefore, to pray for the scholars, to pray that opportunity may be given us to speak to them and that we may wisely use the opportunity, speaking the right word. We should pray for them one by one, pray for them by name. As special promise is given to any two agreeing, join with another to pray for your scholars and for the scholars of the other.

One desirous of the salvation of some entrusted to her found her words unavailing. She bethought herself of this promise. She asked another to join with her in prayer. The result was an ingathering of those whose salvation she sought. We may not, indeed, at once be successful with all, but our prayers in time will be answered, and we shall have the joy of leading others to share with us the fellowship of the Master and of giving other workers to His kingdom.

## “DISCOVERING A GENIUS”

Charlotte Bronté is one of the great names in English literature. She had genius. “Jane Eyre” is known far and wide, but, in her other books, like, and some think, even greater power is shown.

Her latest biographer ascribes her success as a writer to her association with M. Héger, in whose school at Brussels she was a teacher. He discovered her genius. He then set before her those ideals and taught her those literary methods of writing, without which she could never have achieved great things. He encouraged her to write, and made her believe in herself as gifted to win a place among the great writers of her land. Her genius, untutored and unrestrained, would not have sufficed. It needed the formative hand of this teacher to shape it into excellency.

All this sets us to thinking that teachers have a most important part in the making of men and women. It is true, some men of genius, untutored, have left writings that the world will never let die. They have, for themselves, conquered every difficulty. But they have done so at great cost to themselves, and wasted much energy ere their failures taught them how to write. Had some one like M. Héger directed their talents and taught them how to place their thought before others, they would have succeeded more quickly, and, perhaps, have accomplished even greater things.

The truth is an important one to Sunday school teachers. Some seem to think that when they have brought their scholars to Christ, their labors are finished. We might as well say, when the teacher discovers the spark of genius in a scholar, his labors are done. But as Charlotte Bronté needed M. Héger the more because she was a genius, so the scholars need the wise teacher the more because they have the be-

ginning of life with Christ Jesus.

Such beginners are very apt to run to excesses, or to take one-sided views of the Christian life, or to grow discouraged and give up because life with Christ is hard to realize. They need judicious counsel, the unfolding of the truth as it is in Christ, so that they may develop their Christian life and bring rich fruitage at its best. Some will do it without teaching, but after many blunders and sore heart-aches. Some may despair, after having run well for a season, and give up the Saviour.

Then, too, the teacher can discover, oftentimes, just what field of Christian work the beginner is best fitted for. There is a tendency on the part of some to make all Christians alike. They must do the same things, pray the same way, give testimony alike, work by the same methods. If we would stop to read the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians we would learn that it was never designed we should be all like peas in a pod. The Spirit gives diversely. We cannot all sing like angels, nor can we all work in the same fashion. I have a great deal of respect for the business man, slow of tongue, who said, "I am not much of a talker, but if the rest of you will talk I will make the money to keep the talkers going." Let us be done with this nonsense that a man is not a Christian because he does not pray or teach or talk as I do. "Has he faith?" "Has he love?" "Does he serve in his own way?" These are the vital questions. Using our sanctified Christian good sense, let us closely study our scholars and guide them to the place to which God has called them, and for which He has given them gifts.

The teacher will see that, to lead others to the larger life in Christ, he must himself know that larger life, and be striving for it. He must have knowledge of Christ in His word. Apollos was a very eloquent man, but Priscilla and Aquila, tent-makers, took him

unto them and "expounded unto them the way of God more perfectly." After that his eloquence was just as great, perhaps greater, but he also had power to win men to Christ. These teachers discovered his genius, and taught it the better way to exercise itself.

The other day someone came and reported to us the words of a fervent evangelist. If he was reported correctly, he has a great deal to learn. He told his hearers, "All you need do is to ask Jesus for more life, and He will give it you." So He will, but He has marked out the way, the word and the sacraments. We must seek Him in His word, we must be baptized and meet Him in the Lord's Supper, we must obey that word, that the Holy Spirit of life may abide with us. What is the use in such vague preaching? It simply leads to fanaticism, but not to wholesome, harmonious, Christian life.

What we need as teachers is to have a good knowledge of Christ and His teachings, which we may impart to others to guide them to a wholesome life in Christ. That, of course, means general study of the Bible, of the doctrines as held by the Church. The particular study of the lesson should be pursued diligently, but, back of this, for the highest teaching, should be diligent study of the whole of the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church, that the fullness of Christian life, so far as we can grasp it, may be held up to others. For these reasons teacher-training courses are established to help to this larger knowledge. There is nothing to daunt us in this. The high ideal will keep us from stagnating and sinking into machinelike teaching that practically is the same Sunday after Sunday. But then it was a great thing for M. Héger to discover a genius. It will be an infinite joy to discover your scholar and make a workman for the Lord of whom none needs to be ashamed, a man whose rich Christian character shall be of untold benefit to his generation.

## WHAT INFLUENCED YOU MOST?

In looking back upon your own Sunday school life as a scholar, have you ever thought what was the greatest influence in the Sunday school on you for good? Undoubtedly the strongest influence upon very many came through the life and personality of a teacher devoted to God, whose spirit and character was a copy of the Master's.

Through the gracious personality of such a teacher the Bible message came with vividness. The beautiful and lofty purpose that was evident stirred you out of carelessness and shamed you into better things. The love for Christ, breathed both in word and look, persuaded you to embrace that love. The reality of fellowship with God convinced you that He lived and made Himself known to those who trusted Him.

In my own case, the Sunday schools which I attended were very poor, and I never had a teacher of strong religious conviction. But to offset this, I had a father (my mother was dead) whose walk with God was close and whose Christian personality was in evidence all the days of the week and in all his speech and deeds. His influence was mighty in leading me to Christ and convincing me of the reality of religion. Why should not this influence of personality be mighty? Dr. Trumbull says very wisely: "Nor is it sufficient to have Jesus Christ as the ideal standard of character and of human conduct, without any intermediate exhibit between Him and ourselves, of the attributes and traits which His nature personifies and illustrates. Human nature needs the inspiration and the encouragement of purely human ideals, reflecting and, so far, reproducing the one perfect ideal, as an incentive and pattern to worthy being and doing. We know that we ought to be like-minded with Christ;

but Christ is so far above us, and we are so hopelessly unlike Him at the best, that we are in danger of despairing in the struggle, while we have nothing before us but that absolute perfect divine-human standard of attainment. When, however, we see the likeness of Christ imaged in one trait or another of a human follower of Christ, that trait has new attractiveness to us from its very possibility of imitation; and so the followers and witnesses of Christ become our inspiring helpers toward Christ."

The young do a great deal of thinking and reflecting. They are apt to go straight to the mark and brush aside sophistries. When they observe the difference between the character, disposition, purpose and works of their teacher over against the character, disposition, purpose and works of worldly people, they at once decide that it is the love of Christ that makes their teacher pure, unselfish, patient, righteous. If the teacher does not differ from the worldly man or woman, they conclude that there is no difference between Christ's influence and the world's, or that the profession made is hollow, hypocritical, full of cant, and they revolt from all Christianity, unless the sincere Christian love of some other person or persons counteracts the deadly impression.

If these things are so, do we not see that our greatest concern as teachers should be the cultivation of our own life with Christ, or, in other words, to lead a sincere, steadfast, unselfish Christian life? Methods have their force and use. But back of methods must be spirit, and back of all Sunday school methods especially must be the Christian spirit.

In the long run the rich personality, with poor methods, is vastly better than good methods with poverty of personality. For the impartation of Bible facts by ingenious methods may be capitally done and yet the heart be untouched. On the other hand, strong personality may enkindle the spirit of love to Christ in the

heart of the scholar, though it may not convey so many facts or in so skillful a way. As one has said, "Nothing so interesting, nothing so important as this process which is continually going on all around us—the illumination of souls by an already illuminated soul."

To put first things first is wisdom. We are not to despise method. We should learn the teacher methods that our teaching may have the widest scope. We should know as much of the Bible as possible, that the truths that broaden character may be imparted. But after all is said and done, the first and absolute thing is that you know Christ yourself, that you gain a rich Christian personality by fellowship with Him and obedience in daily life. Then when you have heart experience you will speak the words that thrill and your life will bear its silent and powerful testimony to your scholars that your words are true, and persuade them to seek the goodness and beauty of the life in and with Christ.

Though they might not be able to put it into exact words, your scholars practically say, "If the religion of Christ makes him a man like that, then I want to be Christ's, that I may be a man just like he is."

## WHAT THE COMMON SCHOOL HAS DONE

Everyone who knows our common schools has a great respect for the teachers and their work. They are well trained and educated thoroughly for the requirements of their position. They have been well grounded in the methods of teaching and have been taught to observe the child and his characteristics. They are well informed concerning the branches they are to impart to the children, full of the special subjects given them as their department.

The children, especially the older ones, who come to our Sunday schools, accustomed to such instructors and instructions, have little respect for teachers of the Bible who know neither how to teach nor the subject which they teach. The day school has spoiled them. It has given them a high standard, which standard to a certain extent must be measured up to by the Sunday school.

As teachers we may grumble about it, but grumbling will not meet the situation. It is there; wisdom indicates that we must face it and prove ourselves superior to it, if we would make Sunday school teaching respected by the scholars of the day school who sit under able and trained teachers during the week.

Every teacher that has ambition to do good work should study some manual on teaching to learn the methods of teaching and child-nature. There are a number of such text-books. Or, if a chance is given to enter a teacher-training class he should seize it.

But there is one thing everyone can get that is absolutely necessary to retain the respect of the scholars—a good working knowledge of the Bible itself. These bright day scholars will respect and be proud of a teacher who knows the Bible so well that they cannot puzzle her or him and who speak concerning it as a

book well known, both as to its contents and meaning.

To gain this knowledge there must be daily reading of the Bible to familiarize one with its contents as well as to feed one's own soul. Then there must be study of it, not merely the study of the lesson, important as that is, but study of books, circumstances, meaning, until there is a clear knowledge of the Scriptures as a whole and in its parts. You should have a good Bible dictionary, and, if possible, a commentary to refer to. When your scholars find that you are familiar with, and are full of knowledge concerning the Bible, they will respect you and listen to you. Besides it will give freshness, variety and breadth to your teaching, for your knowledge of the whole will enable you to illustrate one portion of the Bible with another portion—the best of all illustrations.

Of course, we would not say that faith and obedience to Christ are not the best helps to understanding the Bible, but how can we believe and obey when we do not know Him in His word? There must be the whole Christ, not a partial Christ, and He comes to us in His fullness when we know Him in the fullness of the Bible.

This full knowledge of the Bible can be gained if we would devote but a small portion of the day to its study. How vast would be our reward, not alone for ourselves, but in enriched teaching of our scholars.

## TEACH RIGHTEOUSNESS

A great deal of emphasis is being placed on personal work to-day, on seeking men personally and pressing upon them the invitation of Christ to come unto Him. In the addresses made to Sunday school teachers there is ever the cry, "Bring your scholars to Christ." All this is most important, for surely the fundamental thing is to bring the sinner into personal relation with Christ by faith.

All this is heartily conceded, but we question whether in this insistence something tremendously important also is not often neglected—the necessity of instruction concerning a righteous, well-developed Christian life. Life comes first, but life needs to be healthily and harmoniously developed. A babe has life, life that has all the possibilities of manhood. Unless it be trained and disciplined and strengthened in body, mind and spirit, the life is a failure, and, perhaps, is lost, because no resistive power to the attacks of disease and temptation has been cultivated.

Very many of our scholars come to look on the religious life as a mere emotional thing, and think it something distinct from their every-day life in school or business. Religion is church attendance, reading the Bible, praying, testifying in meetings, speaking to others about Christ. They do not seem to be taught the stern side of religion, that it is righteous living in thought, word and deed, that is just as busy the other six days of the week as on Sunday, putting into practice the moral teachings of the Bible at any cost, into business, pleasure and society. They do not seem to realize that the Sermon on the Mount is to guide them as to conduct, just as much as the parable of the Prodigal Son as to spirit.

Indeed, our invitations to become Christians lack

the warning note of Christ—"Count the cost." We do not set forth His demands for a pure, honest, upright, righteous life as much as His kindly readiness to receive him who comes. Jesus Himself was ever sifting those who came. He cared for no divided heart. He wanted men to give themselves utterly to His service and obey Him everywhere and in all things.

One of the sad things to day is the double life many professed Christians live. They are zealous church members, and during the week are swayed by worldly principles, pleasures and methods. In business they gamble, falsify, drive, oppress, covet, take advantage contrary to every teaching of Christ. Surely they have never given their *whole* life to Christ.

And much of our teaching fails in making boys and girls righteous in their lives. A physician (he may have been an opponent) was heard to say that when he wanted a boy he always asked him whether he went to Sunday school, and if he replied, "Yes," he would not have him, because he found Sunday school boys worthless. Of course we know that is an exaggeration, but it does point the truth that too many of our scholars do not live righteously in the world about them. It may be the fault of the weak, conscienceless life so prevalent everywhere, it may be faultiness in our teaching and example.

Let us, therefore, recall that our work is only begun when we get scholars to decide for Christ. The other side of the work is to teach them the essentials of a Christlike life, to be righteous, moral, good, self-denying and pure.

Christ's final command was, "Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*" When He forgave Peter, His command was, "Feed my lambs," "Feed my sheep," indicating that He places in the very foremost the supply that

shall strengthen and round out the life that is begun in Him.

Let us not overlook, then, this important feature of our teaching, to inculcate those principles and duties which tend to righteousness, until our scholars shall be known by the beauty and strength of a holy life.

## VACATION AND RETURN TO WORK

Vacation sends some teachers back to work with greater zest and renewed vigor. To others the experience is just the reverse. They have so enjoyed the Sundays that were without the labors of teaching that they hate or dread to take them up again.

Let us be honest. There is at times a drudgery connected with teaching, a drudgery that has little zest in it and which only a stern sense of duty can enable one to endure. But that is true of everything we do regularly. At first the doing is a joy, and then some day the zest goes all out of it and we drag ourselves to our tasks, whether we be artisans, merchants, teachers, preachers or what not. And yet so splendid are the results brought out by drudgery—conquest of sloth, energy, power, strength of will, self-mastery—that someone has said, "Blessed be drudgery." Drudgery has been at the bottom of the best service, the finest achievements of arts, science, invention, statesmanship, all that the world calls best.

That is worth while thinking about when, vacation over, the drudgery of teaching begins again.

Vacation over, begin your work promptly. The longer you put it off the harder it will be to begin. Again, the longer you put off beginning the more you will dissipate the results you have already accomplished with your class. There is always a let-down in the class uncared for by the regular teacher. The longer the absence, the worse the let-down. Get them together as soon as you can. Go after them at once if they do not report.

As a teacher you are entitled to a good deal of sympathy and encouragement. You are a volunteer, unpaid, teaching out of love to Christ. It is more than possible that a great deal of fault is found with you,

and that there is not a little criticism of your methods and ability. Unfortunately this is too much the case and not justifiable in large part. However, you are not working for sympathy or praise, you are working for Christ by taking care of the scholars He has entrusted to you to train for Him. As long as you know you are doing your conscientious best, never mind man's judgment, but take all to Him.

Besides, reflect on what you are doing. What is the highest blessing we can bring to anyone? You recall Jesus said His truth made men free. Salvation was freedom. The Bible speaks to us of those in the bondage of sin and death. Is there anything so pitiable as the men behind prison bars, in bondage, limited? What greater blessing than to throw wide the prison bars and give them freedom! And we are doing that when we lead a scholar out of sin and guilt into the freedom which Christ gives to everyone that believes. And all the further teaching that we give, that leads the scholar who believes into a larger knowledge of truth in Christ is freeing them from limitations and giving them the larger and better things.

Much of Christ's work was just that, not alone saving from sin, but revealing the Father and His ways and His wisdom by His words and His life. One of the sweetest things in our Christian life is the coming into the better understanding of Christ and His truth that frees us from the ignorance of God that limited us in our joy and peace and knowledge. And as we live and learn this experience is repeated again and again.

He gives you this work to lead your scholars out of ignorance into the better and clearer knowledge of Him, a blessing not to be calculated by weight or measure or money. Such teachings of yours are then the doorways for them into a blessed life of trust and service.

I suppose that the reason we fail to grasp this is

because the spiritual effect is unseen. The scholar shyly conceals what has been done to his soul. We are ignorant of what has been accomplished. Again, spiritual growth is slow. We must wait patiently ere the fruit comes. Here, as with our own future rewards, we must have faith. We see not the future life with its blessedness, but we hope for it. Even so with our spiritual work. We sow, and then must wait in hope. But God will not deceive.

Let these things cheer you and help you after vacation to go back with zest to your class.

## WEAKNESS OF THE NEW EDUCATION

Keen observers of our Sunday school work to-day are saying that in the new teaching, with its imitation of the secular educational methods, the real work of the Sunday school is being neglected. The real work of the Sunday school is to kindle faith in God through Christ Jesus and to nurture the religious life, training it to service. The heart must be reached. Education is but a scaffold. It is not and never can be the structure. The intellect can be developed by education, but unless choice and action be secured, the character remains unchanged or, perhaps, made worse. Truth can be a savor of death unto death where there is refusal to accept.

Interest, which the educational methods may secure, may be worthless. Interest, secured by the new pedagogy, is of worth only so far as it leads to truth seen and embraced. No one can question that a wealth of work, admirable and praiseworthy, is being bestowed on the Bible by educators. But unless this work centralizes itself on Jesus Christ and the saving truths, the need of righteousness, the necessity of faith, the grace brought through His sufferings and death, the work as Christian work is an absolute failure.

The weakness of the leaders of the new religious education, with all their study of the child in the different stages of growth and the choice of material suited to these different stages, is its tendency to ignore sin, God's atonement for sin in Jesus Christ, His grace as given in the means of grace, and the primal need of faith. The child is to become God's child and be kept God's child by keeping from it the somber things of life, pain, death, and by dwelling on the pleasant things of life, and finding here the great

evidences of the love and the mercy of God, is the new theory.

Yet the truths that have made Christ precious to children and men above all others are the truths by which they learn to triumph over pain, suffering and sin, and to gather strength for the fight for patience, courage and righteousness as God's children.

Let us not be too sanguine because we win and hold the attention of our scholars by the delightful stories, pictures and methods which the new education gives us, that we are really influencing the heart and life. Long ago Ezekiel was told this, "Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people talk of thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, everyone to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from Jehovah. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but do them not; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their gain. And, lo! thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not."

So Christ was heard. But few were wise, and hearing his sayings did them and built their house on the rock.

Unless we can move our scholars to choice and deed, our brilliant teaching according to the newest methods will fail. They will not be deeply moved nor make the great choice because of moral platitudes and roseate descriptions of goodness, but alone when they learn that they are poor sinners and can only be made righteous as they believe in Jesus who died to save from sin and give power to live righteously.

## UNPROMISING MATERIAL

Much of the material given to the worker is unpromising. He complains that he could really do a great deal better than he is doing, if he had only better material, but those given him are so inferior, dull, ignorant, or so restless, mischief-loving, that it is almost impossible to make any lasting impression. "Give me better material and I will give you better results."

Without doubt there is much that is reasonable in these complaints. Is there not, however, another way in which to look at this unpromising material? Would it not be better to ask what is the best that can be made out of this material?

In Florence is the most magnificent of modern sculptures, the David by Michael Angelo. The block of marble out of which it was hewn was rejected by another artist who had worked upon it, and had cast it aside as unfit. Michael Angelo saw the rejected stone and its possibilities, and taking it, with infinite patience shaped it into the glorious David, with God-like face, with confident pose, just ready to loosen the sling with which to smite the giant Goliath to the earth.

The block was unpromising material. Michael Angelo considered not so much its imperfections as its possibilities. He brought to it his artistic genius and infinite patience. The end crowned the work. The statue is unequaled for majesty, strength and manly beauty of body and face.

The worker must never forget the infinite possibilities of every human soul. Jesus Christ put a new valuation on every child and every man. Others had asked for the strong, the wise, the rich. Jesus took

the weak, the poor, the despised, the babes, and of these built the kingdom of heaven.

Someone has said that in the construction of the windows of a cathedral one window stood out above all the others for richness of design and loveliness. It was the work of an apprentice. The master artist was put to shame. Angry, he demanded where the apprentice had gotten his materials. He answered "I took the pieces you had cast away."

That is just what Jesus did. He took the poor, the unlearned, the despised, whom the workers, the philosophers, the religious leaders, had cast away, and out of them built a kingdom of great and beautiful spirits such as the world had never seen.

It would be well if more of us could take to heart the truth. Unpromising material is God's material. If we patiently strive with it, not giving way to discouragement, He may, through us, fashion it into His likeness and glory.

## OCCASIONAL TEACHERS

I was much interested in listening to a newspaper man, who sees a great deal of life and is in constant contact with men. He said that men were always ready to listen to direct, manly sermons, sermons that grip and deal with verities.

He himself had been called upon by his pastor to preach a lay sermon from the pulpit one Sunday. He had the closest attention, and felt, on the whole, he had done well, perhaps unconsciously thought that he had preached better than the clergyman himself. Possibly he had, as he is a man trained to write and gifted with the art of graphically setting forth a subject. Then, too, he had to help him curiosity, as he was a novelty. Novelty wins attention even when the performance, as a whole, is not of a very high order. He was an occasional talker. If he had to meet the same people one hundred times a year on Sunday with a sermon, fifty times on Wednesday evening with a lecture, and if, besides these, there were talks to the Sunday school, to societies, at funerals, would he be able to win and hold attention at each and every one of these services?

A congressman of rare ability, an occasional attendant, once said to me, "I don't see how you clergymen can be fresh and interesting, making a hundred speeches each year to the same people. Of me there is required but half a dozen speeches in a year, into which I can put my strength and thought."

All this set me to thinking about occasional teachers. A teacher supplies a class for a Sunday. He is a novelty, he can use all his ideas, for he has presented none of them to this particular class. He himself is inspired by the fact that he must make good with this new class, or, better, that he has a fine op-

portunity to make clear to them the truth which he loves. The teaching is a great success. The class wishes it could have a teacher like that all the time.

But suppose he came fifty times a year. The novelty, of course, would vanish. The fresh ideas would be exhausted. The class, with the familiarity which breeds contempt, would be careless and inattentive. That is another story.

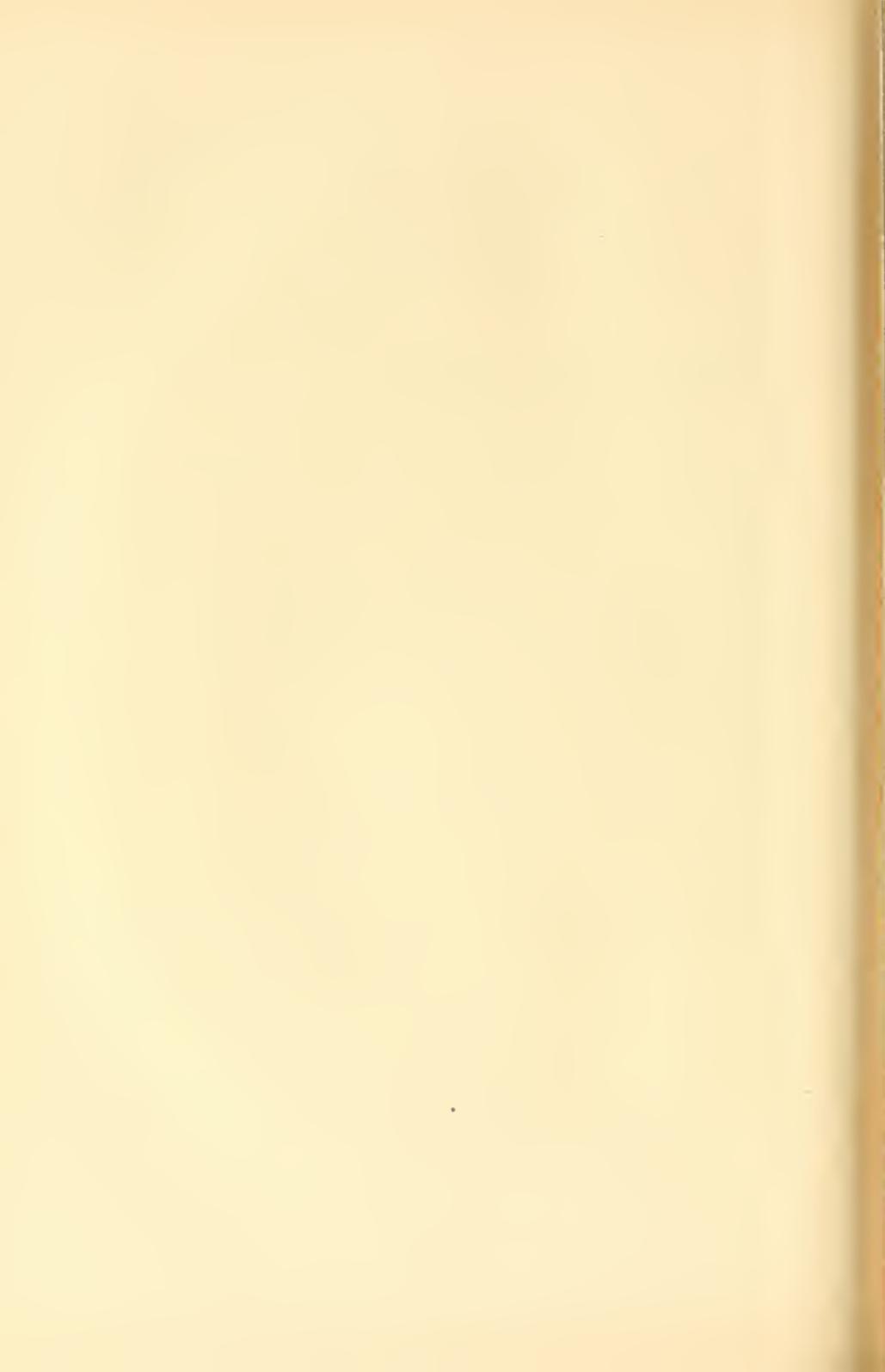
The regular teacher needs to face these difficulties. He must study how to keep the class interested, to give fresh thought, to develop the lesson in different ways to arouse curiosity. It takes grit, patience. It will send the devout teacher to his knees to ask God to help him. But, after all, it is the regular work that tells. Slowly, unseen in its effects, the influence and teaching make their impressions on the scholars. What is most needed is the patience of love. If not now, in the after years the seed sown will come to fruitage.

This is written to encourage the regular teacher. He deserves all honor for sticking to his work. It will be often discouraging. It will seem so far from the ideal. People who run around addressing conventions, who don't teach regularly themselves, can give a great deal of advice as to how teaching should be done. Often the substance of it being "my way." "My way" may do very well for "me," but not for you. Perhaps, too, regular work would not be so palatable or so highly successful with them.

Let us stick to our work given to us by the Lord. Let us do our best. Then let us put our work in the Lord's hands for results, and He will bless both your work and you, the worker.

IV

GENERAL RELIGIOUS THEMES



## THE KINGDOM AND THE CHURCH

Jesus, the Lord, did not often speak of the Church, but often of the kingdom of God. The Acts and the Epistles are full of the Church, of its origin, its purpose, its fellowship. Nor is the reason far to seek. The Lord came to set forth the kingdom of God upon earth, its purpose, principles and spirit. The kingdom of God is doing God's will on the earth as it is done in heaven. He came also to establish the Church, the distinctively religious institution through which the kingdom of God is to be advanced. "The kingdom is the end, the Church a means to that end." The Christian Church could not be established until Christ had finished His work, until by His life and death the gospel had been set forth, by preaching and teaching which gospel the Church should bring men wholly into the kingdom of God. Only after His work was done and He had gone back to the right hand of God, could He send forth the Holy Spirit, who is to the Church what the soul is to the body of man—its life. When Pentecost came and the Holy Spirit was shed forth, the Christian Church was born. Its invisible Head is Christ, its invisible soul is the Holy Spirit. It is the fellowship of believers in the Holy Ghost. In it is the word of the gospel and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, by which He, the Spirit, regenerates and preserves believers.

It will thus be easily understood why the Lord Jesus said little about the Church. Its hour had not come. He was to teach the principles which the Church should proclaim, to establish the sacraments which should be the means of grace to the Church. What He did say concerning the Church was tremendous. The rock on which the Church was to be built was Himself as the divine Saviour. On this rock He would build

the Church, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it. He thus declares the outcome of faith in Him will be the Church made up of believers; that it is eternal and cannot be overthrown. When Paul speaks of the Church and says that it is the body of Christ, precious and loved, he but changes Christ's figure.

Again, Christ speaks of those who trespass and their reclamation. The wronged is to tell it unto the Church, and if the trespasser continue in his disobedience and neglect to hear the Church, he is to be as a heathen man and a publican. He adds also to the Church the power of binding and loosing on earth, and it shall be bound and loosed in heaven. Here He confers authority upon the Church which is far-reaching and startling in its character. Nor must it be overlooked that when Jesus was on the earth, there was in existence a Church, also of God, the Jewish Church, which was to the Christian Church as the bud to the flower. He was of that Church, in it, observing its ceremonies and worship, its truths, together with His disciples. He did not, therefore, despise and contemn the Church to exalt the kingdom of God, but by His example and practice taught that even an imperfect Church is better than none. Membership in it is both a duty and a privilege.

A study of The Acts shows the immense importance and worth of the Church. The Church is the keynote of the book. Its beginning, its progress, its life, its victories, its nearness to God, the nearness of Christ to it, are its themes. There is no account of a believer who did not join the Church gladly, following its services and life with joy.

The outward allegiance to the Church was then almost the same as the inward allegiance. Ananias and Sapphira were exceptions. The body of believers belonged inwardly by faith to the Church. The former lied to the Holy Spirit, the soul of the Church. The

latter was guided by Him, and so filled with love that they were ready to hand over all their possessions to such as were in need. The life of these first Church members was new in its morality. It was not merely a new religion, it brought a new spirit into all human relations. Religion was connected with every detail of life. Its pleasures and employment, its common meals and actions, were all sanctified by its presence. The secret power was love, that catching the spirit of Jesus, loved one's neighbor as one's self. It made sacrifice a joy, it revolutionized society, exalted women, ennobled labor and obeyed authority. With us the Church has become an institution that has in it many who are there because of early training, but who have never made a heartfelt decision for Christ, those who hypocritically seek it for influence, profit, society, position, those who have lost their first love. It is, therefore, judged by the outward and not by the inward, by its false and careless members, not by those who are believing and being sanctified. Those are the ones that weaken its influence and cause men to think that the Church is not the means to advance the kingdom of God. If, indeed, the Church should as an organization become corrupt, adverse to the word of God, it becomes a duty, if it will not heed protests, to leave it, and under a changed form carry on its work, just as Luther did in the Reformation. He left not the Church of God, but the organization of Rome, which had the form of godliness but not the spirit thereof. To him the Church itself was precious.

Whilst we acknowledge the Church to-day is imperfect, such must be the case while it is made up of imperfect men, whom its very province is to perfect. Even a gallery where every picture is perfect, and every marble faultless, will never be. But the Church of to-day does bring men face to face with God in Christ Jesus. It continually bears witness to the fact that God is, and that He is present with men. By wor-

ship and preaching it satisfies man's longing to worship God, and sustains faith in Him. It does stand for righteousness. It boldly speaks to the conscience, rebukes sin, and exhorts to better life. The Church is always on the side of morality. It has as its text-book the Bible, with its unsurpassed morality, and Jesus Christ as the example of righteousness. It is on the side of weakness and ignorance and innocence. It even insists on the law of Christ to bear one another's burdens, and stimulates the unselfish stewardship, the sympathy and love of men. It educates the ignorant. It protects the innocent. It has hope for the worst, and will not in the spirit of Jesus give up the lost, the miserable, the degraded, but seeks and does save them. It does exalt Christ, without whom none can come to the Father. We must judge the Church by these great tendencies, even from a human standpoint.

But there is another standpoint, that of the New Testament, the divine standpoint. The study of The Acts should impress us with the necessity of the Church, its worship, its fellowship, its ministry, its means of grace, the special presence of the Holy Spirit, that it is the body of Christ, that its special work is the advancement of the kingdom of God. We should never forget that significant verse, "The Lord added to the Church daily such as were being saved." It is the Lord's will that everyone should belong to the Church, that it is His training school where men are made strong to do His will on earth, gather His grace and promises, and are made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. In the words of Luther, every Christian should say, "I believe in the Christian Church where He daily forgives abundantly all my sins and the sins of all believers, and will raise up me and all the dead at the last day, and will grant everlasting life to me and to all who believe in Christ."

We should also recognize that the Church is known through her membership, through their lives of sym-

pathy, love, good works, sacrifice and righteousness. That we cannot teach others to prize it unless it be dear to us. That if we do not believe in its divine character, that the Holy Spirit is with its ministry and worship, and because we thus believe are regularly in attendance upon its services, the world will not. That if we do not prize its doctrines as taught out of the Scriptures, the word and sacraments as God's means of grace, its fellowship of saints, as the society which the individual must seek if he has the spirit of Christ, and if he would give and receive the stimulus of Christian love, neither will others prize the Church.

In view of all this, it should be our constant aim as teachers to impress upon our scholars the worth, value and divine character of the Church, that by their own act they should join it as believers in Christ, and that they need its services, teaching and fellowship, if they would continue faithful to Jesus, their Lord and Saviour.

## PERSONAL PERSUASION

The sermon is a power. The results of the past, the results of to-day, are the proofs of this. Wherever the voice of the true preacher is, there someone is convicted, rebuked, stirred and inspired. Peter's sermon brought three thousand to Christ. Philip preached in Samaria until many believed, and a whole city had great joy. In our day almost as great results have followed the faithful preaching of the word of God.

But it may be seriously asked whether, with a large number of persons, individual work is not more required than the sermon to the many. If all persons could be gotten to the churches or halls to hear the sermons, less individual work would be required; but the constant complaint is that there are multitudes who cannot be persuaded to listen to preaching at all. Some very pleasant people are among our friends who never think of stepping over the threshold of a church except on rare and special occasions. These persons are not opposed to the church, they are simply indifferent. There are others who are not merely indifferent, but antagonistic to the churches, or inconceivably careless. The unchurched mass, despite all efforts to minimize it, is a tremendous fact. Anyone who keeps his eyes open knows that it is.

If these persons are to be reached, it must be by patient, persistent, individual effort. Sermons will never reach them, because they do not hear them. Someone must seek them out, one by one, and persuade them of the truth in Christ, or lead them to attend church where they will receive Him. If there is anything that needs to be pounded into the heads and laid upon the hearts of Christians it is this—that now, as never before, individual effort is required with friends, neighbors and acquaintances. Great stress is

laid upon union meetings and revivals, but these draw but a fraction of the unchurched. Christians attend, pray, listen to thrilling sermons, to stirring hymns, and enjoy the excitement while it lasts, and then sink back into their wonted lethargy.

There is here no objection made against special services, but the special services fail because the Christians do not go out among those who are not attending services and bring the power of personal persuasion to bear upon those whom they know. That preacher is happy who is multiplied by his members, who take his message and tell it to this individual and that. His sermon is carried by them beyond the church door and preached to the world. He sets on fire a hundred preachers, though their congregations have but *one* hearer.

Again, "Certain men will be led into Christian life and service only by patient and thoughtful conversation with someone who does understand the truth of Christ. You have a husband or a son or a friend who is not living in the kingdom; he is not enjoying what religion contains for him. You stand closer to his life than any other human being. You can do what no other can." It is this which makes the seriousness of our Christian life. If Christ censures those who did not feed the least of these when they were an hungered, and condemns them to everlasting death, how can we hope to escape if we fail to bring Him, the Bread of Life, to a soul that is an hungered?

It will readily be conceded that this is a task of no ordinary delicacy and difficulty. One cannot talk about religion as he would about business and politics. It cannot be made common without losing its holiness. To ask wisely and effectively about a man's spiritual condition requires thought and judgment. The hour of urging upon another the choice of Christ must not be hastened to gratify coarse impatience.

Yet one cannot but feel that Christ had no such

difficulty. He talks as easily and as naturally to men about themselves as we talk about the weather. He leads the woman of Samaria to conviction and directs the conversation to spiritual ends, as we might speak to another about success or failure in a business transaction, or on a question of town history. He was full of His mission, He was near to God and full of love to men. The one great thing to Him was the kingdom of God. He breathed the rare air thereof. He knew its joy. He knew its absolute necessity to men. He could talk, therefore, sincerely and naturally concerning it, and lead others in His over-mastering desire for their salvation to it.

It has been so with others. They could talk to the many, they could also do the harder thing of talking to a soul face to face, and bring to bear on them the power of personal persuasion. It is said of Hewitson, that "One time he was passing along through a village and saw a young woman standing at the door with her child in her arms. He stopped to speak with her. In his usual grave but gentle manner, he remarked, 'How safe that babe feels when you hold it so! The believer is just as safe in the arms of Jesus.' At another time he met a member of his congregation whom he had not yet visited. In response to his kind inquiry, she told him she lived in such a place, 'in the room up stairs.' Then he continued, 'Ah! well; I hope you invite the Lord Jesus with you; He used to live in an upper room sometimes at Jerusalem, and loved to meet His disciples there.'"

When men live close to God, and fellowship with Christ is real, there will be such vision of truth, precious and necessary, that they must tell it to others. It will find its way to the lips. They will watch for opportunity to make known their treasure to others whose life and happiness depend upon its reception. Even men full of the world's truth must make it known. The last political campaign illustrated this.

Men, intensely interested in the questions before the country, could not keep quiet. On the streets they would herald their views, and as they talked others would gather until the sidewalks were sometimes blocked, to the distress of those who would pass. Silver and gold were heard on the cars, in the home, in the factory, wherever men gathered. The truth possessed them (or what seemed to them truth), and face to face men talked one with another. The men that talk intensely the Christ are men who have caught a sight of His goodness and love, of Him Himself.

The truth must be used. Diffidence may seal the lips, but if a man asks God to help him make Christ known to others, it will be overcome. As a man goes again and again to men, he will, by using his power, gain greater power of personal persuasion. Relying on the Holy Spirit, he will find the Spirit making for him opportunities to do personal work, teaching him with whom to speak and how to speak, that he may bring Christ to men and men to Christ.

Nor should we overlook this in our class-work. Whilst we speak to the class as a body, we ought to bring the power of personal persuasion upon each of them when alone with them. We should cultivate their confidence, that they may reveal to us their troubles and struggles, and teach them Him who is their everlasting Friend.

## EASTER JOY

Easter day, when it began, found the disciples sorrowing even unto despair. When it closed, they were glad and jubilant; their despair had given place to confident hope. What caused the change? There is but one answer—the resurrected Jesus.

We say, advisedly, the resurrected Jesus, rather than the resurrection. He had been to them a dead Christ, He is now a *living Christ*—a Christ who, not alone, has triumphed over death and the grave, but lives to be their friend, knowing their troubles, ready to sympathize, comfort and bless. All day that truth was being taught them. He had shown Himself to the sorrowing Mary Magdalene, to the loving women, to the broken-hearted Peter, to the two hopeless disciples on the way to Emmaus, to the timorous gathering of disciples. At every appearance there was a message that assured them of life that had resistless command of the present and the future; to Mary He says, “I ascend to the Father”—He goes even to the right hand of God; to the women, “In Galilee I will see my brethren”—He rules the future; to the two disciples He speaks of the entrance into glory—He lives clothed with glory absolute; to the assembled disciples is the word, “Peace be unto you”—thereby giving a commission absolute and divine, as the Father’s to Himself, to be His ambassadors, and bestows the gift of the Holy Ghost, with the promise of power. He was a *living Christ*, but the Lord of life, who should ever be with them with all power. He is the living Lord.

Such a Christ is the source of gladness, and makes Easter the day of joy. We are assured by it that He is as near to us, with all sympathy and helpfulness, as though we looked upon Him face to face. The living Christ is the source of joy to every believer, the secret

of a hopeful life, and the powerful means to kindle faith in others.

“Dr. John Brown, in his Yale lectures of last year upon ‘Puritan Preaching in England,’ tells us that the late Dr. Dale was once writing an Easter sermon, and when half way through, the thought of the risen Lord broke in upon him as never before. ‘Christ is alive,’ I said to myself. ‘Alive!’ and then I paused. . . . ‘Can that be really true? Living as really as I myself am?’ I got up and walked about, repeating, ‘Christ is living! Christ is living!’ At first it seemed strange and hardly true, but at last it came upon me as a burst of sudden glory. . . . I then said, ‘My people shall know it; I shall preach about it again and again, until they believe it as I do now.’ Because of this resolve and effort to present Christ to his people as a *living* Christ, Dr. Dale was a mighty preacher. Dr. Bushnell was a mighty preacher for the same reason. He said, ‘I know Jesus Christ better than I know any man in Hartford.’ Had he not thus known Christ, he could not have written the sermons found in his volume, ‘Christ and His Salvation.’”

The peculiar gladness of the Christian is due to this, that he has a living Saviour. His gladness will be proportionate to the realization of this truth. His work will be a message of joy as he carries with him this truth, and will make him mighty in deed and speech.

There is a second element of joy that is plain. The sadness of this world arises out of sin. The nobler a man, the deeper his knowledge of himself, the greater the sadness that is his, because it but makes him conscious of his own innate and actual sinfulness. He is condemned by his own conscience. It was glorious for Christ to arise, but Christ could say, “Which of you convinceth me of sin?” His life was spotless and sinless. Would they be entitled to like life? the sinning disciples might well ask.

Therefore, Christ’s first word is peace, carrying

with it forgiveness, reconciliation with God, salvation. And that they might know how all this was possible, "He showed unto them His hands and side." The road to forgiveness and the life of glory was through His wounds. Did He not make this evident in His teaching before He died, though they could not understand it? Did He not announce it that first Easter day, when He said to the two disciples, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and then to have entered into His glory?" Did He not, when He spoke to the assembled disciples, as Luke intimates, explain to them that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name, and that on this proclamation of peace He sent them, even as the Father had sent Him?

Whether they grasped all this on the first Easter day, we know not. It looks as if they had; but whether they did or not, it is a source of gladness to us that the risen Christ was the crucified Christ, and He has, once for all, put away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself. He made no mistake when He chose the cross. It was the way to save us from sin. The Father sets His seal to the proffered salvation, won through the cross, when He raises Him from the dead. Our gladness is also in this, "I know that my *Redeemer* liveth."

Once again, as they looked upon Him, there must have been recollections of all that He had said about the other life, that where He is there they shall be, that they should share His glory. One is ever experiencing the incompleteness of this life; we are ever being disappointed. We dream of what we will be and do, and how measureless is the distance between what we are and achieve and our dream! This life has its joys and triumphs, but it has its sorrows and defeats. Wrong often wins the victory for a time, and our righteousness is of no avail.

It was even so with Christ. He, humanly looked upon, was a failure when success and responsiveness

to His teachings and deeds of kindness are considered. He is rejected by the rulers and His own nation, He is the sport of the cruel and the wicked, He dies in the very beginning of His manhood, young and strong. Without the resurrection life would have been, even for Him, incomplete.

And yet there were features to Him that we have not. He was righteous, He fulfilled His ideal, He lived a marvelous life of beauty, He had nothing to regret. His influence as a mere man would still have been great, if His disciples could ever have plucked up courage to tell the story of His life and words, without the resurrection.

But our lives, how they contrast with His! There is no strong sense of righteousness, no fulfillment of ideal, no beauty of life. There is much to regret and sorrow over. We go forward to death, and cry, "Life is a mockery, if this be all."

Here is the completion. The life of Christ is the first flowering of the race into the completeness of life, as it shall be. Men have said, impressed by the incompleteness of this present life, there must be another life beyond, in which the desires and stirrings of heart must find their satisfaction, in which the wrongs of this world must be rectified, in which the righteous, crucified, tortured and killed must be crowned with glory and blessedness. It is a strong plea for another life. But it is but a dream until Christ's radiant figure shines across the black night of death, and reveals the glorious day of that land where there is no night and where God wipes away all tears from our eyes.

This revelation that life shall be complete made the disciples glad that first Easter day, gave that triumphant, jubilant tone that is heard in all their trials and sorrows. Every one of them that writes has great words of joy that throb with the truth that their lives shall yet be rounded and complete, their dreams of

perfection reality. "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him."

These three sources of joy Easter has—the living Christ, the certainty of peace with God, the completion of life. Rejoice and be glad.

## INTERESTING TO GOD

A young girl at a large school found, at the end of the half of the first year, that she had no special friend. She was lonely among a crowd of girls. Thinking the matter over, she concluded that she was not a taking person; that there was nothing special about her, nothing in which somebody was not better. She was an average girl, and, therefore, her overtures of friendliness toward the brighter and more attractive girls had been met with courtesy, indeed, but with indifference. It was natural that they should not, out of a hundred classmates, choose an uninteresting one for company.

Her conclusion was a sound one. "Nevertheless, I have my life to live, stupid or not. There must be a way to do it usefully. At least I am interesting to God."

The peculiar truth of the last sentence pressed itself home. The divine interest should not be "least," but the best of all things. There came to her the conviction of a real presence, shutting out loneliness and enfolding her with love and never-failing companionship.

It would be pleasant to follow the change that resulted, the unselfish service that she rendered and the devotion she thus kindled in the hearts of her classmates, but our purpose is rather to consider the truth, "interesting to God."

It has a personal bearing for everyone. Life brings us so many disappointments concerning our associates. We long for their interest, friendship and love, and we cannot gain them. Life has many disillusionments. The acquaintance never takes us into the heart; the apparent friend, on the least provocation, drops us for another, or grows angry over a trifle, and will have

nothing further to do with us. Our troubles are not interesting to those whom we thought loved us. They listen with ill-concealed impatience, and, if we continue the recital of our anxieties, find excuse to leave us, and take great precautions to avoid us ever after. Sadly we reach the conclusion they are not interested in us. We have caught their fancy for the moment, or we are valuable so long as they can use us, or help them while away the hours, but they are not interested in us personally so as to share our sorrows, bear our burdens, help us to nobler life, when it means thought and trouble to themselves. They are not interested in us.

Perhaps, if we probed a little deeper into our own hearts, we might discover that we sought the interest of others, but, in turn, were not interested in them. At least we do not grant them the charity that thinketh no evil, beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

The consolation remains that we are interesting to God. The Lord Jesus makes that plain. All men, women and little children were interesting to Him. The range of individuals that absorbed Christ's interest is wonderful in scope. From the Israelite without guile to the blaspheming thief on the cross; from the loyal John to the traitor Judas; from Mary of Bethany, choosing the good part, to the woman that was a sinner; from the fishermen, sound in body, to the loathsome lepers, His interest passed without any diminution in intensity, patience and love. There is no one individual that cannot find someone like himself in the Gospel narratives in whom Christ was deeply interested.

God's interest is, moreover, a never-failing interest. One of the lovely truths concerning God is that His presence is a constant presence. Earthly friends are separated from us by the body, by distance, by sleep and weariness; but He is ever near us, and His pres-

ence folds us round with love the moment we turn to Him. Often He is near us when our eyes are holden, as when He stood on the beach at Galilee that early morn and looked upon His disciples toiling in vain. They knew Him not.

We should hold fast to this truth, "interesting to God," when we grow lonely. We should go to Him and rest our cares upon Him, catch the greatness of His love. We shall come away strong to endure, joyful in heart, and we shall find, through His blessing, the human sympathy we crave, a just demand of the heart; we shall become interesting to others.

On the other hand, there should come out of this truth help in our dealings with others who are unattractive, even positively repellent. Every one of these is "interesting to God," as we ourselves are. He sees in them the making of a saint. Were our love to God deeper, and had a little of that insight into souls that such love brings, we could find them "interesting." If we are laborers for Him, to whom He has given charge of His little ones, or is seeking the unsaved through us, this would change our treatment of the unattractive and unlovely and give us an interest in them that might bring them to penitence and faith, or, if beginners in Christ, make their lives nobler and more Christlike.

An incident in the life of a noble woman of Sweden may fitly close this study and aid us to a better comprehension of its truth. She had opened a home for crippled and diseased children for whom no one else cared. She received about twenty of the poor, unfortunate little ones. Among them was a little fellow only three years old, but whose looks and disease made him a frightful and obnoxious patient. His complaint had worn him down so far that he might have been said to be a living skeleton. His body was covered with sores and blotches. His constant whining and crying gave the good woman more worry and anxiety and trouble than all the others. She washed him, fed

him, nursed him, but always felt repelled, and her feelings often showed themselves in her face. She really could find nothing in the little fellow to love.

One day she was sitting with the boy in her lap, and she fell into a sort of dozing sleep, and in that dreamy state she thought that she had changed places with the child, and that she was the sufferer, only she was more foul and more repulsive than he was. Then, in her dream, she saw the Lord Jesus Christ leaning over her and looking tenderly at her, and with a look on His face that seemed to say, "If I can love you in your awful state, surely you can and ought for my sake to love that poor little innocent sufferer, whose only inheritance from his parents has been this legacy of suffering."

She started up; the boy was looking longingly into her face. Overwhelmed with shame and grief for her previous treatment of him, and now feeling tender compassion for him, she clasped him to her breast and kissed him as she had never kissed even her own baby. With startled eyes and flushing face the boy smiled upon her sweetly, with a smile such as she had never seen before. The boy was changed too. He understood that wonderful transformation in the woman, and the love of her heart made him forget to be peevish, and his life became one of singular beauty and tenderness.

## IMMORTALITY

The longing for immortality has been justly held to be a strong argument for its certainty. Every desire implanted within us has its answer in the world about us. The longing for beauty within us is met by beauty without, rich, manifold, everywhere existent. This thirst for immortality, which has persisted from age to age and among all people, carries with it the presumption that it will be satisfied.

The future life is needed also to round out and complete this life. Those who live the largest and best life are those who know that they have realized but a tithe of the powers and possibilities in them. Time has but laid a foundation; that which is to be built is yet in the future. Another life is needed to round out into fullness this life. When very old, Victor Hugo wrote:

“I feel in myself the future life. I am rising, I know, toward the sky. The sunshine is over my head. Heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds.

“You say the soul is nothing but the result of bodily powers; why, then, is my soul the more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head and eternal spring is in my heart.

“The nearer I approach the end the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvelous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is a history. For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose, verse, history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode, song—I have tried all. But I feel that I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say, like so many others, ‘I have finished my day’s work,’ but I cannot say, ‘I have

finished my life.' My day's work will begin the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley. It is a thoroughfare. It closes in the twilight to open with the dawn. I improve every hour because I love this world as my fatherland. My work is only a beginning. My work is hardly above its foundation. I would be glad to see it mounting and mounting forever. The thirst for the infinite proves infinity."

If we had no more to go upon than these and similar presumptions for immortality, it would be wisdom to commit ourselves to trusting belief in immortality as the highest we know in regard to the future. To give it up is to quench a hope that has lit the pathway of the noblest of our race to sacrifice, to duty, to deathless deeds. It has been the inspiration of the best in literature and arts and religion. It has given to man his moral worth. When it has been relinquished, man becomes an animal, who comes from earth and returns to earth, and he cries, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." Without immortality, the tendency is for man to become earthly, sensual, bestial. In the clear consciousness of another life, when man shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body, the soul girds itself to watchfulness and sobriety, in the conviction of victory over sin and death; there is the death of the despair that life struggling for truth and right is vain, there is the birth of hope that every toil and battle for righteousness will be crowned with reward.

The apostle, however, takes us out of the shadow land of presumptions into the bright sunlit land of certainty by one great and overwhelming fact, the resurrection of Christ. That takes away doubt and gives confidence. It does more, it reveals just what immortality is and under what conditions the body and soul shall live hereafter. Of the body, Paul says, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown

in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." The risen Lord expresses to us in His glorious heavenly life not only the meaning of these great expressions concerning the body, but also the infinite glory of the spirit. He is the firstfruits of them that slept.

It sometimes seems impossible that this body should be the seed of that new body. Some have been ready to believe in the immortality of the soul, but have scouted the idea of the resurrection of the body, even though that body be a spiritual body.

Is it so strange? We are constantly discovering how one order of nature gives way when its limits are reached to another and higher order of nature. "For example, the telescope has been developed nearly, if not quite, to the limits of clear—colorless—definition which are fixed by the laws of light. If our knowledge of the number of stars is to be carried farther than the eye of the telescope can pierce, we must invent a new instrument, adapted to some still higher power of our environment; and this our astronomers have found; for they have availed themselves of the actinic rays which lie in the spectrum above the visible rays—and the sensitive photographic plate exposed to the skies has disclosed the existence of stars beyond stars, which no telescope can ever reveal."

The one order arises naturally out of the other. When the new conditions of immortality possess body and spirit, they may receive new powers as they pass from one order of life to another.

Someone asked Dr. R. L. Dabney, "Do you not feel that you will be lost in heaven, without your eyes to see and your ears to hear and your tongue to speak?"

"There was once a prisoner," he replied, "walled up in a dark and gloomy dungeon. The only rays of light that came to him were through five loopholes; these narrow slits in the thick wall gave him all the

sight he had, for years and years, of earth and sky, of the glory of the sun, the pale beauty of the moon, the radiance of the stars, and the sweet procession of the seasons. But there came a day when a great earthquake rent those walls, and, unhurt, the captive stepped forth to freedom. The wide sky was now his; the far reaches of mountain and valley; the illimitable sea. On every hand his eye drank in beauty and delight. Do you think he missed the five loopholes?"

Is this not a perfect illustration of what our five senses, like the narrow slits in the wall, do for the souls imprisoned in our natural bodies? And shall we dread the earthquake of death that is to rend our dungeon and let us out to the infinite expanse of the spiritual world? There the body as it is now will give place to a glorified body, which will possess all that was essential in the old body, but will be incorruptible, glorious, powerful and spiritual, like unto Christ's own risen body. The present order, having reached its limit, will give place to the higher order.

It is well for us that we have the great historical witness to immortality in Christ's resurrection. Yet it is not enough to know this fact intellectually. The resurrection becomes glorious and inspiring alone when we realize that to obtain the victory over death, we must obtain the victory over sin, its sting, its agony, and that to obtain the victory over sin we must know Christ as our Saviour, and by faith enter into fellowship. Otherwise immortality brings but gloom to the sinner, for it becomes a future life of sorrow and grief and despair, infinite in duration.

Entering into fellowship with Jesus, we learn, by sweet experience, He lives. Our inward certainty confirms the historical fact. We know that "My Redeemer liveth, and, because He lives, I, too, shall live."

## PRESUMPTION

The first attitude of the child of God to his heavenly Father is the attitude of trust that confidently believes His ways are right and patiently awaits His time. To attempt to dictate to God what should be done and how it should be done is presumption, the very thing Satan tempted Christ in the wilderness to do after he had been defeated in his first attempt to persuade Him by His miraculous power to turn the stones into bread to satisfy His hunger.

By the second temptation Satan sought to persuade Jesus to forsake the way the Father appointed to Him and dictate to God the method of showing to the people that He was the Son of God. Satan tempted Jesus to throw Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple in order that He might force God, the Father, to rescue Him by the hands of angels, that they, supporting Him, might bear Him up that He might defy the ordinary law of descent and place His feet as gently on the stones beneath as though He had stepped from one to another, as He walked on the pavement of the court. Subtly the tempter suggests that "If Thou art the Son of God," Thou wilt thus prove to others that Thou art the Son of God. He insinuates that the wonderful trust in the Father Jesus had shown about His hunger and refusal to eat any bread, except such as the Father willed, should perfectly express itself in something unusual, extraordinary or heroic. The Jews were prejudiced and hard of heart. An act like this would convince them He was the Messiah, and they would readily believe in Him and become His followers. The temptation to forsake the quiet methods God had ordained and adopt something startling, calling attention to Himself and forcing belief,

was very great. But it was presumption and the devil's method.

Christ met the temptation, which had Scripture apparently in its favor, by saying, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God," another Scripture which interpreted the Scripture quoted and made clear its limitations. To tempt God is to distrust God, to test His power presumptuously in secret unbelief. For Jesus to have cast Himself down was to distrust God's ways to bring in His kingdom and forsake them, to presume upon God's promises by placing Himself in danger needlessly, and for the sake of popular applause to display His faith in working wonders.

We, too, are tempted to *presume*. To seek to obtain by worldly means religious ends, or to build up churches and Sunday schools by sensational methods, or to catch the populace, or cater to fashion or wealth, is presumption. It is to dictate to God how His kingdom is to be built up, scorning His ordained methods. A man like Dowie is certainly presumptuous. Yet are not many in lesser measure guilty of presumption also in their methods?

Men are presumptuous who neglect God's ordinary laws and then demand His aid and protection. If ordinarily Jesus had wished to descend from the pinnacle of the temple He would have used the ordinary method—He would have descended by steps, and not on angels' wings. All through His life the use of the ordinary is manifest. He could walk on the water. Once He did this; ordinarily He uses a boat to cross the sea. He could raise the daughter of Jairus to life, but afterward He does not feed her supernaturally when the ordinary suffices, but orders those about her to give her something to eat. He and those who followed Him never used the extraordinary when the ordinary sufficed. Paul, who healed others, was ready to seek the aid of Luke, the physician, in the ordinary life. Christian science, faith-healing, that have no

use for ordinary means and neglect them in ordinary cases, yield to the very temptation which Christ rejected. Extraordinary emergencies may require extraordinary methods, but not ordinary ones, is the clear teaching of Christ's example; usual sicknesses are to be dealt with by usual means. Faith is not to set aside God's usual methods.

It is presumption, again, to thrust ourselves into dangers to which the Lord does not call us and expect the Lord to save us from them when we pray. But if, in the way of duty, a believer comes into the same danger, he can confidently call upon the Lord. He who goes out in a leaky boat upon the sea in a fierce tempest for bravado cannot expect God to care for him; but he who is there at the call of duty can expect His aid, as the disciples in the storm on the lake of Galilee. A man must not go into the places of drink when he is weak in that direction, or he must go down. So must men act toward every other besetting sin. We are not to *court* danger that God, rescuing us, may show that we are His children. Such outward advantage is the mortal injury of the life of the soul within. It is the wounding of faith, the stimulating of unbelief and trust in self. *We must not presume.*

An old story well illustrates this: A Christian woman, trusting to be preserved by her principles, ventured into a place of questionable character, and came back "possessed." When the exorcist asked the evil spirit how he dared to enter into a Christian, his answer was, "Why not, when I found her upon my own ground?"

Yet, on the other hand, in extraordinary cases we may call upon God in humble trust to aid and deliver us. Thus Luther, when Melanchthon was at the point of death, believing that he was necessary to the work of the kingdom, besought God with such fervor and agony of petition that Melanchthon was restored to health. This was not presumption, but the faith that

humbly lays hold on God's promises and pleads for fulfillment.

One may see this still further illustrated in the experience of Hudson Taylor: When the famous missionary first went to China, it was in a sailing vessel. Very close to the shore of the Cannibal Islands the ship was becalmed, and it was slowly drifting shoreward, unable to go about, and the savages were eagerly anticipating a feast. The captain came to Mr. Taylor, and besought him to pray for the help of God. "I will," said Taylor, "provided you set your sails to catch the breeze." The captain declined to make himself a laughing-stock by unfurling in a dead calm. Taylor said, "I will not undertake to pray for the vessel unless you will prepare the sails." And it was done. While engaged in prayer, there was a knock at the door of his stateroom. "Who is there?" The captain's voice responded, "Are you still praying for wind?" "Yes." "Well," said the captain, "you'd better stop praying, for we have more wind than we can well manage." And, sure enough, when but a hundred yards from the shore, a strong wind had struck the sails of the boat, so that the cannibals were cheated out of their human prey.

In all our life, let us not presume to dictate to God what He should do, or the methods He should use to build up His kingdom. His ways may seem to us strange and slow to realize. But in results the way of the pinnacle is not the way of the cross Jesus saw clearly. The cross was the true way of success. Even so now, not by wonders will men be saved, but by God's word faithfully taught and followed will they be won and the kingdom permanently established.

Our prayer should be the Psalmist's prayer, "Deliver Thy servant from presumptuous sins." Our effort should be to follow the Saviour's example and not tempt the Lord our God.

## THE IMPERFECT CHURCH

The weaknesses of the Church and the imperfect lives of church members form favorite subjects for those who are not Christians. Perhaps none are so painfully aware of the short-comings of the churches and members as the true-hearted members themselves. The very ideal they possess and the clearer vision of the spiritual reveals to them the blots and stains of Church and membership. Nor do they merely see these faults in others, but they lament that they themselves fail to realize the truth as they know it.

The Church on earth has never been perfect. We dream of the Apostolic Church as that which realized the Master's thought. But our lessons show the Church then imperfect. There was the quarrel about the ministrations to the widows between the Grecians and the Hebrews which took a congregational meeting to decide. The Church at Antioch is divided by the brethren who came down from Jerusalem and proclaimed to the Gentiles, "Except ye be circumcised, ye cannot be saved." It needed a Church conference to settle that. The Corinthian Church was split into parties and some contemptuously spoke of Paul, whilst the whole Church permitted vicious practices. The Church has never been perfect in any of the ages since then, and all of us from experience can say it is not perfect now.

It is made up of imperfect men. Were there better material there might be a better Church. The Church takes into its care imperfect men, weak men, bad men, and seeks to bring them to perfection by training and discipline. The army is made up of awkward squads. The earthly army may train its awkward squads quickly into splendid soldiers because they have good bodies, but the Church army finds the recruits to be

possessed of diseased souls, which need not training alone, but also health, or, as we say scripturally, sanctification.

But with all that, the Church, fairly considered, is a world-wide advance upon anything else. It gives every one of its members a great object in life. A great object is necessary to a great life. To be without it a man is like a ship without a rudder, drifting purposelessly. With a great object, every faculty of his mind, every power of his soul, every opportunity life presents, must be brought into activity that it may be accomplished. To be the child of God is that object, and what that child must be is known clearly, for it is to be like Christ Jesus. No man can have an object like that without being lifted up and without lifting up his fellow-men about him.

But, it may be urged, cannot one have that great object outside of the Church? It may be possible, but it is not the testimony of experience. The men outside the Church are not pursuing this great object. "No man," it has been well said, "will have God for his Father in heaven who *refuses* to have the Church for his mother upon the earth. He who has no portion in the Church militant upon earth shall never share in the glories of the Church triumphant above; for there is the closest union between these; God, the Word, faith, Christ, the Church, life eternal." Whilst God's mercy may extend to some outside the Church, His Church is His established institution for His children.

Always it follows that those who rightly use the Church, her worship, her means of grace, are lifted up into rightness of life and richness of character.

Roundell Palmer, one of the most distinguished lawyers and statesmen of England, went to London and hired a set of chambers in Lincoln's Inn. This inn maintains a chapel, with church services. His rooms were on the chapel staircase, close to the entrance of the chapel. His father, a clergyman, wrote to him:

“Let me add my injunction that you may still remember it is the *chapel* staircase, and that you consider yourself as dwelling within the sacred precinct, and that you suffer no business hereafter, nor other presence of man, to desecrate the time, and deprive you of the seventh day’s rest.”

Many years afterward Roundell Palmer writes: “Surrounded as I was in those days by most of the elements of earthly happiness, I was, nevertheless, not at peace with myself. I had then, and for years afterward, sensible experience of that conflict between flesh and spirit which St. Paul describes. I was at once engaged in a continual struggle with evil spirits, reasserting their power as often as they seemed to be cast out.

“I was regular and sincere in the observance of religion. I was mindful of my father’s advice not to forget that I lived next door to the chapel, in which there was daily service, and not to let business or anything else encroach upon the Lord’s Day, set apart for religion and rest. Once I broke in upon that day upon a supposition of necessity, when there was none; I never did so afterward without a real necessity, which our Lord’s own precept and example would have warranted.”

Can there be any doubt but that the Church made him truer, nobler, and enlarged his usefulness and influence, as well as kept him a Christian?

The Church is God’s appointment. Christ loves the Church, as a husband a wife; in the Church is the Holy Spirit, with His light, help and revelation; in the Church, the means of grace, the ministry of reconciliation, the fellowship of the saints, with inspiration and comfort. God the Father, Son, the Holy Ghost, is there with special blessing. Can any man afford to lose all these because the men are imperfect, but in God’s hand to be perfected?

Look at the Godward side as well as at the manward

side. Tennyson was once talking to Maurice about the book of Ecclesiastes. Tennyson said that he could not understand its admission among the sacred books; it was utterly pessimistic, of the earth, earthy. Maurice fired up. "Yes," said he, "if you leave out the last two verses; but the conclusion of the whole matter is, 'Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.' So long as you look upon the earth all is 'vanity of vanities.' But if you look up, there is a God, the Judge of good and evil."

It becomes us to look Godward as well as manward. He is the secret of the strength, endurance, richness, joy and hope of the Church. There may be imperfect men in it, hypocrites even, but they cannot debar His blessings from those who are steadfast and true.

In the beautiful words of John Gerhard in "Sacred Meditations": "The holy Church of God sustains the relations of mother, virgin, bride. She is as a mother, because she daily bears spiritual sons to God. She is as a chaste virgin, because she keeps herself pure from all unholy alliances with the devil and the world. She is as a bride, because Christ hath betrothed her to Himself by an eternal covenant, and hath given to her the pledge of the Spirit. The Church is that ship which carries Christ and His disciples, and which will bear us finally into the haven of eternal blessedness; the Church thus sails in a blessed course over the sea of this world, furnished with faith as a rudder, having God as her pilot, angels as her oarsmen, and all the company of the godly as her passengers; on her deck is erected the cross of our salvation as her mast, upon which are suspended the sails of evangelical faith, and with these filled with the breezes of the Holy Spirit she is conducted to the haven of eternal rest."

May we so love the Church and abide faithful that we may come at last to the Church triumphant above.

## WELLS IN THE WILDERNESS

The Israelites had been traveling in the wilderness of Shur for several days. After leaving Marah, whose bitter waters had miraculously been made sweet, their next halt was at Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and three score and ten palm trees; and they encamped there by the waters. To these weary hosts, who had been traveling through the wilderness, exposed to the blinding sun, how delightful must have been the sight of this oasis in the desert, as worn and exhausted they approached its palms and its wells of cool, refreshing water.

The traveler who has plodded along for hours, finds nothing so refreshing as the water that assuages his burning thirst and revives his spent strength. He blesses the man that dug the well. He rejoices over the spring whose waters burst forth and run over the pebbles with sweetest music to the thirsty traveler.

There are in nature and history objects which become aptest illustrations in life, its trials, its reliefs and its joys. Water stands for refreshment and gladness, the journey of the Israelites for the journey of life. The wilderness comes to the vast majority. Its way of pitiless heat, barren prospect, wearing toil, is the way trodden by the spirit. But, there are Elims to which these worn and broken wayfarers can be led, where under the palm trees and by the wells of water they may rest, renew their strength, and in that strength, and with memory of the blessed hours spent there, go joyously on through the wilderness to the goal.

It is the great privilege of the thoughtful to guide the tired to these wells in the wilderness of their lives. This summer, we saw a little child taken a trip on the electric car by her mother. The child was plainly

dressed. The outing was a rarity. The little face was all aglow. A lovely excitement made the body quiver with joy. Every mile of the way was intensely enjoyed. Into that child's life had come the well in the wilderness.

Earlier in the summer, on one of our great railroads, we traveled with a group of children from one of our cities, who were being sent by the Fresh Air Fund workers hundreds of miles into the unknown country, amid its birds, flowers, fields, with all its changing wonders, wells of water and palm trees, to these little travelers in the desert of poverty and bitter circumstances.

Instances like these indicate better than arguments how we may guide others to the wells in the wilderness. There may be those who have a hunger for books, but who must travel their life's journey with but an occasional glimpse into the pleasant gardens of the poets, the essayists, the historians. To give such an one a volume, even to loan them a book, is to open a well in the wilderness to them.

Or to detect in some untutored mind the unconscious want, and to guide it to the goal of its desire by giving means and opportunities, this is even more. To lead the boy or man with scientific bent to the knowledge of nature; to teach the struggling naturalist how to observe the birds, the flowers, the wild creatures of the woods, the gorgeous butterflies; or to disclose to the music-loving the capabilities of harmony, to thrill their souls with exquisite pleasure by revealing the great masters of music to them, this is to guide to wells in the wilderness of their lives.

How many opportunities of this nature may be found! The shut-in, those who tread the wilderness of pain, may be comforted by visit, by thoughtful remembrances; the tired worker by opportune words of cheer; those out in the wilderness of temptation by sympathy, by loving warnings, by the ringing words

of promise for those who overcome. No opportunity is greater in fact than our own as Sunday school workers, leading our scholars to the wells of God's word, and teaching them how to turn their feet there when the wearying and exhausting journeys in the wilderness of worldly occupations make the spirit languid and ready to perish.

How beautifully all this is illustrated by Paul in the storm! For days and nights they have been driven by the gale; the ship was leaking and unmanageable, they were at the mercy of the tempest, the raging sea threatened to swallow them up. Hope had fled; they ate no food, for death was nigh, and in sullen desperation they waited the end. Then Paul stood forth and cried, "Be of good cheer," and with confident voice and trustful face, declared God's promise unto him and unto them that they should be saved. Sweeter even than the wells and the palm trees in the wilderness to the Israelites were these tidings to the spent crew and despairing passengers of the ship. Unspeakably sweet, too, must have been Paul's joy that because of the surrender of himself to God and his service of Him, this message was his to give these hopeless ones.

Perhaps, if we realized these things more, much of our ordinary work might be glorified. The tired day-teacher, guiding the scholars along the ways so tiresome that lead to the wells in the wilderness, might renew courage as the thought that all this weary drill of books and lessons was opening the way to waters which should refresh them in life's trying journey. The mother, spent with labor and thought, might be uplifted when she reflected that in the years to come these children of hers would not only have these memories, but her example, her tender love, her teachings, would spring up as wells of water all through their lives. The teachers of the Bible might cheer themselves in despondent hours, by the knowledge that their scholars in after years would return to these wells they

had opened, and rest by them with grateful recollections of those who taught their feet the way out of the wilderness to the palms and refreshing waters.

Some time ago the son of a minister, long since dead, revisited the church where fifty and more years ago his father preached. An aged woman, sitting in the pastor's Bible class, after the lesson was finished, walked over to the son and said, "I must shake your hand. Your name is dear because of your father. He catechised me. Those teachings of his I have never forgotten. They have come back to me all through my life, and made me what I am. For what he was to me, I could not let you go without shaking your hand and telling you what I owe to him." The son has had this testimony often. He himself remembers the earnest, loving teachings of the godly man. With tears this faithful servant of God would urge the young to receive their Saviour and to follow His steps, and patiently he would teach them the great principles and duties of the Christian life. Because of him, in the wilderness of this earthly life, many found their way to the fountain of living waters.

After all, Jesus Christ is the well of water whose springs are in God, that everyone may drink and live. He alone will satisfy the soul. The man that drinks of other waters shall thirst again, even as the Israelites after they left Elim. But he that drinks of the waters of salvation Christ gives hath in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. There shall be to him in all life's journey that which satisfies the thirst of the soul, renews its powers, gives rest and blessedness, and makes the soul strong to finish its course with joy.

## SIGNS OF THE INDWELLING SPIRIT

The word of Christ is: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Again, He teaches us that His disciples know the Spirit of truth, that He dwelleth in them and shall be in them. The Holy Spirit begets life in the Christian and is with him constantly.

The earnest soul must ask: "Am I born again?" Many curious answers have been given to the question. The most common one is, this is the proof—a change definite in time; a sudden change, of which the normal type is the conversion of a man that has grown up to years of discretion in carelessness and sin; who is convicted of sin, repents, agonizes and suddenly realizes the peace which comes by faith in Christ. Unless a man can point to such a time and struggle, he is not born again, although his life be a life of faith.

There is truth here, a truth which must never be given up, that conversion is possible to the sinner, a conversion that is definite in time and marks the transition from a life of sin to a life of righteousness in Christ. On the other hand, there are those, notably many of those baptized in infancy and nurtured in the Lord, who turn from self and the world to God, the essence of conversion, so gradually that they never can tell the time when this took place. Among these latter have been some of the noblest and best of Christians.

It is of much more importance, therefore, to seek to know whether we have life in Christ through the Spirit, than to know just when we turned from self and the world to God. What, then, are the signs that the Spirit dwells within us?

There are signs that are variable, and there are

signs that are constant, as Meyer points out. Among the *varying* signs are:

First. The joy of realization of salvation in Christ. This varies. Sometimes the joy is overpowering, sometimes like the ebbing tide. Feeling is not the sure ground of assurance.

Second. Agony for souls. The desire that others should share the blessed salvation, a desire that consumes the soul and urges to toil and forgetfulness of all other issues. "Christ, however, only asks us to watch in Gethsemane one hour." Otherwise this agony would be insupportable to the believer.

Third. Access in prayer. They that have the Spirit are mighty in prayer, but not always. As Meyer says: "Sometimes the vision is face to face; at others, though we grasp as in Jacob's night-wrestle, we cannot behold. Like Esther, we seem to wait in the antechamber. As the lark, of which Jeremy Taylor speaks, we rise against the east wind."

Fourth. The openings of Scripture. The Spirit opens our eyes to the wondrous things in the law, to those things which are spiritually discerned. Then the Scripture is exceedingly precious. But, there are times when its pages awake little response in the dull soul of him that believes.

Fifth. The pressure of temptation. It is a marked characteristic of the Christian's experience that there are periods when temptation loses its power, when he is so happy in his faith and living for Christ, that he dreams that he need no longer struggle. But at the foot of the Mount of Transfiguration is ever the trial as of old, and always temptation returns, sometimes as suddenly "as the fury of the storm, when, after an hour's cessation, it takes the mariner unawares." All these signs are variable and cannot be relied upon to give the quiet assurance that the believer needs.

*These are constant:* First. The consciousness of being God's. This is the result of faith. It begins with

faith, but, as we continue faithful, the consciousness grows stronger and stronger that we are God's; that He loves us and keeps us. Luther declared that through faith, "Thou mayest with all joy and comfort exclaim I am Christ—not, indeed, personally, but Christ's righteousness, victory, life, and all that He has is mine own; and, on the other hand, Christ may say, 'I am this poor sinner—that is, all his sins and death are my sins, and my death, inasmuch as he clings to me and *I cling to him.*'" The Spirit dwells within us when we trust to God's faithfulness, truth and love, and not to self, or our faith, or anything else. The outward evidence will be delight in worship, public and private, since therein the believer expresses his gratitude to God and seeks that holding of God which is his confidence. His word will be sought because it is the word of the God of love and salvation.

Second. The supremacy of Jesus in the heart. The Spirit's presence is manifested by breaking down the rule of self and exalting Christ until more and more He rules us. "There is no longer the double empire of self and Christ, as in the poor Indian, who said to the missionary, 'I am two Indians, good and bad'; but there is the undivided reign of Christ, who has put down all rule and authority and power, as in the case of Martin Luther, who said, 'If anyone should ask of my heart, who dwells here? I should reply, not Martin Luther, but Christ.'" The outward evidence of this will be the obedience that springs from love. His commands will be precious. The Lord's Supper will be esteemed and desired, not alone that we may remember and honor Him, according to His command, but that through it we may enter into intimate fellowship with Him and be nourished spiritually by this means of grace, whereby we are brought into fuller union with Him.

Third. Peace. When the Holy Spirit rules there is the peaceful heart, which contentedly looks upon the

future without alarm, because He is with us and will shape all things aright. Again, there rises out of this peace the humility that will not insist upon its own will because it knows that He will choose the best.

Fourth. Love. Love rules the heart where the Spirit is, nor must we think merely of love to God, but of love to men, all men, those in our household, those in our neighborhood, even those who are not naturally lovable. There comes a love like the love of Christ. It may not possess us entirely, but it is a growing love. "Where love reigns in the inner chamber of the soul, doors do not slam, bells are not jerked violently; soft tones modulate the speech, gentle steps tread the highways of the world, bent on the beautiful work of the messengers of peace, and the very atmosphere of the life is warm and sunny as an aureole. There is no doubt of the indwelling Spirit where there is this outgoing love."

Fifth. Deliverance from the love and power of sin. The world cannot understand what is the joy of the Christian life, nor its precious treasures. Neither do we know the love of Christ, the delight of righteousness, the joy of doing good, the crown beneath the sacrifice, the blessedness of peace, the satisfying fellowship with God until the Spirit reveals them. So, likewise, the sinful desires, pleasures and triumphs of the world grow distasteful to the believer in whom the Spirit dwells. There is begotten an increasing desire for purity. He dies daily to sin. It grows hateful to him. He rises to righteousness of life. "There is still a positive rain of smut and filth in the world around; there is the recognition of the evil tendencies of the self-life, which will assert themselves unless graciously restrained, but triumphing above all is the purity of the indwelling Lord, who Himself becomes in us the quality for which holy souls eagerly long."

## EMOTION AND ACTION

Those start life with a decided advantage who are naturally responsive to the claims of others and to the better sentiments of honor and truth. A man who is sympathetic is disposed to be kind, pleasant in manners, helpful. His feelings are easily roused and led to action, which action in turn forms a lovable character. A man who responds to the sentiments where thought and feeling blend is material for the patriot, the loyal follower, the man of honor, of truth, the man heroically devoted to a cause or principle. All that he needs when his emotions are stirred is to follow on to be a patriot, or any one of these. His emotions are not alone the natural preliminaries to action, but impelling forces thereto.

There is, however, a disadvantage, for the emotions roused may not crystalize into deed. The man of sentiment may thus become a sentimentalist, one who takes his feelings to be the evidences that he is really good when he has not the slightest claim to goodness. Indeed, emotions that are not carried out in acts are characteristic of superficial people, and when made the usual life cause a heart of hardness. Outwardly distressing circumstances may move such to tears, whilst inwardly the heart remain dead, like the Russian lady who wept over the woes of some fictitious personage in a play while her coachman froze to death outside. To this Jesus alludes when He speaks of the grain that fell on the rock, which speedily sprang up but then withered away because it lacked moisture, meaning thereby those emotional people who receive the word with joy, but in time of temptation fall away. A heart of rock oft lies underneath the easily stirred emotions.

It is one of the curious phases of human nature that

men are continually satisfying themselves with emotional talk whilst their deeds are directly opposed to their words. "Rousseau, who inflamed by his eloquence all the mothers of France to personally care for their own children, sent his own children to the foundling hospital." Conduct like that persisted in hardens the heart, leads to cruelty, though the speaker easily moved to tears by his own words fancies himself unusually tenderhearted.

One reason for this is that abstract good glows with wonderful beauty, rousing the emotions, but abstract good is difficult to recognize under the vulgar conditions of this workaday world, in which it becomes concrete. When Jesus Christ calls upon anyone to minister unto Him the emotions are roused. The listener is inclined to do anything that is asked by Him, but as Jesus is not here, he does nothing, felicitating himself on his responsiveness to His call. Jesus is here, but He is here under very common and vulgar conditions. He is to be found in the garb of the poor and suffering, in the men and women and children, many of whom are trying and vexatious, in need of His word, and love, and help. It is all so unromantic, every-day and troublesome that under these common garments the Master is not seen. Is not this what the Lord means when He says at the judgment, "I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not"? For when they indignantly disclaim this neglect, He adds, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the last of these, ye did it not unto me." They could not see Him under the vulgar garb of these every-day people.

It is very dangerous to the moral and spiritual life to indulge in emotions without an issue into concrete deed. Possibly one of the greatest curses of theatre going and novel reading is the constant excitement of the emotions without giving any opportunity to real-

ize in action the emotion roused. Everything in play and novel is bent to the excitement of the emotional nature, and oft along praiseworthy lines. The hatefulness of wrongdoing, the serpent hiss of slander, the curse of avarice, the cruelty of ambition, the hell of lust, are depicted with such fidelity that indignation rises; whilst the nobleness of unselfishness, the grandeur of sacrifice, the heroism of patriotism, the charm of purity, the beauty of virtue, are described in impassioned words, so heightened by the art of the drama or literary expression that the heart is inflamed. When these emotions do not become acts the hearers are not benefited, but injured, tend to become less responsive to the virtues inculcated, and at last even skeptical concerning their reality. Life is a play in which men feign goodness. Precisely the same result may arise from the hearing of sermons that by their eloquence touch the emotions. Because the tear readily trickles down the cheek over the pathetic words, or the glow of admiration swells the breast over the picture of the beauty and deathless love of Christ, the hearers consider themselves good. Emotion is taken for action. Until emotion, however, passes into action there is no Christlike character, for that character forms when truth and right are carried into practice for His sake, and in no other way. So thoroughly impressed is a great thinker with the danger of emotions that do not pass into practice that he says: "The remedy would be never to suffer one's self to have an emotion without expressing it afterward in *some* active way. Let the expression be the least thing in the world—speaking genially to one's grandmother, or giving up one's seat in a street car if nothing more heroic offers, but let it not fail to take place."

The apostle says, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." He is anxious that these Colossian Christians should not divorce their feelings and their acts, that goodwill or fine

emotions should find expression in their every-day life. It is just this which makes the religion of Christ the character builder it is. It not only offers in the Church a vast field where the emotions can become embodied in acts, through its works of benevolence and charity, through its fellowship and friendly deeds to men in and out of the Church, through its long list of Christian activities, its Sunday school teaching, the quiet and ceaseless patience and sacrifice required to do good; but, also, it is its teaching that all things can be done in the name of Christ, not a deed, nor a work, nor a study, nor a plan, nor a pleasure that cannot be done in His spirit.

It is well that it should be so. There is nothing that so stirs the emotions as the religion of Christ, for that religion is Christ; Christ the one altogether lovely, the good, the great, the truth, the love of God; Christ, who was so patient, tender, helpful; whose life was sacrifice, whose death was the supremest act of love the world has ever known; Christ, who has widened the vision of earth until it sweeps within its ken heaven and glory and blessedness; Christ, who has revealed that God is our Father, and the unfathomable truth that we sinners are again His sons, forgiven, loved, His heirs, joint-heirs with Christ, the Only-Begotten. Surely there is nothing so stirs the emotions as these incomparable truths. He has, therefore, made provision to realize these emotions in deed. He calls to a life of obedience, righteousness, love, nobleness and beauty like His own, a life that begins in and has much to do with His Church, but which the Great Teacher tells us is to be lived also right here in this workaday world, in all that concerns our doing, where we change our emotions into acts, and thus, through faith in Him, build a character like His.

## THE CHOICEST GIFT

The estimate we place on the value of gifts is a variable one. At first, perhaps, we count by the material value, the money-cost, but, as we grow wiser, we place the gift which comes from the heart as higher than that of the purse. When David longed for a drink of the water of the well at Bethlehem, the well of his childhood, his three mighty men broke through the Philistine host at the peril of their lives and drew water out of the well, and took it and brought it to David. He would not drink it, but poured it out to the Lord, for it was no mere water, but water that spoke of love so great that because of it these three heroes put in jeopardy their lives that he, whom they loved, might have his wish fulfilled. The only one worthy of so precious a gift was God. David's act, like a gleam of light that touches a jewel until it blazes with glory, reveals the kingly nobility of his heart, rich and responsive to every good. So as we ourselves come into nobility of heart and perception of the finer emotions and spiritual realities, we see that the precious gift may be a cup of cold water, because behind it is the noble spirit, the unselfish love. It may seem strange to some that Christ lays so much stress on a cup of cold water given to a disciple in His name, but it seems reasonable to the man who sees in it a cup of cold water and love for Christ. It is a sign of the heart—a heart that is true to the Master and filled with His spirit. Reward is its right.

Of all the brothers of Napoleon, the man that loved him most deeply was his older brother Joseph. The child that was born to Napoleon was the heart of Napoleon's own heart. Napoleon entrusted him to Joseph when he was dethroned. When he was dying, one of his last words was, "I trust my boy to Joseph."

It was the gift of his heart, the complete confidence of love. Joseph had been given the richest gifts—jewels, a crown, but he said, "This is the choicest gift, the gift of my brother's heart. I am ready to die for his son whenever I am called upon."

This Christmas time brings back our thought to God's gift of His only-begotten Son. He had given much to men. The world has in it so much of pleasure, riches, beauty and knowledge that some have been content, at least for a season, with it. God gives these out of love, but His inmost heart is in the gift of Christ.

Something of God may be learned outside of Christ. There are truths outside of the Bible even. Men of heathen religions have in their teachings set forth hints of God, which they have caught from the world He made, and the human life that shadows the divine life, even though darkened by sin. Yet these teachings were imperfect, mixed with evil. How could God teach men Himself, His nature, His love, His mercy, His truth, unless He Himself would walk before men and they could see Him visible, not hidden in heaven and past finding out? Christ came. God's Son became flesh, and in Him God is seen.

He, the almighty King, gave His Son, the heart of His heart, the choicest gift, the gift of love. Well does the Apostle cry, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." Love laughs at all attempts to put into words its worth. There never was a poet who spoke beautifully and profoundly of love, that satisfied anyone who loved that his words fully compassed the height or depth or breadth or length of the love he knew in the depths of the heart. Love eludes definition or description. They that love alone know love.

If this be true of our human love, who can know the love that God gave when He sent His Son? He is infinite and His love is infinite. Every earthly love, indeed, has in it something that may lead to some un-

derstanding of His love. The love of parent to child, the love that, seeing only by sacrifice another can be saved, freely spending itself for him, the love that sends a son to die for the liberty of his land, the love that dares death on foreign shores that others may know the truth of God—all these do set forth somewhat of the love God had when He gave His Son for us, yet all infinitely fall short of that love. Still these gifts of sacrificing love men hold the choicest gifts that men can give. Those who loved like this are the names men count precious and reverently repeat to their children and point to as the crest of the floodtide of human excellence. The choicest gift is, therefore, Christ.

Sometimes we wonder at the music, the jubilant music of the angels, on that first Christmas day. We think how there laid before Jesus the life of misunderstanding, ingratitude, opposition, hatred, awful rejection and death. All that bitter life was before the babe cradled on Mary's breast, and yet they sang as though no cloud should ever pass over the sky of His earthly life. The overwhelming display of God's love in this gift, by its glory, made this as naught. Perhaps, because they knew He would suffer and die, they sang the more, for love that suffers for another is the highest love, and love that never suffers is but a poor thing at best. Even our own Christmas would be but a poor thing if we knew not of Calvary. We measure God's gift by the cross, just as John in that wonderful third chapter sees the glory of God's love, because "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so the Son of man must be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Then follow the undying words, "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

What, then, at this Christmastide does reflection

show that we have done as evidences of our gratitude? Here is God's choicest gift, the outpouring of His love. What has been the return to Him from us? There are things we never can do. He gives us freely our forgiveness, our redemption, our sonship, our needed grace, our eternal glory. But He does ask us to give Him our trust, life and service. Through these He would bring others to see the glorious gift of His love. If God then gave His Son for our sins, in complete confidence of love He now gives His Son into our keeping to make Him known to others. He trusts us with His interests and His kingdom, as Napoleon trusted Joseph with his son, to look after his interests and bring, if possible, the kingdom to him.

It may be that it will cost us something to care for Christ and His kingdom, but, despite all demands, there is joy for us in all the self-denials, just as Christ had joy in enduring the cross and despising the shame. "At a missionary meeting, when some young teachers were to start for foreign fields, the prayers and remarks of the speakers were full of tearful allusions to the hardships and sacrifices of the undertaking, until one young missionary spoke for herself: 'Don't pity me,' she said, almost with a touch of impatience, 'I am doing what I want to do; I go joyfully!'" That is the right spirit. Take hold, in gratitude for God's choicest gift, of the work He gives you to do. In the doing of it will come joy, a joy such as Christ had, a joy that has its roots in the Christmas rejoicing that "Unto you a Saviour is born this day," but a joy that flowers all the year and sings the angelic song always. If, like all that belongs to this life, the joy be not perfect, it will be "in that day." These words, therefore, may well be the motto of many who would be grateful to God at this Christmastide:

"You must live each day at your very best;  
The work of the world is done by few;  
God asks that a part be done by you.

“Have a purpose, and do it with your utmost might ;  
You will finish your work on the other side,  
When you wake in His likeness, satisfied.”

## THE CERTAIN FUTURE

Easter has always been exalted by the Christian Church. A portion of it may have protested against the day, because it thought the observance of it was Romanistic, but the fact of Easter, the resurrection, was as precious and comforting to the Puritan as to the observer of the day. The day itself and its observance are not the great things, though they may help to impress upon the heart the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The fact itself, with its profound message, is the great thing.

Humanity has always held stubbornly to the belief that there is another life. It has held fast to this against odds that appeared almost invincible. Multitudes passed away, yet none ever came back to tell the sad survivors that he lived again, and lived in blessedness. Despite this, humanity persisted in the belief of the future life.

There cannot be any doubt that his very necessities compelled man to this. He needed this future to give him courage for and fidelity to the right. I was much struck with this in the reading of "The House of Nolfings," by Morris. The hero, who can save his life if he will wear the magic armor procured for him by his wife, a daughter of the Sun, will not wear it indeed, since there goes with this safety the destruction of the people. He cannot bear the thought that in the future men shall talk of him as one who chose to live in shame rather than to die a hero in defence of his people. But this future is not enough; there is the strong faith that if he dies a hero, he will gloriously enter Walhalla and sit down to the banquet of the gods. Therefore, he strips off the magic armor and rushes with naked breast into the fight, and dies glori-

ously in the hour of victory won by his strong arm. The future nerves him to his sacrifice.

Probably we do not always realize what the imagination can do for us—the faculty by which we project our thought and purpose into the future and see them realized. “The imagination is a great gift. It is also a great danger. Fear and dismay and all the various forces which so fiercely impede us are apt to possess the imagination, and then in turn it is apt to control the will.” That is the dark side, but it has also its bright side.

The cultivation of the imagination in right directions is one of the most helpful aids that can be given men. Every discovery has been first a dream and then a realization. It has been imagined, then sought for, and at length found. Hypothesis, that is supposition or probability, is the favorite method of the man of science, which he seeks to make real by experiment and observation. Columbus imagines a new world, and then ventures on the Atlantic in his little ships and finds America. The inventor dreams his machine, and toils day and night with wheel and pinion, until, completed, it is almost human in its capabilities. The imagination is a great factor in leading men to great achievement.

Man nowhere needs its inspiration more than in regard to the hereafter. To know that out of all this struggle and endeavor, apparently so useless; out of all disappointments and sorrows, out of all service, there is being formed the man well pleasing to God—to know that he shall be recompensed in a better and more blessed life—is to make him full of courage and hope to endure and win. It is just this which Christ brings by His resurrection to us. His life without the resurrection, or the future life, is but a mockery. It is the triumph of evil and not of the good. Jesus the righteous is crucified, Pilate the unrighteous lives. Jesus' life and death would add, if there were

no resurrection, but another temptation to say that "the good cannot succeed, let us therefore enjoy life as we may." But in Him risen and exalted we know "that no sorrow bravely borne, no duty loyally done, no disappointment faithfully endured, is lost."

There is another side, which has been powerfully set forth by Kidd in his "Social Evolution." "If our conscious relationship to the universe is measured by the brief span of individual existence, then the intellect can know of only one duty in the individual, namely, his duty to himself to make the most of the few precious years of consciousness he can ever know. Every other consideration must appear dwarfed and ridiculous in comparison. Every pain avoided, every pleasure gained in these few years is a consideration beside which the intellect must count any aspiration to further a process of the cosmic evolution in which the individual has no interest as mere dust in the balance." He then proceeds to show how bitter and unprincipled the strife for wealth and power will become under such thoughts. Lust and pleasure and selfishness will rule, and will bring in their train all the vices.

Is not the same lesson endorsed in the teachings of ultra-socialism and anarchism? "We need no God and no future. These are but chains by which laboring men are bound. This world is enough. There is no future to fear, none to compensate. Overturn society and overturn it with violence. Every man must claim his own." Existence with them is animal; refined it may be in some measure, but not spiritual. There is no sonship with God, no future, no blessedness; man is born, has a brief existence and dies, just as the dog is born, lives and dies.

The belief in the future is part of the spiritual endowment of man. He could not be the child of God without it, and it is just because it is part of the spiritual endowment of man that he has held fast to it in

all ages and has not been able to divest himself of the belief of a future life, except, perhaps, by stifling it with intellectual processes, or sinful practices which kill the spiritual nature.

In Christ, he has at length the abundant evidence of the truth, that he shall live again. The narrative, as we have it in the Gospels, of the resurrection, is clear, truthful and historical. As far as such evidence goes, there can be no better; but, it may be said, the certainty cannot come alone through the history, it must be through the actual experience of life with the risen Christ. He must, by His power within our hearts, raise us from sin to righteousness, to convince us utterly that He lives again.

We cannot do without the history. It is needful to lead us to the knowledge of Christ. It is rich and full of consolation in the insight it gives us into His nature, His work, His exaltation, His heart. But, when it has led us up to Him, by faith we must lay hold on Him and know His living self in our hearts and lives; then is all this history irradiated with certainty, the future is as certain as the present, death is welcome. Remember Paul's word, "For me to live is Christ; to die is gain."

Otherwise we, because of our spiritual endowment, are vaguely conscious of a future life; but we walk as in a dream, we hope and yet cannot anchor ourselves with this hope in the storms of life and the tempest of death, that certainty is alive in Christ. Easter is joyous to many. Its hope throws a glow over the future even to those to whom it is but a gracious story; but its strong, deep, immeasurable message of certainty is given alone to those who are living with Christ who died on Calvary, but who, rising on Easter morn, lives our Lord and Saviour forevermore.

## THE DEEPEST HELP

Jesus Christ was the Great Helper. He helped men wherever He went, healing them of every disease. He helped their souls as well as their bodies, teaching them the truth they needed to make their lives, the lives of the children of God. He did what no other has ever done: He forgave men their sins, healing the diseased soul as He healed the diseased body. It was this which startled the Pharisees when He said to the paralytic man, brought by the four faithful friends and laid at His feet, "Thy sins be forgiven thee."

Christ addressed Himself to the deeper want first. Agony of soul is more painful than agony of body. The palsy was evidently the result of an evil life, and was the just punishment of sin committed. After the stroke that left him helpless in body but active in mind, as he lay upon his bed all that vileness rose up before him. He saw himself dying, hastening to the final judgment, a guilty reprobate. His sins rose up before him, ghostly accusers. Bodily distress was forgotten before the poignant anguish of unforgiven sin.

What then was the best help to extend to this man? The body is the interpreter of spiritual life, the tablet on which the soul writes its thought and life. The scar is eloquent of danger passed through. The hard hand of the laborer is the signature of toil. The keen, shrewd eye, the deeply calculating expression, reveal the active mind of the business man. The thoughtful, preoccupied air, the serious brow, are the signs of an intellect devoted to study. "And when we lay a human body in the ground, at last there is a reverence or a pity which starts within us as we see the coffin-lid close on the marks of noble or ignoble servanthip which the years have left written on the face." Sensuality, debauchery, wickedness, as well as honor,

truth and goodness, write themselves upon the face. Our word character indicates this. It originally meant to cut, engrave, suggesting that the lines of the face engraved there express the soul's lineaments to the eye.

If then we knew a face so marked as to show the loathsomeness of the soul within, and we had the power to cleanse the countenance of all trace of sin, making it fair and glorious as the face of an angel of God, would it be the deepest help? The foul soul would remain, and soon would rewrite itself upon the glorious countenance. All the evidences of foulness would return and abide once more.

If we, with our imperfect conceptions, can see this, how much more Christ? He understood that to heal this paralytic body were but the poorest help, if He could not reach his deeper need and cleanse him of inner corruption.

There is here an object lesson of Christ's mode of helping men now. What is true help? There are grades of help. A man may be helped to get money. It is by no means a little help, but if he be ignorant, vicious, his money may only afford him larger scope for villainy. He may be helped to a larger life of comfort, and by placing him under refining influences a polish may be added to his manner, a graciousness to his bearing, a quiet cheer to his life. That would be better help. Again, he might be raised above this polished animal existence, given high and lofty thoughts, filled with knowledge until in intellect and far-reaching plans, in the comprehension of the beautiful and great in art, literature, nature or humanity, he would be like a god. Yet withal, there might be baseness of moral life, meanness of character, a soul full of the creeping things of darkness and evil. The deepest help surely to extend a man is to renew therefore the inner life, freeing him from sin, making him a child of God, for then all these other things might be added unto him.

Let us take but one illustration to help us in our study. A vast problem has come with advancing civilization and increasing population—the help of the poor. It is comparatively easy to give money, to afford them a certain degree of comfort; but the conviction increases that the giving of money in charity oft degrades and pauperizes the recipients. It robs them of self-respect, makes them improvident and debases their characters. Communists think a re-distribution of property in which all shall have equal shares is the solvent of our social troubles. But it would only need a few years to pass away before some would be rich and others poor. For in every truly rich man there are found these qualities, self-respect, determination, decision, power to struggle, self-denial; and until the poor man is taught to respect himself, filled with determination and decision, made powerful to struggle and ready to deny himself, he has not been accorded the best worldly help. The inner man must be reached more than the outer conditions.

Coming back to Christ's help, we perceive clearly that to help our deepest need He must be able to say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee"; to say to us in the anguish of soul over the sinful past and the present evil heart, "The old bitter past is blotted out; I pardon all, I give thee a new heart." It is no use to cure paralysis and leave the sin that caused it; no use to make the face like the face of the angel of God, glorious for beauty and strength, if the evil principle be left within to change slowly or swiftly the face of glory into one of loathsome vice.

Sometimes the water in our towns and cities becomes dirty. Rains on the upland hills and valleys sweeping the soil and the refuse of mines into the brooks and rivers have filled the reservoirs with foul and muddy water. We may filter enough for drinking purposes; but what we need is that the reservoir be purified, and then in every house there will be abund-

ance of pure, sweet, wholesome water. We need help, not the help that sets aside the consequences of our sins, enough water filtered for to-day, but that Christ should go down into the heart, purify it of evil, turning it to God; that He should rule there and dwell there, that we may have power to overcome sin; and then from this reservoir of thought and faith and love, pure deeds and words shall come sparkling and helpful into this world, and on the countenance be engraved the beautiful lines of purity, righteousness and love to God and men.

In all our work as helpers to our fellow-men and our scholars, let us hold firmly to Christ's thought of help, and seek, as the deepest help we can bring, to lead them to Christ, that He may grant forgiveness even by His atoning sacrifice, and through the Holy Spirit give them a new heart.

## “BACK TO CHRIST”

“Back to Christ” has become a very common cry on the part of many who pose as advanced thinkers. Nor should there be any opposition to it, if it were rightly made. But the cry means that the human side of Christ is to be dwelt upon and the divine side of Christ minimized. The Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, are to be studied whilst John is to be ignored. The Epistles, they assert, are of not much weight, as they depart from the Gospels and obscure the true Christ by theological conceptions and human reasonings.

“Back to Christ” is, upon their part, the begging of the matter at issue, for “the Christ” is the matter at issue, “Who is He?” and “What is His office?” Peter answered, when he said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” the chosen Saviour, the divine Son.

The Jews were willing to concede that Jesus was a prophet, as great as any of the Old Testament prophets, even that He might be one of the old prophets returned to this earth. Had He been content with the position of human teacher, as great or greater than the great teachers of the past, He would have been welcomed and honored. It was His insistent claim that He was more than a human teacher that caused the Jews to put Him to death.

That He was not content to be recognized as a mere human teacher is strikingly set forth by that sharp, incisive question that would have a direct, unevasive answer, which He put to the disciples after they had told Him who men said He was—“Who do ye say that I am?” When Peter answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” He was rejoiced, and cried, “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father

which is in heaven." He was greater than any of the prophets. He could not be content with the honor bestowed on them, for this were to leave the world in darkness, without salvation. To know Him as the divine Saviour was the root of all blessedness, salvation, righteousness, peace and joy.

The disciples were not merely to preach the Christ of the Gospels, a Christ marvelous in holiness and beauty of life and wonderful in His teachings and influence and an example to men, They were to set Him forth as the Christ, the divine Son. Nor were they to do this until His work was complete: "Then charged He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was the Christ." The time was not yet come. They could not set Him forth as Saviour until His sacrificial work was complete and He, risen from the dead, should, as their living Lord, give them the Holy Spirit, who should teach them Christ's nature and office, and abide with them always.

In other words, it is not the conception of Christ's human nature that saves men, but His divine nature. The study of the human nature is profitable, but alone when it discloses the divine and teaches us the Father's love and nature does it become most profitable. The answer to sin and the sureness of salvation for sinners is to be found in the cross with Him as sacrifice for sin, in the resurrection with its tidings of Him as life, giving the power to live righteously.

It is brought out by the Lord Jesus in His next words to the disciples after Peter's confession, in which He dwells upon His sufferings and death, offensive then to the disciples, even as they are offensive to many now. But when Peter rebuked Him as He spoke of His death, how stern were His words to him who had been so praised a moment before. "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men." "Back to Christ," when

it means the mere human life, savorest the things that be of men, human love, human teachings and human example, but no divine sacrifice, no divine sustaining life and grace. With what feeling Paul exclaimed, after he had spoken of Christ's death for all, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more"; for well he knew the heart of the Gospel is "the crucified and risen Lord, not a memory, but a living Christ."

"Back to Christ" on the lips of these so-called advanced thinkers too often looks upon the Epistles as a declension from Christ's truth as set forth in the Gospels. Is it not wise to consider what Jesus here says concerning Peter, and what He promises? Peter reaches the truth that He is the Christ, the divine Son, because the Father hath revealed it to him. Revelation vouchsafed then was to be continued, for they were to be specially endowed and guided by the Holy Spirit. Christ followed with the absolute promise that "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; that whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." As the Church had His promise that it should not be overthrown by all the powers of hell, which promise has been proven to be divine because absolutely kept for all the centuries since, just as absolute was this divine promise here made to Peter and the other apostles.

These men certainly were chosen and endowed for a special purpose. Their understanding was enlightened, their spiritual perceptions heightened, that they might set forth the hidden meanings of Christ person, office and work. They were inspired. When, therefore, the men of our times, with specious cries of insight and wisdom, would take us back to a mere human Christ and bid us beware of the apostles' teachings, we might prudently ask what promise has been specially made these modern self-chosen teachers,

wherein are they superior to Peter and John and Paul, specially chosen, not by themselves, but by Christ, and endowed with the Spirit, of which their miracles are proof?

As for ourselves, we would humbly follow these apostles in their teachings, believing that when we follow them we are really going "back to Christ," the divine Christ, the Saviour, whilst the men who despise or belittle them are getting back to the standpoint of the Jews, who could see nothing but a great prophet of blameless life in Jesus. The Christ whom we love is the Christ of the apostles, who delighted to record and tell the story of His beautiful life upon earth, but also who preached and wrote of Him as One who died for their sins and rose again for their justification, who was God's own Son, who ascended, reigns with the Father, who lives now, with whom there is power to forgive sins, for He hath put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, who gives power to live and overcome, with whom there is sweet fellowship now, sweeter than when they walked with Him in Galilee, because it is the understood and realized fellowship of the Lord, the Son of man, and the Son of God.

Augustine said, "The New Testament is concealed in the Old: the Old Testament cannot be understood without the New." So the Epistles are hidden in the Gospels; the Gospels cannot be understood without the Epistles, for they explain the nature, office and work of Christ. "Back to Christ." Yes, "back to Christ," the Christ, the Son of the living God, revealed to us in the Gospels and Epistles.

## SPIRITUAL POWER

Life brings to all workers this experience—a curious sense of helplessness to effect in themselves the higher results. Great men have spoken of destiny, thus confessing that their achievements in the last results were the outcome of forces outside of themselves. Others have made their plans, toiled with energy, guarded every contingency, and have failed, thwarted in their endeavor by a power that baffled all their foresight and energy. "Fate," they cried, "is too strong for us." The Christian gives another name to his destiny and fate, and speaks of God.

In the efforts put forth to do good unto others, there is this curious sense of helpfulness to effect by skill, or talent, or wisdom, a change in the spiritual life of others. There may be brought to the sermon learning, rare art in putting things, the graces of style, the charm of the orator, thoughts of wisdom, and still the will remains stubborn though the heart and intellect respond. A teacher studies his lesson, masters it, sketches his plan of presenting it, carries it out with tact and skill, and still the scholars, attentive and respectful, charmed and held, remain cold and unstirred in the depths of their being. A curious sense of helplessness comes to us in such hours.

On the other hand, there have been many who have been singularly efficient in changing the hearts of men, persuading them of the truth of Christ and securing their submission to Him, who have been persons of rather meager culture and intellectual power. They have had little knowledge of the books, have sinned against grammar, and have been foolish in their human learning, but have been effective to save men. It was not their ignorance that was the secret, for the same results have been accomplished by men of culture

and of human wisdom, men who have been thoroughly trained in the schools. All, however, confessed that they had not in themselves done these things, but that God had used them for His purposes.

Such humility is a good thing. Without it God will not work through us. "I believe," says Ruskin, in "Modern Painters," "the first test of a truly great man is his humility. I do not mean by humility doubt of his own power, or hesitation of speaking his opinions; but a right understanding of the relation between what he can do and say and the rest of the world's doings and sayings. All great men not only know their business, but usually know that they know it, and are not only right in their main opinions, but they usually know that they are right in them, only they do not think much of themselves on that account. Arnolfo knows that he can build a good dome at Florence; Albert Dürer writes calmly to one who has found fault with his work, 'It cannot be done better'; Sir Isaac Newton knows that he has worked out a problem or two that would have puzzled anybody else; only they do not expect their fellow-men therefore to fall down and worship them. They have a curious under-sense of powerlessness, feeling that the power is not *in* them, but *through* them; that they could not do or be anything else than God made them; and they see something divine and God-made in every other man they meet, and are endlessly, foolishly, incredibly merciful."

To what should all this lead us but to the fundamental fact of spiritual power that alone through the Holy Spirit can we gather others out of the world to Christ, or train them to higher spiritual life. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

How then shall we secure this power? Evidently by being in the Spirit ourselves. He must be in us, if He is to be in our words and lives. He must not be

grieved by sin, nor resisted when He would sanctify us, nor disobeyed when He commands. The father of Canon Wilberforce said, "In his later years he gave up preparing sermons, and simply prepared himself." For the most fruitful spiritual results, the Spirit uses the prepared man, the man turning from evil, alive to righteousness, aglow with love to God and in fellowship with Him through the Spirit.

Such a man will be a man of prayer, seeking help from the Spirit, and going from prayer to his work. "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." Such a man will be helped in unexpected ways; he will be given the right spirit, the right words, the right way of saying truth, whilst the Spirit will prepare the hearts of those sought to receive the truth. Prayer is efficacious in ways of which we do not dream. A young artist once complained to William Blake, the great English painter, that the power of invention had forsaken him. To his astonishment, Blake turned to his wife suddenly and said, "It is just so with us, is it not, for weeks together, when the visions forsake us? What do we then do?" asked he. "We kneel down and pray," said she. They that pray fervently for the Spirit will receive visions of truth and likewise power to convey it to others.

Such a man will also be a man of God's word. The word of God is the means by which the Spirit does His work of calling, preserving and sanctifying. He works no miracle that may atone for our laziness. He might often use us if we had not, by neglect of the study of God's word, failed to give Him the means of reaching others through that word in our hearts and on our lips. When certain fanatics who believed that men should speak without preparation said to Claus Harms, whose work was so signally blessed, "Does not the Spirit speak to you when you go into the pulpit

without preparation?" "He does," replied Harms. "He says, 'Claus, you have been very lazy to-day.'" Those who are anxious that the Spirit should speak through them, will study God's word, as a whole, and will particularly study that portion which they are to teach, so that they may be used by Him to save some and build up others in the truths of their most holy faith.

## POWER

Archimedes thought he could find a lever long enough to lift the world if he could find a fulcrum to rest it on. But lacking the fulcrum, he did not attempt the task. The man of to-day is not much troubled for want of "a place to stand," nor for anything else. He feels that he has at his command power enough to do almost anything that he desires. Daniel Webster once said, "Nothing is impossible on Bunker Hill." The spirit of the age is disposed to drop the limit of historic inspiration and say nothing involving power is impossible anywhere.

Power in its relation to man may be divided into two classes, namely, that which man possesses and that which he controls or commands. Power which he possesses is that which he exercises immediately, directly, without any intermediate cause or agency. That which he commands is that which he controls and exercises through mediate agencies. He possesses the power by which he walks; he commands the power by which he rides. He possesses the power of his fist with which he smites his assailant; he commands the power of the battery which strikes down an opposing army. He possesses the power of his voice with which he makes known his thoughts to those in his presence; he commands the power by which he transmits his thoughts to those upon the opposite side of the planet. The former is comparatively circumscribed; the latter seemingly unlimited. When Jesus Christ was on earth men marveled at the power which He possessed; to-day we marvel not so much at the power which man possesses, but rather at that which he commands.

The mightiest forces of nature seem to delight in bowing to man's control. They come at his call; they respond to his signal; they recognize his right to com-

mand. At the curbing stands a little boy, six years of age. He looks anxiously down the street. He sees an electric car approaching. He moves toward the middle of the street. He lifts his tiny hand. For what purpose? To stop that car. "Foolishness!" you say. "That car is propelled by one of the greatest forces of nature, and to think that it can be stopped by the uplifted hand of a child is worse than foolish." But that little boy knows better. He holds up his little hand and the car stops. You say the motorman stopped the car. But what caused him to stop it? That uplifted hand. The conductor assists his royal passenger to board the car. The car thunders on. It is nearing the crossing of a steam-car line. Again that little hand goes up and again that car stops and the little man gets off. The lightning which Franklin coaxed down his kite string has become the obedient servant of that child's will, carrying him where his young feet could not take him.

Now he stands at one of the stations of one of the great trunk lines of the continent. But it is only a flag station. He looks anxiously down the long road of steel. At length, in the distance, he sees the smoke rolling from the nostrils of the iron giant. On it comes with the speed of the wind and the might of a tempest. What is that boy going to do? He is going to stop that train. "Foolish!" you say. "The strong arms of a thousand men could not even impede its progress." But that boy knows he can stop it. True to his mother's directions, he takes his kerchief from his pocket and waves it with the confidence of an autocrat. The giant stops, and with palpitating heart awaits his further pleasure. He mounts the steps, enters the coach and hands the conductor a bit of paper containing his fare and a request to stop for him at another flag station. The iron horse rushes on for another hour and then stops again for the sole convenience of this royal little passenger. He alights and

is met and embraced by his Aunt Jane, whose guest he is to be for the next month.

Wonderful, indeed, that steam and electricity, mightiest forces of nature, should become the willing servants of man's convenience and comfort! More wonderful yet that the tiny hand of a child can direct these potencies. We are reminded of God's first commission to man, "Subdue it and have dominion over it."

But God has placed within the command of man more wonderful powers than those of nature; He has placed even Himself at our command, and invites us to call upon Him, and promises to answer when we call. Let me recite a paragraph of modern history. I recite it, not because it is exceptional, but rather because it is typical. A little more than fifty years ago there was born in Japan a boy who was afterward known as Joseph Hardy Neesima, and was destined by God to be one of the greatest of human forces in the emancipation of the "sunrise kingdom." At the age of five his youthful mind renounced idol worship, although as yet he had not found a faith to take its place. Later there fell into his hands a stray copy of a Chinese translation of a part of our Bible. In this he spelled out the first sublime sentence, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This appealed to his precocious young mind, as more reasonable than any explanation of the universe he had heard. As the little boy at the track lifted his hand to signal the forces of electricity and steam, so this little Japanese lifted his youthful heart to signal the One to whom all power belongeth. These were his words: "*Oh, if you have eyes, look upon me; if you have ears, listen to me!*" And the God to whom he prayed had both eyes and ears, and the omnipotent God began to plan for that boy. He sent him to Shanghai, and from Shanghai to Boston. He called into requisition the ships of commerce. He called to His plans Alpheus Hardy, who gave him an education,

and after whom he was named. He used a Christian college and the Japanese embassy in fitting him for his great work. When at length he was prepared for the work to which God had called him, the government of Japan offered him a lucrative position. But this was to him no temptation. He had determined to be an evangelist to his own race, and nothing could turn him from this purpose. Among other things he desired a Christian college for the training of Japanese pastors. Even his friends pronounced this impossible, telling him he might as well "attempt to fly to Mars," but with unyielding faith he pursued his plans, and before his death saw the college completed and more than nine hundred pupils in attendance. He died before he was fifty years old. He died at his work, with the maps of five provinces before him, on which he was marking the strategic points for a great campaign for his Lord and for the uplifting of his native land. No man has ever so vitally influenced Japan for good as has this wonderful child of Providence.

We have been marveling of late at the wondrous growth and development of this island empire. Do not overlook the fact that Christianity has done much, very much, to make possible all these achievements.

Talk if you will about the wonders of steam and electricity and radium, but do not forget the omnipotent God, the loving Father, in whose hands lie not only the forces of nature but as well the powers that guide the lives of men and shape the destiny of nature.

## PLEASING GOD

We are so constituted that we delight to please. To please those above us and win from them a word of praise, we are often ready to deny ourselves and give toil and treasure.

It is needful, however, that principle and truth should regulate the desire to please. One may often spend strength in foolishly trying to please the unworthy, even be tempted to yield honor and truth to keep on good terms with the false and corrupt. Principle and truth are to be preferred to the gaining of the goodwill of others, when it means the surrender of honor.

If the desire to please be directed to one worthy of reverence and love, it is a great help to a noble life. There have been many instances where a man had a friend, a man, a woman, a wife, whose approbation, that of a pure and generous soul, has been the inspiration to a beautiful life of unselfishness. To please that friend, to bring no shame to her, to be worthy of her praise, spurred him to highest deed. The world might sneer, laugh, misjudge, denounce, but the smile of the friend was sunshine to drive away those dark clouds. Her "well done" a voice that hushed to silence the harsh cries of an unjust world.

Now, if this be true when we strive to please a human friend, how much more must it be true when we strive to please God, worthy of our highest reverence and love. But is it possible for us to please God? The Scripture says it is possible. Paul writes to the Thessalonians and says, "How ye ought to walk and please God." "Enoch had this testimony, that he pleased God." Of Jesus, God the Father said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." God

is no Sphinx, unmoved and insensible. He may be pleased by each one of us.

We please God when we *believe and trust in Him*. "Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that comes to God must believe that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Truth and honor are very dear to sincere men. To doubt them is to wound them most deeply, whilst to rest calmly and confidently upon them pleases them most deeply. God has given to us His word and His promise. To doubt that word and promise is to wound Him; to believe His word, Himself, is to please Him.

Does anything please us more than trust? We are with others where there is a shy, timid child. She hides her face in her mother's lap, then she slowly lifts it, she searches your face. She finds it worthy of trust, slowly she draws near, and now, won by your kindness of face, nestles in your arms. What a throb of pleasure the little one's trust brings to your heart! It is only a child and a child's trust in you, but it pleases you most deeply. Though we are less than little children before God, our trust pleases Him.

We please God when we *honor Christ*. All men are to honor the Son, even as they honor the Father in His will. "He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him." It is impossible to please God if we honor not Christ. It brings richest pleasure to us when one we truly love is honored by others. We resent it most keenly when deserved honor is withheld from them. There is nothing so quickly rouses a father or mother to anger as dishonoring or neglecting a son or daughter; and nothing is more pleasing to parents than honor given to their children. The Father hath sent His Son. To neglect, to be indifferent to Him, to despise Him is to dishonor the Father. When, therefore, we confess Christ as our Saviour and serve Him, we please God.

We please God by *growth in good works*. "That ye

might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work," is the word of Paul to the Colossians. Again he writes, "As ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more."

Could we carry this thought, "By this I am pleasing God," into our duties, how it would help us! Oftentimes we are just ready for duty, our tools in our hands and our work before us, when a friend passes by and says, "What a fool you are to do that!" He goes his way, but the sting remains, and the sweet and healthful impulse is blighted in the bud, and sadly we leave the duty undone.

But if we laid firm hold on this, "This is what God wants me to do and this pleases Him," the sneer would have no effect. There would then be Christ's way of looking at things, who, with the cross before Him, said to Pilate, "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." So let us go up to our sacrifices and duties knowing God loves us and has given us these out of love, and by these we shall please Him. As the great tides lift the vessel above the sunken rocks and the bar which at low tide forbid her voyage, so shall we be carried triumphantly over sacrifice and hardship which, in our earthly moods, are barriers that cannot be overcome. We do not need another cross. We need another spirit under the cross.

Passing over the rich thought that we please God by *increasing in the knowledge of God* (Col. 1 : 10), let us see that to please God we must love Him. There is nothing that so pleases us as love bestowed upon us by another. A little gift with love to the true man or woman is worth infinitely more than a jewel given without love. That which God desires of us most of all, and that which pleases Him the best of all, is our love. The closing word of the great High-priestly prayer is,

“That the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

This love comes to us when we look upon Jesus as He reveals the love of God to us. God first loves us and then we love Him. “We love Him because He first loved us.” That love is made known to us in Christ Jesus. His life here on earth, His teaching, His suffering as the propitiation for our sins, His opening of the glory of heaven, His gift of the Spirit, all these tell us of the love of God which passeth knowledge. As our minds and hearts contemplate Jesus, our love for God shall dominate our whole being, and we shall please Him and seek to love Him more and more.

If we were to carry with us constantly this thought that we can please God, who has loved us and loves us, what might not our future be! What triumphs of loyalty and obedience might not be ours!

“In the last days of Napoleon’s imperial advances to victory this happened. It was a great battlefield, and the emperor, surrounded by his staff, was waiting at a critical moment for news from beyond the hills. Suddenly and swiftly there was seen a boy riding across the battlefield, riding for his life. He crossed the cannons, ran the gauntlets of the ranks of musketry, and he came where Napoleon stood. Then from his breast he drew a dispatch and handed it to the emperor. And the emperor quietly read it and gave his orders accordingly; and *then* turned to the boy. ‘My lad,’ he said—so runs the story—‘you have done your duty; you have helped me in a critical moment. You are wounded.’ And the boy, looking up at the face of Napoleon with something like rebuking tenderness, answered, ‘Nay, sire, I am not wounded; I am only killed!’ and then he fell from his horse. And Napoleon—even Napoleon—turned to his staff and pointed to the dead boy, saying, ‘That was loyalty!’”

If we could ever comfort and inspire ourselves in

duty and sacrifice with this, "By this I can please God," our loyalty and devotion would be such that we could do and sacrifice to the utmost, and even calmly face death to serve Him.

## FISHERS OF MEN

"Follow me and I will make you fishers of men," was Christ's call to the fishermen, Peter and Andrew. There are many who lay more stress upon the second part than on the first, and elaborate the phrase, "fishers of men," dwelling upon the characteristics of the skillful fishermen in catching fish.

They do set forth truth, but, after all, when we emphasize the second clause, are we not missing the greater truth for the lesser? Jesus says, "Follow me." If this be done, then, "I will make you fishers of men." He will not simply teach them how to fish for men, but make them fishers of men.

These are the days of manifold methods, with constant iterations of their efficiency to win and save men. These methods may be useful, but they do not come first. They may even prove hindrances and disadvantageous, through them oftentimes never a man saved. For the great fact is that he who follows Christ learns how and is made wise to save men.

He that follows Christ *knows Christ*. He can be known in no other way. When He is known intimately then we can present Him confidently to others as Saviour. To make Christ real to others He must first be real to us. When He is real to us then our word, tone and look will be powerful to convey Him as the Redeemer to others. When a man in ordinary conversation utters a sentence fraught with intense conviction, based upon experience, everyone realizes the unlikeness to his accustomed talk. It arrests attention, it wins respect, even if it does not lead to belief. Christ becomes real to us when we follow Him. And then He will be made real to others.

An old woman, tottering and feeble, was helped up the church steps by a gentleman who attended church

faithfully, but was no Christian. As she reached the top of the steps, she looked in his face and said to him, "I hope you love Jesus the Saviour." It was the word of one who, following Jesus, loved Him. The intense conviction of the words, the absolute love wrought on his heart, and the man, whom all skillful methods had hitherto failed to move, became a Christian himself, caught in the gospel net.

The apostles became skillful fishers of men, because, following Christ, they knew Him. They saw His work, heard His gracious words, witnessed His love, knew His hatred of evil, His love for good. They learned that He knew them as God knew them, that He had helped according to their needs, that He brought peace to their sin-tossed hearts and joy and the Father's love, by His death and risen life. They knew that though absent from sight, He was still their shepherd and friend, able to care, direct and save. They could say with unfaltering conviction, "We know whom we believe. He is the Saviour for you and me."

How shall we follow Him? We follow Him when we take up our cross daily for His sake and obey Him. We follow Him when we are much with Him in His word. "All, therefore, who desire implicit confidence in Him, must be willing to spend time and take trouble to get into the heart of the gospel story and of Christ Himself. The sure anchorage is not attainable by a listless, random reading of the evangelic narratives, but by a close and prayerful study, pursued it may be for years." Such will not be thrown into panic by the books or words of infidels, or by the strange providences of life. They will trust and find their trust justified.

Follow Christ, and *the believer looks upon men as Christ looked at them*. He loved all men. He knew them as children of God. Even when sinners they were children astray, but children who could return. To Him nothing was so precious as a soul, nothing so

awful as sin, nothing so desirable as righteousness with God, no destiny like that of the soul to a blessed eternity. No wonder He labored to save, suffered and died to bring all to the knowledge of the love of God and His righteousness.

The men that followed Him and saw this desire caught His spirit. They loved men and prized men. The soul was the real royalty of men. The sonship with God made the humblest man a king. It swept away all distinctions. The real treasures of this world were not silver, or gold, or jewels, but men made in the image of God. Like Him, they shuddered over sin and knew its awful end, no matter how entrancingly it presented itself. No wonder they were successful fishers of men and numbered multitudes as the rewards of their soul-fishing.

Nor can it be otherwise with us. With Jesus, we know men as God's children, heirs of heaven; we know the awful end of sin, the worth of a life lived with Him in its righteousness, peace and joy. Woe is unto us if we preach not the gospel. There is an account of a man who in a shipwreck hurriedly caught up his gold and tied it in a belt about his waist. Just as he was about to leap off the sinking vessel, a little hand grasped him; turning, he found a little girl, who said, "Save me, save me!" It was either the child or the gold—a struggle, and then the gold was cast away. He leaped with her into the waves, and battled bravely for the shore. As he gained the beach he was stunned by a blow. When he regained consciousness he found the little girl by his side saying, "I am here, too, safe." Sweet reward!—yet not so sweet as that shall be which will be when the believer shall be greeted by those whom he has saved, saying joyfully, "I am here too."

Follow Jesus, and men are taught *His ways of working*. There was nothing cut and dried about Christ's methods with men. One man He sends home who wants to follow Him; another He tells to leave all.

home and friends, and follow Him. One He asks to sell all he has and give it to the poor, if he would be His disciple; another He allows to keep all. He adapts His teaching to the men who hear Him. He heals sometimes without being asked; others must plead for the healing again and again. He dealt with men according to their temperaments and knowledge. Men differ, as the flowers differ. The great Master treated the flowers of the human garden to such light and shade, soil and cultivation, as might bring them to joyous bloom.

The men that follow Christ will learn His ways of working. Men will be studied by them as Christ studied them, and they will vary their methods to suit the circumstances and dispositions.

Three things will be mighty in this:

First. He that follows Christ will know His words, His own words and the words of the apostles and the prophets whom He had filled with His Spirit. The word of God is quick and powerful. Christ used it again and again in His teachings and controversies, and always with powerful effect. It was ever on the apostles' lips. They were fishers of men, because by the word they laid hold upon their souls. Luther was powerful because he knew the Word; with it he brought men into the kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy. Every wise winner of souls is a man of the word. Much of Moody's success is due to his knowledge of the Bible.

Second. The sagacity of love will teach us how to save men. He that would love must follow Christ until he loves men as He did. It is remarkable how Christlike love will make a man a good fisher of men. The love itself prepares the way. Men instinctively feel that love, and will bear from it what they would deny to everything else. The very tones of love cause the ear to hear and the heart to open, whilst love itself is sagacious, knowing both when and how to talk. It

makes men full of tact and wisdom. It knows how much and how little to say. How easily the old minister reaches the heart of the careless mother as he says to her, smiling upon the babe nestling in her arms, "Oh that you would rest like this little child in the arms of your heavenly Father!"

Third. He that follows Christ, Christ will make a fisher of men, because He will give to him the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is given to such as obey Him. Need we add another word? The Holy Ghost in us will give us wisdom and knowledge, He will make our tongue eloquent, He will fill us with love, He will prepare men's hearts to receive the word that He will put upon our lips. "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."

## GIVING

The money and the material which David gathered for the building of the temple were immense in value. To this great sum the princes contributed freely, whilst Solomon still further increased the amount, and, in addition, paid Hiram's workmen in the fruits of the land. The temple represents, therefore, a liberality which was both generous and self-sacrificing.

The Lord looked upon these offerings with favor. They were pleasing unto Him. To beautify and adorn His temple was then a duty, as it is a duty to beautify and adorn His house to-day. There are many who decry any adornment of church buildings and demand that the money thus expended should be given to the poor, to missions, and the like. In a certain sense they are right. The congregation that burdens itself with a costly building, a high-priced minister secured for his silver tongue, a choir made up of expensive and incomprehensible voices, until it is not able to give to the work of the Lord elsewhere save in pitiable sums, is doing wrong. There is a congregational selfishness just as there is an individual selfishness. A family may find abundant opportunity to spend their total income upon themselves, and may have nothing for the poor, the church, the things of God. It is, however, the rankest selfishness. It is the utter denial of stewardship. It is a defying of God's teaching and commands. Their end is outlined by Christ in the fate of the rich man in the parable of Lazarus and Dives. A congregation is a Christian family. It has a right to spend on its own building and machinery a portion of its income, but when it spends all, or nearly all, on self, its own poor, its own ends, it is an example of a Christian family living in selfishness for which they shall

be held to strict account by Him who intends them to be a center of gracious influence to the ends of the earth.

There is, however, another side. There is a judicious expenditure on building and equipment which the temple illustrates and justifies. There are some people who oppose all such expenditures because they do not want to give to anything. They are like Judas, who found fault with the generous woman who broke the alabaster box of ointment and poured its fragrance on His head. He said, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?" Not that he cared for the poor, but because he was covetous. There are expenditures for the honor and glory of Christ that are precious unto Him.

Do we not reach here the test of giving, not alone its test, but the secret of generous giving? That is truly Christian giving which is offered for Christ's sake, and it becomes easy and great when there is love in the heart for Christ.

It is worthy of thought that giving is the direct result of gratitude and love. It is praise in highest form, for it is love expressing itself in that which costs. It shows a thanksgiving so deep down that it overcomes self and the gratification of self. How easy it is to sing praises and even to pray, especially for what is wanted! Yet, to praise God aright, to the offering of self and of possessions, how difficult! It is a remarkable fact that the Bible contains 146 exhortations to prayer and supplication, and 429 verses which bid men sing, praise and give thanks, an indication "that as worship is more than work, so praise is higher than prayer." The giving from a thankful heart unto God is a test of the sincerity of praise. There is an old story of a visiting minister who was much annoyed by a brother shouting, "Glory! Hallelujah!" opportunely and inopportunely. He asked the pastor whether he could not quiet him. "Easily," was the

reply. Leaving the pulpit, he went to the man and spoke to him. The man became as dumb as an oyster. The visitor, amazed, asked, "What did you say to him to hush him up so effectually?" "Oh," was the dry response, "I asked him for a dollar for foreign missions." His praise was lip-praise. When that which tested the heart was asked, there was no giving, no offering of praise which cost.

There can also be no question that giving is a grace to be cultivated, even as Paul teaches. It is well to begin as we do in the Sunday school, and train the children to give to causes away from home, for Christ's sake, and because it is His work. It is well to practice this individually for ourselves, because we see it is our privilege, that it is what Christ desires, that it is among the noblest deeds we can do, that we thus enlarge the kingdom, and seeing all this resolutely set apart a just portion of our means for His purposes. The old selfishness may rebel, but, if we persist, by the grace of God it may be overcome, and the joy of giving become ours, and we escape that covetousness which is idolatry, the ruin of many a saint who began well, but passed slowly under its power and at last became its slave, retaining an outward form of godliness, but dead within.

A little thoughtfulness must convince us that few of us give out of our poverty. We give out of our abundance, and what can be spared without inconveniencing ourselves. Contrast what is spent upon self, clothing, our homes, our pleasures, our summer outings, our own desires, with what is given to the cause of Christ, and we are humiliated by perceiving how much self receives and how little Christ. In these days, when hard times are heard on every side, and with justice, they are set forth as an excuse why the great missionary treasuries are suffering for funds. If we looked at Christ's servants as Christ looks at them, and observed how they live, the useless expendi-

tures, the luxuries, the pleasures, would not we be constrained to say, "The fault is not in the hard times, but in the selfishness of Christ's own people, who cannot deny themselves for His sake"? Perhaps we will have the courage as individuals to put ourselves in His light and look upon ourselves. If we have, the result will be sure, self-denial and larger offerings. These hard times will then be for good. They will teach us to give at cost to ourselves, they will bring to us the divine joy that lies at the heart of all sacrifice for Christ.

## RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

In a delightful book occurs this sentence: "Without religious instruction there can be no religion; people may practice it a little, rites may be accomplished more or less, but there is no Christianity." The Bible insists upon the same truth, that there must be instruction in the law, in the history of God's people, in the truths of religion, in precepts to be obeyed and promises to be possessed. The New Testament is emphatic that this religious instruction is part of the duties of parents, to be begun with the earliest dawn of consciousness. "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

These early teachings are the most lasting and valuable. They sink deep into the heart, they prepossess the mind, and resist the evil which craves entrance. Through them are formed habits which make the child move easily in the right and the truth. The vitality of these early impressions is amazing. There is nothing that stays and grows like the teaching of a Christian father and mother. Other influences weaken; but this, given in love, grows as the experiences of life witness to its truth. "Its tenderness takes on an unspeakable ever-growing pathos. It melts and subdues and how often, at last, does it conquer and win!" If one could only learn the hidden facts in the sudden conversion of apparently hardened sinners, often far back in childhood would be found the teachings of home, the prayers of sainted father and mother, which dropped imperishable seed into the young heart, which hidden, but living, at last bore fruit in what is called a miracle of grace.

There lingers as a tender and sacred memory the death of one who had nobly served for almost four score years the Master, holding forth Him and His

gospel with untiring zeal and tenderness. When at last the end came, consciousness of those around him departed. But they heard him praying, and the prayer was the German child's prayer he had learned at his mother's knee. The great, strong soul came back to childhood's teaching, and went to the Master he loved with the words with which he first learned to commend himself to Him.

There have been those who have said these early instructions warp the child's judgment, give it a trend from which it cannot break away without violence. They say the child should neither be taught one thing or another, but come with unprejudiced mind to faith and religion to judge for itself. There comes the rub. There is no such thing as an unprejudiced mind. All of us are colored by our surroundings. If good is not taught, evil will be. "We must care for our boys, or the devil will," said a young Sabbath school teacher. "The devil will care for them anyway," answered the old superintendent. "The devil will not neglect them even though we do." It is our business to teach the truth as we know it. Not to do that is to wrong the child and put him helpless in the power of evil. Paul did but commend Timothy that his mother, Lois, and grandmother, Eunice, had taught him from babyhood the Scriptures, "Able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

As the child comes under other teachers and takes upon himself vigor of thought and research, it is just as essential to continue religious instruction. He ought to be in the congregation to hear the pastor's religious teaching from the pulpit and in the catechism. He should be in the Bible school, the Sunday school, even up to and beyond manhood.

The teaching of the child calls for the utmost care and thoughtful consideration of his character, and wise understanding of truth upon the part of the

teacher. Austin Phelps, for instance, tells us that when he was a child a child-revival took place which threw him into great distress, as he was urged to believe in Jesus, when through training and unconscious choice he was already His. "What I needed, as I now look back to the state of my mind, was to be made to *believe in truth-telling, honor, honesty, unselfishness, care for the happiness of others, as Christian things, as well as love to God and trust in Christ.*" There must be judgment. There are those that need conversion, others are in the Lord and need direction.

There should be unceasing desire to unfold the truths of Christ, His character, His work, His teachings, His demands, enforced, explained and illustrated by the Bible, by history, by life. None may compute the value of such seed sowing. Cotton Mather's "Essay to Do Good," read by the boy Franklin, influenced his whole life. Beecher said that Ruskin's works taught him the secret of seeing, and that no man could ever again be quite the same man or look at the world in the same way after reading him. "The Imitation of Christ," and Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," determined the character of John Wesley. These and numberless more prove the value of truth given by another. But none of these can compare with the Scriptures, "inspired of God, profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is righteousness; that the man of God may be furnished completely unto every good work."

In our day, in the rush of secular instruction, there is constant danger that religious instruction be thrust aside. There is neither time nor place for what is, after all, the primal necessity. Secular instruction is good for this life. In a certain sense, the knowledge there is also knowledge of God. This world, with its wondrous laws, its harmonies, its adaptations, its beauties, set forth His wisdom. These are the robe of His glory. These are not *the* truth that is highest,

the truth that admits to sonship and fellowship with the Father and makes men holy. Forever stands the word of Christ: "Sanctify them by Thy truth; *Thy word* is truth." Only through it are men brought out of sin into sonship, and only by it does the Holy Spirit continue His work in the heart, bringing them to the Father, meet for the inheritance of the saints.

Nor must we ourselves forget that we are learners even when we have no school-teacher over us. Instruction must be sought from the pulpit, and woe to the preacher who gives men stones instead of the bread of life. It must be sought in diligent study of the word of God, where we seek to come in contact with Christ Himself, learning of Him; in the words and writings of others, gathering, as the bee gathers honey from flowers, from them the truths that help us, widen our thought, spur us to action, unfold the hidden wisdom; in life itself, where God makes His truth real to us when we work for Him, keep His commandments, bear His crosses. Then will truth ever be real and absorbing, and Christ grow unspeakably precious, God be surer than the solid earth upon which we stand.

## UNKNOWN RESULTS

Several instances have come to the writer lately of good which followed from words spoken many years ago. During all this period he was entirely ignorant of these results. He had spoken his message, which had fallen into receptive hearts, but he knew it not.

One of them may be cited. A young man in doubt concerning his duty came to the writer's church. He was a stranger and of another denomination, yet the sermon he heard gave him light and led him into the ministry of his own people.

There is a great satisfaction to workers when they can perceive known results which almost immediately follow their Christian endeavor. They are encouraged by these evidences that their labor is not in vain, and, rejoicing, continue their efforts.

Much, however, of the results of faithful work and living does not appear at once. Truth taken in the heart is as the grain of wheat that falls into the ground, which must have a long time before it becomes the golden grain of the harvest field. Indeed, the Saviour intimates in the parable of the sower that many who are readily impressed as readily fall away. They are emotional, superficial, and are never really possessed by the truth, never take it into the depths of the heart.

We should not be cast down, therefore, when we do not perceive that our words and works are effective. Those whom we serve, or with whom we associate, may be more deeply affected than we think. Time is needed that the truth they have taken into the heart may germinate, grow and come to fruitage.

One of the curious phases of the human heart is the tendency to conceal the spiritual struggle going on within. It has often been observed that just before one surrenders himself to Christ he may be more reck-

less and defiant than usual, seeking to hide from others the striving of the Spirit within him. As we cannot read hearts, we should be hopeful and patient. Saul of Tarsus was the prototype of numbers since. One day he persecuted, the next day he asked, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

There are times, also, when the words which we prepare for a particular one, and which we are sure must move him, fail entirely with him, but are the means of salvation to others. Lady Huntington pressed on one of her servants the consideration of eternal things; he appeared to pay no attention and she saw no reward; but the gardener heard the conversation through a hole in the wall, and became a man of prayer.

Referring back to our own experience, it may just be possible that the sermon which brought the young man to decision may not have impressed one of our own congregation. It was to him the word of the Lord, to him the stranger, the unknown. All these years since, that word had been fruitful, but we knew it not. How foolish, therefore, to have despaired because we perceived no known results.

Perhaps we are too anxious for results. It may not always be best that we should perceive them. Not a few popular and successful preachers have become castaways. They became intoxicated with success and the praise of men, and lost their humble trust in God. Self came between them and the Saviour and ruined them.

Jeremiah is one of the noblest characters of the Old Testament, because though it was his hard lot to toil among an unbelieving and sinful people, upon whom his words were wasted, or roused them to bitterly oppose and persecute him, nevertheless he was steadfast and true to his mission. Yet he was the stay of the righteous of his day, and he influenced mightily the generation that followed. He knew not these last

results on earth, but is it too much to believe that he knew them in heaven?

It may be our lot to bear witness for Christ, and yet, like Jeremiah, be scorned or be given indifferent attention, but we may be sure that the words will be heeded by some, and when we have passed away there may be rich fruitage.

Division of labor is one of God's laws. One sows and another reaps. It constantly happens that the teacher who really prepared the soil, sowed the seed, nurtured the growing character, does not gather into the garner of Christ. Another comes and reaps and receives the praise. "Success, however, is the world's criterion of merit; fidelity is God's. The reward of being faithful over a few things is just the same as being faithful over many things; for the emphasis falls upon the same word; it is the 'faithful' who will enter into the joy of their Lord." The soldiers who fell at San Juan and El Caney deserve and receive our honor as much as those who won the entrenchments and compelled the surrender of Santiago. The Lord knows to whom the success of the work belongs, and He will honor His workmen aright. We can rest content with that.

Yet, let us not mistake. In all labor there must be fitness. Men differ in disposition and require different methods of dealing. One teacher may succeed where another fails. As one has said: "A Sunday school teacher toils almost hopelessly over a rude boy in the class; another person comes, and the spell of resistance is dissolved. The one teacher is no better than the other, only the one is unlike the other. God uses the mere personal characteristics of both at His will."

Nor should we overlook another fact, that we often reap the labors of another. Under our ministry, decision is reached and confession is made, a soul is saved. But if we could search out the influence that wrought to make the change, we would find that a

mother's prayers, a father's influence, another's words, were the efficient causes of the conversion, which we claim humanly as our own.

Nevertheless, the faithful worker may constantly expect, as his years increase, to hear of results which were due to his words, prayers, life and influence. These unknown results becoming known will bring to him the sweetest joy, joy with which nothing else can compare, the joy of doing good, the joy of Christ, the Great Teacher.

Much will never be known in this life. Some results will be hidden until we reach the other side. When the unwritten history shall be read, then shall the blessed results of work and words be known to our eternal praise, honor and glory. Blessed, indeed, are those who amid the joys of heaven shall be glad with this peculiar joy. Blessed to hear from the redeemed, "Through thee I learned to love Christ and came into life everlasting."

## THE HIGHEST THINGS

Many of the best things that have ever been written or spoken were not the results of long-continued study upon them directly. All of us are familiar with the circumstances under which the immortal Gettysburg address of Lincoln was written. On the back of an envelope, during the journey thither, the words were hastily jotted down. The polished and laborious address of Edward Everett is forgotten; Lincoln's lives and will always live.

Among the Christian lyrics that promise to abide is that of "O Little Town of Bethlehem." It was written one evening near Christmas by Phillips Brooks, apparently thrown off by him without premeditation or patient labor. There is in it that beauty of diction wedded to rare thought that bespeaks for it immortality. What is true of these is also true of much of the best that was ever written or sung. They were the fruits of what we call inspiration.

We would be very foolish, however, to reason that because men specially gifted had reached their highest things in this fashion that we must also reach them in the same way. These gifted ones themselves did not reach these heights without labor. Looking back over their lives, we discover that they were men who lived with a purpose and who deemed no study too great or hard to accomplish their purpose. They toiled in thought until what they studied became part of the soul and was woven into the very fiber of their character. Lincoln was eminently a master of pure English, which he had acquired by his familiarity in early days with the Bible and Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." He had a wonderful faculty of presenting ideas clearly, but it had its origin in the mathematics he laboriously mastered. For years his sympathies had been with the

soldiers, whom he bore on his great heart, anguished for them and his beloved country. Therefore, these highest words were the fruit of years of patient work, and simply unfolded as the rose opens its lovely petals in a night, because of the long months of patient growth before. It is true also that Phillips Brooks wrote "O Little Town of Bethlehem" after years of thought and life. He was essentially a student of books, of men, of Christ. He lived the truth which he learned. Therefore he drew near to Christ and found Him "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person." The incarnation was most precious because it held the truth of God's love and redemption. Therefore he could write these words so full of reverence and wonder that God's own Son should choose this little town of Bethlehem, where He might come to us in the flesh of a little babe.

Indeed, the impression that prevails, that genius always produces its highest things without labor, is most inaccurate. Says one of that great work of Beethoven's, "The Choral Symphony," "It is curious to find that so early as 1793, when Beethoven was but twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, a friend writes of him: 'He intends to compose Schiller's "Freude," verse by verse'; and from that time onward in his sketch-books at intervals occur Schiller's words with musical settings, down to 1822, when the theme takes its present form. For *thirty* years these words, embodying in a kind of joint human and religious fervor the strongly revolutionary sentiments of 1785, when they were written, had been floating in Beethoven's mind; for thirty years he had tried to find music adequate to their expression." He could not strike the note of absolute simplicity, of freedom, of loving human equality, until he had gained the experience which came through years of labor, sorrow and joy.

Out of these things there come to us who are less gifted certain lessons. We need to make the most

of the opportunities of study and living that God gives to us. The daily thought and study of the truth are apt to be tiresome sometimes, and appear to give us little results. We study, but all we appear to get are platitudes which everyone knows. Yet we must not forget that platitudes are, after all, the necessary truths, and, if we study them until we see them as they are, and give them with our heart in the words, others will not only listen, but be stirred by them into resolution and effort.

We need to remember that we are not to wait until inspiration comes, that is, until we are so full of a subject, or a lesson to teach, that we cannot help writing or talking about it. It is a remarkable thing that by far the largest portion of the best things is due to the fact that they had to be done. Often the writer sits down with little inclination to write, but as he writes the thoughts come and the sentences that lift and inspire are given form. There may be little inclination to take up a passage of Scripture, but sit down, study it faithfully, with petition, and lo! as you labor there come understanding and insight. Never forget also that the Spirit works through the word, and cannot use you when He would if you are ignorant of that word. Knowledge of the word is the fruit of study and obedience to it in Christ Jesus. It cannot be learned in any other way. We often fail with right words to others simply because we have neglected to study the word in the past.

We need to remember that the highest things for us may come suddenly. Whatever flower of wisdom, beauty and truth these lives of ours may produce can come only through the patient effort and life. But when we are faithful, suddenly it may come and come again and again, as the rose tree crowns itself with the rose of fragrance and beauty in a night, repeating the wonder at intervals until the night of winter's death comes.

## PATIENCE

Among the virtues underestimated by many, patience must be placed, for it is not a quality that compels attention as courage, for instance, does. It is more like the discipline that makes the victories of courage possible and curbs its rashness in the hour of triumph. Discipline is not attractive. It is an everyday affair as well as the business of many days, with much to bear and little to inspire. Patience, likewise, is the unnoticed virtue that, nevertheless, underlies our highest triumphs.

Much is made of patience in the Scriptures. They dwell on it as a lovely and comforting quality of God, "the patience and longsuffering of God." They urge the necessity of patience upon God's children if they are to secure the rewards of faith, obtain salvation, and attain unto perfection and completeness. What they so strongly urge must be both necessary and precious.

When we think soberly concerning patience, we find it both great and salutary. Patience is more than love, for a mother that loves her child is oft impatient with it. Perhaps we may more truly say that it is love at its highest, thoughtful, controlled and enduring. "Patience bears human weaknesses with a loving heart. It involves gentleness. It bears wrongs with sweetness. It will neither fret nor complain. It is the only virtue that will carry out the goodwill of the heart."

We must not think that patience does not feel keenly, for it is not insensible to drudgery, worry, vexation and pain. It is the grace that transforms drudgery, for it sees that drudgery is the hard road to perfection. It is the grace that lightens toil with the trying, for it knows that wise love continued may gain the wayward one and save the erring one. It is the grace that

irradiates the darkness that death leaves in a home, for though it misses "the touch of the vanished hand and the sound of the voice that is still," yet it waits submissively to know the reason why, lifts the cross appointed without complaint, and persistently trusts that the goodness of God will yet be shown.

Patience is specially needed by Christian workers. The best results everywhere come slowly. The painter, accused by a friend of too much minute care and labor in his work, wisely answered, "Perfection is only possible to him who is patient." Every artist knows the almost infinite patience required to reach the perfect result. Untiring, persistent practice is essential for the control of the voice or the eye or the hand. Untiring patience precedes the perfect voice, the supple fingers, the delicate or sure touch of the musician, the masterful control of color and form in the painter.

The patience of our modern scholars is almost phenomenal. The great works of to-day are the outcome of widest reading and research, they bristle with quotations from authors in the same field, evidences of the most painstaking labor. The subject is mastered before the attempt to write is made. The work of the scientific discoverer is the fruit of the most delicate investigations in the laboratory that required the utmost patience before the discoveries were made, such work often occupying months and years before anything tangible resulted.

Those who teach the Scriptures will obtain their clear and accurate knowledge through patient labor. To know the Scriptures well, so that they may be at one's command, requires time and toil. Those who have secured command over willful scholars have found patience to be indispensable in dealing with them. Scholars are so frequently trying and troublesome in conduct to such an extent that patience fails and the temptation is great to give up the whole work. In such hours patience must be fortified by prayer.

Often the turning point in their characters was just at hand when the tried teacher's patience gave way. Patience, above all, has been found essential in soul-winning. Many are over-anxious about results. Invitations to Christ are given, oft without judgment, without reference to fitness of time or place. When rejected, patience vanishes and no further effort is made. On the other hand, I know of one who has told me that in his efforts to win men, he has oft visited them and kept in friendly touch with them for several years before there was the least perceptible result, and then at length, through some leading of Providence or the persistent loving interest, those men and women gave themselves to Christ. Let patience have her perfect work that ye may be perfect and entire in Christian work.

Patience is a prime requisite in spiritual development. The patience of God is written in all the world. Science in these latter days has opened up the long ages in which God was building the world, as though to emphasize for us in this feverish, impatient period that the beauty and goodness of this world can only be secured by patience like His. "A single coal-seam six inches thick," says one, "contains more vegetable matter than a thousand years could possibly grow. The coal period alone counts up among hundreds of thousands of years." God is illimitably patient.

How slowly God works in nature to give us the beauty of the flower or the majesty of the forest! Even the ripened grain was "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Ought we then to be surprised that the spiritual character is slow of growth, and that we must patiently contend until it reveals its beauty and strength to us? The spiritual character is the greatest of all the works of God and man, for it is the combined work of both; through His grace man achieves godly character. It is but in line with what God does in the domains of the seen, that

the unseen flower of character should require patient watching and care, long continued, ere it blooms in rich loveliness.

Patience comes from a Latin word meaning suffering. The derivation throws a flood of light upon the quality itself. It is the virtue which bears suffering, and learns the lessons suffering would teach man by bearing it until it gives place to perfection. Christ was made perfect through suffering, and who ever bore suffering as patiently as He did? If He had grown impatient where would have been His perfect character or our salvation? Let patience then have her perfect work with us, that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Let patience be ours in work, in the development of spiritual character, even in the suffering that chisels the perfect Christlikeness on that character.

Patience is possible to those that rest in God. They that understand His love and believe in His wisdom have the inward sources of strength that issue in patience. They know that "As a father in a garden stoops down to kiss a child the shadow of his body falls upon it, so many of the dark misfortunes of our life are not God going away from us, but our heavenly Father stooping down to give us the kiss of His infinite and everlasting love." Patience believes in God's love and holds fast to it. Patience is possible to him who recalls the Lord Jesus and seeks to reproduce the life that was patient in labor, patient in duty, patient in suffering. Living with Him in patience he possesses his soul, brings forth the fruit of holy life in patience, and partakes with patience of Christ's sufferings, knowing that when His glory shall be revealed, he will be glad also with exceeding joy.

## POSSIBILITIES

The career of Joseph accentuates the truth of the possibilities that are potential in many, which need but fitting surroundings and discipline to become actualities. He is but the son of a small chieftain in Canaan, without the training and culture of the courts of mighty empires, or of their schools of wisdom. He rises to the greatest heights of power and influence, and displays such wisdom, judgment and prudence as stamp him as an administrator of the highest order.

Some, who are all too slow to observe the many similar instances of history, have been ready in their dullness to insinuate that we have a romance or folk-talk in the history of Joseph. They have forgotten the story of men like Mohammed, Luther, Napoleon and Lincoln, who, though of ordinary lineage or of humble origin, became leaders of men and masters of empires.

The extraordinary achievements of such men emphasize the possibilities that are latent in men. The human mind and heart, because of the repressing chill of untoward circumstances, often fails to bring to flower and fruit the germs of the life that are within. Slothfulness to seize proffered opportunities, the undue cultivation of a particular side of the nature, dwarfing its other side, the paralysis of sin, these and like causes prevent the harmonious unfolding of man's capabilities.

It is a well-known fact that Darwin in his youthful days was fond of music and sensible to the charm of poesy. In his old age, after his years of scientific research, which so absorbed him that he gave no attention to these arts, he found his soul unresponsive to music and poetry. They had no message to him, they were foolishness to him. Failure to cultivate the faculties of taste, imagination and sensibility in these direc-

tions had so deadened this faculty that there was no medium between his soul and such beauty.

The spiritual nature follows the same law. Every soul has great capabilities for God and truth, which God seeks to unfold by the truth He has given, and by the discipline to which He subjects that soul. But when the soul immerses itself in material things, refuses to cultivate the spiritual through the exercise of faith, duty done, suffering borne, meditation upon truth and prayer, the spiritual nature is starved, weakened, deadened. The natural, or earthy, side of the man triumphs over the spiritual until Paul's words are fulfilled: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." This enables us to understand our Lord's quotation of the prophecy of Isaiah: "By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

We, therefore, who cultivate the spiritual side of our nature, who live, though imperfectly, with God, should not be surprised when that which we hold precious and which is reality to us should make no appeal to the worldly and appear to them to be unsubstantial as the fabric of a dream.

Nevertheless, we need not be hopeless concerning them. The possibilities for spiritual capacity are still there, and under the life-giving touch of God's Holy Spirit may become responsive. They may pass from death unto life and be born anew.

The development of men like Joseph furthermore indicates to us what we may possibly be. There are within us undeveloped possibilities which are to be-

come magnificent realities, partly in this world, perfectly in the world to come. John assures us of that in his glowing words, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." Christ will, if we put ourselves into His hands here and diligently do our duty, guide us to the unfolding of our powers of mind and heart and spirit. Sometimes, like Joseph, suffering may precede, but sooner or later there will be the crown of fulfillment and the fullness of our faculties perfected and realized. We shall be great in the true sense—great in mind and heart and spirit.

It is the Master's hand that brings forth in us powers which we have, but which slumber all unknown, or but dimly known to us. Mr. Louis E. Van Norman, in a recent number of *The Outlook*, says that the great novelist, Sienkiewicz, thus spoke of the great pianist, Paderewski, "I am neither an orator nor a musician, but at this concert I have made a surprising discovery: I am not a musician, but I am very musical—like an instrument with all the necessary strings and keys, which awaits only the artist's touch to wake its melody. My musicalness waited the master's hand. As Paderewski played the 'Schumann Concerto,' I, of the *vulgus profanus*, felt all the longings of both composer and virtuoso. He played Chopin, and to me it seemed that the music spoke to my soul, till, in the words of the poet, 'my tears flowed fast and clear.' He played the Polish 'Fantasie,' and immediately in my thoughts there was a marriage between the sounds that flowed from the artist's fingers and the words of the poet, Pol:

"'And do you not see, my countrymen, the countenance of  
your native land?'"

Someone was playing on my soul as on a harp. Paderewski has forbidden anyone to praise him. I will

not praise him personally. I will only pray, 'Send us more like him who can ennoble and charm the heart of my country!'"

In all of us the great Master is seeking to bring to actuality our possibilities. There are heights and depths in everyone of us, in the meanest as well as the greatest, which are inconceivable. there are many chambers of treasures of mind and heart and spirit which have never been opened. If we will but let the Master have His way with us and trustfully learn of Him, He will open these treasures; He will with His touch waken the slumbering melodies, and we shall come to our greatness; we shall be like Him.

## DISCOURAGEMENTS

All workers for Christ meet with many discouragements. This is not strange, when we recall that discouragements come to those who work even in material things, if their ideals are high. The artist, the musician, the singer, the architect, the business man, the housekeeper, each with ideals, fail to reach their highest, and, therefore, are discouraged. It is an old and trite truth that we know full well.

But when we turn to work which deals with the heart, and the character, another spiritual nature and will, the discouragements are both more in number and greater. Matter is more plastic. It is unresisting and patiently submits to our hands and will. The trouble is with us and not with it, if we cannot make out of material things what we conceive. The great musician uses the same keys and the same instrument we do, but how great the difference. The reason is not in the piano, irresponsive and obstinate, but in us, clumsy of finger and stumbling in execution.

When we turn to work undertaken with the human spirit, we meet an opposing will, a heart dull and oft absorbed in worldliness, perhaps the willing captive of evil passion and desire. There are, indeed, those who know better how to approach others, whose words are more persuasive and searching, whose power with God greater, because their living with Him is close and their love great. These, however, fail also. The lessons we have been studying teach this. No one knew men as Jesus knew them. No one could present the truth so skillfully as He presented it. No one had such power with God, for He was in constant fellowship with the Father; nay, more, He Himself was the Lord. But how often He failed. Nazareth rejected Him. The Jewish leaders had no ear for His message and

slandered Him. At last they turned against Him and were able to change the popular feeling favorable to Jesus, so that the multitudes cried, "Crucify Him, crucify Him."

Just as remarkable is the slowness with which the disciples themselves understood His teachings. They were slow to understand. In the storm on the Lake of Galilee He rebukes them in their uncalled-for terror with the words, "O ye of little faith." They were full of petty jealousy, sought earthly reward and not service. At the last they all forsook Him and fled. If anyone had reason to be discouraged it was Jesus.

All this is a striking testimony to the power of the human heart to reject the truth and a lesson to us that we must never forget that much as we may do to make the truth clear and precious to others, yet that the truth must be individually appropriated. In the last issue, everyone must decide the question of faith and life in Christ for Himself.

With it all, Jesus was not discouraged. He was grieved that men chose to reject Him, but, "He saw of the travail of His soul and was satisfied." He saw that He was gathering His chosen and that there would be a host of the redeemed that no man could number. He knew His work was not in vain.

If there be anything that should make us rise above discouragements, it is just this—our work is not in vain, the honest, humble, faithful work we do. We need but patiently wait. Those to whom we minister are not fond of talking about themselves. Rare moments of confidence come which reveal this. A superintendent lately, asking one of his old teachers to again take her class, received in answer a letter stating that, as she was about to be married and leave the city, she could not. Then followed a most glowing acknowledgment of the power his words in the Sunday school had exercised in building up her Christian life. Had it not been for this, this Christ-loving Superintendent

would never have known how his consistent life and sincere words had influenced this brilliantly intellectual and educated woman.

Jesus, too, bore patiently with these (shall we say?) stupid disciples, because He knew what they would become. He saw the nobility of character, the grandeur of faith, the greatness of the work which these men and women would do. What names they have left! Peter, James, John and the other apostles, the Marys and the other women! Like Jesus, we should hope. Who can tell the beauty that shall be in those we teach, in this life and in the life to come?

Let us take long looks ahead when we are discouraged. There is a charming story told of Bishop Nicholson when he was rector, in the first years of his ministry, of a Philadelphia church.

The parish matters, social and financial, were in a bad way, and straightening them out was slow work. He was distinctly discouraged one day when, having gone to New York on business, he stopped to look at the Brooklyn Bridge, then building. A man, covered with dirt, was working on the abutments.

"That's pretty dirty work you are engaged in," said the bishop.

"Well, yes," answered the laborer, "but somehow we don't think of the dirt, but of the beauty which is to come out of our work."

"It was the lesson I needed, and I went back to Philadelphia the better for it," said Bishop Nicholson.

We, too, are doing foundation work, and find much that is disagreeable. There is more dirt than beauty. We need to look far ahead and see in the future days on these foundations the beautiful structure of a noble and Christlike life, and, because of the joy to come, forget the worries and discouragements of our present work.

## COMFORT IN CHRIST'S KNOWLEDGE OF US

The more we study Jesus Christ, the more we are amazed at His knowledge of men. To Him every man He met was an open book. He read him easily and accurately. Men could not conceal themselves from Him. The most impenetrable mask a man assumed was no barrier to His sight. He penetrated it without effort and saw the man behind the mask. His knowledge was even more surprising in this, He knew the motives which ruled men, motives of which even they themselves were unconscious.

As we read the last pages of the Gospels, we learn that the crafty Judas did not deceive Him; that Peter's cowardice was so open to Him that He could foretell to him his base denial. Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate and Herod, rulers and king, are weighed in His balances and estimated at their correct value.

He knew what was in man. His glance was like light falling into a dark place, revealing whatever of beauty or of ugliness, of purity or of filth is there. He continually startled his adversaries by telling to them their secret thoughts. He just as truly amazed the faithful and righteous by His knowledge of their doings and desires. He astonished Nathaniel as much as He did Simon the Pharisee.

In one way it is not very comfortable to meet one who is so familiar with the hidden things of our heart that, if he would, he could tell the world about us, our inner self. There are things we conceal even from our dearest, and seek to blind ourselves to their reality. Who of us would dare to face a man who knew our impurities, passions and secret sins?

After all, it is a truth that we ought to face, for it will help us when tempted to do wrong. "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom

we have to do." Opened is a strong word. The one who has been caught in a shameful deed drops his head to hide his eyes. This word signifies the head raised up that the eyes must face the stern look of the judge. Men cannot hide from His eyes, the eyes of Him who not only sees but must act against evil, for with Him we have to do. The sun sees, and his light on the sensitive plate records the face and deed, but acts not either for or against. His eyes see, but He also must act as our Ruler and Judge, punishing or rewarding as the case may be.

But as we think deeper there is wonderful comfort in His knowledge of us. He knew men thoroughly. Knowing them as He did, He was ready to live and die for them. We value things by the price paid for them. Jewels are prized more than stones. Jesus measures the worth of man by the price He paid for men's salvation. Their redemption satisfies Him for all the travail of His soul under the sufferings of the cross. He said once that a man's soul was worth more than the world. He says by the cross in another way what a man's soul is worth. What hope lies before us! What comfort that He values us at so high a price! His parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost son were all intended to show how He values us, even when in sin.

And it follows irresistibly that what He paid so great a price for He will not willingly let go. He is deeply interested in all our struggles to be true and faithful. He will stand by us, provide a way of escape in temptation, strengthen us. He will never fail us.

Once again, there is unspeakable comfort in the thought that He knows just what our service means. Our service is so far from being what we would like it to be. The earthly and the heavenly are intermingled. There is so much of imperfection. When we have done our best, it all seems so poor and unsatisfactory.

He judges us not by what we have accomplished, but by the tendency and the life. The little toddler brings to us a piece of paper all scribbled with unmeaning lines, a letter to father or mother. But the wise parent sees the message of love and covers with kisses the little face. The life that was behind it and not the performance is known and praised.

Peter is boastful, a coward, a base denier, but, when he comes to himself, Jesus knows his love and faith were obscured for a moment, and forgives and accepts. What is an alabaster box of ointment to Him, the King of kings? but He rejoices and says that wherever His gospel is preached this also that she hath done shall be spoken of as a memorial unto her.

Be of good heart, He estimates our imperfect service by the desire back of it, and counts the broken pillar of our deed as the perfect shaft.

## RIGHTEOUS LIVING, THE CRYING NEED OF OUR DAY

There is to-day a revival of righteousness in our country. The demand is made that men shall carry into politics, into the management of corporations and into business honesty and fair dealing. The revelations of corruption in politics and business have astounded everybody. A new word, "graft," has been coined to express the disgraceful and dishonest conduct of men who prey upon others and deliberately rob those who have trusted them.

The high-handed outrages of gigantic business enterprises, which are in the possession of millions, have amazed the people. These corporations have remorselessly adopted the policy of commercial assassination and have killed honest competitors by foul means, collusions with railroads, shrewd use of law, manipulations of prices and stocks. No rival has been too insignificant. "The keeper of the little corner grocery and even the street peddler are as calmly and quickly crushed out of existence as the great rival concerns." To gain their ends justice has been outraged, law evaded and broken and perjury committed.

Strange to say, many of these men in private life are moral. They are kind neighbors, faithful husbands and good fathers. They are large and generous contributors to colleges, hospitals; they found libraries and are charitable to the poor. They are religious in the sense that they go to church. Some teach in the Sunday school and make fervent prayers. They give largely to the church which they attend and to the enterprises of the church. In private life they are respected and honored. In business and political life they do not at all conform to the standards of Chris-

tian righteousness; they are not merciful nor loving.

The explanation is found in defective conscience. They have one standard for private life and another for business life. They declare that the moral and religious teaching of Christ cannot be applied either to business or politics. Until of late, this has also been the public conscience; but a large portion of the public is awakening to the fact that not only is this false, but, if persisted in, this country is doomed to revolution and its streets to run red with blood as they do in Russia to-day, where long-continued disregard of justice to men is bringing forth its legitimate results.

If, however, a closer investigation is made, it will be found that the same spirit pervades the community. It is astonishing to find how many business men of small capital believe that no business can be carried on with success that is honest. There must be deceptions, tricky advertising, disregard of others' rights and the like, if success is to be obtained. The principle ruling among them is precisely the same as in the great corporations.

Moreover, there is wanting respect for and obedience to law throughout the whole country. "For example," writes one, "the country is now aroused by the impudence of the public service corporations, which have set themselves above the law; yet the man who encourages the saloonkeeper to break the law, that he may get a Sunday drink, because local sentiment regards it as a foolish law, must remember that local sentiment in Wall Street regards the law which high finance is breaking as a 'crank' law; and if the saloonkeeper breaks the law that checks him, the broker and the corporation director will disregard the law that would check them." To take a common illustration, how many try to evade the regulations of railroads with regard to passes and mileage books, though these be signed contracts, and transfer them to others. Both law and solemn pledge are violated. Disregard of law

in the community, and among those who claim to be Christians, thus prepares the way for the large infractions of law.

What will prove helpful in the struggle for righteousness in conduct will be the study of Jesus Christ. He cannot be thought of, for one moment, as disregarding the law or unmindful of the rights of others. At His baptism by John, He silences John's remonstrances with the word, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." He did not need to be baptized. He had no sin. But this was God's appointment. This was His to do, and He did it. His scrupulous regard of God's law and man's law ran through all His life and all His teaching. He never counseled His followers to evade or break a law.

We cannot think of Him as having one law for His private life and another for a life of business. His conduct, we know, would have been the same in both. He would have been found merciful, just, loving in all His dealings. He would have trusted and loved God in all the completeness of life and in every particular thereof. The devil could not tempt Him to fall down and worship him for all the kingdoms and glory of the world. In His public life, as well as in His private life, there was but one principle, "Thou shalt worship God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

What we need, therefore, in these lessons that we are to study is to grasp these teachings and these principles of Christ, first for ourselves and then for our scholars; to press home not only a vague faith, but a faith that makes righteous; a faith that permeates every portion of our life, that willingly obeys the law and keeps it; a faith that sees that we are to be like Christ Jesus in mercy, love, truth and righteous dealing; a faith that prevails because it rests upon God and draws its strength to resist and its power to do righteously from Him. These truths enforced will be as good seed in the hearts of scholars and will bring forth,

in the coming generation of workers, toilers, business men and rulers, fruit, honor, integrity, fair dealing, mercy, righteousness in public and business life as well as in private life.

## BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE

Some blessings we know as soon as they come to us, health, sunshine, food and the like. There are others which, perhaps, disclose themselves as blessings only after years. They were blessings in disguise, which oftentimes are the best and the richest of all.

I sat the other day with some friends, talking about one of the household who had been a cripple from spinal disease. He had possessed a mind of rare order, the faculty of close observation, accurate knowledge of flowers and plants. He would have made his mark as a botanist had he possessed the bodily vigor, perhaps would have become a Burbank. He was often racked with pain, but his was the soldierly spirit that battled to be cheerful and uncomplaining. His smile was ever sweet, the sweetness so pathetic because back of it was pain conquered. He lived, it need not be said, close to God. He bore his cross, following the Master, not understanding why it was given him to bear, but seeking to bend his will to the Father's.

The household centered around him. When he was confined to his bed, as he was at intervals, they clustered around it with ready and untiring sympathy, meeting his courage and cheerfulness with brightness and buoyant spirits. When he died, in young manhood, the sorrow was deep.

As we talked with his father and sister we agreed that their home life, which was exceptional in tender love and happiness, largely arose from the demand thus made upon their thoughtfulness and sympathy, and from the sight of the cheerful courage of the sufferer. Selfishness had little chance for growth under such conditions. No one could go his own way unmindful of the home-circle, when they were called upon to center around a noble son and brother, whose

fine intellect and beautiful spirit challenged their best thought and daily showed them the divine possibilities of the soul. The physical misfortune became a blessing in disguise.

There are many teachings in the word of God to the end that our deepest blessings are generally those which come to us in hardship, pain and disappointment. We cannot grow oaks under glass. The sturdy trunk, the strong branches, the oak-fiber are the product of storms met and conquered, storms which gave it toughness and forced it to send deep the roots which sustained the wide-spreading tree of branch and leaf. The great nations were all the offspring of hardship encountered and borne. Great men have been reared amid privations, or chosen hardness for themselves. The great saints were nurtured in affliction and tribulation. Run down the great ones of the Bible and find one, if you can, who did not walk in dangers and difficulties, which endured, made them strong in spirit and great in faith. Nor have their successors in the ages since been different. Labor and trial have been inseparable companions to the best.

In this Lenten season, Jesus beautifully teaches this to us. In those last discourses to His disciples, when He speaks of His departure, and the disciples are sad, He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." The way to the higher joy was through the way of sorrow.

Sometimes we come dangerously near to rebellion when the Lord appoints to us a cross that bears heavily. We fiercely question why He treats us thus. I have known Christians to lose their faith in His goodness, and cry, "He is not God or He would not treat me like this." The mother that buries her child, the wife her husband, those that lose their wealth or are treated unjustly, are among these.

Let us note first that Jesus Himself bore a weightier cross, and asks no more of us than He was willing to bear Himself. Let us also note, secondly, that His cross to the disciples was mysterious, terrible, the source of despairing grief, but it was a blessing in disguise. When they knew the reason afterward, it became their deepest joy and their salvation.

When, therefore, there comes to us the sorrows that are hard to bear, hard to understand, that pierce our souls and test our faith, let us hold fast to these two things: First, that Christ bore a more painful cross than that which he asks of us. Then let us recall again that, after awhile, out of the cross-bearing will come exceeding goodness to ourselves and to those about us. The end of the steep, stony path is the blessedness of the vision of heaven.

My young friend plucked out of his pain and broken body the deepest joy and nobility of soul, and made the pain a throne of precious influence to all in his home. When we hold fast in faith to the promise that all things work together for good to those who love God, we shall ever discover trials and crosses to be blessings in disguise.

## A REVIVAL OF INTEREST

There is to-day a great revival of interest in the Old Testament Scriptures. They are being read and studied by an increasing number of men and women, boys and girls. The reasons are varied.

Some are studying them for critical purposes. They want to know how this wonderful Old Testament came to be, and never weary in labors over language, authorship and the like. Whilst they are giving us many strange and unproved theories, they are also bringing a vast amount of information which helps to make the book real and living. The Old Testament is to-day read with a knowledge of the customs, surroundings, national characteristics, modes of thought of those times, as never before in the history of the Church. It gives it a reality, a human side, a freshness which had largely been lost with many.

When we read the story of the kings before Abraham and of his day, which the researches among the ruins of Babylonia have brought to light, Abraham becomes much more real. We see how they lived, how they fought, how they worshiped, how they thought in those days. They could write, they had books, laws and civilization.

The discovery of the laws of Hammurabi, long before Moses' day, teach us that the laws of Moses were not something new and unheard of, but the heritage of the Hebrew people, and that on a natural basis, just as God does to-day, God built up the laws of the Israelites, putting into their old laws a new spirit, adding the larger law and dropping the old errors. There was and is inspiration, it is the word of Jehovah, but the word came by way of what had been learned. The new had its roots in the past.

Then there are others who read the Bible as literature. They have found it a most wonderful book, the book of all the world, even as literature. Within its pages are all the varieties of literature—the story, the song, the poem, the narrative, the oration, the proverb, the essay, the drama. "There is more 'good reading' in the Bible," says one, "than in all the volumes of fiction, poetry and philosophy put together. So when I get tired of everything else and want something really 'good to read,' something that is charged full of energy and human emotion, of cunning thought and everything that arrests the attention and thrills or soothes or uplifts you, according to your mood, I find it in the Bible."

No man is truly educated who is ignorant of the Bible as literature. The men who have been our greatest in letters or oratory or statesmanship, have been those thoroughly familiar with the Bible. It has taught them how to think, write and speak. It is a good thing to read the Bible as literature, for, as it is read, its deep undertone is bound to be heard, namely, the truth about God and about man, God's sinning child, and the way by which he can come back to God. Men start out to read the Bible as a "human document," for its poetry, its laws, its oratory, its letters, and find what all these combine to tell, religion, and must decide for or against it.

Perhaps one reason we fail to get the beauty and fascination of the Bible is due to the miserable way we read or study it. How many have ever read the whole story of Abraham or Jacob or Joseph, or of others at one sitting? I handed a young fellow a booklet with the story of Abraham, without chapters and verses, under suitable headings, and told him to read it, remarking it was one of the finest stories I knew. The young fellow read it with intense interest, and knows now more about Abraham than many a church member. As soon as he had finished one of his class-

mates eagerly asked for it, and it is to go the round of the whole class.

Take, for instance, the story of Joseph, one of the most fascinating stories in all literature. How many have ever read it through at one sitting? And have you ever tried, after reading it, to picture it in its fullness? The Bible condenses. With few words it paints a scene, portrays an emotion, describes a situation. And it must be pondered over to get it all, just as you must look again at a great painting to win its beauty for yourself.

Then a great many of us are trying, besides all this, to get at the real heart of all that is written in the Old Testament. It is God's book to us. We cannot forget that it was Christ's Bible. We want to learn what message there is from God to us in what it says. We are anxious to get it not only for ourselves, but for those whom we teach. And as we come, praying for wisdom, we find that its lessons are eternal. We can never get past the faith of Abraham. It has the same quality that our faith has. He believes, and it is counted to him for righteousness. We have larger knowledge. Our object of faith is Jesus, who is our Saviour and Lord, but when we trust God in Him and God justifies us, the quality of faith is the same—confidingly taking Him at His word. Joseph, patient, enduring, seeking the best, lived for God, as we do when we steadily trust in Providence and follow noblest ideals.

It is true that we now interpret the Old Testament by the New, but it is none the less true that the New Testament is concealed in the Old. Both are from the One God, and both were written for our instruction that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.

## “I GO TO PREPARE A PLACE FOR YOU”

The night before Christ died, He told His disciples that He was going to leave them. They were much cast down. How would they get along without Him, their Teacher, Leader, Defender, Friend? And then He comforted them by telling them that He was going to the Father's home of many mansions above, and that He was going to prepare a place there for them, and that after He had prepared it He would come again and receive them to Himself, that where He is there they may be also.

Ever since these words of Christ have been of wonderful comfort to men and women, the old and the young. For it is certain that we must all die, and that death may come to young as well as to old. Death is certain, the time alone of our death is uncertain. We may live long, we may die to-morrow. In the presence of this inevitable death we need comfort.

As we turn to these words of Jesus we find a comfort so singular that in all the world of the past and the present there is nothing like to them. He goes before. The way is no longer a lonely way. He has tasted death for every man, and He allows no one to go through the dark valley of the shadow of death without His loving and gracious presence and sympathy, the sympathy of One who has known death, the presence of One who, overcoming the sharpness of death, has made death His angel to lead us home. And so it happens that when the awful veiled face of death draws near to Christ's own, they look intently, the veil lifts and they see the face to be that of the Lord's messenger, full of mercy and deathless joy. The Lord of life is with us to give us courage to look and triumph. Well, therefore, does Jesus say, "I will come again and receive you unto myself."

If there were space, we would like to show how those words about my Father's home of many mansions have changed the world beyond. Men had talked of it as the land of shades, and some had made it another world like this, but Jesus lighted it up with un-failing and lasting light as a home, a home where God is the Father, a Father whom we know, for we have seen Him in the beauty, goodness, compasssion, truth and love of Christ—"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." When the believer dies, he goes home to his heavenly Father, to the home where sin, tears, pain, sorrow, crying, death, are unknown.

I know that it is not so clear as that to us. Death lies like a mist before it. One beats into a harbor in a fog. The eye cannot penetrate it. The city of which we have been told lies hidden, and then the fog lifts, the sun shines, and the city with its glory lies enchanting before the wayfarer after the long and stormy voyage. So, after life's voyage, we come into the mist of death, but it lifts as we enter, and in the light of glory we see the city of our God, the New Jerusalem, the home of our Father.

One thing makes it certain, all will be done for us that love can do. We measure that love by what Jesus did that the way there might be possible to us sinners. When He found it meant His taking our flesh, living a life where men hurt Him at every turn, and put Him to early and cruel death, His love never shrank. What it meant to bear our guilt who may understand? But His love was great enough to take the sinner's place and be made sin for us.

He says, "I go to prepare a place for you." He, the supreme love, will not only fit us for that home, but also make that home incomparable.

Some years ago, in the city of Boston, a beautiful young girl lay dying. For a long time she refused to see her rector, who was Dr. Donald, of Trinity Church; but at last she sent for him, and he gladly

came. The *Youth's Companion* tells the story. "Dr Donald," said the dying girl, "I am horribly afraid to die! What shall I do? I went to Sunday school, and I was confirmed, and I've always been to church, and I supposed I had done about all I could do; but now I know that I have done nothing! I am just being thrust out of my happy life here into the dark. I can't see anything! I can't believe anything! What shall I do? What shall I do?" The rector's grave, strong face grew very tender as he looked at her. He thought a moment before he answered her, and then he said, 'Jennie, you remember that a year ago a baby came into your sister's household—a dear, sweet, healthy girl; but as helpless as a wave of the sea. Do you remember all that was done for her? How everybody in the family tried to think of some new service for that tiny bit of human life—from the dainty linens and laces made ready before she came to the scientific preparation of her food and her rules of life, and to the love which waked and watched day and night for her comfort? Now, dear child, that is the kind of care that we human beings give to the new life which comes into our lives. Do you suppose that God is less loving than we? Can't you believe that in the home which He is calling you to enter there is making ready every device for your happiness and every protection by which love may make you feel at home? Think about that, dear girl.' The word brought a new light to her face, even as he spoke. The dying girl recurred to it again and again, and in the very last moment, looking up into Dr. Donald's face with the ineffable smile of one who dies in peace, she whispered, "To prepare a place for you."

And still there is one thing which, I suppose, we will never know until we are there, "That where I am, there ye may be also." One can fancy how that promise came back to these apostles, evermore engaging

and entrancing. They had known Jesus. There never was one like Him. Those three years of fellowship were the sunlit years of their lives. Why, when one thinks of it, those years were the gospel they gave up their lives as martyrs to preach.

And some day they would see Him again. They would be like Him. And so heaven's chief glory would be, to be with Jesus. Even so it will be with us. We have often wished to have heard Him, to have seen Him, to have sat at His feet. Well, we shall hear Him, see Him, sit at His feet. "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." The old saint, John, at Patmos, ends his message, the last word of Revelation, with the Master's words, "Surely, I come quickly," and his response, "Even so; come, Lord Jesus." It was the cry for the fellowship that will be the supreme joy of our home beyond.

## A CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

In the story of the birth of Christ, how touching are the words, "And she brought forth her first born Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, *and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.*" The mother of Jesus had as her companions the beasts of the stall, and Jesus was cradled in a manger, because in their deep need no one would yield his or her place in the inn to them.

It was due to selfishness, but it was also caused by poverty. They could not give the money which might have bribed the grasping to surrender his place in the inn to Mary. Joseph and Mary were not beggars, but they were poor. The sacrifice offered by Mary at her purification shows this. Her offering was the offering of the poor, "A pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons."

It appears as though Jesus never forgot the sad circumstances of His birth. At least His references to His poverty and to the poor are frequent. Luke and Matthew record a saying that almost seems an echo of this—"because there was no room for them in the inn." Both tell of one who came to Jesus and said unto him, "Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." There was no room for Him in the inn even then. He was homeless, dependent upon the kindness of others. When He wanted to cross the sea it was in a borrowed boat; when He rode into Jerusalem in triumph it was on a borrowed beast, and when He was buried it was in a borrowed tomb.

If we kept this in mind, how some of His teachings would deepen. When He spoke to the anxious about

taking no thought for their life, what they should eat or what they should drink, nor yet for their body, what they should put on, and pointed them to the birds, without storehouse or barns, who yet were fed by the heavenly Father; and to the lilies of the field, which toiled not nor spun, and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them. He Himself was the true example of that happy trust without anxious care for the morrow. He trusted that the Father would feed Him and would clothe Him. In His poverty He was serene and confident, because He had sought first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and He knew all things should be added unto Him.

And how truly this was proven by those days at Bethlehem. There was no room for Him and Mary and Joseph in the inn. None in the inn were so mean as to do Him and them honor. But the angels left the throne of God to do Him reverence and worship Him. The shepherds came with haste to the manger and adored Him. In the temple, Simeon blessed God for the sight of the Child, whose mother could only bring the offering of the poor, and sang in such ecstatic strains that the Church has been repeating his "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word," in all the ages since. Anna the prophetess gave thanks for Him as the looked-for redemption.

They were poor. The grim, cruel tyrant, Herod, was on their track to kill this strange Child, that some said was born king of the Jews. How shall they, so poor, flee into the strange land, Egypt, and live there? But the wise men had found Him and worshiped, giving them treasures of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Without storehouse, they were fed, and the morrow was made secure.

Out of that first Christmas comes the lesson that God will care for us when we are His, so surely as

He cares for the birds of the air and the lilies of the field.

It did not mean idleness. Joseph, returned to Nazareth from Egypt, toiled over the carpenter's bench, and as Jesus grew in stature, He became his helper. Then, perhaps, Joseph died, and Jesus supported the family by the labor of His hands, for was He not the Carpenter of Nazareth? The pay was meager, and the living now must have been poor. We think of the hands of Christ the healer, so tender in touch and compassionate. The hands with the nail prints of the cross, who can forget them! Still, it is well to think of the hands of the little Babe who was poor, the hands of the helping Boy, the rough, calloused hands of the Carpenter, made so by toil to support His mother and brethren.

For, after all, the mass of men and women and little children are poor. Jesus took upon Himself the conditions which made Him one with the multitudes, that they might know His heart towards them, that shared their burdens then and is not unmindful of them now. Sometimes we wonder whether Christmas, the children's festival, because of the babe Jesus, is not also the festival of the poor rather than the rich, because Jesus was poor and "there was no room in the inn" for Him.

It is true Jesus saw that which is the chief thing in man. Not what men win, their houses, fortunes, rank, culture, is chief, but the soul, the man that may be a child of God, is the chief thing. He could not, therefore, but care for every poor man, every sinner. And yet there are some things that seem to lead us back to His own life of poverty in His teachings. To John He sends the message, after telling of the diseased He had cured, "The poor have the gospel preached unto them." He could not forget them, for was He not one of them? And in that great judgment scene He banishes from Him those who

would not feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the sick and those in prison. We would not for a moment rob these words of their greater content, but we would not forget, either, that Jesus knew hunger and thirst and neglect. Perhaps as He said these words there may have been a recollection of His pure and lovely mother, sick in Bethlehem and unvisited, thrust out to the beasts of the stall in her dire extremity. For her "there was no room in the inn."

And the thought goes home, are we keeping the Christmas of the Lord when, outside of our inn of home, with its flashing lights, with its Christmas tree ablaze with splendor, with its groaning tables, with the rich presents interchanged, in hovels worse than mangers the poor are thrust, with no bread, no clothing, no Christmas cheer?

Can we not in some way make a place of cheer and comfort to the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick and the prisoner? We may by gifts of food and clothing, but, surely by the greater gifts of kindness, fellow-feeling, brotherliness, justice, we may open the inn of Bethlehem, and in so doing make room for the Christ "who though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor."

## THE HIGHEST MINISTRY

A recent popular novel assails the ministry, claiming that they are not ministers, those that serve, but so hampered by their creeds and congregational leaders that they are practically men without conviction, or must preach what is outworn to placate their membership. The hero, a minister, superb in physical manhood, of remarkable purity of soul, of strong conscience, is called to a church which is dominated by a hypocrite and cheat, but who is a great power because he is a large contributor to the treasuries of the local and general church. The outcome of the conflict is that the minister is driven from the congregation and relinquishes the pulpit so that he may truly minister. He gives his energies to accumulating wealth that he may care for outcasts and cripples, which last is indeed worthy.

This conception of ministry is a curious one; the conclusion reached a very important one. Nevertheless the principles, the book claims, are the real principles of Christ and true Christianity.

Let us take the conclusion first in the light of the Gospels. Jesus Himself was a poor man. He does not seem to have cared to make a rich man one of His intimate disciples. They, too, were poor, or in very moderate circumstances. His words concerning wealth are warning words. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "How hardly (with difficulty) shall a rich man enter into the kingdom of heaven." He has a place for the rich. Wealthy men can be Christians and good stewards of God. But Jesus indicates that riches bring many temptations, and that to gain them and handle them when gained in the fear of God requires watchfulness.

Riches, again, are helpless in themselves. They

furnish machinery; they do not make men. The conscientious rich man is ever seeking personalities to use his money. He is perplexed where to put his money, that it may help and not hinder. Unless he can find the right kind of men and women to take his money and use it, his investments do more harm than good. The personality is worth more than money. It takes a good man to do good. Money does not make a man good. The goodness is from within where money cannot reach.

So the conclusion of his book is a very impotent one. The moneyed man is not necessarily a minister, even though he has good plans. He ministers where he personally helps, his money given can only give another person a chance to do good, which will depend on the person himself or herself, or help sometimes in bodily need.

The conception of ministry is a very curious one. Ministry is service. It seeks to help another man to something better. We may help a man to get money, or we may give sufferers money, and it may be real help. But if a man be ignorant, vicious, he may be the worse for it. To give to the beggar is far oftener a hindrance than help. Giving often pauperizes another. It takes away self-respect, makes the independent dependent. The problem of helping the poor is still the vexing one to the benevolent.

It is possible to place another in comfort, surround him with refining influences, that add a polish to manners, a gracious bearing. It is possible to lead him into knowledge, until in intellect and far-reaching thought, in comprehension of the great and beautiful, he is like a god. And still, he might have lowness of morality, meanness of character, a heart full of the creeping things of foulness.

We come to see that the finest ministry is the ministry to the spirit and heart. The man that can come to his fellows cast down and cheer them, to the doubt-

ers and give them certainty, to the seekers and show them light; who can inspire, comfort, strengthen, flash upon men radiant visions of what they may be, ministers in richest measure.

As we think of Jesus that is what impresses. He did heal the sick. But often there is reluctance. He will not heal unless there be faith in the request. When the four men let down the paralytic, He strangely says, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." In the heart of this man is a sorer burden than his disease. It is sin. Jesus speaks to the deeper need. There is no use to take away the paralysis unless He takes away the sin that caused it. There was no use in making the faces of sufferers like the faces of the angels of God, glorious for beauty and strength, if the evil principle was left to change them again to the faces of loathsome viciousness.

Jesus laid His stress on His message. "I am come that ye might have life." "The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life." The man that builds his house on the rock, heareth His sayings, and doeth them.

The highest ministry is the ministry to the spirit. It has not been a mistake to call the preacher or teacher a minister. The man that can bring to another the message of life, that can show the sinner how to be forgiven, how to become a child of God, that can teach another the words and fellowship of Jesus, that can warn, stir, comfort, inspire with the truths of God, is a minister in the supremest sense.

"He made me see God," said a workingman of his minister. "He was my inspiration," said a parishioner of his minister who had gone elsewhere.

Nor must we forget the true minister serves with his hands as well. He must know men and women in their work, in their play. He must suffer with them, rejoice with them, nurse the sick if need be, care for the dying. He must be a man among men. We can

really minister to no one unless some of our life goes into our service. It costs one life-blood to help another aright. Only the man that lives with Jesus Christ will learn how in the deepest and best ways. Only God can teach that and only God can renew the strength failing under the demands of a ministry that takes our life. Only God can keep us hopeful.

## ENCOURAGEMENT

Possibly there is nothing wherein we fail so sadly as in hearty encouragement. It seems to be a part of perverted human nature to find fault, to dwell upon the flaws in deeds done. It is not meant that there should not be judicious criticism, but it should be mixed with discriminating encouragement. The encouragement will hearten and cheer and nerve the listener determined to overcome the fault.

Some years ago, in an Italian city, two young men heard a young girl sing whose voice was exquisite, but she lacked confidence. She was poor, friendless, painfully shy and timid. These royal young men started in to encourage her. They bought some lovely flowers, and after her first number, in which she failed to display her voice because of stage fright, sent them to her. It was the wine of life to her. She had obtained recognition. There was in her that which was worthy. The next number was beautifully rendered, and obtained generous applause. The next day the encouragers kept up the good work, and sent her a note, which, in courteous words, conveyed to her just and appreciative comments on her work, and predicted to her a roseate future if she persisted in her musical training. Long afterward, when she was a queen of song, she confessed that the encouragement then given her made her after-success. The failure thus averted, she declared, would have caused her to relinquish her studies as hopeless. The cheer came just at the crisis, and restored her courage and hope.

Such instances might be multiplied. The minister is often profoundly grateful for the listener who somehow thinks his duty is not done until he puts his warm, friendly hand into his, and thanks him for every good word spoken. Crockett says of a plain Scotch-

man, William Greig: "He was of the great Society of Encouragers, who make the wheels of the world go around. May power be given to their elbows! Many a raw lad preaching his first or second sermon had been grateful for the handshake and good cheer. Many a one had carried William Greig's voice with him in a nook of his memory, as William himself might carry a lamb in the nook of his plaidie. There was once, they say, a sad-voiced, disappointed probationer, who had preached in vacancies and as supply for years which ran into two figures. He was so set up by a good word of William Greig's that he pulled himself together the following Sabbath day, and preached so well that he took a congregation by storm and got a call on the spot. He does not know it, but it was William Greig who got him that call."

The careful reader of the epistles of Paul has observed that the apostle always begins with words of commendation, no matter how serious may have been their conduct which calls for rebuke, except, perhaps, that epistle to the Galatians, which was written in the white heat of indignation because they had removed from the grace of Christ to another gospel. Even where he rebukes he is careful to bring in words of appreciation, and always ends with words of strengthening hope and large expectation. It always seems to us that Paul's own conduct is a beautiful commentary on that glorious thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, especially on the words, "Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Is it not of the innermost power of Christ and His gospel, the never-failing encouragement He holds out to every man, even the worst? When Paul, therefore, encourages some of those early saints who, to judge by his own description, were more nearly scapegraces than saints, is he not just like the Master who saw in publicans and sinners possible saints, and gave them words of hope, and praised everyone who

gave evidence of desire for better life? Surely this is true, or somehow we have not read aright the stories of the woman that was a sinner, of Zacchæus, or the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son.

Every great successful worker has had this gift of encouragement. He was ever on the lookout to see the struggles of others and speak just the right word of cheer. "There is not one doing a commendable work but needs the loyal help of all who love our Lord and Master. There is not one struggling to become better who does not need our encouragement; never our neglect." It is essential for all wise workers with the young to study them, to speak just the words of encouragement which they need. They must guard themselves against fault-finding and must in wise love, like Jesus, have the fitting word of hope, if they would wisely help them to life with God.

## FAITH AND FEAR—A LIFE CONTRAST

Jesus Christ fills the soul with confidence. The natural fears which come through ignorance are replaced by truths that light up the dark places. Let us set out in contrast the words of two men representing two courses of conduct, two schools of thought, as men look on this world, with its overhanging clouds, its impending uncertainties.

One man shall speak for the agnostic, for doubt, for the ignorance which culture brings, the blank pessimism that would enfold us all if we judged only by the cloud, and heard no voice from out the cloud.

Matthew Arnold, on Dover Beach; the sea calm; the tide full; the moon fair; the lights gleaming on the distant French coast; it is a night of beauty, and the poet is inspired to put into rhythm some words that are suggested by the sentiment of the hour.

What shall they be?

“Listen, you hear the grating roar  
Of pebbles which the waves draw back and fling,  
At their return, up the high strand,  
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,  
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring  
The eternal note of sadness in.  
. . . Sophocles long ago  
Heard it on the Ægean Sea, and it brought  
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow  
Of human misery; we find  
Also in the sound a thought,  
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.  
. . . The world, which seems  
To lie before us like a land of dreams,  
So various, so beautiful, so new,  
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,  
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;  
And we are here as on a darkling plain,  
Swept with confused alarms of struggles and flight,  
Where ignorant armies clash by night.”

Here was the mournful, melancholy plaint of the soul that had much culture and no faith.

The voice of the sea is full of sadness. Life is a cheat. There is no certainty of anything, except clouds, struggles, alarms, and the clash by night of ignorant armies.

Is that all that modern culture can tell us?

Surely here is no gospel of sweetness and light. Why, the old Hebrews were in a much better case; for their poet said, "The sea is His, and He made it." "His judgments are a great deep."

Turn to the contrasted life, in which faith takes the place of fear.

General Armstrong (known especially for his educational work down in Hampton, Va.) was born in the Hawaiian Islands in 1839. He died in 1893, after a life of varied usefulness, in which strength, courage, ministry to others, were the marked characteristics.

Among General Armstrong's papers was found, after his death, a memorandum, in which were set down some simple requests and expressions of the deepest convictions of the man's soul.

There is not one word of doubt, misgiving or fear in the whole document.

Let me quote two or three sentences:

"Now, when all is bright, the family together, and there is nothing to alarm, and very much to be thankful for, it is well to look ahead, and, perhaps, to say the things that I would wish known should I suddenly die."

He knew he was to enter the cloud, but there was no hint of fear.

"I hope that there will be enough friends to see that the work continues. Unless someone makes sacrifices for it, it cannot go on. A work that requires no sacrifices does not count for much in fulfilling God's plan. But what is commonly called sacrifice is really the best natural use of one's self and one's

resources; the best investment of one's time, strength and means."

Then looking right into the very heart of the cloud which has made so many strong men cry out like children, he says:

"I am most curious to get a glimpse of the next world. How will it all seem? Perfectly fair and perfectly natural, no doubt. We ought not to fear death; it is friendly. The only pain that comes at the thought of it is for my true, faithful wife, and blessed, dear children; but they will be brave, and, in the end, stronger. . . . It pays to follow one's best light, to put God and country first, and ourselves afterwards."

What a difference in the spirit and words of two such men!

One is the fearful, timid soul, the other is the trusting child that believes the Father's love cannot harm.

The one beats retreat, and in melancholy strain gives us a dirge that would take ambition out of the heart.

The other sounds a bugle call to battle.

It is the everlasting contrast that meets us between strength and weakness, between faith and fear.

## WHICH—REPUTATION OR SIMPLICITY?

Boyd says of the Gifford Lectures of Andrew Lang, that they were "very clever and wonderfully bright." Yet the dreariest professor of divinity never filled his prelection fuller of weighty thought and rare learning. I never, besides, was more impressed than at this time with the fact how natural it is to suppose that what is sparkling and effervescent must be lacking in weight; that what is brilliant cannot be solid. 'Wonderfully smart, but very slight,' one often heard, when the lecture had, in truth, been as massive as if given by Dr. Dryasdust. One felt that in the world it is not safe to be too bright."

Brightness of thought is a matter of temperament and cultivation. Some men see clearly and state clearly what they see. Others see clearly, but express themselves indistinctly. If one troubles himself to study the involved sentences, he finds strong thought. Kant, for instance, is meaty, but he takes a great deal of chewing. Browning gives his admirers much trouble to get at his meaning. Tennyson, to my mind, is as strong as Browning, but his touch is the touch of light.

The preacher is a teacher, and he needs to cultivate strength and clearness. The Lord Jesus is the most admirable model. His words are oft so marvelously simple that they appear to lack depth, but when we seek to go beneath them, or above them, the profound and majestic truths refuse to be measured by our plummet, or the arrow-flight of intellect. Among the beautiful features of Watkins' Glen are the limpid pools. So pellucid is the water that the shining sands are clearly seen at the bottom of the rock-bound pool. They seem within the reach of the hand, but as you

step in you are treated to a bath over your head. Pellucid are the words of Jesus, but, when tried, deep with the wisdom of God.

Muddiness often passes for depth. The other day, as I sorrowfully plied my way through the mud and melting snow, I came to a pool. Apparently the muddy waters had no bottom. Carefully I put my foot down and found my rubber was not covered. I have heard in my day some great men, who had reputation for depth, and I found them muddy and shallow. But many wondered and applauded.

There are many things that cannot be made plain. One may flash upon them the limelight of illustration and help, but, after all, they refuse to be made common. But the things to live by can be understood. In the time of Abraham the wheat grew just as it does now. Our flour making processes may be vastly superior, and we may know by scientific analysis of what wheat is composed, but we still trust the seed grain to the earth; and the gracious sunlight, the refreshing rain, the light and the darkness, bring it to maturity, as thousands of years ago. The fact was plain then as now. Abraham's faith and obedience were not different from our faith and obedience, if he had not the advantages we have to-day. Paul found him a magnificent illustration of true faith in the full blaze of Christianity, though some of our wise find him antiquated.

In our day there is a good deal of nonsense, as I suppose there has always been. Ours is inclined to take the form of a chemical analysis of the Scriptures. The scientific man analyzes the wheat to tell us what it is made of, and astonishes us with his learning. It is good. But wheat was given for bread, and as we eat we know its life-sustaining power. Still, our fathers knew that as truly as ourselves. Just now the books of the Bible are passing through the critics' hands, who are separating it into an immense num-

ber of documents, the truth of which analysis no mortal knows. It is astonishing learning. But the Bible is intended to convey to us the truth, and the way to discover that is to accept it and use it. The fathers knew that as well as we, and we are not displaying an immense amount of erudition in accepting the Bible as they did. However, one may starve during the process of analysis, it seems so far off from solution, and, waiting, die hopelessly.

The sober fact remains that the great truths to live by can be laid hold upon by plain men, just as thousands find them shining with peace and power for righteousness. These truths can be plainly expressed, though you cannot hope to win plaudits for originality. The apostle insists on "the simplicity that is in Christ." To apprehend so as to live does not mean to comprehend so as to understand completely. The wheat life is a mystery to me, and equally so to the wise man of science, but both of us apprehend its breadmaking worth by trial. The Christ I do not comprehend, but I do apprehend by trial that "He is the seed-corn that dying brought life to a sinful world." "He is the bread of life."

There are many of us who know truth; can we not clearly set forth the truths which we know? The old truths are the truths needed to-day. Their root is in God, and a breath of eternity is in them. They will always find responsive hearts. Standing where the light shines on the hilltops, we can cry to those who wander in the fog below and bring the lost ones up out of the chill and desolation, but if we join the wanderers in the fog we cannot help them and chill ourselves.

Standing with Christ in loving faith and obedience, our voice shall utter no uncertain sound, and we can cry, "He is the way, the truth and the life." Is not this the secret of Paul's wonderful words to Agrippa? "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that

hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." The notes are the notes of the clarion. He is certain and helpful, for his life is hid with Christ in God.

## JOYFULNESS

There is a saying of the Lord Jesus that has always been puzzling. It occurs at the close of the parable of the importunate widow who so troubled the unjust judge by her continual coming that he avenged her of her adversary. The Lord uses this to enforce the truth that "God will avenge His own elect which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them." Then follows the puzzling passage, "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"

Does this mean that the world will grow worse and worse down the centuries, and that our Lord, with clear vision of the future, sees a decaying faith and an increasing godlessness? There are other sayings that are far removed from this. The calm confidence with which He sends forth His disciples to conquer the world for Him, the hopefulness which He creates in them, the marvelous success which accompanies the Church to-day, are all on the other side.

It may refer to a special form of faith, which is commended in the parable—the patient confidence which holds fast in times of trouble, when God is apparently forgetful of His own, when they cry and there is no answer, when the adversary appears to prevail. The Son of man comes not only at the final judgment, but comes often in judgment to the world. When He comes in such dark hours, frequently occurring, will He find His own patiently confident of victory?

This interpretation accords with the spirit of joy which is characteristic of Christianity. The Christian is an optimist. Paul, in the prison at Rome, writes to the Philippians, "Rejoice in the Lord; and again I say, rejoice." The prison, the bonds, the adversaries,

were powerless before the sunny faith that, abiding in the presence of the Lord, was clothed with the radiance of joy. Sometimes, in the parching heat of summer, we stand by a spring that bubbles with laughing music as it sends forth lavishly its cool, refreshing waters. Is there any danger that it will spend itself in its generosity? If the spring had voice, it would answer in its joyous confidence, "I fear not the drouth of summer. The reservoir which feeds me is great; therefore I gladly give." When faith rests in the Lord, it will still rejoice when all is dark with evil that apparently triumphs.

Is there not something amiss when we persistently croak over the outlook of the Church and find fault with the doings of our fellow-Christians, who, perchance, do not agree with us? If the Lord reigns, we may be sure that the truth will prevail, and we can wait with joyfulness the result.

Someone has well said, "The want of gladness is, like the want of strength, to be combated as a disease, to be wrestled with and overcome"; and truly he that overcometh hath his reward

"In the charms with various zest  
To every sense of man address;  
Ye will not see the wish to bless  
With universal happiness."

Men reckon without their host, and shut their eyes and complain that it is dark. They are having a heavy struggle, they are sitting bound like men in a cage, but their mental disease is contagious. We may pity, but we must not sympathize with them, but hurry past, as do Virgil and Dante by certain helpless souls, with the exclamation, "Reason not with them; look, and pass them by," or we shall ourselves miss the pathway to the light beyond.

After all, "one with God is a majority." Elijah, with Him, conquers the priests of Baal, Ahab, Jeze-

bel and the time-serving multitudes. Joyousness is strength, and the strength that persists ends in joy. The other day one told of the optimistic and pessimistic frogs. A milkman, on his way to the city, finding his milk too strong, and having compassion on his customers, stopped at a brook to weaken it with a bucket of water. In dipping it up he gathered in two frogs, which went with the water into the milk-can. To say that the frogs were surprised is to put it mildly indeed. They kicked and struggled for life. The pessimistic frog, appalled by the disaster, soon lost heart, and said, "What's the use of struggling? I might as well die now as later," and sank to the bottom and died. The optimistic frog cheerily said, "Well I will kick as long as I can; perhaps I will survive." When the milk-can was opened, what was the surprise of the compassionate dairyman to find a frog with a broad smile on his happy face complacently sitting on a little pat of butter. He had kept on kicking until he had churned the butter and made himself a resting place.

The legend has its weaknesses, but the moral is still there, that a happy disposition is strength and wins under the most adverse circumstances.

There can be no question that "pessimism depends upon a want of faith—that is the thermometer which falls or rises with the increase or decrease of pessimism." Had we space, this might be profusely illustrated by references to past and present. Enough, however, has been said to put us on our guard against a lack of joyfulness and to recall that noble truth, "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

## OVERSTRESS

Much is to be said in favor of the men who are intent upon one thing, the men of one idea and one purpose. But it does not mean that they should dwell upon that one idea and one purpose exclusively, unless it be an idea so great that to dwell upon it is to dwell upon something that touches and includes the many-sidedness of life. Paul said, "This one thing I do"; but that one thing was to be like Jesus, the end of our heavenly calling, and that meant a broad and great life.

Indeed, wise men tell us not to dwell too exclusively on one topic. "If you allow yourself to think too much of any subject, you will get a partial craze upon that, you will come to vastly overrate its importance." Some time ago, a gentleman became interested in a perfect ear. His close observation detected imperfections everywhere. Some stood out like danger signals, some were too big, some too little, some were too broad in the lobe, some too narrow, until at last he was made uncomfortable by the ugliness of this useful organ. He became so enslaved that he saw nothing but ears, ugly ears, everywhere. The nobly shaped head, the lovely face, the speaking eye, the mobile lips, were as though they were not.

I had a friend, an excellent man, too, who once informed me of a sure method by which young men could be kept faithful to the church. I eagerly asked him to tell me. His reply was, "They must pray in public." Public prayer at that time was the subject uppermost in his mind. Some men grow enthusiastic over Christian Endeavor Societies, Luther Alliances, or King's Sons and Daughters, and these, which are helps, are with them ends, and the salvation of the church. Useful as they are, it will not do to put too

much stress upon them. The kingdom of God is very broad.

There is an inclination to grow morbid by dwelling too exclusively on one topic. A large share of Elijah's trouble grew out of this. He was too much occupied with Elijah and Jezebel. He took a despairing view of the religious life of Israel, and though he had splendid opportunities to judge of its condition, his stay at the brook Cherith and his travels in Zarephath did not exhaust the subject. He was a much discouraged man. Israel was given up to Baal. He alone upheld Jehovah. The Lord, however, reverently be it said, was not discouraged, and told Elijah that he had seven thousand faithful left, and that the future was bright with hope.

Elijah dwelt too much upon one topic. He needed to look at and note the hopeful signs as well as the gloomy. There is always a likelihood that in our particular churches, or communities, the signs of religious life may be small and discouraging. The kingdom of God is greater than our congregation, our community, or university. The wise man will not shut his eyes to dangers, but he will also look out and away, and, like Elijah, he will discover God's gracious work elsewhere and be filled anew with hope and courage.

One of the unfortunate things about dwelling on one topic too much is to find it everywhere. Says one: "If you live in the country, you may give in to the idea that your house will be broken into at night by burglars, till, every time you wake in the dark hours, you may fancy you hear the center-bit at work boring through the window shutters down stairs."

Specialists are not always the best people to consult, for they become so infatuated with their specialty that every ache and pain is traced to some defect in the bodily organ they treat. And it is so, sometimes, in our theological world. An idea takes possession of us and we see it everywhere. Plans and purposes are

attributed to men of which they never thought. And whatever they do, the trail of the serpent is over it all. We ought to struggle against this. It is not the highest Christian manhood. There is a broad law of charity for offenders, and a little of this charity might be extended to those who are suspected of evil, but against whom there is no evidence. Especially should this be the case when the men are of known integrity, purity of purpose and spiritual life. Good men as we are in our own judgment, we may do great injustice to others by undue stress upon our hobby. Job's keenest pain was wrought by his professed friends, who, having a theory that was imperfect, sacrificed Job rather than give up their theory. It is noteworthy that the Lord's wrath was kindled against them because they had not spoken of God the thing which was right. God metes out to us as we measure to others, and though we speak in His name and for His cause, we must speak in wisdom and love.

## THE UNIVERSALITY OF CHRIST

There are ideas with which we have become familiar, whose immense significance we overlook because they are familiar. The thought of a world-wide religion is familiar to us, but we need only to reflect that no founder of a religion, with the exception of Christ, has established a world-wide religion to prove to us its extraordinary significance. Nor is it less extraordinary when we recall that Christ was of the Jews, the narrowest, most exclusive of all peoples, who had no conception that a man could be truly religious except he became a Jew. The promise made to Abraham, and enlarged by the prophets, was that all nations should be blessed in him and his descendants. God does not contradict Himself. The Jewish religion does foreshadow Christianity. But their interpretation fettered every teacher of the nation excepting Jesus Christ.

God could establish no religion that has not in it the thought of universality. The whole world is of God, and God must have the whole world in His thought. The laws that undergird the world are the same for every portion thereof. The drop of water in the midst of the boundless ocean and the fragments of rock on a splintered mountain crag are equally controlled by gravitation. Every law is but a thought of God, expressed in regular sequence, and it bears the impress of His universality. God would be imperfect and not God if He were less than comprehensive in His laws.

Every man is of God, and God must have every man in His thought. The religion that omits some men because of race or color, or because of national customs, or ordinances restrictive, may have truth, but it is not the fullness of truth, nor worthy of God's universality.

How this is brought to our attention from the very

beginning of the gospel, and impressed upon us to the very end of the life of Jesus! The angel's song rings with this note of universality, "On earth peace, goodwill to men." Simeon, lifted up in the Spirit, beholds Christ, "the light to lighten the Gentiles." The wise men, the firstfruits of the nations, are led by a star, for this Christ is for the waiting, sorrowing, despairing world, and not alone for the Jews. Like a benediction falls on a weary world the saying, "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The last words of the Saviour are the clarion call to the church militant, "Go ye into the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Every attentive student of Jesus Christ discovers that His purpose was not merely "to redeem His own nation, but the *world*, from the dominion of sin, and by His life to leave behind to latest generations an example for imitation—in fine, to found God's kingdom upon earth—an aim which none of the great ever proposed to themselves, the necessity of which few among them have felt, and which not one of their number has been able to accomplish." This declares Him as divine; His thought is the thought of God, broad enough to include all men, universal as God Himself.

It is, however, one thing to have a great idea, another to give the principles of truth, and life, and power, and redemption from sin, the satisfaction of the spiritual needs of man in all ages. Has Jesus Christ not merely had the thought of universality, but risen to the universal religion for all men and all ages, and endured the test of all thought and civilization? Harris says: "A god of the Scandinavian mythology was once tested in various ways to prove his power. Among other trials he was challenged to a race and was outrun. He afterwards learned that his competitor in the race had been Human Thought. In all that pertains to man's moral and spiritual life Christ has been tested

in the race with human thought for 1800 years, and has been always in advance. In fact, it is much more than this. He has kept the lead, while, by His spiritual quickening of men, it is He Himself who has given to human thought its power and speed." It is startling if one will but observe how the final word in any human movement is from Christ. Always He beckons us up to larger heights. We recall listening in a great university to the discussion of a moral social movement, where the latest scientific research and conclusions were thoroughly brought forward; suddenly at the close of the final word was the truth taught by Jesus Christ, clear as a sunbeam and warm with His personal example.

One other thought in this brief discussion of a great theme, the universality of Christ is manifest in His life and personality. Jesus Christ appeals to all; He appeals to children and men, to woman and man. He is the one man whose example is as touching, inspiring and sympathetic to women as to men. He combines the feminine qualities with the masculine. He is strong and yet tender, just yet loving, true yet compassionate, manly but self-sacrificing; brave men cannot endure the fire of His glance, little children cluster around Him, won by the love of His look; He is the king yet a servant; the Lion of Judah, the Lamb of God; He is not *a* man, He is man complete and perfect, and yet manhood interwoven with the divine. All through the centuries has this universality been proved. Now, as then, He is intensely loved and hated. Like none other, that love is as satisfying to us who love Him as when He walked the earth in flesh. He still calls us to Himself. He whispers peace and rest to the sinner and the heavy-laden. He makes the child glad, the old man joyful. He is our companion, shepherd, friend. No one ever comes to Him and is disappointed. "Whom not having seen we love, and in Him we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

## WATCHWORDS

"Whenever you find a beautiful saying in prose or verse"—this was the advice of an old school-master—"copy it out and put it where you can see it daily, and, if possible, many times a day. This may be troublesome at times, but by the end of the year you will have grown in wisdom and in goodness." "Many a belted knight in the old days," he would observe, "was kept in the path of honor and chivalry by the remembrance of the little motto on his shield. Make some text, some verse of the poets, some passage you have read, your motto; change it if you like, but never be without one."

It is remarkable how many great lives have had some clear-cut truth that guided them in their doing. Sometimes the watchword has been the same throughout life, sometimes it has been changed; but, whilst it lasted, around it have been marshaled purpose, thought and effort. As in a symphony around the theme are woven all the beautiful harmonies, preserving them in lovely relation and bringing them into satisfying unity, so it has been with these lives. Around the simple principle have been marshaled the complexities of life until a harmonious and growing character has resulted.

The watchword of Wellington was "duty"—and the strong, steadfast life of the great general harmonizes with the duty that rises above selfish claims. His great adversary, Napoleon, adopted as his maxim, "A career open to talent," which was a solace to his proud spirit when the aristocrats of his neighborhood ridiculed his plainness of dress and poverty. It brought him to distinction, and though later this changed to "glory," as watchword, yet the latter but emphasizes the first part of the watchword, "a career." Morrison,

the missionary to China, who labored so wonderfully translating into the tongue of that empire the gospel, fashioned his life with two watchwords—the first, “It is my duty,” the second, “Look up, look up.” He made possible all duty, because he drew his strength from God. Luther has the word “faith” central in life and conviction. It rings everywhere its strong appeal in his writings. It is the source of his battle-hymn, “A mighty stronghold is our God,” it is the dominating principle of his character.

If one traces his own life, he will find that certain plain maxims have had much to do with the molding of his own character. A friend, who grows quite confidential, says that two things ran through his young manhood as the golden strings on which the pearls of his success were strung unconsciously to himself: the one was, “Do the duty that lies next to you”; the other, “Faithfully do what is given you to do.” He is only an ordinary man, of ordinary talent, but he has been more than ordinarily successful in his life, and has done not a little good, whilst he is credited with far more ability than he probably possesses.

It must not be thought that such watchwords dispense with knowledge, or make men narrow. They simply are the girdle of the loins, that make endeavor in every direction possible, but give unity to purpose. The wall of one of the prison rooms of the Tower of London has scratched upon it, “He that endureth to the end shall be saved.” The prisoner for conscience’ sake scratched it upon the wall that he might see it, and, inspirited thereby, defy death rather than miss his salvation. He knew the gospel, Christ was to him the Saviour—the richness of a devoted life was his; but he needed just those words to give fiber to his spiritual manhood. The watchword crystalizes for particular purpose our knowledge and convictions.

It is not without foundation that Peter’s epistles are said to center around the word “hope,” John’s

around "love," Paul's around "faith," James's around "works." Yet not one of them failed in the other virtues as well; but their distinctive peculiarities are thus expressed, which gives the flavor and vigor of individuality.

Watchwords may, and oft ought, to change. Sometimes they are wrong; sometimes they are outgrown, or give place to better ones. Saul, the persecutor, had as his first motto "the works of the law," and wrought along its lines the typical Pharisee. He changed that by the grace of God to "the righteousness which is by faith in Christ Jesus," and out of it came the life which was so rich in all that is lovable, good and great. Might it not be added that the energy of Paul expresses itself in that heart-broken question, as he lay prostrate before the Lord, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

It is well to have a watchword—it is better to have the best watchword. Some have unconsciously maxims of the world—selfish, grasping, ambitious. Others have watchwords in which there is no thought of God. As the influence is so far-reaching, sober examination should be made that the watchword that molds conduct and action should be known. If worldly or evil, it should be repudiated, and some great, far-reaching principle adopted whose roots are in God, and it should be enriched by knowledge, and illuminated by the light of Christ Jesus.

## THWARTED PURPOSES

There is something pathetic in the denial to David of his purpose to build a house unto the Lord. The man loyal to God, rich in devotion, keenly alive to the contrast that he dwelt in a house of cedar whilst the ark of God dwelt in a tent, seems to human thought better fitted to build the temple than his grandiose son, whose human sympathies and longings after God are so far below David's.

Some men must prepare the materials; others build with the materials. Some men do the real work; others carry off the credit. The temple was called Solomon's; in reality it was David's. He conceived the thought, drew up the plan, prepared the materials, won the peace by his battles which gave Solomon the prosperity and the leisure to complete the building. Even the co-operation of Hiram of Tyre was secured because he loved David.

Withal God demands a fitness between His instruments and His works. David's rough, warlike life, the bloody deeds that marked his wars, defensive though they were, made him unfit to build the temple of peace, to the God of peace. Solomon, the prince of peace, should erect His house and be prophetic of Him who, the true Prince of Peace, should build the Church of the living God.

Men cannot be all things. Circumstances cannot make our character, but they may force us into lives which leave unrealized our fondest desires. Somehow men are continually thwarted in this life. The man that would be a student and devote himself to books and intellectual research, must toil to win bread for those dependent upon him. The heart aflame with the missionary spirit must labor at the carpenter's bench. The soul that longs for peace and sweet hours of medi-

tation, is forced into the bustle of business or the strife of tongues. In our own experience, a friend, who was drawn to the ministry, developed throat trouble with hemorrhages and was compelled to be a man of business all his days.

It is good to remember that God looked upon David's intention and gave it the same reward as the finished result. "Forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build an house to my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart." In God's sight David built the temple, for to Him the purpose is as the performance.

There is a charming story from the olden times of a king who desired to build a cathedral to God's glory, to which no one was to contribute save himself. He engraved his name upon the finished cathedral, but the next morning it had disappeared and the name of an unknown woman stood in its place. No one of the officials knew the name. On search an old woman was found who, on being interrogated as to what she had done that her name should displace the king's, answered, "I did nothing but bring a little hay to the horses that drew the great building-stones, that I might glorify God to whom the cathedral was being built." And the king knew that a purpose in a heart devoted to God, is in His sight more than riches given from a desire to honor self.

It must not be forgotten that the sincerity of the purpose was shown by David's after-conduct. It was no hazy day-dream, not as when people say, if I were rich, how I would give to the Lord, and give scantily of what they have, their fancy excusing them from to-day's plain duty. Such persons, if rich, would be no more liberal than others of the grasping rich. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." David could not build himself; he could prepare treasures and materials for another. He could put self aside and say, "Lord, use me and my wealth, it matters not who gets the credit."

After all, with the light that Jesus has thrown upon life, it may be said that the realization will be fulfilled in the life to come. The man that used his talent and gained other ten is made ruler over ten cities; that is, his powers find ampler scope in the other world. The unfinished things will be finished there, the thwarted purposes will no longer be thwarted. "Round us on every side are cramped, hindered, still-born lives—merchants who should have been painters, clerks who should have been poets, laborers who should have been philosophers. Their talent is known to a few friends; they die, and the talent is buried in their coffin. Jesus says no. It has at last been sown for the harvest; it will come into the open and blossom in another land. These also are being trained—trained by waiting. They are the reserve of the race, kept behind the hill till God requires it. They will get their chance, they will come into their kingdom,

'Where the days bury their golden suns,  
In the dear hopeful west.'"

Yet there is one other thought that David's thwarted purposes, his rough work of foundation-laying on which Solomon's glorious kingdom was built, wrought in him that rich character which in him survives in the psalms which have in them trust, praise, longings after God, desire for holiness, sobbings and triumphs, lifted the devout of all ages to the throne of God. Somehow God's hand is in all our thwarted purposes and in the things which are to us drudgery and unwelcome duty. Accepting them as David did, they shall be woven into the warp and woof of our characters, making them Christlike forevermore.

## PERSONAL WORK

Emphasis is being strongly laid to-day on personal work. There is insistence that Christians should personally speak to others concerning Christ. For the great means of bringing others to the Saviour, results prove, is personal work. All of us, calling to mind our really effective work with those not Christ's, will confess that it was our personal seeking, personal interest, personal appeal, that brought them to reflection, repentance and confession. On a larger scale we have the following testimony: "In the study of the religious experiences of 251 boys in preparatory schools all over the country, described in the *Pedagogical Seminary*, for October, 1902, the most powerful external influences through which they became Christians are mentioned 391 times, and of these 379 are from persons, and only 21 are from such sources as reading, prayer and Bible study."

Dr. Dixon, on his way to church one afternoon, saw three young men standing on the street corner talking pleasantly with each other, and the thought came, "Why not try to win these young men to Christ? He can save on the street as well as in church." "So I walked up to them," he continues, "and asked in as cheerful a voice as I could command, 'Young gentlemen, are you all Christians?' 'Yes, thank you,' replied two of them, 'we are members of the Methodist Church.' 'No,' answered the third, with rather an embarrassed expression, 'I am not, but my mother is a member of the same church with these young men!' I said to him, 'Will you come with me to a meeting we are to hold in a few minutes?' 'Thank you,' he said, 'but I haven't time, for I am very busy preparing for examination in high school next week!' The Spirit seemed to give me the right answer when I asked the

question, 'Are you ready for the great examination in the future?' And I passed on to the meeting. Within a few minutes I saw that young man come in the door and take a back seat. He is now a minister of the gospel, and says that his Christian life began on the street corner when the question was asked which he could not answer until he accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour." Personal work brought that young man to Jesus.

Personal work that counts must have the heart behind it. The ring of truth and conviction must be in the words spoken. Speech must not be perfunctory. They that are spoken to must see love in the eye and hear the longing that they, too, may share the treasure, Christ, with you, in the tone. To fire others, one must be on fire himself. A sketch of a successful book canvasser, in a late book, shows that he believed in the worth of the book he offered. He read it and re-read it until he could marshal at command all its telling points. "Learn your business," he said in advising others. "Put yourself, your best *self*, into it, and then you may hope to succeed in it." He showed enthusiasm to be the cardinal principle of success, but enthusiasm that had its basis in fact.

There is a great lesson for personal workers in the book canvasser. We must know the gospel, the Christ we present to others. Knowing our need of Him, His preciousness, we have the basis of truth for enthusiastic presentation of Him to others.

After all, the book canvasser learned how to present his book by presenting it. His first efforts were crude, but experience taught him how to approach a man and how to present his book in the best way. The personal worker learns how to work by going to work. He may blunder at first, but his very blunders will help him in his next endeavors. He will know better how to approach a man and avoid what offends. Moreover, it is remarkable that our blunders are often overruled for good.

The personal worker quickly learns his own weakness even when he is at his best. Ere long he is driven to the mercy-seat to seek the help of the Holy Spirit, that He may prepare the heart of the sought to receive his words, that he may be made wise to seize the proper opportunity and to speak the right words.

Do you recall the Syro-Phenician woman, who was apparently rebuffed by Christ? He said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs." Surely the Holy Spirit gave her those words, which turned her Master's saying in her favor: "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the Master's table." So, the worker, whose heart is in his work, especially he who has called upon God to aid him in the Lord's own work, will be guided in his methods and words again and again and lead many to the Saviour.

At this time, when our young people are facing decision for Christ at the Easter and Whitsuntide confirmation, there is special reason for personal work on our part, thoughtful, enthusiastic, wise and patient personal work, that rests for guidance and wisdom upon the Holy Spirit, that they may accept Christ as Saviour.

## JUDGMENTS

There are two kinds of judgment—superficial and profound. There is much more of the first than of the second. The first is caught by the surface indications. In business, it gauges a man's standing by his flaming advertisements, the goods in the windows and in the show cases. The second looks at the honesty and the integrity, the outcome of the business, the books with their debits and credits.

Superficial judgment often mistakes dullness for wisdom. It thinks a man who looks so wise ought to be wise. The other asks for a sentence rich with instruction. The first counts men religious sometimes who make long prayers, and are of sad countenance; the second with Christ looks into the heart.

In all our church life and work we ought to judge profoundly. What is the outcome? To what good? Why does a church exist? To save men from their sins, to build them up into Christlike characters. A church that is faultlessly correct, that never sins against good taste, that never blunders into enthusiasm, but does not reach men, or, only in a feeble way, cannot superciliously despise another that makes mistakes against the correct thing, but reaches and saves men.

The minister who is well educated, faultless in his rhetoric, but dull, unemotional, not the least bit sensational, and who has but a handful to hear him cannot afford to salve his conscience by calling his neighbor a sensationalist who fills his church and saves men and builds them up in righteousness.

Nor, on the other hand, are attendances everything. The church that spends everything to attract men, by its music, its bright and sparkling preacher, and can never do anything for God's great works at large, is simply full of refined selfishness. One thinks of

the English bishop, who, in a beautiful cathedral, where the music cost \$4000 a year, when he received \$200 as a mission collection, said that "Such music is a species of refined selfishness, for it leaves nothing for the Lord's work."

I think, therefore, we ought to keep the real object of a church in view. It is not to glorify ourselves, not to bid for the world's attention, save as it can help it, not to be a refuge for dull respectability, not to be a correct, faultless, but dead organization, but to do good, to convert men, to edify saints, to be a throbbing center of vigorous Christian life, energetic in every good work, full of the spirit of Christian giving, lifting holy hands in prayer. What then are we? What are the words and works of the pastor? What are the results of our combined life? If good, let us continue and improve. If indifferent, then let us adopt such measures as will make us the Lord's Church.

## THE TRUTH IN LOVE

In these days of controversy, when one is inclined to become excited, the judgment is apt to warp, and reckless assertions are made which have no foundation. We cannot all think alike, but we can make an effort to judge each other charitably. A story is told of a clergyman in the early days of the historic Oxford movement. "He was traveling in a railway carriage, when a lady, with whom he was in conversation, lamented the turn things were taking in ritualism. 'There 's that dreadful Dr. Pusey; he sacrifices a lamb every Friday!' 'Really, madam, you must be mistaken.' 'Oh, dear, no, I am not! I have it on the best authority that he sacrifices a lamb every Friday.' 'I really do think you must be mistaken, for I am Dr. Pusey, and I really do not know how I should begin to set about it.'" There is a strong prepossession to credit evil things of our opponent, but care should the more be taken on this very account to know our facts.

The other day the following came under our notice and set us to thinking. An English judge received an application from a Jew whose son had just received a severe sentence for perjury. "Ah, sir! my son is de very best boy in de world for de trut'. He always shpeak de trut', and sometimes he was so fond of it dat he would tell more dan de trut'."

There is a distinguished clergyman who has a national reputation, who has always seemed to us to err in this direction. He seldom states the position of his opponents with fairness. He often states the truth with picturesque additions which are his own. He paints everything with a big brush. If you do not examine too closely, the effect is gorgeous. If you carefully scan the details, you find them imperfect and

faulty. He has a national reputation, but he has no influence with thoughtful men, either of the world or of the Church. His understatements and his overstatements disgust. His oratory and his wit and his good intentions carry him along, but "his name is writ in water."

The apostle wisely enjoined men "to speak the truth in love." It is the Christian combination of two great things. Speak the truth is a first requisite jealously to be guarded as we value our own spiritual life and the progress of the kingdom of God. The love of truth will make us just to all and clear-eyed; the truth of love will make us gentle to all and winning. The uncompromising Christ was also meek and gentle.

It is remarkable that we accord to men great honor when they are dead, of whom we could scarcely say decent things whilst they lived. It is true, the battle was on, and tendencies, real and imaginary, excited the utmost alarm. But justice and charity should be exercised toward them, if we believe God is and that the truth will prevail. Our shrieking and howling rather indicate that we are afraid of our side. Claims to be martyrs, and posing as the elect sent for the salvation of Israel, look as though we were whistling to keep our courage up. The Lord reigns, the truth will prevail, and we may possess our souls in peace, if we believe it. Why not, then, be just to men before they die?

John Keble was certainly a High Church man, who came in for a round share of abuse from the Evangelicals whilst he lived. Matters have greatly changed since his death, for Dean Howson is authority for the statement that his "Christian Year" is now the great delight of Scotch Presbyterians. For the spiritual man in Keble was profoundly Christlike and is recognized by all likeminded.

The Church needs to remember that truth in love is due to every man, opponent or friend.

## TALENT AND EQUIPMENT

In the great picture gallery of Antwerp, among the painters who copy the renowned works of art, one is especially conspicuous. His work is good, but does not attract the attention of the visitor as much as the way in which it is done. He sits on a high chair before his easel and paints, holding the brush with his toes. He has no hands. There must have been a time when with the artistic talent it seemed to him without hands he never could be a painter. He lacked equipment. He had, however, some equipment, poor, indeed, but better than none. His toes might take the place of fingers. He tried and persevered with these awkward members until he is able to reproduce the lovely paintings, his drawing and coloring accurate and pleasing.

Equipment is a splendid thing, but talent is better. The best equipment in the world without the talent of the painter results in daubs of which even a house-painter would be ashamed. Talent is the essential. Paganini with one string could call forth from the violin more entrancing music than many with full-stringed violins. Demosthenes, the stutterer, became the great orator of Athens.

It is very true that lack of equipment is disheartening. Moses felt it when he replied to the command of the Lord to speak unto Pharaoh and declare His will, "Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since Thou has spoken unto Thy servant; but I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue." Nor would he be persuaded even by the Lord Himself, but burdened himself with Aaron as spokesman, to his after distress and hurt of the people of Israel. Jonah, too, was sure he had not the equipment where-

with to face Nineveh, and was taught by almost death itself that he had.

A great many Christians have talent, but they are conscious that their equipment is meager. There is one, for instance, with a deep and personal love to the Master, who has the gift to win the love and interest of the children; but, with little knowledge of books and with blundering speech. There is a painful consciousness of lack of equipment, and with it an impulse to bury the God-given talent. I think this is one great trouble with many that might become splendid teachers in a Sunday school. They are like soldiers who would skip the awkward squad, and be masters of drill without patient practice.

It is so in many other ways—in the visitation of the sick, in sympathy with the poor, in the public prayers, in the gift of the administration, equipment is lacking, though the talent be in the man.

The remedy is to use the equipment that you have. The talent will express itself strongly even with imperfect equipment. Mr. Sill sets this forth:

“This I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream:  
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;  
And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged  
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords  
Shocked upon swords and shields. A prince’s banner  
Wavered, then staggered backward, hemmed by foes.  
A craven hung along the battle’s edge,  
And thought, ‘Had I a sword of keener steel—  
That blue blade that the king’s son bears—but this  
Blunt thing.’ He snapt and flung it from his hand,  
And lowering crept away and left the field.  
Then came the king’s son, wounded, sore bestead,  
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword,  
Hilt buried in the dry and trodden sand,  
And ran and snatched it and with battle shout  
Lifted afresh, he hewed his enemy down,  
And saved a great cause this heroic day.”

The craven could not conquer with unbroken sword;  
The prince won a great victory with the fragment of the

despised sword. This is a picture of life, where the devoted, eager, resolute soul, imperfectly equipped, so uses opportunity that where others, perfectly equipped, despaired, it succeeds gloriously.

"Stir up the gift that is in thee," says the apostle to Timothy. As we do what we can with what we have, each effort makes the next more easy, enlarges the powers of our imperfect equipment, until at length talent and equipment are in harmony. Of course, no man likes to make mistakes, and blunders are mortifying. But it is better to make mistakes trying to do the right than to make the awful mistake of the man with one talent, who, for fear of mistake, did nothing, and was cast out from the presence of his Lord.

## MANLY MINISTERS

Ministers, especially if they are lovable men, are apt to have a great deal of sympathy from their flock. Other men must take the buffets of a rude world, but a congregation surround a minister and keep him from contact with the rough shocks of life. Ministers are sometimes gently complaining, "I am so tired," "My work is so exhausting," and uttering such and like piteous phrases loll back in the comfortable chairs of their parishioners and receive as their rightful tribute the sympathizing ministry of tender-hearted women.

It is not to be wondered at that men grow savage at times who toil hard and receive mighty little petting and coddling. To them, the minister is not a manly man, but an effeminate. It happened me some time ago to be in an audience with a printer for a companion. The speaker said, "The hardest worked man to-day was the diligent pastor of a large city church." My friend humorously remarked to me, "Except the printer on a morning daily." In America, every diligent man has his hands full. He must be at it early and late and to the extent of his powers. Such a man cannot help but feel contempt for the ministers, who work no harder, if as hard, as he, but who are always hunting for a patient ear to listen to their gentle complaints of hard work. The first great minister of the Christian Church was not given to complaints. Our Lord strongly did His work. When He needed rest He sought it, but when He worked He worked bravely and joyously.

The tender ministry of pastors will always gain them the sympathy of the congregation. The majority of us get as good and even better treatment than we deserve. There is plenty to do, and, what is greater, responsibility for souls. The pastor will often be asked to do more than his strength will bear, but let

him be manly. It is manlike to meet difficulties and overcome them, rejoicing in the opportunity. One thinks of the manly warrior in the time of the Black Prince, who said, whenever there was a battle in which the odds were against him, "I perceive there is great honor to be gained here to-day," and as joyously as other men might go to the dancing-floor, went to the bitter battle. The honor to work with God ought to be enough.

It is manly to bear our burdens and not to complain, to quietly complete our tasks and seek for approval from above. It is manly, if we are overcrowded, simply to state the fact without whimpering, and decline, for God never, whatever men may do, lays upon us more than we can bear.

Strange ideas of a manly ministry come from an overstraining of athletics. Muscular Christianity is the rage, but big bodies are not big souls. Many of the manliest men have been small of stature. Stanley, of England, was little and delicate in frame, but his heart was the heart of a lion. Bicyclists, tennis players, baseball enthusiasts, may bulk large on the turf and in the pulpit, but complain as much as the lean, lank and physically weak brethren. In the ministry it is conviction, courage, joyous soul and patient steadiness that counts with men. The man who unflinchingly marks his duty, does it, and begs not for sympathy for that which he ought to do, he honors his profession and has the spirit of his Master.

## LIFE MORE THAN WORD

There is a plain tablet in Balliol Chapel, Oxford, bearing the name Richard Lewis Nettleship and the words: "He lived great things and thought little of himself; desiring neither fame nor influence, he won the devotion of men and was a power in their lives, and, seeking no disciples, he taught to many the greatness of the world and man's mind."

This man did not write much. A biographical sketch of Thomas Hill Green, an essay on Plato's conception of goodness and some editing were his chief works. Some fragments have been gathered since he died. Yet he has been and is now a potent force. He himself said: "I feel more than I used to do that the fact that men like Socrates and Christ *wrote* nothing does somehow go along with their unique greatness. I do seem to see that if one could literally live one's theories and beliefs it would be something greater than any book one would be likely to write."

Here is a truth well worth weighing. It does not mean that it is not a great thing to write well, and give the world thoughts upon which to feed and thoughts to inspire. But it does mean that the greater thing is to live nobly. Being is the great thing, not doing, for the highest doing must always rest on being. Life is always higher than the transcript of life. As has well been said: The food of other men's thoughts is so nourishing and solacing a part of our lives that we are apt to attribute some special merit to the mere plying of the literary trade, fancying that it demands some special endowment, some unique gift. We forget that merit never attaches to an act, but always depends on the force that projects the act."

Anyone who uses words feels their inability to express his thought. Many things really cannot be put

into words. They must be experienced before they can be known. Having loved, we know what love is, but who can exactly define love? Who can explain faith to him who has never believed? How often we must say to children, asking puzzling questions, "Wait, you will understand what you ask after awhile," which is but another way of saying, "After you have experienced what you ask you will understand."

Robertson, in one of his sermons, put this finely, as he comments on the silence of Christ when Pilate asked Him, "What is truth?" by the statement, "Christ did not answer Pilate because He had lived thirty years before men that men might know that truth by His life, the truth that can never be fully expressed by word."

The prophet that left the most wonderful impression on Israel was Elijah. He never wrote a word. His life was so great and lofty that the memory of it continued through the centuries, and it became a conviction that the Messiah could not appear unless Elijah should first come and prepare the way. The written word of Isaiah and the other prophets as the centuries have passed are weightier now; yet even these prophets felt Elijah's influence and embodied in their writings the truths which he placed in the foreground by his life.

The lesson to us is that the central thing is to live. Fine as it is to speak and to write well and strongly, it is finer to live well. The influence of a life strongly lived in Christ is greater than any words we can speak. It may be very gratifying to our self-love to speak and write well, but it will never avail as our lives, beautifully setting forth Christ. Indeed, the very potency of our words must in the long run spring from our lives. Only as we live can we have the insight into truth, the word of conviction that convinces, the heart-tones that go to other hearts.

This is possible to all. We can live a Christian life,

we can illustrate faith to others by the sweetness, purity, strength and trustfulness of a good and unselfish life. The influence thus exerted will be more potent than speech, and will do more to persuade others to love Christ than words, and will give such cogency to our broken speech for Him that it shall win and keep for Him our scholars unto life everlasting.

## SOME DAY, SOME GREAT SERVICE

How many men and women, who are neglecting common opportunities to serve, are speaking thus to themselves, "I am fully resolved some day to do some great thing for God. I purpose the best. I love Him, and when He gives me a task worthy of my powers I will do it." They neglect the common duties, but still their consciences by speeches like this.

A Cornell student puts this well in what he says about Horace W. Rose: "One day he said to me, 'You fellows must be intending to do a mighty lot of personal work when you once get at it; you are putting it off so long,' for he knew that many of us who were holding conspicuous places in the Cornell University Christian Association were not doing personal work, but were excusing ourselves from it on the ground that we were enjoying special advantages in the equipment for study available at Cornell, and that by putting more time in our college work we would be preparing ourselves for more effective Christian service later in our lives. I believe we all see now that we will never be in a place of more exceptional opportunities for effective service than while in college."

The Cornell student reasoned well, for *the* place for service is the place where one is; keeping resolutely at the common, tiresome service, we do our work for Christ well. The truth is, "none but common duties ever come to us, every uncommon duty becoming common when it appears."

God gives a man the common service to get him ready for the uncommon service. He begins with little things that he can do, and as he gathers strength He gives him work proportioned to that strength. The child is taught to read and write first the simple elementary branches, and afterward the larger ones. If

he never learns these, he is unprepared for those. Unless he conquers his childish pettishness and boyish temper, the passions of age become ungovernable; unless a man cultivates the power to do, the active sympathy, the personal service, to-day, the future will find him powerless, dull of heart, and utterly lacking in the faculty of personal work with his fellows.

"Many years ago," says W. C. Sage, "a friend of mine was taking an evangelistic tour through the Highlands of Scotland in company with a young friend, recently converted. When they came to the young convert's native village, my friend said, 'Samuel, you must speak to-night.' 'I can't,' was the reply, 'I never said half a dozen words in public in my life.' 'But you must; God tells me you are to speak to-night.' Accordingly, at the right moment, Samuel arose in the meeting, and, in trembling, awkward fashion, said, 'Everyone here knows me. Parents used to point their children to me and tell them to be like me. They called me a model boy; but if I had died three months ago I should have gone straight to hell.' My friend told me afterward he could never forget how the power of God came down upon the meeting. But this was only Samuel's first word for Christ. He has spoken many since. For a long period he has been a member of Parliament, and when a word needs to be said on behalf of the cause of God and truth in the House of Commons, Samuel is the man to say it. And somehow he makes people listen. But to-day he would trace the beginning of all that is useful in his public career to those few trembling words, falteringly spoken, in his native village."

It was but a common duty the young man met, a common duty in a small village, but it was uncommon, too, a great service then and the way to great service in the after days.

Who may tell what is the great and small in service? The Lord does not anywhere tell us to do great things.

He gives us ordinary opportunities and duties, the service we call common. But He does say, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." We are to take the common service as His and do it for His sake, remembering that neglect of it is disobedience to Him.

As we do it we shall find that it keeps us near to Him, teaches us great lessons of dependence, fellowship and love. And lo! the little service has in it the making of our own greater Christian life.

The common service, as we call it, may be the uncommon service. The word spoken, the deed done, the personal effort may drop like a seed of infinite potentialities into the heart of a friend, a scholar, an associate. There it may live and grow, the fruitage being salvation of a larger knowledge and discipleship of Christ.

Or we may come to the larger life of service ourselves, made ready for it by the discipline of the common ordinary service. Unconscious to ourselves there may be in us the beauty of holiness, the large unselfishness of sacrifice, that surrender of self to the Master which makes possible the incalculable influence on others, the heroic deed or the martyr's death.

















