WRITINGS OF CATHERINE BOOTH

by Catherine Booth

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Catherine Booth, compiled for study and devotional reading.

60 Chapters

Table of Contents

1. 00A.00 Female Ministry
2. 00A.00c Preface
3. 00A.01 Female Ministry
4. 01.00. Godliness
5. 01.01. Repentance
6. 01.02. Saving Faith
7. 01.03. Charity
8. 01.04. Charity and Rebuke
9. 01.05. Charity and Conflict
10. 01.06. Charity and Loneliness
11. 01.07. Conditions of Effectual Prayer
12. 01.08. The Perfect Heart
13. 01.09. How to Work for God with Success
14. 01.10. Enthusiasm and Full Salvation
15. 01.11. Hindrances to Holiness
16. 01.12. Addresses on Holiness
17. 02.00. PAPERS ON AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY
18. 02.01. Aggresive Christianity
19. 02.02. A Pure Gospel
20. 02.03. Adaptation of Measures
21. 02.04. Assurance of Salvation
22. 02.05. How Christ Transcends the Law
23. 02.06. The Fruites of Union with Christ
24. 02.07. Witnessing for Christ
25. 02.08. Filled with the Spirit
26. 02.09. The World's Need
27. 02.10. The Holy Ghost
28. 02.11. Salvation Army Publications
29. 03.00. PAPERS ON PRACTICAL RELIGION.
30. 03.01. The Training of Children
31. 03.02. Strong Drink Versus Christianity
32. 03.03. Worldly Amusement and Christianity
33. 03.04. Heart Backslliding
34. 03.05. Dealing with Dealignnwith Anxious Souls
35. 03.06. "Compell Them to Come In"
36. 03.07. Female Ministry
37. 03.08. Hot Saints
38. 03.09. Conscience
39. 03.10. Aggression

40. 03.11. The Uses of Trial
41. 03.12. Prevailing Prayer
42. 04.00. Popular Christianity
43. 04.00.1. Preface
44. 04.00.2. Contents
45. 04.01. Its False Christs Compared With The Christ Of God
46. 04.02. Its Mock Salvation vs. A Real Deliverance From Sin
47. 04.03. Its Sham Compassion vs. The Dying Love Of Christ
48. 04.04. Its Cowardly Service vs. The Real Warfare
49. 04.05. Its Sham Judgment in Contrast With The Great White Throne
50. 04.06. Delivered in Steinway Hall, Regent Street
51. 04.07. The Salvation Army Following Christ
52. 06.00.0. The Works of Catherine Booth
53. 06.00.1. Contents
54. 06.01. Obey The Holy Spirit
55. 06.02. Expect To Receive The Holy Spirit
56. 06.03. How To Overcome Satan's Deceptions
57. 06.04. How to Overcome Self Deception
58. 06.05. How To Wait For The Holy Spirit
59. 06.06. How To Receive The Greatest Gift
60. S. What is Repentance?Title/Content

00A.00 Female Ministry

Female Ministry; or, Woman’s Right to Preach the Gospel By Catherine Booth

00A.00c Preface

Preface The principal arguments contained in the following pages were published in a pamphlet entitled Female Teaching, which, I have reason to know, has been rendered very useful. In this edition all the controversial portions have been expunged, some new matter added, and the whole produced in a cheaper form, and thus, I trust, rendered better adapted for general circulation. Our only object in this issue is the elicitation of the truth. We hold that error can in the end be profitable to no cause, and least of all to the cause of Christ. If therefore we were not fully satisfied as to the correctness of the views herein set forth, we should fear to subject them to the light ; and if we did not deem them of vast importance to the interests of Christ’s kingdom, we should prefer to hold them in silence. Believing however that they will bear the strictest investigation, and that their importance cannot easily be over-estimated, we feel bound to propagate them to the utmost of our ability. In this paper we shall endeavour to meet the most common objections to female ministry, and to present, as far as our space will permit, a thorough examination of the texts generally produced in support of these objections. May the great Head of the Church grant the light of His Holy Spirit to both writer and reader.

Chapter 3

00A.01 Female Ministry

Female Ministry; or, Woman’s Right to Preach the Gospel THE first and most common objection urged against the public exercises of women, is that they are unnatural and unfeminine. Many labour under a very great but common mistake, viz. that of confounding nature with custom. Use, or custom, makes things appear to us natural, which, in reality, are very unnatural; while, on the other hand, novelty and rarity make very natural things appear strange and contrary to nature. So universally has this power of custom been felt and admitted, that it has given birth to the proverb, "Use is second nature." Making allowance for the novelty of the thing, we cannot discover anything either unnatural or immodest in a Christian woman, becomingly attired, appearing on a platform or in a pulpit. By nature she seems fitted to grace either. God has given to woman a graceful form and attitude, winning manners, persuasive speech, and, above all, a finely-toned emotional nature, all of which appear to us eminent natural qualifications for public speaking.

We admit that want of mental culture, the trammels of custom, the force of prejudice, and one-sided interpretations of Scripture, have hitherto almost excluded her from this sphere; but, before such a sphere is pronounced to be unnatural, it must be proved either that woman has not the ability to teach or to preach, or that the possession and exercise of this ability unnaturalizes her in other respects; that so soon as she presumes to step on the platform or into the pulpit, she loses the delicacy and grace of the female character. Whereas, we have numerous instances of her retaining all that is most esteemed in her sex, and faithfully discharging the duties peculiar to her own sphere, and at the same time taking her place with many of our most useful speakers and writers.

Why should woman be confined exclusively to the kitchen and the distaff, any more than man to the field and workshop? Did not God, and has not nature, assigned to man his sphere of labour, "to till the ground, and to dress it"? And, if exemption is claimed from this kind of toil for a portion of the male sex, on the ground of their possessing ability for intellectual and moral pursuits, we must be allowed to claim the same privilege for woman ; nor can we see the exception more unnatural in the one case than the other, or why God in this solitary instance has endowed a being with powers which He never intended her to employ.

There seems to be a great deal of unnecessary fear of women occupying any position which involves publicity, lest she should be rendered unfeminine by the indulgence of ambition or vanity; but why should woman any more than man be charged with ambition when impelled to use her talents for the good of her race. Moreover, as a labourer in the GOSPEL her position is much higher than in any other public capacity; she is at once shielded from all coarse and unrefined influences and associations; her very vocation tending to exalt and refine all the tenderest and most womanly instincts of her nature. As a matter of fact it is well known to those who have had opportunities of observing the private character and deportment of women engaged in preaching the gospel, that they have been amongst the most amiable, self-sacrificing, and unobtrusive of their sex.

"We well know," says the late Mr. Gurney, a minister of the Society of Friends, "that there are no women among us more generally distinguished for modesty, gentleness, order, and right submission to their brethren, than those who have been called by their Divine Master into the exercise of the Christian ministry." Who would dare to charge the sainted Madame Guyon, Lady Maxwell, the talented mother of the Wesleys, Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Whiteman, or Miss Marsh with being unwomanly or ambitious. Some of these ladies we know have adorned by their private virtues the highest ranks of society, and won alike from friends and enemies the highest eulogiums as to the devotedness, purity, and sweetness of their lives. Yet these were all more or less public women, every one of them expounding and exhorting from the Scriptures to mixed companies of men and women. Ambitious doubtless they were; but theirs was an ambition akin to His, who, for the "joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame:" and to his, who counted all things but dung and dross, and was willing to be regarded as the off-scouring of all things that he might win souls to Jesus and bring glory to God. Would that all the Lord’s people had more of this ambition.

Well, but, say our objecting friends, how is it that these whose names you mention, and many others, should venture to preach when female ministry is forbidden in the word of God? This is by far the most serious objection which we have to consider--and if capable of substantiation, should receive our immediate and cheerful acquiescence; but we think that we shall be able to show, by a fair and consistent interpretation, that the very opposite view is the truth. That not only is the public ministry of woman unforbidden, but absolutely enjoined by both precept and example in the word of God.

And, first, we will select the most prominent and explicit passages of the New Testament referring to the subject, beginning with 1 Corinthians 11:1-15 : "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head: for that is all one as if she were shaven," etc. "The character," says a talented writer, "of the prophesying here referred to by the apostle is defined 1 Corinthians 14:3-4; 1 Corinthians 14:31 st verses. The reader will see that it was directed to the ’edification, exhortation, and comfort of believers;’ and the result anticipated was the conviction of unbelievers and unlearned persons. Such were the public services of women which the apostle allowed, and such was the ministry of females predicted by the prophet Joel, and described as a leading feature of the gospel dispensation. Women who speak in assemblies for worship, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, assume thereby no personal authority over others; they simply deliver the messages of the gospel, which imply obedience, subjection, and responsibility, rather than authority and power."

Dr. A. Clarke, on this verse, says, "Whatever may be the meaning of praying and prophesying in respect to the man, they have precisely the same meaning in respect to the woman! So that some women at least, as well as some men, might speak to others to edification, exhortation, and comfort. And this kind of prophesying or teaching was predicted by Joel 2:28, and referred to by Peter (Acts 2:17). And, had there not been such gifts bestowed on woman, the prophecy could not have had its fulfilment. The only difference marked by the apostle was, the man had his head uncovered, because he was the representative of Christ: the woman had hers covered, because she was placed by the order of God in subjection to the man; and because it was the custom both among Greeks and Romans, and among the Jews an express law, that no woman should be seen

abroad without a veil. This was and is a custom through all the East, and none but public prostitutes go without veils; if a woman should appear in public without a veil, she would dishonour her head--her husband. And she must appear like to those women who have their hair shaven off as the punishment of adultery." See also Doddridge, Whitby, and Cobbin.

We think that the view above given is the only fair and common-sense interpretation of this passage. If Paul does not here recognise the fact that women did actually pray and prophesy in the primitive Churches, his language has no meaning at all; and if he does not recognise their right to do so by dictating the proprieties of their appearance while so engaged, we leave to objectors the task of educing any sense whatever from his language. If, according to the logic of Dr. Barnes, the apostle here, in arguing against an improper and indecorous mode of performance, forbids the performance itself, the prohibition extends to the men as well as to the women; for Paul as expressly reprehends a man praying with his head covered as he does a woman with hers uncovered. With as much force might the doctor assert that in reproving the same Church for their improper celebration of the Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 11:20-21), Paul prohibits all Christians, in every age, celebrating it at all. "The question with the Corinthians was not whether or not the women should pray or prophesy at all, that question had been settled on the day of Pentecost; but whether, as a matter of convenience, they might do so without their veils." The apostle kindly and clearly explains that by the law of nature and of society it would be improper to uncover her head while engaged in acts of public worship.

We think that the reflections cast on these women by Dr. Barnes and other commentators are quite gratuitous and uncalled for. Here is no intimation that they ever had uncovered their heads while so engaged; the fairest presumption is that they had not, nor ever would till they knew the apostle’s mind on the subject. We have precisely the same evidence that the men prayed and preached with their hats on, as that women removed their veils, and wore their hair dishevelled, which is simply none at all.

We cannot but regard it as a signal evidence of the power of prejudice, that a man of Dr. Barnes’s general clearness and acumen should condescend to treat this passage in the manner he does. The doctor evidently feels the untenableness of his position; and endeavours, by muddling two passages of distinct and different bearing, to annihilate the argument fairly deducible from the first. We would like to ask the doctor on what authority he makes such an exception as to the following: "But this cannot be interpreted as meaning that it is improper for females to speak or to pray in meetings of their own sex." Indeed! but according to the most reliable statistics we possess, two-thirds of the whole Church is, and always has been, composed of their own sex. If, then, no rule of the New Testament is more positive than this, viz. that women are to keep silence in the Churches, on whose authority does the doctor license them to speak to by far the larger portion of the Church. A barrister writing us on the above passage, says "Paul here takes for granted that women were in the habit of praying and prophesying; he expresses no surprise nor utters a syllable of censure, he was only anxious that they should not provoke unnecessary obloquy by laying aside their customary head-dress or departing from the dress which was indicative of modesty in the country in which they lived. This passage seems to prove beyond the possibility of dispute that in the early times women were permitted to speak to the "edification and comfort" of Christians, and that the Lord graciously endowed them with grace and gifts for this service. What He did then may He not be doing now? It seems truly astonishing that Bible students, with the

second chapter of the Acts before them, should not see that an imperative decree has gone forth from God, the execution of which women cannot escape; whether they like or not, they 'shall' prophesy throughout the whole course of this dispensation; and they have been doing so, though they and their blessed labours are not much noticed."

Well, but say our objecting friends, hear what Paul says in another place:--"Let your women keep silence in the Churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the Church" (1 Corinthians 14:34-35). Now let it be borne in mind this is the same apostle, writing to the same Church, as in the above instance. Will any one maintain that Paul here refers to the same kind of speaking as before? If so, we insist on his supplying us with some rule of interpretation which will harmonize this unparalleled contradiction and absurdity.

Taking the simple and common-sense view of the two passages, viz. that one refers to the devotional and religious exercises in the Church, and the other to inconvenient asking of questions, and imprudent or ignorant talking, there is no contradiction or discrepancy, no straining or twisting of either. If, on the other hand, we assume that the apostle refers in both instances to the same thing, we make him in one page give the most explicit directions how a thing shall be performed, which in a page or two further on, and writing to the same Church, he expressly forbids being performed at all.

We admit that "it is a shame for women to speak in the Church," in the sense here intended by the apostle; but before the argument based on these words can be deemed of any worth, objectors must prove that the "speaking" here is synonymous with that, concerning that manner of which the apostle legislates in 1 Corinthians 11:1-34. Dr. A. Clarke, on this passage, says, "according to the prediction of Joel, the Spirit of God was to be poured out on the women as well as the men, that they might prophesy, that is teach. And that they did prophesy or teach is evident from what the apostle says (1 Corinthians 11:1-34), where he lays down rules to regulate this part of their conduct while ministering in the Church. All that the apostle opposes here is their questioning, finding fault, disputing, etc., in the Christian Church, as the Jewish men were permitted to do in their synagogues (see Luke 2:46); together with attempts to usurp authority over men by setting up their judgment in opposition to them; for the apostle has reference to acts of disobedience and arrogance, of which no woman would be guilty who was under the influence of the Spirit of God." The Rev. J. H. Robinson, writing on this passage, remarks: "The silence imposed here must be explained by the verb, to speak (lalein), used afterwards. Whatever that verb means in this verse, I admit and believe the women were forbidden to do in the Church. But what does it mean ? It is used nearly three hundred times in the New Testament, and scarcely any verb is used with so great a variety of adjuncts. In Schleusner's Lexicon, its meaning is traced under seventeen distinct heads, and he occupies two full pages of the book in explaining it. Among other meanings he gives respondeo, rationem reddo, praecipio, jubeo; I answer, I return a reason, I give rule or precept, I order, decree." In Robinson's Lexicon (Bloomfield's edition), two pages nearly are occupied with the explanation of this word; and he gives instances of its meaning, "as modified by the context, where the sense lies, not so much in lalein (lalein) as in the adjuncts." The passage under consideration is one of those to which he refers as being so "modified by the context." Greenfield gives, with others, the following meanings of the word: "to prattle--be loquacious as a

child; to speak in answer--to answer, as in John 19:10; harangue. plead, Acts 9:29; Acts 9:21. To direct, command, Acts 3:22." In Liddel and Scott's Lexicon, the following meanings are given: "to chatter, babble; of birds, to twitter, chirp; strictly, to make an inarticulate sound, opposed to articulate speech; but also generally, to talk, say."

"It is clear then that lalein may mean something different from mere speaking, and that to use this word in a prohibition does not imply that absolute silence or abstinence from speaking is enjoined; but, on the contrary, that the prohibition applies to an improper kind of speaking, which is to be understood, not from the word itself, but, as Mr. Robinson says, from 'the context.' Now, 'the context' shows that it was not silence which was imposed upon women in the Church, but only a refraining from such speaking as was inconsistent with the words, 'they are commanded to be under obedience,' or, more literally, 'to be obedient:' that is, they were to refrain from such questionings, dogmatical assertions, and disputations, as would bring them into collision with the men--as would ruffle their tempers, and occasion an unamiable volubility of speech. This kind of speaking, and this alone, as it appears to me, was forbidden by the apostle in the passage before us. This kind of speaking was the only supposable antagonist to, and violation of 'obedience.' Absolute silence was not essential to that 'obedience.' My studies in 'Biblical criticism,' etc., have not informed me that a woman must cease to speak before she can obey; and I am therefore led to the irresistible conclusion, that it is not all speaking in the Church which the apostle forbids, and which he pronounces to be shameful; but, on the contrary, a pertinacious, inquisitive, domineering, dogmatical kind of speaking, which, while it is unbecoming in a man, is shameful and odious in a woman, and especially when that woman is in the Church, and is speaking on the deep things of religion."

Parkhurst, in his lexicon, tells us that the Greek word "'lalein," which our translation renders speak, is not the word used in Greek to signify to speak with premeditation and prudence, but is the word used to signify to speak imprudently and without consideration, and is that applied to one who lets his tongue run but does not speak to the purpose, but says nothing." Now unless Parkhurst is utterly wrong in his Greek, which it is apprehended no one will venture to affirm, Paul's fulmination is not launched against speech with premeditation and prudence, but against speech devoid of these qualities. It would be well if all speakers of the male as well as the female sex were obedient to this rule.

We think that with the light cast on this text by the four eminent Greek scholars above quoted, there can be no doubt in any unprejudiced mind as to the true meaning of "lalein" in this connection. And we find from Church history that the primitive Christians thus understood it, for that women did actually speak and preach amongst them we have indisputable proof. God had promised in the last days to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, and that the daughters as well as the sons of mankind should prophesy. And Peter says most emphatically, respecting the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, "This is that which is spoken of by the prophet Joel," etc. (Acts 2:16; Acts 2:18.) Words more explicit, and an application of Prophecy more direct than this does not occur within the range of the New Testament.

Commentators say, "If women have the gift of prophecy, they must not use that gift in public." But God says, by His prophet Joel, they shall use it, just in the same sense as the sons use it. When the dictation of men so flatly opposes the express declaration of the "sure word of prophecy," we

make no apology for its utter and indignant rejection.

Presbuteros, a talented writer of the Protestant Electoral Union, in his reply to a priest of Rome, says:

"Habituated for ages, as men had been, to the diabolical teaching and delusions practiced upon them by the papal 'priesthood,' it was difficult for them, when they did get possession of the Scriptures, to discern therein the plain fact, that among the primitive Christians preaching was not confined to men, but women also, gifted with power by the Holy Spirit, preached the gospel; and hence the slowness with which, even at the present time, this truth has been admitted by those giving heed to the word of God, and especially those setting themselves up as a 'priesthood' or a 'clergy.' As shown in page 66, God had, according to His promise, on the day of Pentecost poured out his Holy Spirit upon believers--men and women, old and young--that they should prophesy, and they did so. The prophesying spoken of was not the foretelling of events, but the preaching to the world at large the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ. For this purpose it pleased God to make use of women as well as men. It is plainly the duty of every Christian to insist upon the fulfillment of the will of God, and the abrogation of every single thing inconsistent therewith. I would draw attention to the fact that Phoebe, a Christian woman whom we find in our version of the Scripture (Romans 16:1) spoken of only as any common servant attached to a congregation, was nothing less than one of those gifted by the Holy Spirit for publishing the glad tidings, or preaching the gospel. The manner in which the apostle (whose only care was the propagation of evangelical truth) speaks of her, shows that she was what he in Greek styled her, a deacon (diaconon) or preacher of the word. Our translators speak of her (because she was a woman) only as 'a servant of the Church which is at Cenchrea.' The men 'deacons' they styled ministers, but a woman on the same level as themselves would be an anomaly, and therefore she was to be only the servant of men ministers, who, in the popish sense, constituted the Church!" The apostle says of her--"I commend unto you Phebe our sister, who is a minister (diaconon) of the Church which is at Cenchrea: that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you." To the common sense of disinterested minds it will be evident that the apostle could not have requested more for any one of the most zealous of men preachers than he did for Phebe! They were to assist "her in whatsoever business she" might require their aid.

Hence we discern that she had no such trifling position in the primitive Church as at the present time episcopal dignitaries attach to deacons and deaconesses! Observe, the same Greek word is used to designate her that was applied to all the apostles and to Jesus Himself. For example: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister (diaconon) of the circumcision" (Romans 15:8). "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers (diaconoi) by whom ye believed" (1 Corinthians 3:5). "Our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers (diaconous) of the new testament" (2 Corinthians 3:6). "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers (diaconoi) of God" (6:4). The idea of a woman deacon in the "three orders!"--it was intolerable, therefore let her be a "servant." Theodoret however says, "The fame of Phebe was spoken of throughout the world. She was known not only to the Greeks and Romans, but also to the Barbarians," which implies that she had travelled much, and propagated the gospel in foreign countries. See Doddridge, Cobbin, and Wesley, on this passage.

"Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles; who also were in Christ before me" (Romans 16:7). By the word "kinsmen" one would take Junia to have been a man; but Chrysostom and Theophylact, who were both Greeks, and consequently knew their mother tongue better than our translators, say Junia was a woman. Kinsmen should therefore have been rendered kinsfolk; but with our translators it was out of all character to have a woman of note amongst the apostles, and a fellow-prisoner with Paul for the gospel: therefore let them be kinsmen!

Justin Martyr, who lived till about A.D. 150, says, in his dialogue with Trypho, the Jew, "that both men and women were seen among them who had the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit of God, according as the prophet Joel had foretold, by which he endeavored to convince the Jews that the latter days were come."

Dodwell, in his dissertations on Irenaeus says, "that the gift of the spirit of prophecy was given to others besides the apostles; and, that not only in the first and second, but in the third century--even to the time of Constantine--all sorts and ranks of men had these gifts; yea, and women too."

Eusebius speaks of Potomania Ammias, a prophetess, in Philadelphia, and others, "who were equally distinguished for their love and zeal in the cause of Christ."

"The scriptural idea," says Mrs. Palmer, "of the terms preach and prophesy, stands so inseparably connected as one and the same thing, that we should find it difficult to get aside from the fact that women did preach, or, in other words, prophesy, in the early ages of Christianity, and have continued to do so down to the present time to just the degree that the spirit of the Christian dispensation has been recognised. And it is also a significant fact, that to the degree denominations, who have once favoured the practice, lose the freshness of their zeal, and as a consequence, their primitive simplicity, and, as ancient Israel, yield to a desire to be like surrounding communities, in a corresponding ratio are the labours of females discountenanced."

If any one still insists on a literal application of this text, we beg to ask how he disposes of the preceding part of the chapter where it occurs. Surely, if one verse be so authoritative and binding, the whole chapter is equally so; and therefore, those who insist on a literal application of the words of Paul, under all circumstances and through all time, will be careful to observe the apostle’s order of worship in their own congregations.

But, we ask, where is the minister who lets his whole Church prophesy one by one, and himself sits still and listens while they are speaking, so that all things may be done decently and in order? But Paul as expressly lays down this order as he does the rule for women, and he adds, "The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (ver. 37). Why then do not ministers abide by these directions? We anticipate their reply--"Because these directions were given to the Corinthians as temporary arrangements; and, though they were the commandments of the Lord to them at that time, they do not apply to all Christians in all times." Indeed; but unfortunately for their argument, the prohibition of women speaking, even if it meant what they wish, was given amongst those very directions, and to the Corinthians only: for it reads, "Let your women keep silence," etc.; and, for aught this passage teaches to the contrary, Christian women of all other Churches might do what these women were forbidden to do; until, therefore, learned

divines make a personal application of the rest of the chapter, they must excuse us declining to do so of the 24th verse; and we challenge them to show any breach of the Divine law in one case more than the other.

Another passage frequently cited as prohibitory of female labour in the Church, is 1 Timothy 2:12-13. Though we have never met with the slightest proof that this text has any reference to the public exercises of women; nevertheless, as it is often quoted, we will give it a fair and thorough examination. "It is primarily an injunction," says the Rev. J. H. Robinson, "respecting her personal behavior at home. It stands in connection with precepts respecting her apparel and her domestic position; especially her relation to her husband. No one will suppose that the apostle forbids a woman to 'teach' absolutely and universally. Even objectors would allow her to teach her own sex in private; they would let her teach her servants and children, and perhaps, her husband too. If he were ignorant of the Saviour, might she not teach him the way to Christ? If she were acquainted with languages, arts or sciences, which he did not know, might she not teach him these things? Certainly she might! The 'teaching,' therefore which is forbidden by the apostle, is not every kind of teaching any more than, in the previous instance, his prohibition of speaking applied to every kind of speaking in the Church; but it is such teaching as is domineering, and as involves the usurpation of authority over the man. This is the only teaching forbidden by St. Paul in the passage under consideration."

"If this passage be not a prohibition of every kind of teaching, we can only ascertain what kind of teaching is forbidden by the modifying expressions with which didaskein stands associated: and, for anything these modifying expressions affirm to the contrary, her teaching may be public, reiterated, urgent, and may comprehend a variety of subjects, provided it be not dictatorial, domineering, nor vociferous; for then, and then only, would it be incompatible with her obedience." The Rev. Dr. Taft says, "This passage should be rendered 'I suffer not a woman to teach by usurping authority over the man.' This rendering removes all the difficulties and contradictions involved in the ordinary reading, and evidently gives the meaning of the apostle." "If the nature of society," says the same writer, "its good and prosperity; in which women are jointly and equally concerned with men; if in many cases their fitness and capacity for instructors, being admitted to be equal to the other sex, be not reasons sufficient to convince the candid reader of woman's right to preach and teach because of two texts in Paul's epistles, let him consult the paraphrase of Locke, where he has proved to a demonstration that the apostle, in these texts, never intended to prohibit women from praying and preaching in the Church provided they were dressed as became women professing godliness, and were qualified for the sacred office."

"It will be found," says another writer, "by an examination of this text with its connections, that the teaching here alluded to stands in necessary connection with usurping authority, as though the apostle had said, the gospel does not alter the relation of women in view of priority, for Adam was first formed, then Eve."

"This prohibition," says the before-named barrister, "refers exclusively to the private life and domestic character of woman, and simply means that an ignorant or unruly woman is not to force her opinions on the man whether he will or no. It has no reference whatever to good women living in obedience to God and their husbands, or to women sent out to preach the gospel by the call of the Holy Spirit."

If this context is allowed to fix the meaning of didaskein in this text, as it would in any other, there can be no doubt in any honest mind that the above is the only consistent interpretation; and if it be, then this prohibition has no bearing whatever on the religious exercise of women led and taught of the Spirit of God: and we cannot forbear asking on whose skirts the mischief resulting from the false application of this text will be found? Thank God the day is dawning with respect to this subject. Women are studying and investigating for themselves. They are claiming to be recognized as responsible human beings, answerable to GOD for their convictions of duty; and, urged by the Divine Spirit they are overstepping those unscriptural barriers which the Church has so long reared against its performance.

Whether the Church will allow women to speak in her assemblies can only be a question of time; common sense, public opinion, and the blessed results of female agency will force her to give us an honest and impartial rendering of the solitary text on which she grounds her prohibitions. Then, when the true light shines and God's words take the place of man's traditions, the Doctor of Divinity who shall teach that Paul commands woman to be silent when God's Spirit urges her to speak, will be regarded much the same as we should now regard an astronomer who should teach that the sun is the earth's satellite.

Another argument urged against female preaching is, that it is unnecessary; that there is plenty of scope for her efforts in private, in visiting the sick and poor and working for the temporalities of the Church. Doubtless woman ought to be thankful for any sphere for benefiting her race and glorifying God. But we cannot be blind to the supreme selfishness of making her so welcome to the hidden toil and self-sacrifice, the hewing of wood and the drawing of water, the watching and waiting, the reproach and persecution attaching to her Master's service, without allowing her a tittle of the honour which He has attached to the ministration of His gospel.

Here, again, man's theory and God's order are at variance. God says, "Them that honour me I will honour." Our Lord links the joy with the suffering, the glory with the shame, the exaltation with the humiliation, the crown with the cross, the finding of life with the losing of it. Nor did He manifest any such horror at female publicity in His cause as many of His professed people appear to entertain in these days. We have no intimation of His reproving the Samaritan woman for her public proclamation of Him to her countrymen; not of His rebuking the women who followed Him amidst a taunting mob on His way to the cross. And yet, surely, privacy was their proper sphere. On one occasion He did say, with reference to a woman, "Verily, I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (Matthew 26:12; see also Luke 7:37-50). As to the obligation devolving on woman to labour for her Master, I presume there will be no controversy. The particular sphere in which each individual shall do this must be dictated by the teachings of the Holy Spirit and the gifts with which God has endowed her. If she have the necessary gifts, and feels herself called by the Spirit to preach, there is not a single word in the whole book of God to restrain her, but many, very many to urge and encourage her. God says she shall do so, and Paul prescribes the manner in which she shall do it, and Phebe, Junia, Philip's four daughters, and many other women actually did preach and speak in the primitive Churches.

If this had not been the case, there would have been less freedom under the new than under the old dispensation. A greater paucity of gifts and agencies under the Spirit than under the law.

Fewer labourers when more work to be done. Instead of the destruction of caste and division between the priesthood and the people, and the setting up of a spiritual kingdom in which all true believers were "kings and priests unto God," the division would have been more stringent and the disabilities of the common people greater. Whereas we are told again and again in effect, that in "Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free, male nor female, but ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

We commend a few passages bearing in the ministrations of woman under the old dispensation to the careful consideration of our readers. "And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time," etc. (Judges 4:4-10). There are two particulars in this passage worthy of note. First, the authority of Deborah as a prophetess, or revealer of God's will to Israel, was acknowledged and submitted to as implicitly as in the cases of the male judges who succeeded her. Secondly, she is made the military head of ten thousand men, Barak refusing to go to battle without her.

Again, in 2 Kings 22:12-20, we have an account of the king sending the high-priest, the scribe, etc., to Huldah, the prophetess, the wife of Shallum, who dwelt at Jerusalem, in the college; to inquire at her mouth the will of God in reference to the book of the law which had been found in the house of the Lord. The authority and dignity of Huldah's message to the king does not betray anything of that trembling diffidence or abject servility which some persons seem to think should characterize the religious exercises of woman. She answers him as the prophetess of the Lord, having the signet of the King of kings attached to her utterances.

"The Lord gave the word, and great was the company of those that published it" (Psalms 68:11). In the original Hebrew it is, "Great was the company of women publishers, or women evangelists." Grotius explains this passage, "The Lord shall give the word, that is plentiful matter of speaking; so that he would call those which follow the great army of preaching women, victories, or female conquerers." How comes it that the feminine word is actually excluded in this text? That it is there as plainly as any other word no Hebrew scholar will deny. It is too much to assume that as our translators could not alter it, as they did "Diaconon" when applied to Phebe, they preferred to leave it out altogether rather than give a prophecy so unpalatable to their prejudice. But the Lord gives the word and He will choose whom He pleases to publish it; not withstanding the condemnation of translators and divines.

"For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam" (Micah 6:4). God here classes Miriam with Moses and Aaron, and declares that He sent her before His people. We fear that had some of our friends been men of Israel at that time, they would have disputed such a leadership. In the light of such passages as these, who will dare to dispute the fact that God did under the old dispensation endue his handmaidens with the gifts and calling of prophets answering to our present idea of preachers. Strange indeed would it be if under the fulness of the gospel dispensation, there were nothing analogous to this, but "positive and explicit rules," to prevent any approximation thereto. We are thankful to find, however, abundant evidence that the "spirit of prophecy which is the testimony of Jesus," was poured out on the female as fully as on the male disciple, and "His daughters and His handmaidens" prophesied. We commend the following texts from the New Testament to the careful consideration of our readers.

"And she (Anna) was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption on Jerusalem" (Luke 2:37-38). Can any one explain wherein this exercise of Anna's differed from that of Simeon, recorded just before? It was in the same public place, the temple. It was during the same service. It was equally public, for she "spake of Him to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (see Watson on this passage).

Jesus said to the two Marys, "All hail! And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go, tell my brethren that they go before me into Galilee" (Matthew 28:9-10). There are two or three points in this beautiful narrative to which we wish to call the attention of our readers.

First, it was the first announcement of the glorious news to a lost world and a company of forsaking disciples. Second, it was as public as the nature of the case demanded; and intended ultimately to be published to the ends of the earth. Third, Mary was expressly commissioned to reveal the fact to the apostles; and thus she literally became their teacher in that memorable occasion. Oh, glorious privilege, to be allowed to herald the glad tidings of a Savior risen! How could it be that our Lord chose a woman to this honour? Well, one reason might be that the male disciples were all missing at the time. They all forsook Him and fled. But woman was there, as she had ever been, ready to minister to her risen, as to her dying Lord-- "Not she with traitorous lips her Savior stung, Not she denied Him with unholy tongue;

She, whilst apostles shrunk, could danger brave;

Last at the cross, and earliest at the grave." But surely, if the dignity of our Lord of His message were likely to be imperiled by committing this sacred trust to a woman, He who was guarded by legions of angels could have commanded another messenger; but, as if intent on doing her honour and rewarding her unwavering fidelity, He reveals Himself first to her; and, as an evidence that He had taken out of the way the curse under which she had so long groaned, nailing it to His cross, He makes her who had been first in the transgression, first also in the glorious knowledge of complete redemption.

"Acts 1:14; Acts 2:1; Acts 2:4. We are in the first of these passages expressly told that the women were assembled with the disciples on the day of Pentecost; and in the second, that the cloven tongues sat upon them each, and the Holy Ghost filled them all, and they spake as the Spirit gave them utterance. It is nothing to the point to argue that the gift of tongues was a miraculous gift, seeing that the Spirit was the primary bestowment. The tongues were only emblematical of the office which the Spirit was henceforth to sustain to His people. The Spirit was given alike to the female as to the male disciple, and this is cited by Peter (16, 18), as the peculiar specialty of the latter dispensation. What a remarkable device of the devil that he has so long succeeded in hiding this characteristic of the latter day glory! He knows, whether the Church does or not, how eminently detrimental to the interests of his kingdom have been the religious labours of woman; and while her Seed has mortally bruised his head, he ceases not to bruise her heel; but the time of her deliverance draweth nigh."

"Philip the evangelist had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy." From eusebius, the ancient ecclesiastical historian, we learn that Philip's daughters lived to a good old age, always abounding in the work of the lord. "Mighty luminaries," he writes, " have fallen asleep in Asia. Philip, and two of his virgin daughters, sleep at Hierapolis; the other, and the beloved disciple, John, rest at Ephesus."

"And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-labourers" (Php 4:3). This is a recognition of female labourers, not concerning the gospel but in the gospel, whom Paul classes with Clement, and other his fellow-labourers. Precisely the same terms are applied to Timotheus, whom Paul styles a "minister of God, and his fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ" (1 Thessalonians 3:2).

Again, "Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus; who have for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but all the Churches of the Gentiles" (Romans 16:3-4). The word rendered helpers means a fellow-labourer, associate coadjutor [Greenfield] working together, an assistant, a joint labourer, a colleague. [Dunbar] In the New Testament spoken only of a co-worker, helper in a Christian work, that is of Christian teachers. [Robinson] How can these terms, with any show of consistency, be made to apply merely to the exercise of hospitality towards that apostle, or the duty of private visitation? To be a partner, coadjutor, or joint worker with a preacher of the gospel, must be something more than to be his waiting-maid.

Again, "Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord" (Romans 16:12). Dr. Clarke, on this verse, says, "Many have spent much useless labour in endeavouring to prove that these women did not preach. That there were prophetesses as well as prophets in the Church we learn, and that a woman might pray or prophesy provided that she had her head covered we know; and, according to St. Paul (1 Corinthians 14:3), whoever prophesied spoke unto others to edification, exhortation, and comfort, and that no preacher can do more every person must acknowledge. Because, to edify exhort, and comfort, are the prime ends of the gospel ministry. If women thus prophesied, then women preached."

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). If this passage does not teach that in the privileges, duties, and responsibilities of Christ's kingdom, all differences of nation, caste, and sex are abolished, we should like to know what it does teach, and wherefore it was written (see also 1 Corinthians 7:22). As we have before observed, the text, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, is the only one in the whole book of God which even by false translation can be made prohibitory of female speaking in the Church; how comes it then, that by this one isolated passage, which, according to our best Greek authorities, is wrongly rendered and wrongly applied, woman's lips have been sealed for centuries, and the "testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy," silenced, when bestowed on her? How is it that this solitary text has been allowed to stand unexamined and unexplained, nay, that learned commentators who have known its true meaning as perfectly as either Robinson, Bloomfield, Greenfield, Scott, Parkhurst, or Locke have upheld the delusion, and enforced it as a Divine precept binding on all female disciples through all time?

Surely there must have been some unfaithfulness, "craftiness," and "handling of the word of life deceitfully" somewhere. Surely the love of caste and unscriptural jealousy for a separated

priesthood has had something to do with this anomaly. By this course divines and commentators have involved themselves in all sorts of inconsistencies and contradictions; and worse, they have nullified some of the most precious promises of God’s word. They have set the most explicit predictions of prophecy at variance with apostolic injunctions, and the most immediate and wonderful operations of the Holy Ghost in direct opposition "to positive, explicit, and universal rules."

Notwithstanding however all this opposition to female ministry on the part of those deemed authorities in the Church, there have been some in all ages in whom the Holy Ghost has wrought so mightily, that at the sacrifice of reputation and all things most dear, they have been compelled to come out as witnesses for Jesus and ambassadors of His gospel. As a rule, these women have been amongst the most devoted and self-denying of the Lord’s people, giving indisputable evidence by the purity and beauty of their lives that they were led by the Spirit of God.

Now, if the word of God forbids female ministry, we would ask how it happens that so many of the most devoted handmaidens of the Lord have felt themselves constrained by the Holy Ghost to exercise it? Surely there must be some mistake somewhere, for the word and the Spirit cannot contradict each other. Either the word does not condemn women preaching, or these confessedly holy women have been deceived. Will any one venture to assert that such women as Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, Mrs. Fletcher of Madely, and Mrs. Smith have been deceived with respect to their call to deliver the gospel messages to their fellow-creatures? If not, then God does call and qualify women to preach, and His word, rightly understood, cannot forbid what His Spirit enjoins.

Further, it is a significant fact, which we commend to the consideration of all thoughtful Christians, that the public ministry of women has been eminently owned of God in the salvation of souls and the edification of His people. Paul refers to the fruits of his labours as evidence of his Divine commission (1 Corinthians 9:20). "If I am not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord." If this criterion be allowed to settle the question respecting woman’s call to preach, we have no fear as to the result. A few examples of the blessing which has attended the ministrations of females, may help to throw some light on this matter of a Divine call. At a missionary meeting held at Columbia, March 26th, 1824, the name of Mrs. Smith, of the Cape of Good Hope, was brought before the meeting, when Sir Richard Otley, the chairman, said, "The name of Mrs. Smith has been justly celebrated by the religious world and in the colony of the Cape of Good Hope. I heard a talented missionary state, that wherever he went in that colony, at 600 or 1000 miles from the principal seat of government, among the natives of Africa, and wherever he saw persons converted to Christianity, the name of Mrs. Smith was hailed as the person from whom they received their religious impressions; and although no less than ten missionaries, all men of piety and industry, were stationed in that settlement, the exertions of Mrs. Smith alone were more efficacious, and had been attended with greater success than the labours of those missionaries combined." The Rev. J. Campbell, missionary to Africa, says, "So extensive were the good effects of her pious exhortations, that on my first visit to the colony, wherever I met with persons of evangelical piety, I generally found that their first impressions of religion were ascribed to Mrs. Smith."

Mrs. Mary Taft, the talented lady of the Rev. Dr. Taft, was another eminently successful labourer in the Lord’s vineyard. "If," says Mrs. Palmer, "the criterion by which we may judge of a Divine call to

proclaim salvation be by the proportion of fruit gathered, then to the commission Mrs. Taft is appended the Divine signature, to a degree pre-eminently unmistakable. In reviewing her diary, we are constrained to believe that not one minister in five hundred could produce so many seals to their ministry. An eminent minister informed us that of those who had been brought to Christ through her labours, over two hundred entered the ministry. She seldom opened her mouth in public assemblies, either in prayer or speaking, but the Holy Spirit accompanied her words in such a wonderful manner, that sinners were convicted, and, as in apostolic times, were constrained to cry out, 'What must we do to be saved?' She laboured under the sanction and was hailed as a fellow-helper in the gospel by the Revs. Messrs. Mather, Pawson, Hearnshaw, Blackborne, Marsden, Bramwell, Vasey, and many other equally distinguished ministers of her time." The Rev. Mr. Pawson, when President of the Wesleyan Conference, writes as follows to a circuit where Mrs. Taft was stationed with her husband, where she met with some gainsayers:--'It is well known that religion has been for some time at a very low ebb in Dover. I therefore could not help thinking that is was a kind providence that Mrs. Taft was stationed among you, and that, by the blessing of God, she might be the instrument of reviving the work of God among you. I seriously believe Mrs. Taft to be a deeply pious, prudent, modest woman. I believe the Lord hath owned and blessed her labours very much, and many, yea, very many souls have been brought to the saving knowledge of God by her preaching. Many have come to hear her out of curiosity, who would not have come to hear a man, and have been awakened and converted to God. I do assure you there is much fruit of her labours in many parts of our connection."

Mrs. Fletcher, the wife of the sainted vicar of Madeley, was another of the daughters of the Lord on whom was poured the spirit of prophecy. This eminently devoted lady opened an orphan house, and devoted her time, her heart, and her fortune, to the work of the Lord. The Rev. Mr. Hodson, in referring to her public labours, says, "Mrs. Fletcher was not only luminous but truly eloquent--her discourses displayed much good sense, and were fraught with the riches of the gospel. She excelled in that poetry of an orator which can alone supply the place of all the rest--that eloquence which goes directly to the heart. She was the honoured instrument of doing much good; and the fruit of her labours is now manifest in the lives and tempers of numbers who will be her crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord." The Rev. Henry Moore sums up a fine eulogium on her character and labours by saying, "May not every pious churchman say, Would to God all the Lord's people were such prophets and prophetesses!"

Miss Elizabeth Hurrell traveled through many counties in England, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ; and very many were, through her instrumentality, brought to a knowledge of the truth, not a few of whom were afterwards called to fill very honourable stations in the Church. From the Methodist Conference, held at Manchester, 1787, Mr. Wesley wrote to Miss Sarah Mallett, whose labours, while very acceptable to the people, had been opposed by some of the preachers:--"We give the right hand of fellowship to Sarah Mallett, and have no objection to her being a preacher in our connection, so long as she preaches Methodist doctrine, and attends to our discipline."

Such are a few examples of the success attending the public labours of females in the gospel. We might give many more, but our space only admits of a bare mention of Mrs. Wesley, Mrs. Rogers, Mrs. President Edwards, Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Gilbert, Miss Lawrence, Miss Newman, Miss Miller, Miss Tooth, and Miss Cutler, whose holy lives and zealous labours were

owned of God in the conversion of thousands of souls, and the abundant edification of the Lord's people. Nor are the instances of the spirit of prophecy bestowed on women confined to by-gone generations: the revival of this age, as well as of every other, has been marked by this endowment, and the labours of such pious and talented ladies as Mrs. Palmer, Mrs. Finney, Mrs. Wightman, Miss Marsh, -3- with numberless other Marys and Phoebes, have contributed in no small degree to its extension and power.

We have endeavored in the foregoing pages to establish, what we sincerely believe, that woman has a right to teach. Here the whole question hinges. If she has the right, she has it independently of any man-made restrictions which do not equally refer to the opposite sex. If she has the right, and possesses the necessary qualifications, we maintain that, where the law of expediency does not prevent, she is at liberty to exercise it without any further pretensions to inspiration than those put forth by that male sex. If, on the other hand, it can be proved that she has not the right, but that imperative silence is imposed upon her by the word of God, we cannot see who has authority to relax or make exceptions to the law.

If commentators had dealt with the Bible on other subjects as they have dealt with it on this, taking isolated passages, separated from their explanatory connections, and insisting on a literal interpretation of the words of our version, what errors and contradictions would have been forced upon the acceptance of the Church, and what terrible results would have accrued to the world. On this principle the Universalist will have all men unconditionally saved, because the Bible says, "Christ is the Saviour of all men," etc. The Antinomian, according to this rule of interpretation, has most unquestionable foundation for his dead faith and hollow profession, seeing that St. Paul declares over and over again that men are "saved by faith and not by works." The Unitarian, also, in support of his soul-withering doctrine, triumphantly refers to numerous passages which, taken alone, teach only the humanity of Jesus. In short, "there is no end to the errors in faith and practice which have resulted from taking isolated passages, wrested from their proper connections, or the light thrown upon them by other Scriptures, and applying them to sustain a favourite theory." Judging from the blessed results which have almost invariably followed the ministrations of women in the cause of Christ, we fear it will be found, in the great day of account, that a mistaken and unjustifiable application of the passage, "Let your women keep silence in the Churches," has resulted in more loss to the Church, evil to the world, and dishonour to God, than any of the errors we have already referred to. And feeling, as we have long felt, that this is a subject of vast importance to the interests of Christ's kingdom and the glory of God, we would most earnestly commend its consideration to those who have influence in the Churches. We think it a matter worthy of their consideration whether God intended woman to bury her talents and influence as she now does? And whether the circumscribed sphere of woman's religious labours may not have something to do with the comparative non-success of the gospel in these latter days.

Chapter 4

01.00. Godliness

Godliness

Project Gutenberg

Title: Godliness

Author: Catherine Booth

Release Date: October, 2004 [EBook #6669] [Yes, we are more than one year ahead of schedule] [This file was first posted on January 12, 2003]

Edition: 10

Language: English

Character set encoding: ASCII

Produced by Avinash Kothare, Juliet Sutherland, Charles Franks and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team. This file was produced from images generously made available by the Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions.

GODLINESS.

BEING REPORTS OF A SERIES OF ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT JAMES'S HALL, LONDON, W., During 1881,

BY MRS. CATHERINE BOOTH.

INTRODUCTION BY DANIEL STEELE, D.D.

CONTENTS.

Chapter 1. Repentance

Chapter 2. Saving Faith

Chapter 3. Charity

Chapter 4. Charity And Rebuke

Chapter 5. Charity And Conflict

Chapter 6. Charity And Loneliness

Chapter 7. Conditions Of Effectual Prayer

Chapter 8. The Perfect Heart

Chapter 9. How To Work For God With Success

Chapter 10. Enthusiasm And Full Salvation

Chapter 11. Hindrances To Holiness

Chapter 12. Addresses On Holiness PUBLISHERS' PREFACE. In giving this volume to our American readers, we are assured that we are doing a special favor to all the lovers of "Christianity in earnest." "Aggressive Christianity," from the same talented author, has met with unusual favor, and has been the means of much good. We are confident that the present volume is in all respects equal to the former, and that no one can read it without great spiritual profit. The Introduction, by Dr. Daniel Steele, is a forcible presentation of the main doctrines of the book, and is creditable to the head and heart of the writer, and a commendation which all intelligent readers will highly esteem. Our object in publishing these sermons, is, that their perusal may kindle a flame of revival in the hearts of believers, which may result in many turning unto the Lord.

MCDONALD & GILL

BOSTON, MASS.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE. In presenting another volume of reports of my Addresses, I have only to repeat what I have said with respect to similar books before-- Read, for the sake of getting more light and more blessing to your soul, and you will, I trust, partake of the good which many have professed to receive at the West-End services, wherein most of these words were first spoken.

I am well aware that, in such imperfect reports of, for the most part, extemporaneous utterances, often most hurriedly corrected, there may be found abundant ground for criticism; but, if this book may be the means of leading only a few souls to devote themselves more fully to God and to the salvation of men, I shall be more than compensated for any unfriendly criticism with which it may meet.

I have not sought to please any but the Lord, and to His fatherly loving-kindness I commend both the book and its readers.

CATHERINE BOOTH.

London, Nov. 10, 1881.

INTRODUCTION. The sermons of Mrs. Booth already re-published under the title of "Aggressive Christianity," came to American Christians as a tonic to their weakness, and a stimulant to their inertness. The sermons in the present volume are a much-needed prophylactic, a safeguard against several practical errors in dealing with souls; errors which lead them into Egyptian darkness, instead of the marvelous light. The sermon on Repentance is a most faithful showing up of spurious repentance, the vain substitute for a downright abandonment of every form of sin, and right-about facing towards the Lord. In directness and point, it is a model for earnest revival preaching,--rather, for all preaching to unsaved souls, outside the church, or within it. All of these will be found in some subterfuge, which must be ruthlessly torn down, before it will be abandoned for the cleft Rock. The sermon on Saving Faith is next in order. The disastrous consequences of what, for the want of a better description, maybe styled an Antinomian faith, an unrepentant assent of the intellect to the historic facts of the Gospel, which too many evangelists and other religious teachers are calling saving faith, are clearly set forth and plainly labeled, POISON. This spurious

trust in Christ following a superficial repentance, which has never felt the desperate sinfulness and real misery of sin, has furnished our churches with a numerous class of members, aptly described by the prophet Micah: "The sin of Israel is great and unrepented of, yet they will lean on the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us?" We are convinced that much of the work of the faithful and pungent preacher, who preaches with his eye fixed on the great white throne and the descending Judge, is to dislodge professors from their imaginary trust in a Saviour who does not save them, and probe deeply their hearts festering with sin, which have been hastily pronounced healed, "slightly healed." Many of us have incautiously said to awakened souls, "Only believe," before we have thrust the heart through and through with the sword of God's law. We have dismissed God's schoolmaster. The law, like the slave charged with the task of leading the boy to school, and of committing him to the teacher, we have thought to be too harsh and severe for our sentimental age, and have unwisely discharged, and have assumed its office of a paidagogos to Christ, and we have missed the way, and misled a priceless soul. God have mercy on us, and give us humility, as He gave Apollos, to be set right by an anointed woman!

After her timely correction of erroneous teachings on faith, Mrs. Booth proceeds, pruning-knife in hand, to cut away from the tree of modern Christianity the poisonous fungus of a "spurious charity." Her four sermons on Charity are four beacons set on the rocks of counterfeit Christian love. She sets forth several infallible tests by which genuine love may be distinguished from the devil's base imitation. Like the Epistles of St. John, these sermons are full of touchstones for testing love, that golden principle of the Christian life. It would be very profitable for all professors of that perfect love which casteth out all tormenting fear, to apply unflinchingly these touch-stones to themselves. They may find the word "perfection" taking on a meaning deeper, broader and higher than they had ever before conceived. Why should not our conception of Christian perfection steadily grow with the increase of our knowledge of God and of His holy law? The sermon on The Conditions of Effectual Prayer, we commend to all Christians and to all seekers of Christ, who are mourning because their prayers do not prevail with God. In the clear light of this sermon they will find that the difficulty lies, either in the lack of fellowship with Jesus Christ, or of obedience to His commands, or in the absence from their hearts of the interceding Spirit, or in defective faith. In the discussion of these hindrances to prayer, the preacher lays open the heart, and with a skilful spiritual surgery, searches it to the very bottom. The incisiveness of her style, her courage and plain dealing with her hearers, tearing off the masks of sin and selfishness, the various guises in which these masquerade in many Christian hearts and obstruct their access to a throne of grace, remind us of Dr. Finney's unsparing exposure and condemnation of these foes to Christian holiness, and of John Wesley's cutting up by the roots "Sin in Believers." In this sermon Mrs. Booth turns her attention to another phase of faith and of practical error in the guidance of souls to Christ. Her views on this vexed question are not extreme but philosophical and scriptural. She teaches that God has made the bestowment of salvation simultaneous with the exercise of faith, and that "telling a person to believe he is saved, before he is saved, is telling him to believe a lie." But she insists that the act of faith is put forth with the special aid of the Holy Spirit giving an assurance that the blessing sought will be granted. This assurance, or earnest, given by the Spirit, becomes the basis on which the final act of faith rests, namely, "I believe that I receive." This corresponds with William Taylor's Divine "ascertainment of the fact of the sinner's surrender to God, and his acceptance of Christ," before justification. [Footnote: Election of Grace, pp. 38-42.] Both teachers agree with Wesley's analysis of faith which teaches that the fourth and last step,

"He doth it," can be taken only by the special enabling power of the Holy Spirit, [Footnote: Sermons. Patience, Section 13; Scripture Way of Salvation, Section 17; and Whedon on Mark 11:24] All three locate the Divine efficiency before the declaration, "I believe that I receive," or "have received" (R. V.), making that declaration rest upon the perception of a Divine change within the consciousness. They all insist that saving faith is not a mere humanly moral exercise, but that power to believe with the heart descends from God, and that it must be waited for in prayer, and that it becomes in the believer a series of supernatural and spiritual acts, a habit of soul, at once the seed and fruit of the Divine life-stirring, uniting in itself the characters of penitent humility, self-renunciation, simple trust, and absolute obedience grounded in love. These teachers magnify the Divine element in faith. We look in vain in their writings for any such direction to a penitent as this, "Believe that you are saved, because, God says so in His Word," but rather believe that you are saved when you hear His Spirit crying, Abba, Father, in your heart.

Many modern teachers fall into the error of treating saving faith as an unaided intellectual act to be performed, at will, at any time. It is rather a spiritual act possible only when prompted by the Holy Spirit, who incites to faith only when He sees true repentance and a hearty surrender to God. Then the Spirit reveals Christ and assists to grasp Him. In the refutation of the high predestinarian doctrine that faith is an irresistible grace sovereignly bestowed upon the elect, there is great danger of falling into the opposite error, called Pelagianism, which makes saving faith an exercise which the natural man is competent to put forth without the help of the Holy Spirit. The real guilt of unbelief lies in that voluntary indifference toward Christ, and impenitence of heart, in which the Holy Spirit cannot inspire saving faith. In our introduction to "Aggressive Christianity," we advertised, in behalf of the American churches, a universal want--Enthusiasm. In her brief Exeter-Hall address, Mrs. Booth discloses the source of the supply. Holiness is the well-spring of enthusiasm. Hence it is not a spring freshet, but an overflowing river of power in all its possessors, and, notably in the Salvation Army, bearing the unchurched masses of England on its bosom. A holy enthusiasm is contagious and conquering. We cannot touch the people with the icicle of logic; but they will not fail to bow to the scepter of glowing and joyful love. Few men can reason; all can feel. Enthusiasm and full salvation, like the Siamese twins, cannot be separated and live. The error of the modern pulpit is that of the blacksmith hammering cold steel--a faint impression and huge labor. The baptism of fire softening our assemblies would lighten the preacher’s toil and multiply its productiveness. The four addresses on Holiness are hortatory rather than argumentative or exegetical. They are spiritual cyclones. It is difficult to see how any Christian could withstand these impassioned appeals to make what Joseph Cook calls "an affectionate, total, irreversible, eternal, self-surrender to Jesus Christ, as both Saviour and Lord," in order to attain that "perfect similarity of feeling with God," wherein evangelical perfection consists.

It gives me great pleasure to have some humble part in echoing across the American continent these glowing utterances from the lips of this modern Deborah, the Christian prophetess raised up by God for the deliverance of His people from captivity to worldliness and religious apathy. "Would God that all the Lord’s people," men and women, "were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!"

"Shall we the Spirit’s course restrain, Or quench the heavenly fire? Let God His messengers ordain, And whom He will inspire! Blow as He list, the Spirit’s choice Of instruments we bless: We will, if Christ be preached, rejoice, And wish the word success."

DANIEL STEELE.

Reading, Mass., Nov. 23, 1883.

01.01. Repentance

CHAPTER I.

REPENTANCE, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of Heaven is at band.-- Matthew 3:2. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.-- Matthew 4:17.

"Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Qentiles, that they should repent and torn to God, and do works meet for repentance."-- Acts 26:19-20. In the mouths of three witnesses--John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and the Apostle Paul--this word shall be established, namely, that repentance is an indispensable condition of entering the kingdom of God.

People generally are all at sea oh this subject, as though insisting that repentance were an arbitrary arrangement on the part of God. I believe God has made human salvation as easy as the Almighty, Infinite mind could make it. But there is a necessity in the case, that we should "repent and turn to God." It is just as necessary that my feelings be changed and brought to repentance towards God, as it is that the wicked, disobedient boy, should have his feelings brought back into harmony with his father before he can be forgiven. Precisely the same laws of mind are brought into action in both cases, and there is the same necessity in both.

If there is any father here who has a prodigal son, I ask, How is it that you are not reconciled to your son? You love him--love him intensely. Probably you are more conscious of your love for him than for any other of your children. Your heart yearns over him every day; you pray for him night and day; you dream of him by night; your bowels yearn over your son, and you say, with David, "Absalom, Absalom, my son, my son." Why are you not reconciled? Why not pat him on the head, or stroke his face, and say, "My dear lad, I am well pleased with you. I love you complacently; I give you my approbation?" Why are you always reproving him? Why are you obliged to hold him at arm’s length? Why can you not live on amicable terms with him? Why can you not have him come in and out, and live with you on the same terms as the affectionate, obedient daughter? "Oh!" you say, "the case is different; I cannot. It is not, ’I would not;’ but, ’I cannot.’ Before that can possibly be, the boy’s feelings must be changed towards me. He is at war with me; he has mistaken notions of me; he thinks I am hard, and cruel, and exacting, and severe. I have done all a father could do, but he sees things differently, to what they are, and has harbored these hard feelings against me until he hates me, and will go on in defiance of my will." You say, "It is a necessity that, as a wise and righteous father, I must insist on a change in him. I cannot receive him as a son, till he comes to my feet. He must confess his sin, and ask me to forgive him. Then, oh! how gladly will my fatherly affection gush out! How I should run to meet him, and put my arms around his neck! but there is a ’cannot’ in the case." Just so. It is not that He does not love you, sinner; it is not that the great, benevolent heart of God has not, as it were, wept tears of blood over you; it is not that He would not put His loving arms around you this moment, if you would only come to His feet, and

confess you were wrong, and seek His pardon; but, otherwise, He may not--He cannot. The laws of His universe are against Him doing so. The good, it may be, of millions of immortal beings, is involved. He dare not, and He cannot, until there is a change of mind in you. You must repent. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Well, if repentance be an indispensable condition of salvation, let us glance at it for a moment, and try to find out what repentance really is; and, oh! how full of confusion the world and the church are upon this subject! I say it, because I know it by converse with hundreds of people. May the Holy Spirit help us!

Well, first, repentance is not merely conviction of sin. Oh! if it only were, what a different world we should have to-night, for there are tens of thousands on whose hearts God's Spirit has done His office by convincing them of sin. I am afraid we should be perfectly alarmed, astounded, confounded, if we had any conception of the multitudes whom God has convinced of sin, as He did Agrippa and Festus. Oh! I could not tell you the numbers of people, who, in our anxious meetings, have grasped my hand, and said, "Oh! what would I give to feel as I once felt! There was a time, fifteen, or seventeen, or twenty years ago," and so on, "when I was so deeply convinced of sin that I could scarcely sleep, or eat--that I could find no rest; but, instead of going on till I found peace, I got diverted, cooled down, and now, I feel as hard as a stone." I am afraid there are tens of thousands in this condition--once convinced of sin.

There are thousands of others, who are convinced now. They say, "Yes, it is true what the minister says. I know I ought to lay down the weapons of my warfare against God; I know I ought to cut off this right hand, and pluck out this right eye." They are convinced of sin, but they go no further. That is not repentance. They live this week as they did last. There is no response to the Spirit; they resist the Holy Ghost.

Neither is repentance mere sorrow for sin. I have seen people weep bitterly, and writhe and struggle, but yet hug on to their idols, and in vain you try to shake them from them. Oh! if Jesus Christ would have saved them with those idols, they would have no objection at all. If they could have got through the strait gate with this one particular idol, they would have gone through long since; but to part with that--that is another thing. Such people will weep like your stubborn child, when you want him to do something which he does not want to do. He will cry, and when you apply the rod he will cry harder, but he will not yield. When he yields, he becomes a penitent; but, until he does, he is merely a convicted sinner. When God applies the rod of His Spirit, the rod of His providence, the rod of His Word, sinners will cry, and wince, and whine, and make you believe they are praying, and want to be saved, but all the while they are holding their necks as stiff as iron. They will not submit. The moment they submit, they become true penitents, and get saved. There is no mistake more common than for people to suppose they are penitents when they are not. There are some of you in this condition, I know. I am afraid you are quite mistaken--you are not penitents. God is true though every man should be a liar; and, if you had sought, as you say you have, and perhaps, think you have; if you had been sincere and honest with God, you would have been saved years ago. Oh! may God, the Holy Spirit, help you to come out and be HONEST. That is what God wants--that you be honest. "Oh," says He, "why cover ye my altar with tears, and bring your vain oblations? Just be honest, and I will be honest with you and bless you; but while you come before Me and weep and profess, and bring the halt, and the maimed, and the blind, a

curse be upon you." He looks at you afar off. Be honest. Repentance is not mere sorrow for sin. You may be ever so sorry, and all the way down to death be hugging on to some forbidden possession, as was the young ruler. That is not repentance.

Neither is repentance a promise that you will forsake sin in the future. Oh! if it were, there would be many penitents here to-night. There is scarcely a poor drunkard that does not promise, in his own mind, or to his poor wife, or somebody, that he will forsake his cups. There is scarcely any kind of a sinner that does not continually promise that he will give up his sin, and serve God, but he does not do it.

Then what is repentance? Repentance is simply renouncing sin--turning round from darkness to light--from the power of Satan unto God. This is giving up sin in your heart, in purpose, in intention, in desire, resolving that you will give up every evil thing, and DO IT NOW. Of course, this involves sorrow, for how will any sane man turn himself round from a given course into another, if he does not repent having taken that course? It implies, also, hatred of, sin. He hates the course he formerly took, and turns round from it. He is like the prodigal, when he sat in the swine-yard amongst the husks and the filth, he fully resolved, and at last he acts. He went, and that was the test of his penitence! He might have sat resolving and promising till now, if he had lived as long, and he would never have got the father’s kiss, the father’s welcome, if he had not started; but he went. He left the filth, the swine-yard, the husks--he trampled them under his feet; he left the citizen of that country, and gave up all his subterfuges and excuses, and went to his father honestly, and said, "I have sinned!" which implied a great deal more in his language then than it does in ours now. "I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee;" and then comes the proof of his submission, "and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants"--put me in a stable, or set me to clean the boots, so that I can be in thy family and have thy smile. That is repentance--Jesus Christ’s own beautiful illustration of true penitence. Have you done that? Have you forsaken the accursed thing? Have you cut off that particular thing which the Holy Spirit has revealed to you? Is the "but" the hindrance that keeps you out of the Kingdom? You know what it is, and you will never get saved until you renounce it. Submission is the test of penitence. My child may be willing to do a hundred and fifty other things, but, if he is not willing to submit on the one point of controversy, he is a rebel, and remains one until he yields.

Now, here is just the difference between a spurious and a real repentance. I am afraid we have thousands in our churches who had a spurious repentance: they were convinced of sin--they were sorry for it; they wanted to live a better life, to love God in a sort of general way; but they skipped over the real point of controversy with God; they hid it from their pastor, perhaps, and from the deacons, and from the people who talked with them.

Now, I say, Abraham might have been willing to have given up every other thing that he possessed; but, if he had not been willing to give up Isaac, all else would have been useless. It is your Isaac God wants. You have got an Isaac, just as the young ruler had his possessions. You have got something that you are holding on to, that the Holy Spirit says you must let go, and you say, "I can’t." Very well; then you must stop outside the kingdom. I beseech you, do not deceive yourselves by supposing that you repent, for you do not; but, oh! my dear friends, let me beseech you to repent. The apostle says, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;" and this is, I believe, the greatest work of the ministry. To do what? To persuade men to submit. We

are constantly talking to thousands of people who know just what God wants of them. We cannot bring many of them any new light or new Gospel. They know all about it. They used to tell me that so often, that I longed for a congregation of heathen, which I have found since then. Consequently, when they hear the Gospel, like the publicans and sinners of old, they go into the kingdom, while such as some of you who are the natural children of the kingdom, are shut out, because when they hear they receive, and submit, and obey, while you stand outside and hold on to your idols, and reason, and quibble, and reject! My dear friends, let me persuade you to trample under foot that idol, to tear down that refuge of lies, and to come to God honestly, and say, "Lord, here I am, to be a servant, to be nothing, to do anything, to suffer anything. I know I shall be happier with Thy smile and Thy blessing than all these evil things now make me without Thee." When you come to a full surrender, my friends, you will get what you have been seeking, some of you, for years. But then another difficulty comes in, and people say, "I have not the power to repent." Oh! yes, you have. That is a grand mistake. You have the power, or God would not command it. You can repent. You can this moment lift up your eyes to Heaven, and say, with the prodigal, "Father, I have sinned, and I renounce my sin." You may not be able to weep--God nowhere requires or commands that; but you are able, this very moment, to renounce sin, in purpose, in resolution, in intention. Mind, don't confound the renouncing of the sin, with the power of saving yourself from it. If you renounce it, Jesus will come and save you from it. Like the man with the withered hand--Jesus intended to heal that man. Where was the power to come from to heal him? From Jesus, of course. The benevolence, the love, that prompted that healing, all came from Jesus; but Jesus wanted a condition. What was it? The response of the man's will; and so He said, "Stretch forth thy hand." If he had been like some of you, he would have said, "What an unreasonable command! You know I cannot do it--I cannot." Some of you say that; but I say you can, and you will have to do it, or you will be lost. What did Jesus want? He wanted that, "I will, Lord," inside the man--the response of his will. He wanted him to say, "Yes, Lord;" and, the moment he said that, Jesus supplied strength, and he stretched it forth, and you know what happened.

Don't look forward, and say, "I shall not have strength;" that is not your matter--that is His. He will hold you up;--He is able, when you once commit yourself to Him. Now then, say, "I will." Never mind what you suffer--it shall be done. He will pour in the oil and balm. His glorious, blessed presence will do more for you in one hour, than all your struggling, praying, and wrestling have done all these weary years. He will lift you up out of the pit. You are in the mire now, and the more you struggle the more you sink; but He will lift you out of it, and put your feet on the rock, and then you will stand firm. Stretch out your withered hand, whatever it may be;--say, "I will, Lord." You have the power, and mind, you have the obligation, which is universal and immediate. God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent," and to believe the Gospel. What a tyrant He must be if He commands that, and yet He knows you have not the power!

Now, do you repent? Mind the old snare. Not, do you weep? The feeling will come after the surrender.

Now, do not say, "I do not feel enough." Do you feel enough to be willing to forsake your sin? that is the point. Any soul who does not repent enough to forsake his sin, is not a penitent at all! When you repent enough to forsake your sin, that moment your repentance is sincere, and you may take hold of Jesus with a firm grasp. You have a right to appropriate the promise, then it is "look and live." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Will you come to that point now?

Don’t begin making an excuse. Now!--all men! everywhere!--NOW! Oh! my friend, if you had done that ten years ago! You have been accumulating sin, condemnation, and wrath ever since. God commanded you these ten years to repent, and believe the Gospel, and here you are yet. How many sermons have you heard?--invitations rejected? How much blessed persuasion and reasoning of the Holy Spirit have you resisted?--how much of the grace of God have you received in vain? I tremble to think what an accumulated load of abused privilege, lost opportunity, and wasted influence, such people will have to give an account of. Talk about hell!--the weight of this will be hell enough. You don’t seem to think anything of the way you treat God. Oh! people are very much awake to any evil they do to their fellow-men. They can much more easily see the sin of ruining or injuring their neighbors than injuring the great God; but He says, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me." Do you not see; the awful weight of condemnation that comes upon you for putting off, rejecting, resisting, vascilating, halting, while He says, Now--now? He has had a right to every breath you have drawn, to all your influence, every hour, of every day of all your years. Is it not time you ended that controversy? He may do with you as He did with such people once before--swear in His wrath that you shall not enter into His rest. Are you not provoking Him as they provoked Him? Oh! my friend, be persuaded now to repent. Let your sin go away, and come to the feet of Jesus. For your own sake be persuaded. For the peace, the joy, the power, the glory, the gladness of living a life of consecration to God, and service to your fellow-men, yield; but most of all, for the love He bears you, submit. A great, rough man (stricken down), said to my husband, a few weeks ago, when he looked up to the place where other people were being saved, "Mr. Booth, I would not go there for a hundred pounds!" My husband whispered, "Will you go there for love?" and, after a minute’s hesitation, the man, brushing the great tears away, rose up, and followed him. Will you go there for love--the love of Jesus!--the great love wherewith He loved you and gave Himself for you? Will you, for the great yearning with which your Father has been following you all these years--for His love’s sake, will you come? Go down at His feet and submit. The Lord help you! Amen.

01.02. Saving Faith

CHAPTER II.

SAVING FAITH. And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.-- Acts 16:30-31. This is one of the most abused texts in the Bible, and one which, perhaps, has been made to do quite as much work for the devil as for God. Let every saint present, ask in faith for the light of the Holy Ghost, while we try rightly to apply it. Let us enquire:-- 1. Who are to believe? 2. When are they to believe? 3. How are they to believe?

I. Who are to believe? To whom does the Holy Spirit say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved?" Now mark, I answer, not to all sinners indiscriminately. And here is a grand mistake in a great deal of the teaching of this age--that these words are wrested from their explanatory connexion, and from numbers of other texts bearing on the same subject, and held up independently of all the conditions which must ever, and did ever, in the mind and practice of the Apostles, accompany them; indeed, it has only been within the last sixty or seventy years that this new gospel has sprung into existence, preaching indiscriminately to unawakened, unconverted, unrepentant sinners--"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." It seems to me, that great injury has been done to the cause of Christ by thus wrongly dividing the Word of truth, to say nothing of the unphilosophical character of such a course, for how can an unawakened, unconvicted, unrepentant sinner, believe? As soon might Satan believe. It is an utter impossibility. Thousands of these people say, "I do believe." My dear son, only a little time ago, on the top of an omnibus, was speaking to a man who was the worse for liquor, and using very improper language; trying to show him the danger of his evil, wicked course, as a transgressor of the law of God. "Oh!" said the man, "it is not by works, it is by faith, and I believe as much as you do." "Yes," said my son, "but what do you believe?" "Oh," he said, "I believe in Jesus Christ, and of course I shall be saved." That is a sample of thousands. I am meeting with them daily. They believe there was such a man as Jesus, and that He died for sinners, and for them, but as to the exercise of saving faith, they know no more about it than Agrippa or Felix, as is manifest when they come to die, for then, these very people are wringing their hands, tearing their hair, and sending for Christians to come and pray with them. If they had believed, why all this alarm and concern on the approach of death? They were only believers of the head, and not of the heart; that is, they were but theoretical believers in the facts recorded in this book, but not believers in the Scriptural sense, or their faith would have saved them. Now, we maintain that it is useless, and as unphilosophical as it is unscriptural, to preach "only believe" to such characters; and Christians have not done their duty, and have not discharged their responsibility to these souls, when they have told them that Jesus died for them, and that they are to believe in Him! They have a much harder work to do, and that is, "to open their eyes" to a sense of their danger, and make them, by the power of the Spirit, realize the dreadful truth that they are sinners, that they are sick, and then they will run to the Physician. The eyes of the soul must be opened to such a realization of sin, and such an apprehension of the consequences of sin, as shall lead to an earnest desire to be saved from sin.

God’s great means of doing this is the law, as the schoolmaster, to drive sinners to receive Christ as their salvation.

There is not one case in the New Testament in which the apostles urged souls to believe, or in which a soul is narrated as believing, in which we have not good grounds to believe that these preparatory steps of conviction and repentance, had been taken. The only one was that of Simon the sorcerer. He was, as numbers of people are, in great religious movements, carried away by the influence of the meeting, and the example of those around him, and professed to believe. Doubtless, he did credit the fact that Jesus died on the cross. He received the facts of Christianity into his mind, and, in that sense, he became a believer--in the same sense that tens of thousands are in these days--and he was baptized. But when the testing point came, as to whose interests were paramount with him, his own or God’s, then he manifested the true state of the case, as the apostle said, "I see thy heart is not right with God." And nobody is converted whose heart is not right with God! That is the test. If Simon had been converted, his heart would have been right with God and he would not have supposed the Holy Ghost could have been bought for money. And Paul added, "For I perceive that thou art still in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." And what further did he say to him? "Therefore, at once believe"? No; he did not. "Therefore, repent, and pray God, if, perhaps, the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." Repent first! and then believe, and get this wickedness forgiven, and so we get a double lesson in the same passage. This Simon was the only person we have any record of, as believing, where there is not in the passage itself, taken with the context, a reasonable and rational evidence, that these preparatory steps of conviction and repentance, were taken before the teaching of faith, or the exercise and confession of faith. Simon had this faith of the head, but not of the heart, and, therefore, it ended in defeat and despair.

Some have written me this week that they had believed. They had been persuaded into a profession of faith, but no fruits followed. Ah! it was not the faith of the heart: it was the faith of the head--like that of Simon’s--and it left you worse than it found you, and you have been groping and grovelling, ever since. But do not think that was real faith, and that therefore real faith has failed, but be encouraged to begin again, and repent. Try the real thing, for Satan always gets up a counterfeit. Therefore, don’t go down in despair because the wrong kind of faith did not succeed. That shall not make the real faith of God of none effect--God forbid!

Look at one or two other cases--the three thousand in a day. Surely this is a scriptural illustration. Surely no one will call that anti-Gospel or legal. What was the first work Peter did? He drove the knife of God’s convincing truth into their hearts, and made them cry out. He awoke them to the truth of their almost lost and damned condition, till they said, "What must we do to be saved?" They were so concerned, they were so pricked in their hearts, their eyes were so opened to the terrible consequences of their sin, that they cried aloud before the vast multitude, "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?" He convinced them of sin, and thus followed the order of God.

Again, the eunuch is often quoted as an illustration of faith; but what state of mind was he in? Was he a careless, unconvicted sinner? There he was--an Ethiopian, a heathen; but where had he been? To Jerusalem, to worship the true and living God, in the best way he knew, and as far as he understood; and then, what was he doing when Philip found him? He was not content with the

mere worship of the temple, whistling a worldly tune on his way back. He was searching the Scriptures. He was honestly seeking after God, and the Holy Ghost always knows where such souls are; and He said to Philip, "Go, join thyself to that chariot: there is a man seeking after Me; there is a man whose heart is honestly set on finding Me. Go and preach Christ, and tell him to believe." That man would have sacrificed, or done, or lost anything, for salvation, and, as soon as Philip expounded the way of faith, he received it, of course, as all such souls will.

Saul, on his way to Damascus, is another instance. Jesus Christ was the preacher there, and surely, He could not be mistaken. His philosophy was sound. Where did He begin? What did He say to Saul? He saw there an honest-hearted man. Saul was sincere, so far as he understood, and if, in any case, there needed to be the immediate reception of Christ by faith, it was in his. But the Lord Jesus Christ did not say one word about faith. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"--tearing the bandages of deception off his eyes, and letting him see the wickedness of his conduct. When Saul said, "Who art Thou, Lord?" He repeated the accusation. He did not come in with the oil of comfort; He did not plaster the wound up, and make it whole in a moment; but He said, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." He ran the knife in again, and opened Paul’s eyes wider, and his wounds wider, too, and sent him bleeding on to Damascus, where he was three days before he got the healing. He had to send for a poor human instrument, and he had to hear and obey his words, before the scales fell from his eyes, and before the pardon of his sins was pronounced, and the Holy Ghost came into his soul. I wonder what Paul was doing those three days! Not singing songs of thanksgiving and praise. That had to come. Oh! what do you think he was doing? He neither ate nor drank, and he was in the dark. What was he doing? No doubt he was praying. No doubt he was seeking after this Christ, who had spoken to him in the way. No doubt he was looking with horror upon his past life, and abjuring forever his accursed antagonism to Jesus Christ, and to His Gospel. Of course, he was bringing forth fruits meet for repentance, according to the Divine order--Acts xxvi.: And then came Ananias, and preached Christ unto him, and he believed unto salvation, and the scales fell off, and his mouth was filled with praise and thanksgiving to God.

Cornelius, is another instance, but what was the state of his mind and heart? We know that he feared God and wrought righteousness, as far as he was able. He gave alms to the people, and prayed day and night. That is more than some of you ever did, who live in the Gospel times. You never prayed all night about your souls. No wonder if you should lose them--not half a night, some of you. But Cornelius did--he was seeking God. He honestly wanted to know Him. He was willing, at all costs, to do His will: consequently, the Lord sent him the glorious message of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

I might go on multiplying instances, but I must stop. We have said enough to show who are to believe. Truly penitent sinners, and they only. This text is to a repenting, enlightened, convicted sinner. Now, some of you are enlightened, convinced, and so wretched that you cannot sleep. You do repent. You are the very people, then, to whom this text comes--Believe. You are just in the condition of the gaoler.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," and now let us look what state of mind the gaoler was in. We see, from the whole narrative, how his eyes had been opened. The earthquake had done that. Some people need an earthquake before they get their eyes opened,

and it has to be a loud one, too. The gaoler's eyes were opened, and he made the best use of his time. He was lashing their backs a little while before! Talk about a change--here was a change. "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? I am ready to do anything, only tell me what." And when a soul comes to that state of mind, he has nothing more to do but to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And he came in, trembling, and went down on his knees, and washed their stripes. When you get to that state of mind, you will soon get saved. You will have nothing more to do but to believe. You will find it easy work, then.

II. When is a sinner to believe? When he repents? Here again I am going to answer some of your letters. One writes: "I am afraid I do not realize my sin sufficiently. I have no particular agony on account of sin, but I do see my whole life to have been one huge error and sin." There is nothing more common than for souls to delude themselves on this point of feeling. That gentleman confounds feeling with conviction. He thinks because he has not this extreme agony which some have, therefore he is not sufficiently convinced, while the Holy Ghost has opened his eyes to see that his whole life has been one huge error and sin. He is convinced that it has been all sin--not one isolated sin here and there abstracted from his life, but such a perception of his true character that he sees his whole life to have been sin. Surely, my friend, you are convinced. What else but the Holy Ghost could have shown you that? Now, the truly repentant soul first sees sin; secondly, he hates sin; thirdly, he renounces sin. Now, let me try you by each of these tests. Don't let Satan deceive you, and make you belie the exercises of your own mind. Face the facts, and when you have come to a conclusion, don't allow him to raise a controversy, but stick to your facts, and go on from them, or you will never get saved. Satan is an accuser of the brethren, and, I suppose, of the sisters too. I will be as honest and as searching with you as I possibly can. I will not spare the probe, but when we have probed and found the truth, stand on it, for Christ's sake, and don't let it go from under your feet, because Satan will try to cheat you out of your common sense, conscience, and convictions.

You see sin. An entirely unawakened soul does not see sin; that is, in its true character, in its heinousness, in its consequences. He admits that all people are sinners. Oh! yes; but he does not see the deadly, damning character of sin. He does not see what an evil and bitter thing sin is in itself. Now, the Holy Ghost alone can open the soul's eyes to see this. Without Him, all my preaching, or any other preaching, even the preaching of the angels, if they were permitted to preach, might go on to all eternity, and it would never convince of sin. If you see sin, it is the Holy Ghost who has opened your eyes. Praise Him, and take encouragement, my friend. If God has thus far dealt with you, and opened your eyes to see the character and consequences of sin, does it not augur well that He desires also to save you from it? He has opened your eyes in order that He may anoint them with eye-salve, and cause you to see light in His light.

Now, have you got thus far? You have told me that your life has been one great sin; others say, one particular form of sin. Whatever it is, if you are convinced of sin, it is the Holy Ghost who has convinced you; therefore, thank God, and take courage thus far.

Further, the true penitent hates sin; that is, his feelings towards sin are quite different to what they were in the past. There was a time when you could commit sin, almost without notice, without concern. People do not realize the great change that has taken place in them in this respect. They are brought gradually to it. Translate yourself back into your unawakened state. How did you live

then? The very things that now cause you such distress, you practised every day, and they gave you no concern. The things that horrify you now, in the very thought or temptation to them, you then were daily practising without compunction. You had no hatred to, no dread of sin. You were willing bondslaves of Satan. Now, you are his unwilling slave. Then, you ran towards sin, now, he has to drive you, and when you fall, it is against your will. You hate sin. Now, mind, this is not being saved from it. This is not saying you have power to save yourself from it. In fact, this is the very difficulty personified by the apostle, when representing the ineffectual struggles of a convicted sinner. The things you would not, those you do, and the things you would, those you have not the power to do. Nevertheless, you desire to do them. There is the difference. Once you did not desire to do them, and, perhaps, those who did, were a pack of hypocrites, in your estimation. Now, you feel quite differently, and you struggle, and strive, and pray, and watch. Some of you have told me so, and yet you say, "I am again and again overcome." Of course you are, because you are not saved yet! But don't you see, you desire to be. You hate the sin which enthrals you. You struggle against it. You watch against it and you are not overcome half so frequently, perhaps, as you were before. People do not see what a great deal they owe to the convincing and preventing power of the Holy Spirit helping their infirmity, even now, to cut off and pluck out the right hand and the right eye, and bringing them up in a waiting attitude before God, like Cornelius and the eunuch. You, my hearers, some of you, are following after God. You are longing for deliverance, are striving against sin.

Take an another illustration. I don't mean that the soul has power to save itself from its internal maladies. That you will get when Jesus Christ saves you. But, I mean this: here is a soul convinced of sin. Here is a man who is daily addicted to drink. He is a drunkard. He becomes convinced of sin. Now, then, the Spirit of God says, "Will you give up the cup?" Then commences the struggle. Now, the question is, are you to teach that man that he is to go on drinking, and expect God to save him? Are you to keep putting before him faith, and telling him, "Oh! never mind your cup, but believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved"--or, are you to tell him, "you must put away your sin, cut off that right hand, pluck out that right eye, renounce that drink forever in your heart, in your purpose, in your will, and until you do, you cannot exercise faith on the Lord Jesus?"

Here is another person addicted to lying. He, when he is convinced of sin, sets a watch over his lips, that he may not offend with his mouth, and he does succeed in so guarding himself, or the Holy Spirit so helps him to guard himself, that he does not lie as he used. He is overcome now and then, because he has not yet found the power, but he is resolutely, and as far as his will is concerned, cutting off this outward sin, and waiting in the way of obedience for full deliverance and salvation.

There is a servant systematically robs his master's till. He goes to a religious meeting and is convinced. "Now," the Spirit of God says, "you must cut off that dishonesty. You cannot come to this meeting night after night pretending to want to be saved, while you are going on every day robbing your master! You must cut off that right hand, and give up that pilfering, and resolve that you will make restitution, and wait for Me in the way of bringing forth fruits meet for repentance." You see what I mean. Now, you are just here, some of you--you know you are. If you are addicted to any evil habit, it is just the same. Jesus Christ wants you to forswear that habit in your will, determination, and purpose. You have not the power to deliver yourself from it. You may struggle,

as some of you tell me you are doing, but it overcomes you, and down you go. He knows all about that, but He approves of the struggle, and the effort, and the watchfulness, and the determination, and when He saves you, He will give you the power, and then you will stand and not fall, for He will hold you up.

Now you know that you go thus far, and you know that at this moment, if you had the power in yourself to extinguish the force of that evil habit over you forever, you would do it without another moment's hesitation. You say, "Oh yes, I would indeed. Would to God I had the power." That is repentance; that is genuine repentance. Now, what you cannot do for yourself, He meets you just where you stand, and says, "I will do it for you; I will break the power of that habit; I will deliver you out of the hands of the enemy; I will save you out of that bondage. Only throw your arm of faith around me, and I will lift you up; and I will inspire you with my Spirit; you shall stand in Me and by Me; and what you are now struggling to do for yourself, I will do for you."

Then you have got thus far that you hate sin? "Yes, I have." You have said it in your letters to me, and there are others saying it who have not written to me. "Yes," you are saying, "I desire to be saved from it. I would save myself this very instant if I could, and never sin again." Would you? Is not that repentance? What else is it, think you?

Suppose you had a disobedient and rebellious son, and he had been living irrespective of your law and will, wasting your money and trampling under foot your commandments. Suppose he comes back, he sees the error of his course. His eyes are opened, perhaps, by affliction, perhaps by want, or ten thousand other things. At any rate he sees it, and he comes home and says, "Oh! father, what a fool I have been; how wicked I have been. I see it all now--I did not see it when I was doing it. I see my evil course, my sins that made you mourn, and turned your hair grey. Oh! how I hate it all. I repent in dust and ashes. Father! I forsake it all! I come home to you!" What would you say? Would you say, "My son, you have not repented enough. Go! begone! Wait till you feel it more!" No, your paternal heart would go out in love and forgiveness, and you would put the kiss of your reconciling love upon his cheek. "Even so there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth!" as there would be joy in that family circle over the return of that wandering child. But suppose that lad were to come and say, "Father, I do thus repent; I do thus forsake my sins; but there are some companions who will follow me so closely that I am afraid I shall again fall under their power, and there are some habits so terrible that I am afraid they will again conquer. Let me, then, be always by your side. You must strengthen me." What would you say? Would you not say, "Then, come in, my son; sit by me, live with me, and I will shield you--I will deliver you? Thou shalt never cross this threshhold without me. I will live with you; I will hold you up." And, as far as a human being could shield another, you would shield your son; he would never lack your sympathy or your strength day or night. Your Heavenly Father lacks neither sympathy or strength. His eye never sleeps. His arm never tires, and you have only to go and lay your helpless weakness on His Almighty strength by this one desperate leap of faith, and He will hold you up, even though there were a legion of devils around you.

Lastly, you renounce your sins, that is, in will, purpose, and determination. You say, "I never wish to grieve Him again." You sing it, and you feel it. "I never want to grieve Him any more;" and if you could only live without grieving Him, you would not much mind, even if it were in hell itself. Is not that penitence? You know it is. You renounce sin. You do not say, "Lord Jesus, save me with this

right hand, with this right eye; Lord Jesus, save me with these forbidden things hanging about my skirts." No; you say, "Lord Jesus, save me out of them. Make me clean." That is penitence. You see it. You hate it. You renounce it. Now then, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, Holy Spirit, reveal the simple way of faith.

III. You say, "How am I to believe?" Some despairing soul asked me this in large letters, "How am I to believe?" How does a bride believe in her husband when she gives herself to him at the altar? She trusts him with herself. She believes in him. She makes a contract, and goes home, and lives as if it were true. That is faith. How do you trust your physician when you are sick, as you lay in repose or anguish upon your bed? You trust him with your case. You commit yourself to him. You believe in his skill, and obey his orders. Have faith like this in Jesus Christ.

Trust and obey, and expect that it is going to be with you according to His Word.

Instead of this, the faith of many people is like that of a person afflicted with some grievous malady. A friend tells him of a wonderful physician who has cured hundreds of such cases, and gives him abundant evidence that this doctor is able and willing to cure him, if he will only commit himself to his treatment. The sick man may thoroughly believe in the testimony of his friend about this physician, and yet, for some secret reason, he may refuse to put himself into his hands. Now, there are numbers like that with Jesus Christ. They believe He could cure the malady of sin on certain conditions. They believe He is no respecter of persons. They believe He has done it for hundreds as bad as they, and yet there is some reason why they do not trust Him. They hold back.

Now, what you want is to give your case into His hands, and say, "Lord Jesus, I come as Thou hast bid me, confessing and forsaking sin. If I could, I would jump out of it now and forever. Thou knowest I come renouncing it, but not having power to save myself from it; and now, Lord Jesus, Thou hast said, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." I do come; Thou dost not cast me out; Thou dost take me; Thou dost receive me. Blessed, Holy Father, I give myself to Thee. I put my sins upon the glorious sacrifice of Thy Son. Thou hast said Thou wilt receive me, and pardon me for His sake. Now, I roll the guilty burden on His bleeding body, and I believe Thy promise, I trust Thee to be as good as Thy word." That is faith. "Oh!" said a dear lady, "I do not feel it." No: you must trust first. Mark, not believe you are saved, but believe that He does now save you.

"What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." That is the law of faith. Believe that ye receive it before you feel it; when you receive it then you shall feel it. God shall be true, and every man or devil who contradicts Him, a liar. Throw your arms around the Crucified. Take fast hold of the hand of the Son of God. Put your poor, guilty soul right at the foot of His cross, and say, "Thou dost receive; Thou dost pardon; Thou dost cleanse; Thou dost save;" and keep using the language of faith. I have seen numbers of souls step into liberty repeating these precious words in the first person, "He was wounded for my transgressions, He was bruised for my iniquities, the chastisement of my peace was laid upon Him, and by His stripes I am healed." Keep using the language of faith all the way home to-night. Go into your closet and say, "I am determined to be saved, if there is any such thing as salvation." Resolve that if you perish, you will perish in that room, at the foot of the cross, suing for pardon, and you will get it. I have never known a soul come to this who did not soon get saved. Get into the lifeboat. Put off from the old stranded wreck of your own righteousness or your own efforts; step right into the

lifeboat of His broken, bleeding body. Take fast hold, and resolve that you will never let go until the answering Spirit comes into your soul, crying, "Abba, Father," and you shall know of a truth that you have passed from death unto life. The Lord help you. Amen.

01.03. Charity

CHAPTER III.

CHARITY. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.--1 Corinthians 13:13.

It must be a precious thing to be greater than faith, and greater than hope--it must, indeed, be precious!--and, just in proportion as things are valuable and precious amongst men, so much trouble and risk will human speculators take to counterfeit them. I suppose that in no department of roguery in this roguish world, has there been more time and ingenuity expended, than in making counterfeit money, especially bank notes. Just as wicked men have tried to imitate the most valuable of human productions for their own profit, so the devil has been trying to counterfeit God's most precious things from the beginning, and to produce something so like them that mankind at large should not see the difference, and, perhaps, in no direction has he been so successful as in producing a Spurious Charity.--I almost think he has got it to perfection in these days. I don't think he can very well improve on the present copy. This Charity--this love--is God's most precious treasure; it is dearer to His heart than all the vast domains of His universe--dearer than all the glorious beings He has created. So much so, that when some of the highest spirits amongst the angelic bands violated this love, He hurled them from the highest Heaven to the nethermost hell! Why? Not because He did not value those wonderful beings, but because He valued this love more. Because He saw that it was more important to the well-being of His universe to maintain the harmony of love in Heaven than to save those spirits who had allowed selfishness to interfere with it. So our Lord says, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven." The day is coming when He will behold all the dire progeny of this first rebellion fall also. Haste, happy day!

But, let us look for a few minutes at this precious, beautiful Charity. Let us try, first, to define it. What is it?

First.--It is Divine. It must be shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. In vain do we look for this heavenly plant amongst the unrenewed children of men--it grows not on the corrupt soil of human nature; it springs only where the ploughshare of true repentance has broken up the fallow ground of the heart, and where faith in a crucified Saviour has purified it, and where the blessed Holy Spirit has taken permanent possession. It is the love of God--not only love to God, but like God, from God, and fixed on the same objects and ends which He loves. It is a Divine implantation by the Holy Ghost. Perhaps some of you are saying, "Then it is useless for me to try to cultivate it, because I have not got it,--exactly!" You may cut and prune and water forever, but you can never cultivate that which is not planted. Your first work is to get this love shed abroad in your heart. It is one of the delusions of this age that human nature only wants pruning, improving, developing, and it come out right. No, no! Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. If you want this Divine love, you must break up the fallow ground of your hearts, and invite the Heavenly Husbandman to come and sow it--shed it abroad in your soul.

Secondly, I want you to note that this love is a Divine principle, in contradistinction to the mere love of instinct. All men have love as an instinct; mere natural love towards those whom they like, or who do well for them. "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even publicans the same?" Wicked men love one another from mere natural affinity, as the tiger loves its cubs. There is great confusion amongst professors of religion on this subject. They feel sentiments of pity and generosity towards their fellow-men, and they may even give their goods to feed the poor, and yet not have a spark of Divine Charity in their hearts. Saul, after God departed from him, was not wholly destitute of generous feeling respecting his family and kingdom. Dives in hell had some pity for his brethren! But neither of them had a spark of this Divine Charity. Mind you are not deceived; millions are!

Let us note one or two points wherein a spurious and Divine Charity utterly and forever diverge--disagree in nature.

First.--Spurious Charity is selfish--is never exercised but to gratify some selfish principle in human nature. Thousands of motives inspire it--too many to enumerate; but we will glance at two or three. We read in the context that a man might give his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burned, and yet be destitute of true Charity.

Now what an anomaly. But we have wonderful illustrations that such a thing is possible. First, a man may do this to support and carry out a favorite system of intellectual belief of which he has become enamored, just as men become absorbed, in politics, or in what they consider the good of their nation, so that they will even go to the cannon’s mouth to promote it.

Further, a man may do it in order to merit eternal life. Paul did this when he went about to establish his own righteousness. He tells us afterwards that self was the mainspring of all his zeal. It was all his own exaltation; there was no Divine love; he was an utterly unrenewed, Christless, and selfish man, at the very time he was doing this.

Or, it may be, in the third place, to gratify a naturally generous disposition. I used to say to a generous friend of mine, when he was talking in a confidential way about his giving, and the delight it gave him, attributing it to Divine grace--I used to put my hand on his, and say, "Hold! my friend; I am not so sure it is all grace. You like giving better than other people do receiving. Look out that you do not lose your reward through not taking the trouble to see what you give to; don’t give your money to every scheme that comes across you. Remember that you are answerable to God for your wealth, and that God will demand of you HOW you have bestowed your goods." That is true Charity that takes the trouble to investigate relative claims, and tries to find out the best channels in which to give for God’s glory and the salvation of men. Don’t you put down your generosity to the Holy Ghost if it is not of that kind, for you will never receive a bit of interest for it, here or hereafter--not a fraction! A false Charity begins in self and ends on earth. Here is a mark for you to distinguish between it and God’s Charity. The devil’s Charity always contemplates the earthy part of man in a superior degree to the spiritual part; and here it exactly crosses and contradicts the Divine Charity, which always contemplates man in the entirety of his being, and always gives the first importance to the soul.

We have plenty of spurious Charity in these days. The other day when I took up a so-called "religious print," and saw some fulsome things it had been saying about a certain individual, lately

dead, I thought, really, would one ever imagine this were a Christian paper, in a Christian country? There is not the slightest recognition of a soul, no reference to the man's spiritual condition or his future state. Here are one or two of the most ordinary human qualifications seized on, and made the most of, to make it out that he was something beyond his fellows, but, as to any recognition of a soul, or of a God who will judge him, of a Heaven or hell, nothing!

Oh, people say, when speaking of Godless, and even wicked men, "You must be charitable, you must not judge." Satan does not care how much of this one-sided Charity there is; the more the better for his purpose; it will make people all the more comfortable in their sins, and get them all the more easily down to hell. My friends, are you more concerned about relieving temporal distress than you are about feeding famished souls? If you are, you may know where your charity comes from! Don't misrepresent me, and say that I teach all of one, and none of the other. God forbid, for, if any man "hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" But, on the other side, if he sees him spiritually famishing--dying for want of the bread of life--how dwelleth the love of Christ in him, if he does not minister to this spiritual destitution? I know that real Christianity cares for body and soul. Bless God, it does; but, always mind that it sets the soul FIRST. I know the Master fed the multitude; but, before that, He had them with Him three days, trying to save their souls, and when they got hungry in the process, then He made them sit down, and fed their bodies. He always looked after the soul first, and so does everyone possessed of Divine Charity.

Why? Because Divine Charity has opened his eyes. He realizes the value of souls. He sees them famishing. He sees them being damned, and he cannot help himself. His desire to save them rushes out of him like a torrent; he beholds them, and has compassion on them. Try your Charity by this mark: Do you contemplate the dying, famishing, half- damned souls of your fellow-men? Do you look abroad on the state of the world, and the state of the church? Do you think about it? Do you go into your closet, and spread it before the Lord, as Hezekiah and Jeremiah and Hosea did? Do you look at it, and turn it over, and weep over it, and pray and cry, as Daniel and Paul did? Try yourselves, my brethren, my sisters, by this mark.

Divine Charity is always revolving round that great problem of infinite love. "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Oh, I can never get it out of my ears or away from my heart! Oh, how I see the emptiness and vanity of everything compared with the salvation of the soul! What does it matter, if a man dies in the work-house--if he dies on a door-step, covered with wounds, like Lazarus--what does it matter, if his soul is saved? It is your creed as much as mine, that the soul is immortal, and that the death of the body is only its introduction, if it be saved, to a glorious future of everlasting felicity, progress, and holiness. Does the child remember how he used to cry over his lessons, when he becomes a man? Does he remember all the little difficulties of his school days, when he is inheriting the fruits of them? Just so; ten thousand times less important will be all our sufferings, trials, and griefs here, if we save our souls, and the souls of others. This Divine Charity makes everything else subservient to the salvation of souls; it uses everything else to save and bless the inner and spiritual man. Do you remember, on one occasion, when the Master had fed the multitudes, and when they came to Him again to be fed, He said, "Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." You would have said, "Quite right; the people want to be fed; they are hungry." But do you hear the Divine lament that comes out in these words, that they were so

spiritually obtuse, that they valued the earthly bread more than the heavenly! Give them as much temporal bread as you like, but mind you give them the spiritual bread first, for this is characteristic of true Charity. Have you got this Charity? Every soul knows whether it has or not. People are so unphilosophical in religion; they talk about not knowing; but you can find out in two minutes whether you love God or yourself best. Tell me that woman does not know whether she loves her husband or herself best! Nonsense! What is the proof?--she seeks to please him, and is willing to sacrifice herself for him--in fact, merges her interests altogether in his. Do you love God best? Are you willing to forego your interests, and to seek His? Have you this Divine Charity, born of Heaven, tending to Heaven? If not, my friend, resolve you will have it now. Begin to cry mightily to God, for the Holy Spirit to shed it abroad in your heart; give up your quibblings and reasonings, and go down at the foot of the cross and ask Him,-- "Come, Lord, and break up this poor, wicked heart of mine, and shed this beautiful, pure, Divine Charity abroad in it," and then you will not, henceforth, seek your own, but the things that are Jesus Christ's.

01.04. Charity and Rebuke

CHAPTER IV.

CHARITY AND REBUKE. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.-- 1 Corinthians 13:13. The second main point of difference between a true and a false Charity, we want to remark, is, Divine Charity is not only consistent with, but it very often necessitates, reproof and rebuke by its possessor. It renders it incumbent on those who possess it to reprove and rebuke whatever is evil--whatever does not tend to the highest interests of its object. This Charity conforms in this, as in everything else, to its Divine model--"As many as I love I rebuke and chasten"--when necessary for the good of its object, for He doth not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men, any more than a father willingly chastises a disobedient child; but, if he be a wise father, he will do it because he loves it. Just so the possessor of this Divine Charity can afford to rebuke and reprove sin wherever he finds it. He will not suffer sin upon his neighbor, but will in any wise reprove him, and strive to win him to the right. We will just turn to a beautiful illustration (there are many, if we had time to go into them) of the working of this Divine Charity in the heart and life of the very apostle who wrote 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. We cannot get wrong, because it is Paul himself. (Galatians 2:11-15.)

"But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all"--

Well done, Paul,--noble, gloriously courageous Charity that! He did not go and mutter behind Peter’s back and stab him in the dark--

"I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles."

You want a characteristic of true Charity. Now, listen to it. It would be exceedingly painful to Paul thus publicly to rebuke Peter. They loved one another, for we find Peter, long after this, in one of his Epistles, calling Paul "our beloved brother, Paul." They loved one another. Paul understood the claims of true Charity, for he wrote this thirteenth of Corinthians. If he loved Peter, and if he understood the claims of true Charity, why did he thus openly rebuke Peter, why did he inflict upon himself the pain of doing it? Faithfulness to Peter himself, faithfulness to the truth, faithfulness to Jesus Christ demanded it; therefore, he sacrificed his own personal feelings, and inflicted this pain upon himself, rather than allow Peter to go wrong, the Romans to be misled, and the Jews to be carried away with worldly policy. Paul set himself to rebuke Peter in the presence of all, for truth lay, as it very often does, with the minority; nearly all the influence was on the side of the

circumcision. They were the most influential of the brethren, and Paul set himself against all this influence in his rebuke of Peter. Why? Because faithfulness to the truth demanded it, and Divine Charity is FIRST PURE.

There is a greater example still in our Lord Himself, in the Master whose whole soul was love, whose life was one sacrifice for the good of His creatures; and yet how faithfully He reproved His own when they erred from the truth, and how fearlessly He exposed and denounced the shallowness and hypocrisy of those who professed to love God, and yet contradicted this profession in their lives. How fearlessly He reproved sin everywhere. He said to his disciples on one occasion, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." As if He had said, you ought to have learned this before now. On another occasion, He said, "Are ye also yet without understanding?" And again, "Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things that be of God;" that was Divine Charity, that was faithful love, that dared to rebuke, rather than let the object of it do wrong, and sin against God. And again, when He goes to the hypocrites and Pharisees, He says, "Ye say ye are the children of Abraham"--(it was as difficult for Jesus Christ to confute the professors of His day, as it is for His ambassadors to confute the professors of this day, who are living inconsistently with their professions)--He said, "Ye say that ye are the children of Abraham; if ye were the children of Abraham, ye would listen to me; or, if ye were the children of God, ye would believe in me, for I came out from God. No! ye are the children of your father, the devil, and his works ye do." And yet His Divine heart was full, to breaking, of love, and broke itself on the cross for them, and prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Oh, that your Charity and mine might not lack this lineament of the Divine likeness! Would to God there were more of this faithful, loving Charity, that dares to reprove sin, and to rebuke its brother, instead of the false Charity that fawns on a man to his face, and goes behind him and stabs him in the back. Do you suppose that the great mass of the professors of this generation think one another to be right? Take almost any given church. Do you suppose that the great mass of the members of that church suppose in their hearts that their fellow members, brothers and sisters in church communion, are living consistently--I don't mean in things only, but in heart--that they are living really godly lives? Alas! witness what they say behind each other's backs. They believe no such thing; they know perfectly well it is not so, and they take care to tell other people so; and yet there is not one in a thousand of them ever went privately to his brother, and took lovingly hold of his hand, and reproved him for his sinful and backsliding conduct.

What would be thought of any woman who were to go, after being to church the day before, and ask for a private interview with Mrs. ---, and, when alone with her, with tears in her eyes, and deep earnestness in her voice, were to say, "Dear Mrs. ---, I have come to see you on a very painful errand, but will you suffer a word of exhortation from one so unworthy and weak as I feel myself to be, and yet, I trust, one who has the Spirit of God, which urges me to come to you? Will you allow me to say that I was much pained with your attitude at church, yesterday. It seemed to me that your mind was not at all occupied with the solemnity of the service, but seemed to be occupied in criticising the person's dress in the seat opposite to you, and I could not help noticing that when you got outside the doors you began to laugh and talk in a way quite incompatible with the service you had been attending?" If she were to say, "Dear Mrs. ---, I have not mentioned this to a soul, not even to my husband, but I have come to tell it to you; let us go down before the Lord and ask

Him for the Holy Spirit, that He may show you how wrong you are, and how you are sliding away from the love of God"--what would be the thought, what would be said, of such conduct?

If everybody who sees sin upon his neighbor would do that--if he would take the Lord's counsel and go and see his brother alone, and tell him his fault--how many would be saved from backsliding, and how many a disgraceful split and controversy in churches might be saved! But where are the people who will do it? I don't mean there are not any--God forbid--I know there are; but I am speaking comparatively. Where is the man who will inflict pain upon himself?--for that is the point. If it were a pleasant duty, he would do it easily enough; but it is a painful duty, he does not like to screw himself up to it. Where is the man that will do it, rather than suffer his brother to go to sleep in his sin, and rather than the precious cause of Christ shall be disgraced and injured? Where are the saints who will go in meekness and in love to try to reclaim the one who has erred? I hope you know a great many. I am sorry to say I know only a few. If you know many, I am very glad, and the more you know the better I am pleased. If you are one of these, that is one, at all events. If every Christian would have this sort of Charity, what a change would soon come about. That is what the church wants--people who can afford to rebuke and reprove, because they don't care what men think of THEM --who are set only on pleasing their Lord and Master, and doing His will. Have you got this Charity that seeketh not her own? What a contrast between Saul and Paul. Did you ever think about it? What does he say? "I went about to establish my own righteousness." That was his inspiring motive; that was the spring of his action, before he got true Charity; not that he cared for the kingdom of God, but he cared for his own honor, glory, and exaltation, and wanted to stand well with his nation. Then contrast him when he becomes Paul. What does he say? "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." There is Charity, if you like. These were the very people with whom he had been so anxious to stand well, and whose good word he wanted; but, when the Holy Ghost had come, and Paul had got the Divine Charity, and got his eyes opened to see their devilish and lost condition, he so weeps over them that he says, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

There is a contrast. He does not care now, what they think of HIM; he is going about, trying to open their eyes and make them see that they are not the children of Abraham, but the children of the devil, that they are going to the bottomless pit, and that, unless they turn round and seek the God of their fathers, they must perish. Self is lost sight of altogether, now; Paul's heart and soul and efforts are set on the salvation of men. If they choose to; praise him, he takes it as a matter of course; if they choose to condemn him, he takes that as a matter of course, too. He is seeking the kingdom, and, however men treat him, the kingdom he seeks, right on to martyrdom. He runs the gauntlet of their direst hate and malice, that he may open their eyes and turn them from Satan to God, and from sin to righteousness. Self is lost sight of; it is not Paul now--it is Christ and His kingdom.

False Charity is the opposite of this. Its possessor is most concerned about what people think of HIM; not how they treat his professed Lord. The possessor of false Charity cannot afford to reprove anybody. Oh, dear, no! he would faint at the very idea; and he calls people hard and legal and censorious who dare to do it-- poor, sneaking coward! but he will not be afraid to stab a man behind his back. The speech of this false Charity betrayeth it, it flattereth with its lips; honey is on

its tongue, but the poison of asps is underneath; beware of it! Even when it professes to commend a brother, or neighbor, it rolls up its sanctimonious eyes, and always puts a "but" in--one of the devil's "buts." "Oh, he is a good man, but--." "Yes, I have a great esteem for him, only there is such and such a thing." Oh, it is very Divine. The devil can put on a garb of light when it answers his purpose. Oh, the fair reputations that this slime of the serpent has trailed over! Oh, the influence for good that this venom of the devil has poisoned and ruined, for it has been, truly said, "There is no virtue so white that back-wounding calumny will not strike"--even in God's perfect man, those who are watching and seeking to betray can find something on which to ground their accusations.

I say, mind which Charity you have got True Charity, rejoiceth not in iniquity. Are you conscious in your soul of a feeling of triumph when anybody that you don't like happens to fall on some evil thing? If you have, look out--the devil has got hold of you. Do you rejoice in iniquity when it happens to an enemy? If so, woe be to you, unless you get that venom out. God won't have it in Heaven. One man with that venom in him would damn Paradise, "Love your enemies"--love them; "bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven." Now, my brother, my sister, try yourself. "We shall meet again, and you will find that these are no imaginary vagaries that I have been talking of; they are realities--though these great realities of our Christianity are seldom preached in these days; but they are here, and there is no truth in you if you have not got the Charity which hates evil as evil, and which will reprove it, and root it out, and have it cured!"

Here, again, false Charity is the very antipodes of the Divine. It does not care much about righteousness. Quietness is its beau ideal of all that is lovely and excellent. It says, "Let us be quiet; you must not disturb the peace of the church." It cries, "Peace, peace!" when there is no peace. It says, "We cannot help these evils. Every man must look after himself; we are not responsible for our neighbor." It knows very often that there are continents of dirt underneath--"things," and "systems," and men--which it chooses to patronize; but then, it is covered up, and so it says, "Let it alone; we cannot have a smudge. Let it alone. Peace! Peace! Never mind righteousness--the church must be supported, if the money does come out of the dried-up vitals of drunkards and harlots; never mind, we must have it. Never mind if our songs are mixed with the shrieks of widows and orphans, of the dying and damned! Sing away, sing away, and drown their voices. Never mind; we cannot have it looked into, and rooted out, and pulled up. Peace; we must have peace!" And they call you, as Ahab did Elijah, the disturber of Israel, if you dare to touch the sore place and exhibit their putrifying wounds and bruises; and when you say to them, "The law of life is, 'Do unto others as you would they should do unto you,'" they impudently turn upon you and say, "But we are not expected to be perfect in this life," and so they throw a thicker covering over the filth, and on it goes. This is the devil's Charity; and the more the better for his purpose. But the Charity and the wisdom which is from above, is first pure, and then peaceable! I would rather be in everlasting warfare in company with that which is fair, and true, and good, than I would walk in harmony with that which is hollow, and rotten, and vile, and destined for the bottomless pit. The Lord help you to make the same choice!

01.05. Charity and Conflict

CHAPTER V.

CHARITY AND CONFLICT. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.-- 1 Corinthians 13:13.

Another characteristic of this Divine Charity is, that it OFTEN INVOLVES CONFLICT.

It was so with our Lord. He was the very personification of it. He was love itself, and grace and truth poured from His lips incessantly. His blessed feet went about doing good, and His hands ministering to the necessities and happiness of His creatures, yet His whole course through this degenerate world was one of conflict, opposition, and persecution. His proper mission was to bring peace on earth; but the result of it was a sword! Why? That was not His fault. He would, doubtless, have enjoyed being at peace with all men, as His ambassador exhorts us--"as much as lieth in us to be." More, He was the Prince of Peace! Then, how was it that wherever He went, there was sword, opposition, and conflict to the death? Because men resisted and rejected His Divine and Heavenly ministrations. They would not hear His rebukes and His teaching, because they condemned them. They would not listen to His voice, because they were of their father the devil, and the works of their father they would do; and, therefore, they went about to persecute Him, and to kill Him. This was the reason--not that He wanted it to be so, but it was the consequence of their resistance to the beautiful, heavenly, and Divine truths which He taught; and it is just so now, with the same truth, and the living embodiments of such truth. JESUS CHRIST COME IN THE FLESH AGAIN IN HIS PEOPLE, living out before the world His principles, acting upon His precepts, living for the same objects for which He lived, will produce, exactly and everywhere, the same result. It must be so while men are divided into two classes--the righteous and the wicked--those who are born of the flesh, and those who are born of the Spirit. One must either give in, or there must be perpetual conflict and warfare. It was so with the Saviour, and so, perhaps, with some of us.

I think this is often a snare to God’s really sincere people. I think some of God’s people are afraid; they don’t like the feeling that their hand is against every man, and every man’s hand against them, or nearly so. They do not like the feeling of isolation; they do not like being compelled to take a course which nearly all the Christian professors round about them condemn, and make out to be uncharitable, and they often examine themselves to see whether it is possible that they may be going wrong in following the Divine Spirit. They say with Jeremiah, and with the Jeremiahs of every age, "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth!" They are as "speckled birds, against whom all the birds round about are gathered." They feel this opposition and conflict deeply, but what are they to do? Very often, in following the leadings of the Divine Spirit, it is impossible for us to avoid such consequences. We have to march through troops of opposing forces. We have to become the subjects of almost universal suspicion. But what then? Must we give in? Must we decline to tread in the bloodstained footsteps of the Captain of our salvation? Must we decline the honor of being in the advance guard of the Lamb’s army because of the conflict, because of the pain, because of

the persecution? Nay, nay; let us hold on, those here, who are thus led by the Divine Spirit into paths which involve conflict with everybody. Follow on, brother! follow on, sister!

There is no point on which those who want to come out thoroughly for God, suffer more than oh this. They continually say, "You see, my friends"--they are Christian, friends--"my friends object." People come, to see me, or they write that the Spirit of God has been urging them into a certain course, for months or years, and they are held back by the opinions and wishes, perhaps, of parents, or of brothers and sisters, or uncles, or aunts, or Christian friends.

I believe it will be found, in the great day of account, that there have been more blessed enterprises crushed, more leadings of the Holy Ghost disobeyed, more urgings of the Spirit quenched, through the influence of what are called Christian friends, than all other influences put together. "Suffer me first to go and bury my father," is an everlasting standing excuse for those whom, the Lord calls on in advance paths of Christian service! Oh, my friends, I am sure of it. Look out, you fathers and mothers, you brothers and sisters, and aunts! Do not misunderstand me. Carefully weigh, probe, and examine, before God, your impressions and desires. Go into your closet, spread them there before the Lord. Lay them out, examine your own heart. Be sure there is no self-interest, no vain glory, no desire to be great, or to do some out-of-the-way thing. Be as clear as you like; be satisfied, in your own mind, that it is God's call, and then let fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, husbands, or wives complain--but go forward, my brother, and God will justify you. If, twenty years ago, I had stopped for Christian friends to sanction and to open the door, I should have waited till today, and the number of souls God, in His infinite mercy, has given me, I should not have gathered. But I did not wait for anybody's sanction to my Lord and Master's call; but said, "Lord, if I die in attempting it, I will do it." He seldom lets people die in attempting His will. He stands by them, and gives them abundant fruit. A lady said to me the other day, "You know my father is a Christian, and I am so afraid of going opposite to him." "Yes," I said, "that is quite a right feeling; I respect that feeling in you." But she was a woman of considerably matured age, and I added, "But is your father awake to the interests of God's kingdom as he ought to be?" She replied, "I dare not say he is." "I suppose," I said "he is comparatively old--a sort of dried-up Christian, who has lost the vigor and enterprise of his youthful days, when he wanted to go out and make everybody Christian?" "Yes," she said, "he has gone sadly behind in his zeal for the kingdom of Jesus Christ." "Now," I said, "God holds you responsible, just as He holds any other being. He has not two codes-one for men and one for women. There will be no two judgment seats, whatever men do here. God will hold you responsible for obedience to the teaching of His Spirit, and the leading of His providence, as much as your brother. What shall you say? You will be in the position of the man who said, 'Suffer me first to go and bury my father.'" She said, "I am afraid I shall."

Now, I say, let us settle this, you Protestant Christians here. Because Catholicism has abused this principle, that a man is to leave his father and mother, and houses and lands, if needs be, is that any reason that we Protestants are to give it up? And has it come to this, that a man has only to follow Christ when everybody approves it --cries "Amen"--and when his own interests appear to him to be secured by so doing? Then, if it were so, I would give up religion altogether, and go and enjoy myself. I said to a lady, "When you married yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ, you put yourself in the same position as you would to an earthly husband." What woman in the world would feel that she ought to obey father and mother, rather than her husband? Ridiculous! Much

less is she to obey her father, if her father's wishes are exactly contrary to the Divine teaching. She is only to obey IN THE LORD, and yet thousands of fathers and mothers are preventing their children working for God. Oh! what will you say to God when your precious children stand at His bar, without the sheaves they might have gathered, and the souls they might have won? What will you say to Him? And why do you hold them back? Oh, the mean, paltry considerations that you would be ashamed to own before this congregation! Is it for fear of suffering? Not in many instances; but, even if it were, did you bargain with Jesus Christ when you gave yourself and children to Him, that they were not to suffer for Him? Is it because of your pride?--because you want for them this world's applause and favor? Look out! God has wonderful ways of chastising His people in those very things in which they sell His interest. But you say that "everybody will be against you!" Yes, very likely. Let us settle that at once. Count all things dung and dross. Let none of these things move you. You say, "It will be a life of conflict to the end." Very likely, so was His. "I am so weak," you say. He knows all about that. You say, "It will be so cutting to have people saying this, and saying the other." I know it is cutting, but that is the path He calls you to tread, and He will give you grace to bear the cutting. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake;" and, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."

He does not show where He is leading us, so we can only go a step at a time. The future may look dark, but let us be fully persuaded in our own minds that the step in advance is the step the Lord wants us to take--then take it, and leave the future with Him. Come out, as Abraham did, not knowing whither you go; and, as sure as He sits upon the throne, He will vindicate your course, and, perhaps, the very things that you sacrifice, or that you think you sacrifice, for Him, He will give you, as the reward of your faithfulness.

Oh, have I not known many such instances. I have known daughters who have been turned out of their father's houses for following the leadings of the Spirit of God, and who have endured all sorts of persecution, and trial, and suffering, and those fathers, when they were dying, would have nobody else to pray with them but that individual daughter. The way to win the souls of parents is by a consistent, steadfast, holy consecration to the Lord Jesus; whereas, if you pander, and trim, and hesitate, you will miss the reward. Do you think people do not know when we are inconsistent? Oh, yes, they know quite well, and they say, "That is not the right sort of religion;" but you be consistent and thorough, and God will honor these very means to the winning of the souls about whom you are so concerned.

Further, a false Charity shrinks from opposition. It cannot bear persecution. Now, here is one unfailing characteristic of a false Charity: it is always on the winning side--that is, apparently, down here; not what will be, ultimately, the winning side. When Truth sits enthroned, with a crown on her head, this false Charity is most vociferous in her support and devotion; but when her garments trail in the dust, and her followers are few, feeble, and poor, then Jesus Christ may look after Himself. I sometimes think respecting this hue and cry about the glory of God and the sanctity of religion, I would like to see some of these saints put into the common hall with Jesus again, amongst a band of ribald, mocking, soldiers. I would like to see, then, their zeal for the glory of God, when it touched their own glory. They are wonderfully zealous when their glory and His glory go together; but, when the mob is at His heels, crying, "Away with Him!--crucify Him!--crucify Him!"--then He

may look after His own glory, and they will take care of theirs.

True Charity sticks to the LORD JESUS IN THE MUD, when He is fainting under His cross, as well as when the people are cutting down the boughs and crying "Hosanna!" I fear many people make the Lord Jesus Christ a stalking-horse on which to secure their ends. God grant us not to be of that number, for, if we are, He will topple us from the very gates of Heaven down to the nethermost hell. This false Charity cannot go to the dungeon--you never find it at the stake. It always manages to shift its sides, and change its face, before it goes as far as that. Never in disgrace; never with Jesus Christ in the minority, at Golgotha--on the cross. Always with Him when He is riding triumphant!

Oh, I often think if times of persecution were to come again how many of us would be faithful? How many would go to the dungeon? How many would stand by the truth, with hooting, howling mobs at our heels, such as followed Him on the way to the cross--such as stood round His cross and spat upon Him, and cast lots for His vesture, and parted His garments among them, and wagged their heads and cried, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save"? How many of us would stick to Him then? But, as your soul and mine liveth, that is the only kind of love that will stand the test of the Judgment Day.

Oh, have you got this Charity? Love in the darkness; Love in the Garden; Love in sorrow; Love in suffering; Love in isolation; Love in persecution; Love to the death!--Have we got this love? Examine yourselves, beloved, and see whether you are in the faith or not, for there is much need of it in this day, when there are so many false gospels and so much false doctrine;--when we hear so much about being "complete in Him" by people who never were in Him at all, and no more understand what it means than the very kitten that lies on their hearth. I say, examine yourself, whether you be in the faith or not, and whether you are in Him; for, verily, it is no easier now to be His real followers than ever it was.

Further, a false Charity refuses to call things by their proper names! Oh! what endless ways it has of putting lying! lying that is done on this day by professing Christians! Oh, the nice, comfortable, self-indulgent ways it has of looking at ungodly trades and practices! What do I mean? I mean trades that cannot be made subservient to the interest of the kingdom of Christ; trades that thrive by ministering either to the vile passions of human nature, or to the ungodliness of human nature. By what nice names it calls Satanic traffics in the bodies, hearts, and souls of men! And, when Divine Charity remonstrates with it, it turns round and says, "Well, you know, but we must have regard to our own interests; we have large interests at stake." I sometimes say, "God knows you have! and, when the Judge riseth up to avenge those who have been oppressed and destroyed by your iniquitous traffics, you will find them sadly TOO LARGE, TOO BIG FOR THE HELL ITSELF TO CONTAIN." The Lord have mercy on any of you who are living on the follies or wickedness of your fellow-men. Make haste to get out of such trades. Wash your hands of them, for, depend upon it, that is the devil’s Charity that would try to make you comfortable in them! It has nothing to do with Divine Charity.

"Oh, my soul, come not into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united," but stand aloof from all such alliances of light with darkness, of truth with falsehood; "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," "For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh

shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." He is the same God; He changes not! Let us call things by their right names. Let us face the evil. Let us chase it out of the world--or, at any rate, chase it out of the church. Depend upon it, the Lord is going to prove all things. I can hear, as it were, the rumbling of the earthquake of the Divine indignation underground, I can see the gathering of the Divine wrath overhead; and, IF THIS NATION DOES NOT REPENT, AND IF THE CHURCHES OF THIS LAND DO NOT COME OUT AND WASH THEIR HANDS OF THESE THINGS, GOD WILL SEND US SUCH A BAPTISM OF BLOOD AS WE HAVE NEVER CONCEIVED OF, AND HE WILL PUT US OUT, and put some other nation in our place, or else He will act contrary to all His former dealings with nations! Do you suppose that Jerusalem was more guilty than we are? Have we not been exalted much higher than Jerusalem ever was? And have we not sinned against greater light and privilege than ever she did? Are not our professed Christians exactly the same in character as her Pharisees? Do they not make fine and long prayers, and, at the same time, devour the widow and fatherless? Yea, for hellish gain, do they not make widows and orphans wholesale? Might not God truly say of us, "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger: they are gone away backward." Even the prophets prophesy falsely, and the people love to have it so! Do you say, "No, we are not so bad?" I answer, look abroad over the land, open your eyes, observe and see. Has it not become proverbial--have you not heard it until your ears have tingled, and your face burned with shame--"Better go and deal with anybody than a Christian"? and, alas! has there not been much ground for it? Have we any need to wonder that infidels wag their heads? Can you go into a shop where you are sure you will not be extortioned? Do you know anybody who keeps a conscience with respect to the profits he makes? Is there anybody scarcely who won’t charge his neighbor more than the article is worth, if he has a chance, and call it lawful? That is extortion. It may be only asking twopence for an article worth a penny, or a 1,000 pounds for what 700 pounds should buy; it does not matter the amount--it is EXTORTION!

God puts extortioners amongst the blackest of sinners. The Lord help me to "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others," and have the Charity that will not take a mean advantage of my neighbor because I have the chance, and thus traduce the precious name of the Holy Jesus by calling myself one of His followers. It is time this satanic Charity was swept out! The very first law, the very vital principle of true Charity, is righteousness. There is no Charity apart from righteousness. If your Charity is incompatible with righteousness, it is born of the devil and leads to hell!

If you have had anything revealed to you, in your heart or life, that you see to be wrong, say, "Here Lord, pour the light in; I am so glad You have shown this thing to me while there is time to alter it. Now bring your dissecting knife, and cut it away, even if the roots go deep down into my very heart’s core. I will have it out." Will you? Will you be made true, straight, clean? Will you be made Divine? Will you be filled with the pure, holy love of God towards God, and towards men, and all beings? That is what the Lord wants you to have. This is what He has sent His Son to do. No subterfuge; no make-believe work to get you into Heaven as you are; but He wants to make you as He wants you to be, and He can do it. The Great Physician is able, He is willing, He has got love enough, and power enough and grace enough to do it for you. Confide all your heart to Him. Will you have this Divine Charity wrought in you? It will make you willing to suffer, to endure

hardness, and shame, and contempt, and persecution. It will make you willing to do anything that human nature can do, and endure anything that human nature can suffer, that you may accomplish the same purposes that He came to accomplish, that you may help onward the progress of His glorious kingdom.

01.06. Charity and Loneliness

CHAPTER VI.

CHARITY AND LONELINESS. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.- 1 Corinthians 13:13. The possession of this Divine Charity often necessitates walking in a lonely path. Not merely in opposition and persecution, but alone in it, and here, again, Jesus, who was the personification of Divine lore, stands out as our great example. He was emphatically alone, and of the people there was none with Him. Even the disciples whom He had drawn nearest to Him, and to whom He had tried to communicate most of His thought and spirit, were so behind that He often had to reprove them, and lament their obtuseness and want of sympathy. In the greatness of His love He had to go forward into the darkness of Gethsemane. He was alone while they slept, and then through ribaldry, scorn, and sarcasm, to the cross. Alas! alas! almost alone, except a few--to their everlasting honor--poor faithful women--alone!

And, as it was with the Master, so it has been with all those whom God has called to go in advance of their race. It was so with John, and with Paul, and with most of the apostles, and with all those whom God has called to extraordinary paths since. Must John have a revelation of things shortly to come to pass? He must go alone into the Isle of Patmos! Must Paul hear unspeakable words, not, at that time, lawful for a man to utter? He must go alone into the third heaven, and not be allowed even to communicate what he saw and heard when he came down; alone, he must necessarily go in advance. And just so, when God has called some of His followers to an out-of- the-way path, they have had to go alone in an untrodden way. Superior love necessitates a lonely walk. You shrink, and say, "That seems so hard." Yes, I know; I wish I could make it easier, but I cannot help it. I simply state the fact, that superior love necessitates, in some measure, a lonely walk, because you see it is only they who--thus love, to whom the Lord tells His secrets. If you want to ask a confidential question and get a confidential answer, you must be on the bosom of your Master. You won’t be able to do it at a distance. Then, you see, when He gives to any soul superior light to its fellows, and that soul follows the light, it necessarily entails a path in advance of its fellows. Unless he can inspire and encourage them (which, alas! is hard work) to follow, he must go on alone. That was a beautiful illustration we read in the lesson (Acts 10:1-48). Here is Peter called to go in advance of the whole Church! Now, the Lord wants a man to do this, and whom does He choose? He chooses impulsive, energetic, head-first Peter. But then, there is something to be done first God lets down the sheet with all its unclean contents, and Peter fastens his eyes upon it. (I wish you had studied all the sheets the Lord has let down before your eyes, you would have come out very differently to what you have.) Peter studies them, and soon the Divine vision has absorbed Peter’s attention. When the Lord has fairly got his attention, then comes the voice, "Now, Peter, rise, slay and eat." Then, when the Lord had taught him his lesson effectually, and when Peter saw that he had not yet explored all the ideas of the Divine mind about the extension of His kingdom, and that his business was to follow his Lord’s directions, and not to have his own "ifs" and "buts," but go ahead and do as God bade him, then Peter goes on to carry out the Divine direction. Then the church, aghast, as usual, at anything new-- always down upon a measure,

whether good or bad, if it has the awful quality of being new--was down upon it. This new church, which had only just itself been brought to God by a set of new measures, is down upon Peter, and they call him to the council to answer for his conduct.

He tells them all about it in the truthful simplicity of a man of God, and, thank God, they bad sense enough--yes, and love enough, charity enough, to accept his explanations, and to glorify God. Would to God we could get as much sense and charity in these days! A lady writes to me, only the other day, of her husband, saying that he sympathises with outside work, but contends that there is everything one wants in the church; and another contends that there is everything everybody wants somewhere else, and so they are down upon all the Peters that dare to do anything out of the jog-trot line. You may reason ever so urgently, and show them that all these old measures are not enough for everybody, that there is a great mass of outlying population which they do not reach--the Gentiles of this generation; you may show them that these Gentiles are without the Holy Ghost, that they are not cleansed, that they are yet common and unclean; you may show them that these new measures of yours are quite as lawful as their old measures, and that, probably, they would be a great deal more useful, and, moreover, that they have been borne in upon you by the Holy Ghost, and that you feel as if there were a fire in your bones urging you to go and try them, but they will not hold their peace and glorify God, but will loose their tongues and villify you.

False Charity looks more at the means than at the end. Its possessor is more concerned about what men will think of him, than what will exalt the Redeemer. You can know it by this mark. Are you more concerned about what your neighbor, Mr. So-and-So, or your minister, Rev. Mr. So-and-So, or even your bishop, thinks about you, than you are about the extension of the kingdom of Christ? Look out, my friend, yours is the wrong sort of Charity. True Charity looks at the end--the spread of righteousness in the earth--the reign of the King--and it is not very fastidious about the measures, so that they are lawful.

I do not advocate anything unlawful, to do good--God forbid. Divine Charity says, "Anywhere with Jesus"--in the temple or outside of it-- at the seaside or in Cheapside--on the mountain top or in the market place--in the streets--anywhere, Lord Jesus, if Thou wilt only come and take Thine inheritance and reign over the hearts and souls of men. True Charity is only too glad to become a Jew to the Jews, as weak to the weak, if it can only pick them up;--only too glad to descend to men of low estate, and put its arms round their necks, if it can only bring them to the cross and bring them back to the heart and Heaven of God; and it does not care what the Pharisee on the other side says; it is set on saving the poor sinner; it is pouring in oil and wine, and putting him on its own beast; it is intent on saving him, and does not care what anybody thinks. Have you got it? It is so good. It makes you feel so warm and comfortable inside. It is beautiful, and it proves better and better every day, and it will be better still when you are dying--Faith and Hope will be done away, but this love will last forever! But this necessitates somebody leading the way--going on in advance. Will you be content to go in advance? Will you endure the hardness of a pioneer? Can you bear the ridicule and gibes of your fellow-men? Dare you go where the Holy Ghost leads, and leave Him to look after the consequences? If so, happy are you, and you shall have a harvest of precious souls; you shall shine as the stars forever; but, if you draw back, His soul shall have no pleasure in you. Step out on to the Divine love, that is able, alone amongst the breakers, to bear your little bark--able to make you more than a conqueror. Oh, step out--follow, follow, follow--do not be afraid!

Spurious Charity is the opposite of this. It must have human notice. Ostentation is its very essence. Cease to notice it, and it will soon die. "I went about to establish mine own righteousness," says Paul, before he got the true Charity. Here was a grand opportunity for Pharisaic Saul. These Nazarenes, were they not everywhere spoken against? Was not this a grand opportunity for him to be everywhere spoken for?--and so he takes advantage of public opinion, and becomes "exceedingly mad" against them; and, not satisfied with persecuting them in his own city, he goes after them into strange cities, but he reveals, afterwards, when he got the Divine Charity, that the mainspring of his zeal was SELF-GLORY.

False Charity hates to be in a minority--you never find it in an unrespectable minority,--it wants company, and that of a respectable, genteel kind. Its possessors are always sticklers for the traditions of the elders; their horizon is bounded very largely by the opinions of men and the attitude of the rulers. They are always asking, "Have any of the rulers believed on Him?"

Now, my friends, let this teach you wisdom and love. Prove all things before you condemn. I have no doubt Saul was an honest man, in the world’s acceptation of the term, for he says he persecuted the Nazarenes ignorantly, thinking he was doing God service; but what a grand mistake he was making, and how effectually he was doing the work of the devil! Of course, if he had seen, he was mistaken, he would have ceased to be mistaken.

I wish people would stop and think that the path they are now standing in the well-beaten track on which they are now walking with such slow dignity--was one quite as new and unconventional and outrageous to the coadjutors of their forefathers, as the path which any new departure by the Holy Ghost may set before them now. I wish such people would read history. I suppose they do not, or, if they do, they read it as they do the Bible--they fail to draw any practical principle from it. Such people should read "Neale’s History of the Puritans," and see in what a hurricane of excitement, opposition, contempt, and persecution, their forefathers fought for the very paths they are now standing still in, and holding so sacred that they cannot have them disturbed. Do you see how unphilosophically they are acting? If their forefathers had acted on the principles they are acting on, they would have stood still in old paths, and we would never have been in the new ones. These people stand in these paths of traditionalism and routinism, just where their forefathers left them, occupying all their time in admiring the wisdom and benevolence and devotion of their forefathers, instead of imitating their aggressive faith and MARCHING ON TO THE CONQUEST OF THE WORLD. Which is the most God-honoring? Which has the most common sense in it? Which will please your, forefathers the most? But it is now as it was in the days of the Son of Man--for, "ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, ’If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’ Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets."

Alas! what a deal of this is going on to-day, only there is one difference--it is going on "under a Christian creed, instead of a Jewish." It is only the creed that differs--the character, the spring of action, is the same.

Now, my friends, try yourselves--which Charity have you got? Do you rejoice in the extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ by any lawful means, or are you more concerned about the color of a man’s coat than the state of his heart? Would you rather the poor drunkard were left to rot and

seethe in his misery, than that a man should put on a blue jacket with an S.[Footnote: Badge of the Salvation Army.] on his collar, and go and fetch him out? Would you rather have men damned conventionally, than saved unconventionally? If you would, you are a Pharisee at heart--I care not what you call yourselves. Go home and read for your instruction Matthew 23:23-28.

Further, how bitterly this false Charity often comes out in individual cases. We will just take an illustration. We will suppose here is a family of decent, respectable, professedly Christian people, who have been to church or chapel most of their lives. Or here is a Church, we will suppose, of the same character--nothing particular has happened; they fear the Lord, and go comfortably along, and are just where they were ten or fifteen years ago, making up for deaths and removals. We will suppose that a member of that family or that church, as the case may be, gets converted. He reads a book, goes to a special meeting, or some providential utterance is the means of sending the light of God's Spirit upon his soul, and he is quickened and woke up to see the miserable, half-dead, guilty condition in which he is; he is praying and groaning, and feeling after God; he gets the sense of his transgressions and unfaithfulness being taken away, and the joy of God's salvation restored to his soul. Now, in a moment, almost immediately, as in the case of Peter, as soon as the internal work is done, comes the external path opened up. The Spirit of God lays before him some new work, something strikes him which has been long forgotten, or which never seems to have been recognised in his family or church. He sees what a grand thing that would be for the conversion of souls, and the extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and he feels it beginning to burn like a fire in his bones to enter this path of usefulness. He prays much over it, and he waits until he is fully satisfied that it is not a vain impulse, but that it is of the Spirit of God. Full of love, and faith, and zeal, he goes to tell his minister, or some Christian friend; he expects that they will sympathise with his feelings, and enter into his project; but, alas! alas! they begin by raising objections--they start difficulties:--"Well, but you see that would be a little out of our order: that is not exactly our way of doing things. I am afraid the deacons would object, or I am afraid something would happen;" and if he has the misfortune to be young (anybody would think it was a sin to be young), they will "crush" him out; they put the extinguisher on, and say, "Wait, my brother, until you have more experience," or, "my sister," especially, "you must never presume to do anything of which we cannot approve!"

Oh! friends, you smile because you know how true it is! Oh, alas! the thousands of urgings of the Holy Ghost; the thousands of heavenly voices that have been as clear to human souls as ever Peter's sheet was to him; the thousands of glorious aspirations and schemes for the spread of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ that have been thus crushed by this spurious, false, selfish, devilish Charity! The Lord put it out.

Oh! I would not care what the Lord called my child to do that would be for the extension of His kingdom and the glory of His name; I would not restrain her or keep her back. I might say, "My child, it may be a painful thing for me to consent. I might have chosen another path for you; but if you are satisfied the Spirit leads you, go forward, and I will do all I can to help you." Why? Because I want the King to have His own, and I do not care how it is, so that He gets His own, and I will have Him to use mine as well as me to get it.

Fathers and mothers, look out! If you grudge your children to God, He will be even with you. "They that honor Me, I will honor, but they who do not, shall be lightly esteemed." They shall get light

weight all round, and be whipped with their own rods. Mind how you withhold that which is most precious from God! Mind you do not receive the grace of God in vain; some people do. The fifth point in which this Divine and spurious Charity contradict each other, is, that Divine Charity--the pure love of God--is law abiding. That is, it always manifests itself in harmony with the great moral law of the universe--it never does evil that good may come! You never hear it saying--"I cannot say that this is exactly square; I know this is not exactly the right course, but then I can accomplish such and such objects by adopting it." Never! that is of the devil! You may always know that the law of righteousness is entwined round the very heart of Divine Charity, and as justice and judgment are the habitation of the throne of its Divine Author, so righteousness is in the very core of its soul. It will never sacrifice righteousness for peace, or anything else.

Now, what is the whole duty of man? To love mercy, to do justly, and walk humbly with God; and, when the Holy Spirit has brought about that result in your soul, God will look on you with a beneficent eye, with a smile of approbation, and its genial influence will sun your whole being, and you will walk in the light of it, even as the angels do in Heaven. "Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God;" that is the whole duty of man--everything is included in that. Do you hear it, oh! ye temporizers with Divine law? Do you hear it, ye who say that we must come down partly, and be a little like the world in order to win it? that you must come on to the level of the ungodly in order that you may win them to God?--I tell you that all unrighteousness is sin! Do you hear this, you who contend for covering up by a false Charity certain sins which are sending men to perdition wholesale, and make laws and acts of parliament to protect men in these crimes? I know your specious arguments that come from the devil; but I ask, is it justice to take one part of the human race, and that the weaker, and, therefore, according to the law of Divine Charity, demanding the greater protection from cruelty and wrong, and offer that part up for the supposed good of the other, because the latter is stronger? Is that justice? Is that mercy? and, mind, I say emphatically supposed good; for, do you think one part of God’s creation can be trodden down without reacting with terrible moral force upon the other? Do you think it can? Was it ever done? Will it ever be done? No! not while He sits on His throne. Yes, supposed good, for facts mock your arguments. It is not for their good; you know it is not. You cannot accomplish your purpose when you have done all; and think you that you will escape, by your satanic inventions, the Divine Executioner? Think you that your specious arguments will avail with Him who hath sworn in His holy habitation that He will avenge the oppressed and down-trodden of the earth? No, no! I see written between the lines, and I hear muttering between your speeches. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." You cannot escape the penalty! The last characteristic of true Charity which I shall name is, that it holds out, in spite of ingratitude, opposition, and persecution! Its possessor seeks the good of all men, not because he ought, merely, but because he cannot help it. His heart is on the side of God and truth. He loves righteousness, and, therefore, cannot desist from seeking to bring all beings to love it, too, although they hate and despise him for so doing. Jesus held out in this glorious love, even in the agonies of crucifixion. "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." His heart was set on bringing man back to God, and He went through with it. His soul did not draw back, and His Divine love constrained Him, even onto death.

Paul followed his Master in this respect; and though the more he loved some of his converts, the less he was loved, he went on, seeking their highest good, not being hindered for a moment by

their ingratitude. He loved them--not their good opinion or applause! A spurious Charity soon tires when the objects of it prove unworthy. Its possessor says: "I have had enough of this; the kinder I am, the worse people treat me. I shall button up my pocket, and take my ease, till I am better appreciated." Self-glory is the very life of spurious Charity: it dies right out under ingratitude and contempt. Which have you got, my brother?--my sister? Does somebody say, as a man who had been to a service at Scarborough the other, day, and had been hearing some straight truth, said, when asked, "How did you like it?" The man, a young, prosperous tradesman in the town, shuffled about, and said: "Well, it was awful; if that is true, I am on my way to hell." Thank God he had found it out. Now, have you got this Divine Charity? I told you, at the beginning, it did not grow on unregenerate human nature, so if you are an unregenerate man, and have not the Holy Spirit, I want you to find it out. You have to begin at the beginning, and get the plant planted. No matter what spurious imitations you have got, if you have not got the love of God. Have you got it, brother?--sister? If you have not, you can have it this afternoon. Will you seek it? We were all once without it, even as it is said, "We were the children of wrath, even as others;" we hated those who hated us; we hated things, not because they were wicked, and against God, but because they were opposed to us personally; our love and hate were influenced by selfishness, the same as others, but now the Lord has renewed our hearts, and made us in some little measure, like Him who "loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; and, therefore, God anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows." Oh! yes; the more you love righteousness and hate iniquity, the more of gladness you will have, and the more glorious the testimony you will give for God. You will be able to say, with David, "I have not hid Thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared Thy faithfulness and Thy salvation: I have not concealed Thy loving kindness and Thy truth from the great congregation." There will be no difficulty about declaring it. We find it easy to declare it when people get it. We cannot keep them quiet; they are like the early converts--they are up two or three together; and, like Paul, we have to say, "One at a time; you shall all prophecy, if you do it one at a time." When people get it, it bubbles up, and runs over; "it springs up," as out great Master said, "as a well of water, unto everlasting life." Many floods cannot quench it; it abideth forever. Have you got it? Have you got enough of it to lift you above your petty, selfish interests, or are you guided by the Charity that first looks inside to see how any proposition will affect self, instead of seeing how it will affect the kingdom of God? And you, poor sinner, who know you have not got it--I have more hope of you than some who profess to have it. His great bowels of compassion move towards you; He is waiting to shed abroad this love in your heart. The feast is spread; all things are now ready. Oh! come into His banqueting house, and sit under His banner of love for ever and ever.

01.07. Conditions of Effectual Prayer

CHAPTER VII.

CONDITIONS OF EFFECTUAL PRAYER.

If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.-- John 15:7.

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.-- Mark 11:24.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.-- James 1:5-7.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.-- Romans 8:26-27.

I have not taken the texts in the order in which they stand, but in the order in which they logically follow one another, and in which they elucidate the subject. And now, in the few remarks I wish to make, I shall try to embody answers to the letters I have received on this subject. There is no experience, perhaps, more common in these days than this, nothing more constantly said to me by professing Christians: "Well, I have prayed a long time for certain things, but I don’t seem to get any answers to my prayers." I often wonder such people don’t give up praying altogether I think I should if I never got answers.

Now I say, this is a very God-dishonoring experience, and there must be something wrong somewhere when this is the case. There must be something wrong either with the suppliants or the Giver. Oh! I feel often what a deeply God-dishonoring thing it is when Christians meet, as they frequently do, up and down the country, to pray for a revival, to pray for a specific thing in their Churches and in their families, and it never comes.

Some years ago, when the wave of revival was sweeping over Ireland and America, you know the Churches in this country held united prayer- meetings to pray that it might come to England; but it did not come, and the infidels wagged their heads, and wrote in their newspapers: "See, the Christians’ God is either deaf or gone a-hunting, for they have had prayer-meetings all over the land for a revival, and it has not come." Oh! how my cheeks burned with shame as I thought of it; how I mourned over it! I knew it was not because our God was asleep --not because His arm was shortened--not because His bowels of compassion did not yearn over sinners--not because he could not have poured out His Spirit and have given us the same glorious times of refreshing they had in other places. That was not the reason. There was only one reason, and that was, that His

people asked amiss.

They did not understand the conditions of prevailing prayer. They did not fulfil them. If they had prayed till now, and maintained the same attitude, they would not have got the answer, because there are conditions to these promises, as to all other promises; and we may pray ourselves black and blue in the face if we do not comply with the conditions. God will never move an inch to meet us, and never fulfil the promises in our experience. May you, who are awake to perceive your responsibilities and obligations in respect to the perishing world, take heed to my words, and take home what I say--think about it, pray over it, try to realize it is the Lord's message to you. These are only a tithe of the glorious promises with respect to prayer. There are plenty of them in the Book, in which God has bound Himself to answer the faithful prayers of His people.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Now, why is it that the great mass of professing Christians do not get answers to their prayers? In the first place, they are not the CHARACTERS to whom God has made the promises. These promises are made to God's saints--to those who keep His commandments, who walk in the light and have fellowship with Him through the Holy Spirit, and, therefore, the Spirit can make intercession for them. How can the Spirit make intercession for a man when He is not in him? Those who are walking in the light can see what sort of requests to put up, when to put them up, and how to put them up; they see it all, because they are in the light. Such people do ask, and receive. But, alas! it is because there are so few of these that God's character is traduced every day, and that infidels laugh at us and at our God, too.

Now, do not go round about, and try to put this off you. Who are these promises made to? I challenge anybody to find me promises in this Book, taken with the context (except in the case of repenting sinners, who are a special class, and met with special promises), except to saints. There are no promises of answer to prayer, except to this class of character. These promises are not made to everybody, are they? The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to God, except it be his prayer when he is forsaking his wickedness. Then that prayer is not an abomination; but all other prayers of the wicked are. These promises are made to righteous people--to people who are:

First, in fellowship with God. "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you;"--having been brought into living fellowship by a living faith, the promises are made to those people who MAINTAIN that union--who walk in it, who live in it, and who avail themselves of the opportunities and privileges which Jesus has bestowed upon them by virtue of that union.

Now, you see, friends, it is not enough that you were once in union with Jesus, in order to get answers to your prayers. I am afraid there are thousands in a backslidden state. They have let go the grasp of faith; they are not abiding in Christ; they are abiding out of Him, and yet they are constantly praying and wondering why God does not answer their prayers. Don't you see, the first condition is wanting. There is no possible way of approach to the Father but through the Son. All prayers are an abomination to God which do not go up to Him through His Son, and in His Son, except such as those of Cornelius, who never heard of Christ; but to people who have ever had the light and known His Son, no prayers while out of living union with His Son are accepted. And that does not mean saying, "For the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ." It does not matter much what people say. God never pays any attention to people's words; it is what they mean and feel that He

pays attention to; and He knows when people really offer their prayers in union with His Son. They are not in union, and, therefore, their prayers never rise any higher than the room in which they offer them. They hardly get out of their mouths; God never hears them. They are drowned and buried in their own throats.

Oh! you young converts, never drop out of living union with Jesus. Keep in it--hold it fast--walk in it, and you will get answers to your prayers every day. You will be as sure of it as if you saw God doing what you ask, and heard Him speaking to you. You will be able to say, "I know that Thou hearest me always." Bless His name! Those who abide in Him can say that in their measure. The next condition of prevailing prayer, is--obedience to the light. Now, what does it mean to walk in obedience? Well, it does not mean, searching this New Testament to find out how little of God's grace will get you into Heaven! It does not mean, running round to see what this person says and the other person says about such and such a text, in order that you may escape from the real, practical meaning of the text! Such people are hypocrites at heart, whoever they are; or at least, insincere. They don't want to know God's will; they would much rather not know it. They want to get away from the plain, practical, common-sense meaning of the text, and then they say, "It doesn't mean exactly what it says," and "It should be interpreted so-and-so;" and they stroke themselves down, and try to make themselves feel comfortable when they are traitors at heart. That is not walking in the light.

Walking in the light is like walking in the sun--not running behind a pillar there, and a tree yonder, to get away from the light. It is coming right out, and saying, "Now, Lord Jesus; I want to know Thy will. Lord, pour Thy light upon me. I am prepared to follow it, even though it is to the block and to the stake."

First, desire to have the light. Oh! it makes my heart ache--I was going to say boil--with righteous indignation, in jealousy for God's honor, to think that He should be so traduced and blasphemed by those who profess to love Him--who try to make out that they get wrong for want of light. Nothing of the kind. Here is plenty of light; but you must say, "Yes, Lord, I am willing to have it, even if it condemns me. If it condemns my heart, my head, Lord, pour it on me. If it condemns my life, pour it on me. If it condemns those companions, those indulgences, pour it on me: I will give them up. If it condemns my business, pour it on me: I will abandon such business, and sooner die in the workhouse than continue in it. If it condemns my family relations, I will come out from them, and follow Thee." The Lord will always answer such a soul as that. He will put His finger down on this sore spot and the other, and He will tell you what to do, and you will be as sure of it as if you heard His audible voice. What does it mean to walk in the light? Obey His voice. Don't stop to confer with flesh and blood, but, as Paul did, get up, and set off to commence the career which your Master commands. Paul did not stop to confer with flesh and blood. He did not stop to reckon what it would cost him, but on he went, and never stops, until he reaches the block. That is walking in the light--obeying--not standing, quibbling with the Lord about it; not saying, "Oh! but,"--but doing it.

Oh! friends, no matter who preaches another Gospel to you; no matter who comes with the doctrine that you can be accepted of God--be a saint on any other conditions. For Christ's sake and your soul's sake, don't believe them. As the apostle John says: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." You say,

"But then it is such a costly sacrifice." It is, in one sense; but when you have paid the price, when you have made the sacrifice, when you have entered upon the road, the joy, the light, the power, and the glory are worth a hundred times as much. Did any man that ever got the Pearl of great price feel that he had given too much for it, even if he had given all that he had? Never! Martyrs and confessors have gloried in the possession of it while they have writhed on the rack and in the flames, and you never heard one solitary testimony that any man or woman of God ever thought that they had paid too highly for it. Never! Do you want to have your prayers answered? That is the way. Walk so that your own heart condemns you not. The obedient child that lives in complacent affection with its parent has no fear in coming up to ask for favors. It knows it will get them. Its own heart does not condemn it. "If our own heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." I defy any man to separate confidence and obedience. If you will not be obedient, you cannot have confidence. I challenge any Christian here to tell me that he can go up to the throne of God in faith for any blessing, when his own heart condemns him. He knows he cannot. HE HAS FIRST TO GET THAT STATE OF CONDEMNATION TAKEN AWAY before he can exercise faith for any blessing. Walk in the light, and then you shall have fellowship with Him, and His blood will cleanse you from all sin, and the Spirit will teach you how to pray, and what to pray for, which the great mass of professors know nothing about.

Further, the leading, teaching, and urging of the Holy Ghost is the next condition of effectual prayer. We might call these conditions a four-linked chain, connecting our souls with the very heart of God. First, fellowship with Jesus; second, obedience to His commands, walking in the light; third, the intercession of the indwelling Spirit; and fourth, the exercise of faith; and if you miss any one of these links, your prayers are done for. You may have all the other three, but if you miss one, you will not get answers. It will cut communion, and there will be no response.

I am afraid a good many professors do not know what the Spirit of intercession means. They do not know anything about the Spirit making intercession for them with groanings that cannot be uttered. When we get more of this Spirit of intercessory prayer in parents, we shall see more spiritual children born. Now, the Holy Spirit says, here we know not what to pray for as we ought, unless the Spirit teaches; hence people are constantly, as James says, asking and not receiving, because they ask amiss. "Ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts"--that means, your earthly desires, affections, purposes, bound by the horizon of earth.

Now, I believe that this is the great reason why thousands of Christians pray and never, get answers. They ARE SELFISH IN THEIR PRAYERS; they are earthy; they ask amiss, that they may consume it upon their earthly desires, affections, and propensities. Mothers tell me that they have prayed for their children for years, and not got one of them converted. I say, "More the pity; more the shame on you." Why? Because they prayed merely selfish, instinctive prayers, because they were their children, or because they wanted them to be religions, so that they would not go into sin, or bring disgrace or misery upon the family, or it would be so nice to have them religious; but they don’t want them to be righteous over much; they don’t want them to be so given up to God as to cut off the vanities and fooleries of this world, and to give themselves up wholly to Christ--that is too much; but just religion enough to make them a comfort to themselves. Would you answer such prayers if you were God? Hundreds and thousands of prayers are put up every day that go no deeper and no higher than that, if the motives were analyzed--and the Holy Ghost does analyze. I am afraid many wives pray for their husbands on the same tack. They are not

troubled that their husbands are living in disobedience to God, squandering their time, talents, and money, and robbing the kingdom of Jesus Christ of what they might be doing for it;--the agonizing consideration is, that, if religious, they would spend so much more time at home; that they are wasting the money, instead of laying it up for the children; and that, if they were religious, all this would be right. Now, I say, God will never answer that wife's prayer for her husband! You must think of what your husband could be for God-- what he could do for God's kingdom--how Jesus Christ has shed His blood for him--how dishonoring a life of sin is to God; and you must dwell on this until your heart is ready to break, and you will soon get your husband converted, if you act wisely along with your prayers. God hates selfishness--selfishness is the devil, the very embodiment of him. You must get out of self; you must look at your child always as God's, as having a precious soul redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus, and having talents and capacities to glorify Him and spread His kingdom; and you must ground your prayers on that, and say, "I would rather lay them in the grave, a thousand times--rather they were poor and despised--than they should grow up to dishonor Thee." Then you will get your prayers answered!

People pray about their business. God sees that the way to destroy that man is to let him get on. He does not want money in order to roll the old chariot along. God sees that prosperity would eat his soul like a canker, and so He won't let him get on. The Spirit of God never leads the soul to a selfish prayer. No; it leads the soul to weep because men keep not His law, to cry more about His interests than its own. It is willing for its own house to lie desolate, if that will promote the spread of God's kingdom. It is willing for the sparrow to find a nest on its own altar, if by that it can replenish and glorify the altar of Jehovah.

Then comes the last link--faith. Here is another secret. No believer can exercise faith for anything that the Holy Ghost does not lead him up to. You may pray, and pray, but you will never exercise faith until you have the Spirit making intercession in you. There is very little difficulty about believing with people who have taken the three preceding steps. Those who are in fellowship with Jesus, those who are walking in the light, those who have the Holy Ghost as an interceding Spirit--they know what to pray for; they know what the mind of the Spirit is; they know how the Spirit is leading them, and they can march up to the throne and "ask and receive." They know their request is according to the mind of God, and they can wrestle, if need be, like the Syrophenician woman, if He sees fit to try their faith. He does not always answer at once. He lets them wrestle with groans that cannot be uttered; but they know the Spirit is making intercession for them, and they hold on sometimes amidst great discouragement and temptation till the answer comes. They get the assurance of faith, which says, "Yes, it shall be done." People look at them with wonder. Christian friends know the thing they are praying for has not come, and say, "You look as glad as if yon had it;" "I have got the earnest: I know it is coming: I have the assurance that it shall be done." Now, every praying parent ought to wrestle till that is got for every child. You never ought to leave off till then, and then train as well as pray--co-work with God: that is the law of the kingdom, all the way through. Believe that ye receive it, and ye shall have it. Oh! the confusion, the jumbling there is, in dealing with poor souls at that point. People say, "Believe you are saved, and you are saved." I have heard Christians give that advice to souls many a time. "Believe you are saved, and you are saved." Believe a lie, and it will come true. Is that God's philosophy? What is the use of telling a person to believe he is saved before he is saved? That is telling him to believe a lie. People say, "Believe you are sanctified, and you are sanctified." Indeed! When were you sanctified? God never

tells a person to believe a thing until it happens. He has made the bestowment of the gift to be simultaneous with the exercise of the faith. Believe that ye receive, and ye shall have--not that ye did receive an hour ago, for that would not be true; not that ye will receive an hour hence, for that would be presumption. There is no such promise, but believe that ye do now receive, and ye shall have. "I will never disappoint the man who dares trust me to that extent." He shall have it. You say the age of miracles is past. Yes, because the age of that sort of faith is past. You will get miracles back when that sort of faith returns. God has bound Himself over to the faith of His real people, and He would sooner break all the laws of nature, than He would break the laws of grace. He can easily set aside a law of nature; but He will never set aside a law of grace. He has bound Himself to faith--the only power in the universe to which He has bound Himself--and nobody ever rose up in this world yet, and said, "I trusted God, and He deceived me." Faith means TRUST--faith means ABANDONMENT--as if you were dying, and you had nothing left but the naked promise of God. You say, "I am dying: I must trust now," and that man jumps on to the promise. He gives up experimenting, and really trusts; and you have seen the light come into his eyes; you have heard the song of praise burst from his lips, because he believed he received, and he did receive.

Now, then, some of you who have written to me, know you are living in fellowship with Jesus. Some of you have lately commenced to walk in the light. You have cut off and put away the idols; you have abandoned yourself to the will of God, and sworn, by His grace, that you will follow Him all the way. You do feel the Holy Ghost is in you. Oh! I entreat you to obey fully, to let the Spirit have His way. Do not restrain Him. Don’t think it will hurt your bodies: don’t think it is too much; don’t think you are getting fanatical; don’t think that, after all, God does not require this kind of thing-- follow the Spirit. Let the Spirit lead you, and groan through you; let the Spirit wrestle with God through you--follow Him. If we had more of this in these services, we should have more fruit; and if the church had more of this, there would be more souls born into the kingdom.

It was one of the things in which I grieved the Spirit of God in my early days that I would not let Him, to the extent He would have done, make me a woman of prayer; and yet, in comparison with many, perhaps, I was one. He used to lay particular people and subjects on my heart, so that I could not help praying; but oh! how bitterly I have regretted and wept before the Lord that I did not let Him have all His way with me in this respect. Take warning! and you whom He is beginning to lead, let Him lead you. Pour out your souls for others and with others. I believe that more souls are convinced in real prayer, than in speaking. I have noticed this many a time. I have seen at the bottom of a great hall or theatre, or in the gallery, a lot of the roughest men conceivable, behaving in the most unseemly manner, arrested by the influence of prayer. Perhaps, when the rowdyism has been ready to break into open tumult, a little woman has stretched out her hands over the congregation, and said, "Now, let us pray;" and I have seen the whole mass of men assume an attitude of quietness and reverence. I have watched the aspect of the congregation, and seen great, rough, black-faced fellows get their heads down, and sometimes wipe their eyes; and when we have got up to sing, there has been no more disorderly conduct, but they have settled down with the solemnity of death, to listen. Hundreds of them were convinced of sin while under that prayer. It was the Holy Ghost wrestling for those souls in the heart of that woman, that struck them with conviction.

Prayer is agony of soul--wrestling of the Spirit. You know how men and women deal with one another when they are in desperate earnestness for something to be done. That is prayer, whether

it be to man or God; and when you get your heart influenced, and melted, and wrought up, and burdened by the Holy Ghost for souls, you will have power, and you will never pray but somebody will be convinced,--some poor soul’s dark eyes will be opened, and spiritual life will commence.

01.08. The Perfect Heart

CHAPTER VIII. THE PERFECT HEART. For the eyes of the Lord ran to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him-- 2 Chronicles 16:9. This passage occurs in the history of Asa, one of the most godly and devoted kings that ever sat upon the throne of Judah. We are told in the fourteenth chapter that he commenced his reign by setting himself to destroy the idolatry into which the whole nation had been betrayed by its former ruler, and to restore the worship and service of the God of Israel. He set himself to bring back the nation to its allegiance and obedience to God; and his success is a great encouragement to any who shall set themselves, single-handed and with a perfect heart, towards God, to do this in any circle, under any circumstances.

He succeeded. God blessed him in his efforts to purge his kingdom inside, and God also delivered him from his enemies outside, and enabled him by His power to defeat the king of Ethiopia, who came against him with an exceeding great army, because King Asa was perfect in his heart towards God. When this king came up against him, Asa went and cried unto the Lord, and cast himself upon his God, trusting Him to deliver him, and God never disappointed any man, either before or since Asa's day, who did that. God delivered his enemies into his hand and made him a successful and happy king, over a prosperous and increasing people. But by-and-bye, after many years, for Asa was perfect in his heart towards the Lord for many years of his long reign; but whether it were, as, alas! too often happens, that a life of ease and prosperity brought forth in Asa the results of partial backsliding, we know not; but as years went on, another war was declared, and this time it was the king of Israel who came up against the king of Judah. What did Asa do? Did he go, as formerly, and cry unto the Lord, and put his battle into His hands? No, he did not. He had left His first love; he had become, in a measure, untrue to the Lord God of Israel. He forgot where his strength lay; his spiritual perceptions had become dim; he had lost his realization of God's ability to help and deliver him out of the hands of his enemies, and so he fell back upon worldly policy. He went down to Assyria and courted Ben-hadad, the king of Assyria, and said, "Come and help me, that my enemies may depart, for I am sore pressed." Ah! what a picture of backsliders. On another occasion, when Jehosophat made an ungodly alliance, a prophet met him and said, "Should'st thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?" No man ever did this without being sorely whipped, as poor Asa was. He succeeded, indeed, in the battle, and won the victory. It was a lawful end, but he accomplished it by unlawful means. He won the victory, and, I dare say, he was congratulating himself, and stroking his beard in self-complacency, when, lo! the prophet comes to deliver God's message to him, and he says:--

"Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

"Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet because thou didst rely on the Lord He delivered them into thine hand.

"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him. Herein thou hast done foolishly; therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars"--the very thing he went to Assyria to seek to avoid. He wanted peace, not war, and he went down to Assyria to enable him to spend the remainder of his days in peace, when, lo! the Word of God goes forth, "Thou shalt have wars." He was chastised in the very thing for which he sold himself and his God. "Be sure thy sin will find thee out." It is God's way to chastise His children by those very things in which they sell His interests. "Thou shalt have wars." But we want to deal specially with the lesson which the prophet draws from this event; for he says, "Wherefore didst thou go to Assyria? Wherefore hast thou sinned against God? Hast thou forgotten who the God of Israel was? Didst thou not know that the eyes of the Lord run throughout the whole earth?" He would have helped thee now, Asa, as much as in the past. He will help any man who is whole- hearted towards Him--that trusts in Him. Now, I say, this is the lesson which the prophet draws, not only for Asa, but for all the Asas since his day, and those who are yet to come, for every man and woman who professes to be a servant of God, the prophet sounds down to the ages that "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him."

Now, what is this perfect heart? "Ah!" you say, "that is the point." Yes, that is the point, and we will try to show what kind of a heart this is. It must be A DIFFERENT KIND OF HEART TO HEARTS IN GENERAL; all hearts are not perfect towards God, or else His eyes would not have to be running to and fro throughout the earth to find them. They would be plentiful enough if they were the common sort of hearts, but evidently they are a different kind of hearts to ordinary hearts; and another thing is evident on the face of the text, that these kind of hearts are very precious in the sight of God. He delights in them; He makes greater store by one such than He does by thousands of the other kinds of hearts, of which there are so many. I say, these two lessons everybody with common sense will admit at once--that these hearts are not the common hearts, and that they are very precious in the sight of God.

Now, what is the meaning of this term "perfect heart," referring to the hearts of God's children, all the way through the Bible? As you know, I like to establish my points in the mouths of two or three witnesses, I will give you two or three texts, that we may find out God's meaning of this term, and then we will give you the very lowest rendering, where all schools are agreed, for I don't want controversy. We will just look at Psalm xxxvii. 37: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." There are such people as God means in that verse. Psalm lxiv. 4: "That they may shoot in secret at the perfect," who have always been a favorite target of the devil. He does not shoot much at people whose hearts are perfect towards the Lord. It is at those perfect people he shoots. "Suddenly do they shoot at him," perhaps while he is thinking they are his friends. "Suddenly they shoot, and fear not."

"Be ye perfect," says the Saviour, "even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." That means something. We will try to find out what it does mean (Matthew 19:21)--

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven: and come and follow Me."

And, again, at 1 Corinthians 2:6 -- "Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect." And (2 Timothy 3:17)-- "That the man of God may he perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good

works."

There are numbers of others, but these are samples, and I suppose all Christians attach some meaning to these terms. They must be terms signifying a great difference between the persons who are spoken of and ordinary men and women. Now, what do they mean? Well, the very lowest rendering of all divines and all schools is this, that it means sincerity and thoroughness. Well, that is all I want. Give me a man sincere and thorough in his love, and that is all I want; that will stretch through all the ramifications of his existence; it will go to the ends of his fingers and his toes, through his eyes, and through his tongue, to his wife, and to his family, to his shop, and to his business, and to his circle in the world. That is what I mean by holiness! Then, taking the lowest translation, it means that a man is whole-hearted in love, and thorough out-and-out in service! Amen. For that man who is thus perfect towards God, God will indeed show Himself strong in more ways than one! This cannot mean a merely natural heart, it must mean a renewed heart, because there are no perfect hearts by nature. There is no one in this sense that doeth good and sinneth not, for every child of Adam has gone astray like a lost sheep, has done the things he ought not, and left undone the things he ought to have done, and the whole world has become guilty before God. There are no naturally perfect hearts. It must mean, then, a heart renewed by the Holy Ghost, put right with God, and then kept right. A heart cannot be kept right until it has been put right, and that is the secret of the failure with some of you. You are trying to bring forth fruits before the tree is planted. You are looking for the fruits of a perfect heart before you have got one. You may well be disappointed. You must get your heart renewed, and then kept right by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Then, what does this perfect heart imply?

1. A heart perfect in its loyalty to God, thoroughly given over to God’s side, irrespective of consequences,--loyal. These are the hearts that God wants. This was the difference between David and Saul. There was not so much difference in the greater part of Saul’s outward life, when compared with the life of David. It was only the prophet Samuel, perhaps, who knew the difference, and a few close observers; but the difference was, that David was loyal to God, and God calls him, for this reason, a man after His own heart. From the first calling of David from the sheepfolds, right to the end, with one or two exceptions, during the whole of his life, he was loyal to God, and, if you will carefully search his history, you will find that in all his wars, and all his dealings with the nations round about, and with the leaders of affairs in his own kingdom--in everything,

David was loyal to God. It was the interests of God’s kingdom that lay at David’s heart--not his own honor, ease, or aggrandizement--not his own fame or riches, or building himself a house--it was the house of his God that was dear to his heart. He was loyal; whereas Saul was loyal only as far as it served his own purposes and interests. Oh! how many such Sauls there are in these days. When God’s commandments went counter with his notions, he openly set God at naught, and did as he liked. He sacrificed God’s interests to his own. He was unloyal at heart, hence he was a traitor, and never could learn the way of the Lord. He was never perfect towards the Lord his God, and, at last, God cast him off, and Samuel did also, and you know what his end was. Just the difference between the two--loyal and unloyal. A heart perfect towards God! What does it mean? It means--

2. Perfect in its obedience. That man or woman who has this kind of a heart, ceases to pick and choose amongst the commandments of God, which he shall obey, and which he shall not--he ceases to have his own will, though sometimes he may have a struggle with his own will, and the way that God may call him to take may look to him as if it were a dangerous or risky way, and he may wait a little bit, to be thoroughly satisfied; but when once satisfied that it is God's way, the true child will not hesitate. He confers not with flesh and blood, but on he goes, irrespective of consequences. This was Paul's kind of obedience. He conferred not with flesh and blood; he counted all things dung and dross, and he went on doing so to the end--thorough in his obedience.

People come to us and want to know what they are to do; they feel that they are only half-hearted in God's service; they have neither joy nor power, and say, "What must I do?" and we take, as God helps us, the dissecting knife, and try to find out the difficulty. We get them down under the blaze of the Holy Spirit's light, and try to probe them and find where they are wrong. Perhaps the Lord leads us to the sore spot, and we point out the difficulty, but, instead of obeying, they shrink away. They look ahead, and they see that to obey the light will involve loss of some kind--perhaps reputation, wealth, family associations, ease, or loss of friends, loss of temporal comforts, loss of good business. Loss is in the background, and they see it. They know where we are leading them to, and they slip back; they do not want to see, and yet they do not want to consider themselves dishonest, so they turn their heads away, and will not look in the direction of the light, smoothing it all over and singing-- "Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were an off'ring far too small," &c. That is not a perfect heart, but a partial heart towards the Lord God. The partial heart, so common, alas, now-a-days, wants to serve God a little. It is willing to go a little way with God, but not all the way; so that, taking the lowest interpretation, that is not a perfect heart towards the Lord. Can it be expected that the Lord should shew Himself strong in behalf of such people? Do you think you would if you were God?

Suppose you were a king, and had a prince or statesman who was serving you very valiantly and devotedly while it served himself; but, suppose the tables were turned, and you were dethroned and cast away into exile, your name being bandied about the nation where you once reigned as king, in disgrace and dishonor; suppose this statesman gave you up, and said, "Oh! I am going to be on the side of the reigning monarch. I was very devoted to this man while he reigned, but I cannot afford to be devoted to him now his interests draggle in the dust; I must be on the winning side." What would you think of such a man? And if you were restored to your kingdom and power, would you show yourself strong on behalf of such a man? No; you would remember, as David did, the man who cursed you. But if you had a prince or statesman who followed you into exile, who ministered to you in secret, who tried to hold up your interests, who contended for your righteousness and justice, and held up your name and tried to make the people see that you were a good and true man, who held on to you, when all the nation was calling you traitor--if you came back to your throne, would you not show yourself strong in behalf of that man? Of course you would. The Lord says He will show Himself strong in behalf of those of such a heart towards Him.

You masters here have a servant--a clever, smart man; you know how well he can serve you, and how valuable he can be, and would be if he were true; but you have reason to believe that he will only go with you as far as it will be for his own interests; he will serve you as far as he can serve himself, too, but, if he can get up by putting you down, you may lie there. What would you say to such a man? You would say, "I shall never show myself strong for him." So God is not likely to

show Himself strong for people who are not of a perfect heart. A lady said to me, "I have been doing this and doing that for years, but I have no power; why don't I have it?" I said, "Because you are not true to God. He will give it to anybody who is true to Him, and He can see into your heart, and knows you are not." Why will He not show Himself strong in your behalf? Because you do not show yourself thorough in His behalf. The moment you show yourself thorough, that moment will He show Himself strong for you. If you had been in Daniel's place you would not have done as he did. Daniel was one of the perfect-hearted men; he served his God when he was in prosperity. He set his window open every day. Then his enemies persuaded the king to make a decree that no man should pray but to this king for so many days. "Now," they said, "we shall have him." But Daniel just did as he was wont, he went and prayed with his window open. You say, "That was demonstrative religion, that was courting opposition. What need was there for him to make this display; could he not have shut the window and gone into an inner room? That was just like you Salvation-Army people, you always make a demonstration. Why could he not have gone into an inner chamber and prayed?" Because he would be thorough for his God in adversity, in the face of his enemies, as he was in prosperity. So he went and prayed with open window to the God of Heaven, and because He is the God of Heaven, He is able to take care of His own. His heart was perfect towards the Lord his God.

3. This perfect heart is perfect in its trust:--and, perhaps, that ought to have come first, for it is the very root of all.

Oh, how beautiful Abraham was in the eyes of God; how God gloried over him. How do I know that Abraham had a perfect heart towards God? Because he trusted Him. No other proof--no less proof--would have been of any use. I dare say he was compassed with infirmities, had many erroneous views, manward and earthward, but his heart was perfect towards God. Do you think God would have failed in His promise to Abraham? Abraham trusted Him almost to the blood of Isaac, and God showed Himself strong in his behalf, and delivered him, and made him the father of the faithful; crowned him with everlasting honor, so that his name, from generation to generation, has been a pillar of strength to the Lord's people, and a crown of glory to his God.

01.09. How to Work for God with Success

CHAPTER IX.

HOW TO WORK FOR GOD WITH SUCCESS.

Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.-- Matthew 21:28.

Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.-- Luke 14:23.

I am to speak of some needful qualifications for successful labor; and I say:--

First, that there are certain laws which govern success in the kingdom of grace as well as in the kingdom of nature, and you must study these laws, and adapt yourself to them. It would be in vain for the husbandman to scatter his seed over the unbroken ground or on pre-occupied soil. You must plough and harrow and put your seed in carefully, and in proper proportion, and at the right time, and then you must water and weed and wait for the harvest. And just so in Divine things. Oh! we shall find out, by-and-by, that the laws of the spiritual kingdom are quite as certain and unerring in their operation as the laws of the natural kingdom, and, perhaps, a great deal more so; but, through the blindness and obtuseness and unbelief of our hearts, we could not, or would not find them out. People get up and fluster about, and expect to be able to work for God without any thought or care or trouble. For the learning of earthly professions they will give years of labor and thought, but in work for God they do not seem to think it worth while to take the trouble to think and ponder, to plan and experiment, to try means, to pray and wrestle with God for wisdom. Oh! no: they will not be at the trouble. Then they fail, grow discouraged, and give up.

Now, my friends, this is not the way to begin work for God. Begin as soon as you like--begin at once--but begin in the right way. Begin by praying much for Him to show you how, and to equip you for the work, and begin in a humble, submissive, teachable spirit.

Study the New Testament with special reference to this, and you will be surprised how every page of it will give you increased light. You will see that God holds you absolutely responsible for every iota of capacity and influence He has given you, that He expects you to improve every moment of your time, every faculty of your being, every particle of your influence, and every penny of your money for Him. When you once get this light, it will be a marvelous guide in all the other particulars and ramifications of your life. Study your plans. How men in earthly warfare study plans of stratagem, and adopt all manner of measures in order that they may take the enemy by surprise! But, alas! how little care and attention God’s people give to taking souls; and yet it is far harder work to take souls than it is to take cities.

How surprised I have often been at the assumption of people who, perhaps, never gave one hour’s consecutive thought in their lives to the best means of doing certain work, and yet they will pronounce an opinion right off as to certain modes and measures which have been tried and proved successful in the lives of some of the most successful laborers for God. They will say, "Oh! I don’t believe in it." "Oh! it is all nonsense, ridiculous, wrong!" while, perhaps, those people whom

they condemn have been pleading, and weeping, and studying, and experimenting, and almost sacrificing their heart's blood to try to find out the best means of winning souls for Christ.

I shall never forget the shock that came over me once in a large gathering of Christian people, when a gentleman, who occupied a somewhat prominent position, was giving out a hymn which contained a verse something about spending one hour in watching with Jesus. He stopped in the middle of this hymn, and said words to this effect: "I am afraid we are verily guilty here. I do not know that I dare say I ever watched one consecutive hour with Jesus in my life." I shall never forget it. My cheeks burned with shame. I said, "Oh! my God, if these are the leaders, we need not wonder at the people." A man occupying such a position to dare to say it! The Lord have mercy on him. No wonder the Lord's work is done in such a bungling way! I say those who want to be successful in winning souls require to watch not only days but nights. They want much of the Holy Ghost, for it is true still, "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting." We have grown wiser than our Lord now-a-days; but, I tell you, it is the same old-fashioned way, and if you want to pour out living waters upon souls, either publicly or privately, you will have to drink largely at the fountain yourself, and have them very ready to let out! If you have not, your talk will be as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. Oh! it makes my soul weep tears of blood to think of the misdirected effort that will be put forth this very Christian Sabbath. Plenty of labor, but how little comes of it?--all because it is cramped, and ruined, and misdirected, for want of thought, and prayer, and a single eye for the salvation of souls. May God rouse us up to this, and make us willing to think, and labor, and learn, and wrestle, and sacrifice, in order that we may do it.

Then, further, the second qualification for successful labor is power to get the truth home to the heart. Not to deliver it! I wish the word had never been coined in connection with Christian work. "Deliver" it, indeed--that is not in the Bible! No, no; not deliver it; but drive it home--send it in--make it felt. That is your work;--not merely to say it--not quietly and gently to put it before the people. Here is just the difference between a self- consuming, soul-burdened, Holy Ghost, successful ministry, and a careless, happy-go-lucky, easy sort of thing, that just rolls it out like a lesson, and goes home, holding itself in no way responsible for the consequences. Here is all the difference, either in public or individual labor. God has made you responsible, not for delivering the truth, but for GETTING IT IN--getting it home, fixing it in the conscience as a red-hot iron, as a bolt, straight from His throne; and He has placed at your disposal the power to do it, and if you do not do it, blood will be on your skirts! Oh! this genteel way of putting the truth! How God hates it! "If you please, dear friends, will you listen? If you please, will you be converted? Will you come to Jesus? or shall we read just this, that, and the other?"--no more like apostolic preaching than darkness is like light.

God says, "GO AND DO IT: compel them to come in. That is your work. I have nothing to do with the measures by which you do it providing they are lawful."

"Use just the same diligence, earnestness, and determination that you would if you were resolutely set on any human project, and always be sure that I will be with you to the end of the world. Never doubt My presence when you are set on My business. I will be with you, and I will succeed you." Do it--the Lord help us to get the truth home! This was the way with Paul, and this was the way with Jesus. Paul says: "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." Oh! what a beautiful insight this gives us into the ministry. Why do you persuade men, Paul? "Because I know

the terror of the Lord that is coming on, and because we thus judge that, if One died for all, then were all dead. Therefore, I persuade men." He did not give up when he had put it before them. He carried them on his heart, and he says, "That by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." He wept it in, as well as drove it in, with his logic, and his eloquence, and with the power of the Holy Ghost in him. Make it go in--make your words felt; don't talk to them in that sickly, languid way that makes no impression--make them know it. If you have not enough of the Holy Ghost for this, go to your closet till you have, and then come and drive the Word home to their conscience as a two-edged sword, dividing asunder soul and spirit. The second thing indispensible to success is simplicity:-- naturalness in putting the truth.

You have not only to get it home, but, in order to do this, give it them simply and naturally. If I were asked to put into one word what I consider the greatest obstacle to the success of Divine Truth, even when uttered by sincere and real people, I should say, stiffness. It seems as if people, the moment they come to religion, assume a different tone, a different look, and manner--short, become unnatural.

People sometimes come to me and say, "Oh! I would give the world to be natural, but I have got into this way of talking to people. It seems as though I cannot be natural. Can you help me?" I say, "Yes, I can help you, by this advice--Determine, by the help of God, that you will break the neck of this bondage. I will tell you how to begin. Begin with your family. Break off right in the middle of conversation on earthly matters, and begin to talk about their souls, or your own experience, or drop down on your knees, and begin to pray." "Oh! but it would be such a break." It should not be a break to talk to your Father. If you are in the spirit of it there will be no break. This will help you, more than anything else. Determine that you will overcome this sanctimoniousness, which is the curse of a great deal of the religion of this day. We want SANCTIFIED HUMANITY, not sanctimoniousness. You want to talk to your friends in the same way about religion, as you talk about earthly things. If a friend is in difficulties, and he comes to you, you do not begin talking in a circumlocutory manner about the general principles on which men can secure prosperity, and the sad mistakes of those who have not secured it; you come straight to the point, and, if you feel for him, you take him by the button-hole, or put your hand in his, and say, "My dear fellow, I am very sorry for you; is there any way in which I can help you?" If you have a friend afflicted with a fatal malady, and you see it, and he does not, you don't begin to descant on the power of disease and the way people may secure health, but you say, "My dear fellow, I am afraid this hacking cough is more serious than you think, and that flush on your cheek is a bad sign. I am afraid you are ill--let me counsel you to seek advice." That is the way people talk about earthly things. Now, do exactly so about spiritual things. If your friend is a spiritual bankrupt, tell him so. Tell him where he is going, and that the reckoning day is coming, and that he will be in God's prison-house very soon, and that, if the creditor once gets hold of him, and shuts him up, he will never get out till he has paid the uttermost farthing. If your friend has a spiritual disease, tell him so, and deal just as straight and earnestly with him as you would about his body. Tell him you are praying for him, and the very concern that he reads in your eyes, will wake him up, and he will begin to think it is time he was concerned about himself. Try to attain this simple, easy, natural way of appealing to people about their souls. I believe if all real Christians would attain this, and act upon it, this country would be shaken from end to end!

Thirdly, you must be in earnest--desperate, I would like to say.

And, indeed, friends, settle this as a truth, that you will never make any other soul realize the verities of eternal things, any further than you realize them yourself. You will beget in the soul of your hearer, exactly the degree of realization which the Spirit of God gives to you, and no more; therefore, if you are in a dreamy, cosy, half-asleep condition, you will only beget the same kind of realization in the souls who hear you. You must be wide awake, quick, alive, feeling deeply in sympathy with the truth you utter, or it will produce no result.

Here is the reason why we have such a host of stillborn, sinewless, ricketty, powerless spiritual children. They are born of half-dead parents, a sort of sentimental religion, which does not take hold of the soul, which has no depth of earth, no grasp, no power in it, and the result is, a sickly crop of sentimental converts. Oh! the Lord give us a real robust, living, hardy Christianity, full of zeal and faith, which shall bring into the kingdom of God, lively, well-developed children, full of life and energy, instead of these poor, sentimental ghosts that are hopping around us. Oh! friends, we want this vivid realization ourselves. If we have it we shall beget it in others. Oh! get hold of God. Ask Him to baptize you with His Spirit "till the zeal of His house eats you up." This Spirit will burn His way through all obstacles of flesh and blood, of forms, proprieties, and respectabilities--of death, and rottenness of all descriptions! He will burn His way through, and produce living and telling results in the hearts of those to whom you speak. Earnestness--such earnestness that it comes to desperation--like that of Paul, who counted all things but dross; yea, and who counted not his life dear unto him. That was the secret. He counted not his life, nor anything that constitutes life--liberty, pleasure, enjoyment, friends, reputation, ease, &c.,--all on the altar, all was in the scale. He counted none of those dear unto him, so that he might win the perfection, the fulness of Christ in his own soul, and the salvation of the souls around him.

Oh! what a LAUGHING-STOCK TO HELL is a light, frivolous, easy, lukewarm professor. Oh! what a shame and puzzle to the angels in Heaven, and what a supreme disgust to God. "I would thou wert cold or hot. So, then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth." Oh! what will that be? Talk about shame! Think of that! Shame! Some of you feel it going into the streets for God. You feel it when a few people see you kneel down here! Think of being spewed out of the mouth of God before an assembled universe. What will that be? God helping me, I will avoid that I will sooner hang with Jesus on the cross, between two thieves, than I will bear that shame. "I would thou wert cold or hot!"

Some of you say, in your letters, that you will have this whole- heartedness. You say that you have given up all, and that you are consecrating yourself to a life of labor. Now, be hot. I know you will burn the fingers of the Pharisees. Never mind that. I know you will fire their consciences, like Samson’s foxes did the corn. Never mind that. Be hot. God likes hot saints. Be determined that you will be hot. They will call you a fool: they did Paul. They will call you a fanatic, and say, "This fellow is a troubler of Israel"; but you must reply, "It is not I, but ye and your father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord." Turn the charge upon them. Hot people are never a trouble to hot people. The hotter we are the nearer we get, and the more we love one another. It is the cold people that are troubled by the hot ones. The Lord help you to be HOT.

Then another indispensable condition is the surrendering of all our powers.

There must be no holding back. "Cursed be he that holdeth back his sword from blood." That curse is resting on Christendom to-day. Oh! they will thrust the sword a little way in, but they will

not go in to the core. They dare not draw blood--the soldiers of this age--for their lives. They dare not touch a man to the quick, because, alas! they are looking to themselves, and thinking what people will say of THEM, instead of what God will say of them. You must not be afraid of blood if you are to be a true warrior of the Lord Jesus Christ. You must not be afraid to say, if need be, "Oh! generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? "You must not be afraid to say, if need be, "You have made my Father's house a den of thieves," if you save some of them by doing it.

Oh! this accursed sycophancy; I was going to say, this accursed fear to brave the censure of the world--this accursed making good evil and evil good, as if God were altogether such an one as ourselves. Don't you think He sees through the vile sham? Oh! my friends, if we don't mend in this respect, He will come in judgment before long, and we shall find out then the difference between the precious and the vile, if we do not find out before. If you want to be a successful worker, you must make up your minds to begin with, that you will be CRUCIFIED. As a dear minister once said to somebody, when he was arguing with him about being so hard in the pulpit, "I don't care." "Oh!" said the other, "Don't you know what became of 'Don't care?'" "Yes," he said, "He was crucified, and I am ready to be crucified alongside of him." When you are in the right, don't care. You can but be crucified, and it will soon be over; and then the Book says, "They that suffer with Him will also reign with Him, and they shall be glorified together." It would be a wonderful thing to be glorified alone, but, oh, think of being glorified together! A gentleman said lately, "I have been thinking a great deal about the glory. It is a wonderful thing--that glory that is to follow. This would be worth a man sitting on the dunghill all his life to obtain." I looked at him, and thought, perhaps you are nearer to it than you think, and perhaps I am, too. Ah! it is a wonderful thing, that glory that is to follow. Then let us be willing to suffer with Him and for Him. Make up your mind to be crucified at the start, and then it will be easy.

Further, complete abandonment is a condition of successful labor.

It is so in anything. What would you think of a soldier who was always reckoning how much it was to cost, and when he should get back, or whether it was worth the sacrifice? You would say, "He is of no use to the British Army. We want men who will go in to win at all costs." Now, God wants men and women who will go in to win, who believe in winning, who know they have the power to win, and who count all things loss in comparison to winning. Do you want success? If you do not come to that first, you will never get it.

Fourthly--You must give up, kick out of the way, trample underfoot, all that hinders.

Reputation. Perhaps there are some ministers here. There were some last Sunday, and there were some the Sunday before. Some of you have written and others have talked to me. You say, "It would be such an entire breaking from one's circle." Exactly. Some say, "You see, the inevitable consequences of setting up this high standard would be a constant running of the sword into some of your best hearers and your best friends." Exactly; that is giving your sword to blood. You would not think much of drawing the blood of an enemy--it is the blood of your friends that is the test! I know all about it; I have been there. I was there a long while once. It was my own sore spot. The devil said, "If you begin preaching they will call you an impudent woman," and I felt it would be better almost to go to hell than have that said about me. He said, "They will put you in the newspapers, and say all manner of coarse and vulgar things about you;" and God only knows

what that was to my soul; but I battled and struggled with it for a long while, until I said, at last, "Lord, I don't care what they call me--I give myself to Thee to win souls." Have I ever regretted it? Shall I ever regret it? No; He will take care of your reputation. Give it up to Him, my brother. The Scribes and the Pharisees never had anything good to say of Jesus coming in the flesh. Give up your reputation--follow Him. If it must be, decide to go after Him to Gethsemane, to Golgotha and the cross. Never mind--follow Him. Give up your reputation.

Then, your habits. How ashamed some of you will be who have made the mere Paris-born frivolities of society stand in the way of your consecration to Christ; and yet people who do this say they are Christians. I don't know; I cannot believe it. There is drinking; they will have a glass of wine. Very well, you can have it; but you shall not have the wine of the kingdom. Professors will dress like the prostitute of Paris. Very well; but they shall not be the bride of the Lamb. He will not walk in the streets with them, nor sit at the same table. You can go to parties where it is said there are only religious people, but where you know all manner of gossip and Christless chit-chat is going on, which you would be awfully ashamed the Master should hear, and from which you retire with no appetite for prayer. You can go to all this, but I defy you to have the Holy Ghost at the same time. I won't stop to argue it; I ONLY KNOW YOU CANNOT DO IT. All that will have to be put aside and given up. You say, "That is a sore point." Yes; I know that is driving the sword to blood.

Fifthly.--You must consecrate your money to be used for God.

I once heard an old veteran saint say, and I thought it was extravagant at the time, "I consider the use of money the surest test of a man's character." I thought, no, surely his use of his wife and children is a surer test than that; but I have lived to believe his sentiment. Hence, you see how human experience justifies Divine wisdom--"the love of money is the root of all evil". So it is, in one form or other. God never uses anybody largely until they have given up their money. I simply state a fact. We know it is so by experience and the history of God's people. You must give up your money as an end: saving it for its own sake, or the gratification of your selfish purposes or those of your children--it must be all given to God, to whom it belongs, being entirely used in His service. If you want to be a successful laborer for souls, you will have to do that at the threshhold. Give up your money to the Lord. If you think it right to keep some of it, keep it to use it for Him as you go; and be as strict with yourself, to your Heavenly Father, as you would be with your secretary or clerk to yourself, and then you will be all right.

It is a narrow and difficult path. I tremble for you who have got it, and I am glad I have not; but as you have got it, I give you the best advice I know. It is an awful thing to have it, but the next best thing is to consecrate it and use it to His glory; and if you do not, it will eat into your soul as doth a canker. To your spiritual nature it will be as a cancer is to your physical nature. They are Paul's words, not mine.

I must say a word about the reward.

You think I am always driving you to do. Yes, because you need it. The Lord knows I do not find you do any too much. Some of you I am heartily ashamed of. Some of you need driving so that you ought to thank God for the rod. Paul says, "Shall I come unto you with the rod?" He was obliged to do it with some people. It is not an enviable thing to have to do; but we dare not, when

God sets us work to do, shirk it; but there is a bright side--there is the reward. "What!" you say, "does He pay you?" Yes, good wages--pressed down-- heaped together! He says, "The man who remembereth the poor (do you think He means only their bodies?), I will remember him; I will make his bed (what a tender allusion!) in his sickness." He will shake it up; spread His feathers on the pillows as no earthly nurse, not even the tenderest wife, can do. "I will make his bed in his sickness." You will want Him then, brother! You are very independent, some of you, now, but you will want Him then. "I will make his bed in sickness. I will put underneath Him my everlasting arms." He will cause you to triumph in the swellings of Jordan. That will be grand, will it not? He will give you a triumphant entrance into His kingdom, those of you who have gone out in loving solicitude and anxious sympathy to labor for the souls of your fellow-men. He will administer unto you an abundant entrance, and then--what? He will give you CHILDREN; and the barren woman shall have more children than she that hath a husband.

Oh! the whole world is akin here. Every man and woman wants children. They are especially a heritage from the Lord. Nothing can make up for the want of children. The poorest parents, living in the humblest hut, would not sell you their children, and the rich man, who has twenty thousand a year, would give it for a son or for a daughter, when he cannot have one. All human beings want children. Now, then, the Lord will give you children. A mother--even a sanctified mother--I suppose, cannot help feeling proud, or, rather, glad and thankful, when she shows good, obedient, and godly children to her friends. I do not believe that God wants to grind this out of us. I believe He delights in it Himself, just as He delighted to show His servant Job to the devil. "Hast thou considered My servant Job?" Ah! was He not proud of him?--and He has been proud of him ever since. God has put this feeling in us, and it is a right feeling when it is sanctified. We cannot help but be proud of godly and obedient children; but what will it be to show your spiritual children, to the angels? How shall you feel when you gather the spiritual family which God has given you round the throne of your Saviour, and say, "Here am I and the children whom Thou hast given me"?--the children won through conflict, and trial, and strife, such as only God knew; "Children begotten in bonds," as Paul says--chains--children born in the midst of the hurricane of spiritual conflict, travail, and suffering, and cradled, rocked, fed, nurtured, and brought up at infinite cost and rack of brain, and heart, and soul; but now, here we are, Lord. We are here through it all. "Here am I and the children whom Thou hast given me." How shall you feel? Shall you be sorry for the trouble? Shall you regret the sacrifice? Shall you murmur at the way He has led you? Shall you think He might have made it a little easier, as you are sometimes tempted to do now? Oh! no, no!--THE CHILDREN! THE CHILDREN! you shall have children! Won’t that be reward enough?

Oh! sometimes, when I am passing through conflict, and trial, in connection with a work which brings plenty of it behind the scenes, I encourage myself in the Lord, and remember those who have gone home sending me their salutations, from the verge of the river, telling me they will wait and look out for me, and be the first to hand me to the Saviour when I get there. Will not this be reward enough? Even so, Lord. Amen.

01.10. Enthusiasm and Full Salvation

CHAPTER X.

ENTHUSIASM AND FULL SALVATION. AN ADDRESS DELIVERED IN EXETER HALL.

Why should we be enthusiastic in everything but religion? Can you give me any reason for that? If there is any subject calculated to move our souls to their very centres, and to call out the enthusiasm of our nature, surely it is religion, if it be the real thing. Why should we not be enthusiastic? I have never seen a good reason yet. Why should we not shout and sing the praises of our King, as we expect to do it in glory? Why should not a man cry out, and groan, and be in anguish of soul, as the Psalmist says, as if he were crying out of the belly of hell, when he is convinced of sin, and realizes his danger, and is expecting, unless God have mercy, to be damned? Why should he not roar for the disquietude of his spirit as much as David did? Is there anything unphilosophical in it? Is there anything contrary to the laws of mind in it? Is there anything that you would not allow under any great pressure of calamity, or realization of danger, or grief? Why should we not have this demonstration in soul matters? They had it under the old dispensation. We read, again and again, that when the people came together after a time of relapse, and backsliding, and infidelity, when God sent some flaming, burning prophet amongst them, and they were gathered on the sides of Carmel or elsewhere, that, on some occasions, the weeping, and, on other occasions, the rejoicing, was so great that they made the very ground tremble, and almost rent the heavens with the sound of their crying and rejoicing.

We are told, on one occasion, that the noise was heard afar off, and, on another, that it was as the sound of many waters. Would to God we could get men, now-a-days, so concerned about their sins and their souls, that they should thus cry out. It would be a happy day for religion and for the world if it were so. If these things are realities, I contend that this is the most sane, rational, and philosophical way of dealing with them; and I say that the ordinary, cold, heartless, formal way (and, if it is not so, it has that appearance) is unscriptural.

Somebody was talking to me about having so much feeling in religion. I said, "My dear friend, what do you think God gave you feeling for?" Some people seem to think it a mistake that we have feelings. Our feelings play a very important part in all our social relations. Why would you exclude them from religion? David expressed his feelings, and was so carried away by them that he called on all creation to praise the Lord, the hills and the trees to clap their hands and be glad. Get the right kind of religion, and it will make you glad. If you have not the right kind of feeling, I am afraid you. have not the right kind of religion. We have some enthusiasm, and when our enthusiasm dies, I am afraid we shall die, too. Nevertheless, our power is not in our enthusiasm; neither does it consist in certain views of truth, or in certain feelings about truth. But it consists in whole-hearted, thorough, out-and-out surrender to God; and that, with or without feeling, is the right thing, and that is the secret of our power. We have glorious feelings as the outcome; but the feeling is not the religion--the feeling is not the holiness. Holiness is the spring and source of the enthusiasm. Hence our power with the masses of the people.

How is it that wherever we go, as an organization, these signs and wonders are wrought? Somebody said, "It is a strange thing; see what has been done at So-and-so, and So-and-so, and So-and-so. They had all tried, and you send a couple of lads or lasses, and you have the town in an uproar at once. What is it? What is the secret? Will you answer the question?" Well, it is the whole-hearted, determined abandonment of everything for the King's sake. That is it. It is going in, as the Apostles went in, determined to win souls, determined to set up the kingdom of Jesus Christ, at all costs. That is the source of our power, and if you get that, you will have power, and if you don't get that, it matters not what else you have. I want you reasonably and calmly to see that this holiness is a real, definite blessing; that it is a level on to which the great mass of the professing Christians of this generation have not come, or even scarcely looked up. It is a high level, but it is a level on to which every one of you can come, if you will. You have heard enough about it. You are convinced you may have it. Will you have it? The Lord is sitting there; He is looking at you, and He is saying, "What is all this stir about? What is all this talk, this singing, and this praying about? Here I am. What do you want Me to do? I am ready to do it." And you say, "Lord, I want Thee to cleanse my heart from sin, and to fill me with the Holy Ghost, and to enable me to be whole- hearted and thorough in Thy service, and to go and win souls for Thee." "Very well," the Lord says, "I am ready to come into the temple, if you will clear out the rubbish. Are you willing for Me to come in? I am waiting to come in as a Refiner; but you must make a straight way for my feet. You must pick out the stones, and throw out the rubbish, and make Me a straight path." Will you make Him a straight path? Will you trample under foot that accursed thing which has so long kept the fulness of the blessing from you? Will you give up arguing about it and trying to make out that it is not a stumbling-block, when you know it is? How many will? I wish we had room to have a form. I am sorry we have not. With all the light you have on the subject, with what I am sure the Holy Ghost has revealed and is revealing to your souls, with all the glory that He is putting before you, and the power for usefulness and happiness, will you make this full consecration? The light of the Spirit is on you: will you, act? Will you act? Every spark of light you get without obeying it, leaves your soul darker. Every time you come up to the verge of the kingdom and don't go over, the less the probability that you ever will. I know people who have been going up and down for more than forty years, like the Israelites, and it is a question if they ever go in. You have come near again. Will you go over? You can tell the Lord without telling us, though we would like to know, and see you put your foot over the border, into this Canaan of peace and power. Will you put your foot over? Who will? who will? Will you stand up and raise your voices to the Lord and ask Him?

01.11. Hindrances to Holiness

CHAPTER XI.

HINDRANCES TO HOLINESS.

I shall try, in the short time I may occupy, to go straight to the point--to some of the difficulties and hindrances which I know are keeping not a few here to-day out of the enjoyment of the blessing. I know there are some here who are satisfied that this blessing is attainable, who are satisfied that God can thus keep them, as we have been singing, if they were to lean the whole weight of their need-- their soul, and body, and spirit--upon Him, and trust Him. They believe He could, and they believe He would. They have come to perceive that it is not at all a question of human strength, or human weakness, or human knowledge, but that it is simply a matter of Divine strength, fully recognized and fully trusted by human weakness. Therefore, there is no more a stumbling-block in their way about reckoning themselves holier than other people, or stronger than other people, for they recognize themselves as the very weakest and most sinful of all people: but they have come to understand this blessing to be human weakness, leaning with all its weight upon Divine power; and they believe God does thus save and keep those people who do thus lean. Then, what hinders? There they stand, just where the Israelites stood, when they might have gone in and possessed the good land. "They entered not in because of unbelief," and for that unbelief there is a reason--a cause. They dare not venture their souls on this Divine power, because there is back in their consciousness some difficulty, some obstacle, something which is only known to themselves and the Holy Ghost, which prevents them from doing this. When they try to jump on to the Divine strength there is something that holds them back, and they cannot make the spring. They try to forget it--they sing, and pray, and seek, to make themselves believe there is nothing, and they come up again and again right to the entrance of the goodly land, and then they try to spring in. Some of you will today, but you will not be able to spring, because there is something holding you back; and you are conscious of it, but will not allow yourselves to realize it. Now this is the point, when my dear husband read that passage, "When they had prayed, the place was shaken," I thought, Oh! what was involved in that prayer--what does that mean? Why did the glory come? Why did the Holy Ghost overshadow them? Why were they filled with God--so filled that they had to go down and could not help themselves, but went into the streets and poured it out upon the godless multitudes around them? Why, why did it come? Why do hundreds of assemblies of God’s people meet and pray, but nothing comes? They hold long meetings, and make long prayers, and sing,

"We are waiting for the fire;" but nothing comes! Why did it come on that particular occasion? Because in that prayer was thorough, entire, everlasting self- abandonment. They came up caring for nothing but pleasing God and doing as He bade them; and the Holy Ghost alone knows when a soul arrives at that point. He will never come till the soul does arrive at that point. This is the deficiency, I am satisfied, with hundreds. There they stand, right on the borders of the glory-land, but there is some wedge of gold, or Babylonish garment that they buried years ago.

They won’t think about it. They say, "Oh, it is nought, nought! That little thing would not hinder, it is so long ago." They would not, when they knew they ought, dig it up and burn it before the Lord. If this is so with any here, you must dig it up, or the Holy Ghost will never come. A lady, a short time ago, was brought up to the very edge of this blessing, but there was something she felt she ought to do. She had a sum of money which she felt ought to be given up to a certain object. She prayed and struggled, and attended prayer-meetings, and prayed long into the night; but, no, she would not face the difficulty. She said, "Oh! no; I am not satisfied in my own mind. How do I know God wants it for that purpose?" She might have struggled till now if she had not made up her mind to obey; but, the moment she did--alone, up in her bedroom, the blessing came. A gentleman came up to the penitent-form, after one of my West-end services, last season, and told me: "I am a preacher. I have been laboring in the Gospel for eight years, but I know I am utterly destitute of this power." "Do you want it?" "Oh!" he said, "I do;" and he looked as though he were sincere. "Then," I said, "what is it? There is a hindrance. It is not God’s fault. He wants you to have it He is as willing to give you the Spirit as He was Peter or Paul, and you want to have it. Now, will you have it? Have you understood the conditions?" "Ah!" he said, "that is the point." Now, you know I should be a false comforter if I were to try to make you believe you were right when you had not yielded that point. "Well," he said, "you see it would be cutting loose from one’s entire circle." Ah! he was led, you see, by "Christian friends." I said, "Did not the Lord Jesus cut loose from His circle to save you? and, if your Christian friends are such that to live a holy life you must cut loose from them, what are you going to do--stop in that circle, ruin your own soul, and help to ruin them, or cut loose and help to save them?" Oh! there is no profounder philosophy in any text in the Bible than that--"How can ye believe who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" You will have to come to God not caring what anybody thinks. As a dear lady, who is going through floods of persecution for Jesus, said, "I don’t care if they turn their backs on me, and never speak to me any more, and cast me out, and my children, too. I don’t care if I can only have His presence and follow Him." When you come to that you will get this pearl.

I know a father and mother who want this blessing,--especially the mother. They have a family of beautiful little children, but the father says, "What are we going to do for our children? It is a very serious matter cutting loose from our circle." A gentleman said to me, "I have to do something for my sons. What am I to do?" "No," I said, "you have got to do nothing for your sons. You have to train them for God, and leave GOD to do for them, and He is well able to look after His own. That is your business; train them for God, and leave God to find a niche for them, and if He can’t on earth, I warrant you He will in Heaven." People have things wrong way up now-a-days. They have the notion that they have to do this, that, and the other, for themselves and their children, instead of accepting it as their great commission that they have to propagate and push along and extend the kingdom of Jesus Christ, to seek His kingdom and His righteousness, and leave Him to look after their interests. When you come to this it will soon be done. A FRAGMENT.

Love Him, trust Him, Him alone; Father, Keeper, Three in One.

Saviour, Master, Leader, too; Lover, Brother, ALL to you.

Fear not, care not, Only follow His way, this day, And to-morrow.

Waiting, working, For His sake; Watching, hoping, Till daybreak.

Peaceful, joyful, In His peace; Filled full, kept full, By His grace.

01.12. Addresses on Holiness

CHAPTER XII.

ADDRESSES ON HOLINESS, IN EXETER HALL.

FIRST ADDRESS.

I think it must be self-evident to everyone present that it is the most important question that can possibly occupy the mind of man--how much like God we can be--how near to God we can come on earth preparatory to our being perfectly like Him, and living, as it were, in His very heart for ever and ever in Heaven. Anyone who has any measure of the Spirit of God, must perceive that this is the most important question on which we can concentrate our thoughts; and the mystery of mysteries to me is, how anyone, with any measure of the Spirit of God, can help looking at this blessing of holiness, and saying, "Well, even if it does seem too great for attainment on earth, it is very beautiful and very blessed. I wish I could attain it." That, it seems to me, must be the attitude of every person who has the Spirit of God--that he should hunger and thirst after it, and feel that he shall never be satisfied till he wakes up in the lovely likeness of his Saviour. And yet, alas! we do not find it so. In a great many instances, the very first thing professing Christians do, is to resist and reject this doctrine of holiness as if it were the most foul thing on earth.

I heard a gentleman saying, a few days ago--a leader in one circle of religion--that for anybody to talk about being holy, showed that they knew nothing of themselves, and nothing of Jesus Christ. I said, "Oh, my God! it has come to something if holiness and Jesus Christ are at the antipodes of each other. I thought He was the centre and fountain of holiness. I thought it was in Him only we could get any holiness, and through Him that holiness could be wrought in us." But this poor man thought this idea to be absurd. May God speak for Himself! Ever since I heard that sentiment I have been crying from the depths of my soul, "Lord, speak for Thyself; powerfully work on the hearts of Thy people and awake them. Take the veil from their eyes, and show them what Thy purpose in Christ Jesus concerning them is. Do not let them be bewildered and miss the mark; do not leave them, but Lord, reveal it in their hearts." There is no other way by which it can be revealed, and, if you will let Him, He will reveal it in your heart.

It occurred to me that I might say a word or two on what my husband said about infirmities, because I am so continually meeting people who will make infirmities sins. They insist upon it that the requirements of the Adamic law have never been abated; that we are not under the evangelical law of love, or the law of Christ, as the Apostle puts it, but that we are still under the Adamic law, and that these imperfections and infirmities, to which my husband has referred, are sins. I wonder that such people do not think of a certain passage, which must forever explode such a theory, where the Apostle says, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." If these infirmities had been sins, we should have the outrageous anomaly of an apostle of Jesus Christ glorying in his sins! You see, his infirmities were only those defects of mind and body which were capable of being overcome and overruled by

grace, to the glory of Christ and to the furtherance of His kingdom.

I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me --that, in consequence of these very infirmities, the power of Christ shall so rest upon me as to lift me above them, make me independent of them, master of them, so that, through these very infirmities, I shall more glorify His strength and grace than if I were a perfect man, in mind and body. In another place he says, "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me." Some people think this was sin; but surely, the words, "messenger of Satan," show that this thorn was no act or disposition of Paul's, but some external temptation or affliction, inflicted by Satan. Besides, the Divine assurance, "My grace is sufficient for thee," ought to forbid the idea of sin. Paul sought the Lord thrice to have this thorn removed; surely if it had been sin, the Lord would, have been as anxious to have it removed as His servant was! This thorn was, doubtless, some physical trial--as the words, "in the flesh," indicate--some tribulation or sorrow, through the patient endurance of which the strength of Christ could be magnified in Paul's weakness--one of those things which he could bear "through Christ who strengthened him." But mark, this was a Divinely-permitted discipline to prevent Paul from falling into sin; quite a different thing to sin itself. "God tempteth no man with evil." The Lord sent this to Paul for the purpose not of making him humble, for he was humbled before, but of keeping him humble. And does He not send something to us all? Do we not need trials and tribulations in the flesh in order to keep us humble? But is this evidence that, because we require these things to keep us humble, therefore pride is dwelling in us and reigning over us? It is an evidence just to the contrary.

Oh, that people, in their enquiries about this blessing of holiness, would keep this one thing before their minds, that it is being saved from sin!--sin in act, in purpose, in thought!

I have a beautiful letter, received a short time ago from a young lady, who wrote me soon after my former services in the West End. She told me that she had been the bondslave, I think, for four or five years, of a certain besetting sin, and her first letter was the very utterance of despair. She had struggled and wrestled and prayed, and tried to overcome the sin that had been reigning over her. Now and then she would get the victory, and then down she went again, and she said, "It is such a subtle thing, connected with my thoughts and imagination, so that I do not think I ever can be saved." I answered the letter, and tried to encourage her faith and hope in Jesus Christ. I showed her how dishonoring this unbelief was, and that, if she would only trust Him to come in and reign in her heart, He could purify and cleanse the very thoughts and imagination. She made a little advance, and wrote me another letter. I wrote her again, and encouraged her to trust further. She said she could not come so far as to think that He could purify her thoughts. She had got as far as to believe that He could save her from putting them into practice, but she could not believe that He could purify them. I wrote her back once more, and tried, the Lord helping me, to show her how Jesus, by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, could purify the very thoughts of our hearts, and, thank God, she did go another step. I have had two letters from her since. She said in the first of them, "I rejoice with trembling, for fear it should be only temporary, but I have trusted Him to purify the source, and I must say HE HAS DONE IT, and, instead of thinking these thoughts, I have holy thoughts, and if Satan presents anything to my mind, it is so repulsive to me that I cannot tell you the grief and horror with which it fills me." I wrote her again, encouraging her, and I got another letter, in which she said, "It is a fact that He has cleansed the thoughts of my heart, and now I am

conscious that my thoughts are pleasing to Him, that He has saved me from this sin which has been the trouble and torment of my life for all these years gone by."

Now, what I want to say to you, is, that what He can do for one, He can do for another. If I am wrong here, I give up the whole question. I am perfectly mistaken in the purpose and aim and command of the Gospel dispensation, if God does not want His people to be pure. Not to count themselves pure when they are not. Oh, no! We are told, over and over again, that God wants His people to be pure, and THAT PURITY IN THEIR HEARTS IS THE VERY CENTRAL IDEA AND END AND PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST; if it is not so, I give up the whole question--I am utterly deceived. In justification of this, I have selected two or three texts which seem to put it all in one; summing-up texts, so to speak. I will take first, as a specimen, what my husband has been trying to enforce--"The will of God is your sanctification." There is, however, a sense, and an important sense, in which sanctification must be the will of man. It must be my will, too, and if it is not my will, the Divine will can never be accomplished in me. I must will to be sanctified, as God is willing that I should be sanctified. There are as many, and more, exhortations in the Bible to sanctify yourselves than there are promises of God to sanctify you. The next text is James 4:8 : "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts ye double-minded." This was to backsliders, to people who had been professing to believe, but who had gone back under the dominion of their fleshly appetites and passions. There are two or three other texts where we seem to get the whole matter summed up, as, for instance, "He gave Himself for us (that is, for us Christians, the whole Church of God) that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."--That is, purify us. And then 1 Timothy 1:5 shows God’s purpose and aim in the whole method of redemption. "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned"--cleansed and kept clean, for if it had been cleaned and become dirty again, it would not be a good but a bad conscience. And again, in 1 John 3:1 : "And every man that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure." Now, I say, these are summing-up texts, and there are numbers of others to the same effect, to show that the whole end and purpose of redemption is this--that He will restore us to purity; that He will bring us back to righteousness; that He will purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God--not only purge you from the past, but keep you purged to serve the LIVING GOD; that it shall be done by the application of the blood to the conscience, and then it shall be maintained by the power of the Holy Ghost keeping us in a state of purity and obedience to righteousness.

Now, I say, if this be not the central idea of Christianity, I do not understand it. If God cannot do this for me--if Jesus Christ cannot do this for me, what is my advantage at all by His coming?

There is a great deal more in these epistles directed to the individual Christian to be this, that, and the other, and to do this, that, and the other, than there is about what God will do for him after all! This is not an objective Christianity--this is not sitting down and sentimentalizing and thinking of Christ in the Heavens, in these epistles; it brings Him down, to all intents and purposes, INTO OUR HEARTS AND LIVES HERE, and it is one of the continual exhortations, be ye this, and do ye this and the other.

These epistles represent a real, practical transformation to be accomplished IN US, and this is the only thing that will do to die with. If it is not accomplished in you, I tell you, you will not be able to

die in peace. You will want to be cleansed, as my dear husband told you, before you can venture into the presence of the King of kings. You will want a sense of beautiful, moral rectitude and righteousness spreading over your whole nature, which will enable you to look up into the face of God and say, "Yes, I love Thee, I know Thee, and Thou knowest me, and lovest me, and we are one. I love the things Thou lovest, and desire the things Thou desirest. We are of one spirit, 'joined in one spirit unto the Lord.'" You will want that, and nothing less will do to die with. And why not have it? Will you have it? Why not let God work it in us? Will you try it? People are constantly saying, "They long for it, and they wish they could get it." Will you let God do it? Will you put away the depths of unbelief which are at the bottom of all your difficulty? People really do not believe that God can do it for them, and that is at the bottom of their difficulties. But He can do it, and He promises to do it. Will you go down, and say, "Be it unto me according to Thy word"?

"BORN--A SAVIOUR." Luke 2:11.

Jesus a Saviour born, Without: Without the inn, refused with scorn. Cast out: Cast out for me, my Saviour, King, Cast out to bring this lost one in.

Jesus a Saviour born, A man: A man of sorrows, smitten, torn by stripes: By stripes, O Lord, my soul is healed, By stripes, Thy stripes, my pardon sealed.

Jesus a Saviour born, The Lamb: The Lamb of God hath bled and borne My sins: My sins the Sacrifice did slay, My sins the Lamb doth take away.

Jesus a Saviour born To save: To save at night, at noon, at morn. To keep: To keep from sin, from doubt, from fear; To keep, for lo! the Keeper's here.

Jesus a Saviour born, A King: A King! exalt His glorious horn, And sing: O sing, ye heavens! He burst His grave, And sing, O earth! He lives to save!

SECOND ADDRESS.

I beseech yon therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.-- Romans 12:1-2.

I have been thinking about the word in the text, "that"--"that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God." This advance in the Divine life, as well as every other, right to the end, till we advance into glory, has its conditions. The condition of the advance from an absolutely unawakened worldly condition, to that of a convinced sinner, is the reception of the light. God awakens and enlightens tens of thousands, and thousands reject the light--instantly put it away--shut their eyes --will not have the light. These go back into greater darkness, and sin with more alacrity than ever they did before;--those who receive the light advance into the condition of awakened, enlightened souls. The next condition of advance from the state of a struggling sinner, willing to part with his sins and to follow Christ, is faith, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that he may receive the forgiveness of sins. And at every advance onwards, if the believer is ever to get beyond the first principles, if he is ever to grow a single inch, so to speak, there is a condition involved in that advance! For instance, if, after conversion, the Holy Spirit reveals to him something which is inconsistent--which he did not before see-- the condition of his advance

another step is the renunciation of that thing!--the reception of the light, and obedience to it; and, if he shrinks from and does not receive and obey the light, he will never advance any more until he does. There are thousands of Christians, who, instead of advancing, have gone back since their conversion, because they would not comply with the condition, "THAT" they might prove the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

There was a condition. They would have proved the will of God if there had been no condition; but there was a condition they would not comply with; so there they stick, just where they were--or, rather, they have gone backward.

Well, now, then, here is a condition to this grand and glorious advance from the state of justification, where, while the believer is given power over sin, so that it does not rule over him, yet he sometimes, through its inward workings, falls under its power--the advance from this comparatively sinning and repenting condition on to that platform where the believer so abides in Christ that he sins not, that he loves God with all his heart, and soul, and mind, and strength--so united to Christ that, walking in the power of the Holy Ghost, he fulfils the law of love under which he is placed--the advance, I say, from that up and down, in and out, falling and rising state, to this higher platform, also has its conditions.

You would go up to it to-day if it were not for the conditions; most of you would go up in a body, as the Israelites would have gone into Canaan, if there had been no condition. I never knew anyone so foolish as not to want to be in the good land; they want to be in, of course, and they would go in and get the honey and the milk, but there are the conditions! Now then, here you have it plain, and you have it in numbers of other passages equally plain.

There is nothing upon which the Holy Ghost has been more particular than in laying down the conditions. And what are they? "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice"--the living man--you, all of you; not it--not something in you. The latter term is never used by the Holy Ghost when speaking to Christians, but always you, ye, your bodies, your souls, your mind, the whole man--YOU, "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." And is it not? Is it too much? Is it more than He bargained for when He bought you? Is it more than He paid for? It is "your reasonable service." And now, then, comes the conditions: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove."

Oh! if you could be transformed to Him and conformed to this world at the same time, all the difficulty would be over. I know plenty of people who would be transformed directly; but, to be not conformed to this world--how they stand and wince at that! They cannot have it at that price. As dear Finney once said, "My brother, if you want to find God, you will not find Him up there, amongst all the starch and flattery of hell; you will have to come down for Him." That is it--"Be not conformed to this world."

Nothing wounds me more, after being at meetings for dealing with souls, where I have tried to speak in a most pointed and thorough way to make everybody know what I meant, when I go to the dinner or supper-table, people have not known a bit, or, if they have, they won’t accept it. Oh! this is the secret--they will not come down from their pride and high-mightiness. But God will not be revealed to such souls, though they cry and pray themselves to skeletons, and go mourning all

their days. They will not fulfil the condition--"Be not conformed to this world;" they will not forego their conformity even to the extent of a dinner party. A great many that I know will not forego their conformity to the shape of their head-dress. They won't forego their conformity to the extent of giving up visiting and receiving visits from ungodly, worldly, hollow, and superficial people. They will not forego their conformity to the tune of having their domestic arrangements upset--no, not if the salvation of their children, and servants, and friends depends upon it. The sine qua non is their own comfort, and then take what you can get, on God's side. "We must have this, and we must have the other; and then, if the Lord Jesus Christ will come in at the tail end and sanctify it all, we shall be very much obliged to Him; but we cannot forego these things."

Oh! friends, I tell you, this will never do. God helping me, I will, I must tell you, because it is driven in upon my soul by what I am seeing and hearing every day. People come to these meetings, and they groan and cry and come to us for help, and we exhaust our poor brains and bodies in talking to them and giving them advice, telling them what to do, and, when it comes to the point, we find, "Oh! no; don't you be mistaken: we are not going to sacrifice these things. We cannot have the Lord if He will not come into our temples and take them as He finds them. We could not forego these things."

You remember the text that was read at the opening of the meeting-- "And the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world." It means something! and there are a hundred other texts teaching the same truth. Now, what does it mean? The Lord help us to see it! Does it not mean that we are not to be like the rest of the world?--that we are not to be guided by the same maxims, or act upon the same principles as the world?--that we are not to attach the same importance to mere earthly and worldly things that worldly people do? Have you ever thought of those awful words in the parable of the sower?--"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things, entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful,"--not abominable things, not immoral things, not shameful things, but the desire of other things. And, in another text: "Who mind earthly things." They attach more importance to worldly things and other things than they do to the things of His kingdom. They practically make these things first, though they sing about His kingdom and profess to make Him first: they make the earthly things first, and, therefore, they will not have their earthly things upset for His things; and do you suppose He is cheated? Do you suppose He is deceived? Do you think it likely that the great God of Heaven, who has millions of angels and archangels to worship and serve Him, is going to pour His glory on such people, and reveal Himself to them, and use them? Not likely! "I will be first in your love," He says.

You women here, if you knew that you were not the first and only one in the affections of your husband, what would you say? And you husbands, would you dwell with a wife if you knew you were not the only one in her affections, but that they were divided between you and someone else? "Not likely!" you would say; "I am not going to lavish my affections, and my society, and my gifts, and everything I possess, on one whose heart is divided with another. If she will have her heart divided, then she must go to that other."

Now you know God is a jealous God, and He knows who do mock Him, and He knows who will not sacrifice this conformity to the world that they may walk with Him in white. He knows, also, who do not care what anybody thinks of them, or what people say of them; who are willing to be counted

fools and fanatics that they may walk with Him and promote the interests of His kingdom, and who only regard their bodies as His instruments and their homes as His temples; who are willing that their breakfast hours, or dinner hours, or luncheon hours, or any other hours may be upset, and, in fact, everything made subservient to the interests of His kingdom. We must place everything at His service--our children, business, homes, and everything. If I understand it, this is nonconformity to the world.

Before I close, let me say a word to help those who are desiring to attain this blessing. There is no other way. It is of no use beating about. BE NOT CONFORMED, BUT BE YE TRANSFORMED. These two are in juxtaposition. If you will be conformed, then you cannot be transformed; if you will not be transformed, then you must be conformed. Now, will you give up conformity to the world? If so, you may, everyone of you, be transformed this morning--go up into the land. You may all be saved to-day, and make your abiding-place in Christ, and have all the power and glory which comes to those who possess Him; you may advance from the miserable condition of a poor up-and-down, in-and-out, wretched man, on to the glorious vantage ground of a saved man--a saved woman--a triumphant saint of God!

FAITH. My faith looks up to Thee-- My faith, so small, so slow; It lifts its drooping eyes to see And claim the blessing now. Thy wondrous gift It sees afar; Thy perfect love It claims to share, And doth not, cannot fear. My faith takes hold on Thee-- My faith, so weak, so faint; It lifts its trembling hands to be, Trembling, but violent. The kingdom now It takes by force, And waits till Thou, Its last resource, Shall seal and sanctify. My faith holds fast on Thee, My faith, still small, but sure, Its anchor holds alone to Thee, Whose presence keeps me pure. And Thou alway, To see and hear, By night, by day, Art very near-- Art very near to me.

THIRD ADDRESS.

What a deal there is of going to meetings and getting blessed, and then going away and living just the same, until sometimes we, who are constantly engaged in trying to bring people nearer to God, go away so discouraged that our hearts are almost broken.

We feel that people go back again from the place where we have led them, instead of stepping up to the place to which God is calling them. They come and come, and we are, as the Prophet says, unto them a very pleasant instrument, or a very unpleasant one, as the case may be; and so they go away, and do not get anything. They do not make any definite advance. We have not communicated unto them any spiritual gift. They merely have their feelings stirred, and, consequently, they live the next week exactly as they lived the last, and go down under the temptation just as they did before. Would you dream for a moment from reading the New Testament that this was the kind of thing God intended in His provisions of grace and salvation? Is there not a definite end in every promise, exhortation, and command? God is most definite in His requirements and promises, and in the provision which He has made; and yet many of the Lord’s people are perpetually and persistently indefinite. They go to and fro, like a door on its hinges, and never get anything from the Lord. We want you absolutely to get something from the Lord, and we are quite sure you may and will, if you comply with the condition. The Lord is ready to give you that particular measure of grace, strength, and salvation which you need. Now that you have come up to the threshhold of the goodly land, there is only one thing which can keep you out, provided you have made the needed consecration. Of course, if you are holding anything back, then you can

never come in until you give that up. If yon are cleaving to some doubtful thing, and don't give God the benefit of the doubt, you can never come in; but, if you see this, and make the necessary consecration, if you really desire this blessing, there is only one thing which can possibly keep you out of its enjoyment, and that is--unbelief.

It will be said of you, in years to come, as it was said of some in olden times, "They entered not in because of unbelief." You have come right up to the threshhold, and some of you have been there many a time. Oh! what gracious influences you have been the subject of. You have seen through the veil! You have felt His hand! You have had your feet on the threshhold! You have been almost in, and then you have drawn back through unbelief. Shall it be so again to-night? God forbid! Will yon step over? Will you venture? Will you trust? Will yon leap on to His faithfulness? Will you spring into the arms of Omnipotent Love, and trust Him with consequences? Never mind if you do die, or something happens to you that never happened to anyone else in the world's history; God will take care of you. Never mind if the devil does come round and "consider" you, as he did Job, and afflict you with boils, and put you upon the dunghill--you will be happier there with Jesus than in a palace without Him. Oh! this caring for consequences! The devil knows the grand possibilities open to many of you; he knows not only what you might receive and enjoy in yourselves, but what you might accomplish for God if you would only come in and possess this blessing; and so he frightens you with consequences. He knows what you might do, and whom you might be instrumental in saving! Who knows how many of these precious ones that cluster round you, you may be instrumental in leading on to this higher platform--this glorious vantage ground of Christian experience? and, through them, how many more? and how, in this way, the glorious blessing would spread? Remember, also, that every time you come near and go back, there is less probability that you will ever come in at all; and the nearer you come and go back, the less probability there is that you will ever come as near again.

You are grieving the Spirit. There are some people who have been coming near for years, and now they have gone back altogether, and I am afraid they will never come up again. What will you do? The law of the kingdom, from beginning to end, is, "According to your faith be it unto you," and, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Eternal truth has uttered it--"ye shall have them." Now then, will you? Have you let go all? Are your skirts free? Are you leaving all behind you? Are you resolved from to-night to cut from the past, and no more make any provision for the flesh to fulfil its lusts, but that you will bid the things that are behind a final adieu, close your eyes on them, and fix your eyes on the mark of the prize of your high calling, and press on every succeeding hour of your life until you reach it? Will you? If you will, God will give you this blessing. He waits to do it; He is here. The Holy Ghost is here: He is leading many of you up; He is beseeching you; He is seconding what I am saying, in your hearts; He is saying, "Come, beloved; come into the banqueting house;" He wants to bless you and fill you with His Spirit. Now then, will you come? Oh! the Lord help you not to draw back, but to press on, press on, press on, never minding the consequences.

FOURTH ADDRESS.

I think, dear friends, that I have only a very few words to say to you now. I am, as it were, holding on to God for power by which to say them, so that they shall sink into your hearts and produce some immediate and permanent results in your lives. I believe the Lord is not only grieved and

disappointed, but I believe He is angry, when His people meet, and talk, and sing, and pray, and then go away without any definite result having been reached--without ever having given anything to Him, or received anything from Him. I believe He feels with respect to us, just as He felt with respect to His people of old, when He said, "Why come ye and cover my altar with tears?" As though He said, "You know what I want you to do; come and do it; and, when you do it, I will open the windows of Heaven and pour out a blessing." My heart ached at what a lady told me this morning, before I came into this hall. She said, "A friend of mine remarked, 'You don't mean to say that you are going to call four thousand people together to cry for the Holy Ghost?' She said, 'Yes, I do.' 'Well, it makes me frightened. What if anything should happen; if something should be done?'" Would to God something would happen; would to God something might be done that should frighten somebody. But oh! what did that reveal? Depths of infidelity and unbelief; and yet people wonder that infidelity is increasing. Is it any wonder that infidels are laughing us to scorn? Is it any wonder that at Christian Evidence Societies men get up and say that the Christian system has become effete? No wonder, when that is the state of heart of the Lord's people.

People meet together, and pray, and talk, and sing "Whiter than snow," and they don't believe it any more than do the heathen. They pray for the Holy Ghost, and do not so much as believe there is a Holy Ghost. They ask God to do something, when they never knew Him to do anything, and don't expect He ever will. The world is dying because of this unreality, and being damned by it.

Josephine Butler says, about France, "France is waiting for a reality:" and so is England, and so is the world waiting for a reality. God help us to make some real people. You believe, some of you, that nothing is going to happen. You don't believe that God is going to do anything--so He won't in your experience. If you had lived at Nazareth, do you think Jesus Christ would have done anything for you? If you had been deaf and dumb, you would have remained so, for He could not have done any mighty works in you, because of your unbelief! He is the same now; and if you don't expect Him to do anything, brother, He will not. But some of us do expect Him to do something. Some of us believe He is going to do something, and that by this little stone, cut out of a mountain, without hands, He intends to raise a great kingdom. Jesus Christ is not going to be disappointed, and allow the devil to chuckle in His face forever, and say, "I have cheated You out of Your inheritance." We will do something, or die in attempting it.

After all, what does God want with us? He wants us just to be and to do. He wants us to be like His Son, and then to do as His Son did; and when we come to that, He will shake the world through us. People say, "You can't be like His Son." Very well, then, you will never get any more than you believe for. If I did not think Jesus Christ strong enough to destroy the works of the devil, and to bring us back to God's original pattern, I would throw the whole thing up for ever. What! He has given, us a religion we cannot practice? I say, No, He has not come to mock us. What? He has given us a Saviour who cannot save? Then I decline to have anything to do with Him. What! does He profess to do for me what He cannot? No, no. He "is not a man, that He should lie: neither the Son of man, that He should repent:" and I tell you that His scheme of salvation is two-sided--it is God-ward and man-ward. It contemplates me as well as it contemplates the great God. It is not a scheme of salvation, merely--it is a scheme of restoration. If He cannot restore me, He must damn me. If He cannot heal me, and make me over again, and restore me to the pattern He intended me to be, He has left Himself no choice.

I challenge anybody to disprove by the Bible that He proposes to restore me--brain, heart, soul, spirit, body, every fibre of my nature--to restore me perfectly, to conform me wholly to the image of His Son. If He could have saved me without restoring me, then He could have saved me without a Saviour at all. How do you read your Bibles? How do you read the history of the miracles--the stories of His opening the eyes, unstopping the ears, cleansing the leper, and raising the dead? He will heal you if you will let Him. These are the sort of words the world wants--the living words, living embodiments of Christianity, walking embodiments of the Spirit, and life and power of Jesus Christ. You may scatter Bibles, as you have done, all over the world. You may preach, and sing, and talk, and do what you will; but, if you don't exhibit to the people living epistles, show them the transformation of character and life in yourself which is brought about by the power and grace of God--if you don't go to them and do the works of Jesus Christ, you may go on preaching, and the world will get worse and worse, and the church, too. We want a living embodiment of Christianity. We want JESUS TO COME IN THE FLESH AGAIN. Did you ever notice the tense in that passage--"He that believeth that Jesus is come in the flesh"--not that He did come, or was come, but that He is come now. Oh! how people hate Jesus Christ in the flesh. You may be ever so devout, ever so Pharisaic, till you come to Jesus in the flesh, and then they will gnash on you with their teeth as they gnashed on Christ. They can't resist such people. This is what the world wants--holy people; and nothing else will do. We have tried everything else. You Christian people from other divisions of the Lord's forces, you have tried Bibles, and preaching, and singing, and services, and Sunday-schools. I have been lately to a part of the country where they told me that nearly every member of the population had passed through their Sunday-schools, and yet there are men there who will drag a young girl down a flight of stone stairs and kick her till she is black and blue. The great mass of the people who took part in the Lancashire Riots have passed through your Sunday-schools.

Now, I say, God is speaking to you in these things, if only you will hear Him, and He is saying that the letter killeth, that circumcision, and baptism, and forms, and ceremonies, and going to chapel, and Bible reading, is all nothing, when there is no Holy Ghost in it. You want a real, living embodiment of Christianity over again, and if the Salvation Army is not going to be that, may God put it out! I would be willing to pronounce the funeral oration of the Army if I did not believe it was going to be that. The world is dying for this.

I was so touched, yesterday, by hearing a story from Paris, told by a young woman who has just returned, and was telling me about my precious child. The story was this: A woman came, one morning, and asked for the lady. They tried to put her off, and asked, "Will not someone else do?" "No," said the woman; "I do want to see the lady herself." They said, "You can't see her to-day--she is too ill!" "Then," she said, "When can I see her?" They appointed a time the next afternoon, and then this poor woman came, and she told this story: "I did hear, six years ago, that there was somebody could take the devil out. Now, see, I have got a devil in, and he do make me wicked and miserable, and I do want him taken out, and I have been running about these six years to find somebody who could pull him out. I've been to lots of priests, but they could not pull him out because they had a devil in them; and, you see when there's a devil in me and a devil in them, we got to fighting, and they could not pull him out." What a comment on "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" Of course, nobody can put a devil out who has a devil in them. The poor old woman's sense told her this.

"And," she continued, "a gentleman told me that this lady who has come here is able to pull him out, and I have come to her to do it, for I want him pulled out." Oh, yes! I thought, that is what poor humanity wants all the world over. THEY WANT PEOPLE WHO CAN CAST THE DEVIL OUT--people who have in them Holy Ghost power to do it. Oh! will you be such an one?

"Where is God?" someone said to me the other day, in agony--"Where is God?" Where, indeed! "Why does He not show Himself? Why does He not do something?" That lady was afraid something would happen when 4,000 met together to beseech the Holy Ghost! Why not? You say He has not changed. Your creed says so. You say He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. You say the needs of the world are as great. You say His great, benevolent heart beats for His fallen, sinful, erring human family. You say He loves us. You are always telling about His love. What is the reason He does not do something for us, and come down in the same plentitude of spiritual power as He did at Pentecost? Why? Only because you are not as given up to Him and as willing to do it as the people were in former times. You have not accounted all things dung and dross. You have not thrown everything into the scale, and, therefore, He will not thus baptize you with the Holy Ghost. These are the people that the world wants--people of one idea--Christ, and Him crucified. For Christ's sake, give up quibbling.

I said to a lady who had got this blessing when somebody got at her and began with this verse and that verse, and this translation and that translation--"Mind you don't begin to reason; you will lose your blessing"--and she did lose it. You can't know it by understanding. Oh! if the world could have known it by understanding, what a deal they would have known. But He despises all your philosophy. It is not by understanding, but by faith! If ever you know God it will be by faith, becoming as a little child--opening your mouth, and saying, "Lord, pour in;" and then your quibbles and difficulties will be gone, and you will see holiness, sanctification, purity, perfect love, burning out on every page of God's Word. I weep before God, I feel almost more than I can bear, over this awful knack that some people seem to have of plucking the bread out of the children's mouths when they are just getting an appetite for it. The Lord have mercy upon them! If you don't come in yourselves, for Christ's sake don't keep other people out. A minister--a devoted, good man--was trying to show me that this sanctification was too big to be got and kept. I said, "My dear sir, how do you know? If another man has faith to march up to Jesus Christ and say, 'Here, I see this in your Book; You have promised this to me; now then, Lord, I have faith to take it:' mind you don't measure His privilege by your faith. Do you think the church has come up to His standard of privilege and obligation? I don't. It has many marches to make yet. Mind you don't hinder anybody." The law of the kingdom all the way through will be--"According to your faith." If you want this blessing, put down your quibbles, put your feet on your arguments, march up to the throne and ask for it, and kill, and crucify, and cast from you, the accursed thing which hinders it, and then you shall have it, and the Lord will fill you with His power and glory now, and something will happen. The Lord grant it.

02.00. PAPERS ON AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

PAPERS ON AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY BY CATHERINE BOOTH SALVATIONIST PUBLISHING AND SUPPLIES, LTD. 117-121 JUDD STREET, KING'S CROSS, LONDON, W.C.1 MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY THE CAMPFIELD PRESS, ST. ALBANS

PREFACE THE addresses contained in this little volume were delivered during a series of services at the West End of London, in the summer of 1880. That they were used then of the Lord I had abundant evidence, and on that account I have consented to their reproduction in this form, hoping that He may still speak through them to many souls.

I only regret that pressing public duties have prevented the shorthand writer's notes being revised as thoroughly as I could have wished, especially as they are reports of what were themselves largely unpremeditated utterances.

CATHERINE BOOTH.

London, December, 1880

CONTENTS 1. Aggressive Christianity 2. A Pure Gospel 3. Adaptation of Measures 4. Assurance of Salvation 5. How Christ Transcends the Law 6. The Fruits of Union with Christ 7. Witnessing For Christ 8. Filled with the Spirit 9. The World's Need 10. The Holy Ghost

02.01. Aggresive Christianity

AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY Mark 16:15.—

‘Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.’

Acts 26:15-18.—

‘And I said, Who art Thou, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee: Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me.’

I WAS thinking, while I was reading the lesson, that, supposing we could blot out from our minds all knowledge of the history of Christianity from the time of this Inauguration Service—from that Pentecostal Baptism—or, at any rate, from the close of the period described in the Acts of the Apostles, suppose we could detach from our minds all knowledge of the history of Christianity since then, and take the Acts of the Apostles and sit down and calculate what was likely to happen in the world, what different results we should have anticipated, what a different world we should have reckoned upon as the outcome of it all. A system which commenced under such auspices, with such assumptions and professions on the part of its Author (speaking after the manner of men), and producing, as it did, in the first century of its existence, such gigantic and momentous results. We should have said, if we knew nothing of what has intervened from that time to this, that, no doubt the world where that war commenced, and for which it was organized, would have long since been subjugated to the influence of that system, and brought under the power of its great originator and founder! I say, from reading these Acts, and from observing the spirit which animated the early disciples, and from the way in which everything fell before them, we should have anticipated that ten thousand times greater results would have followed, and, in my judgment, this anticipation would have been perfectly rational and just.

We Christians profess to possess in the Gospel of Christ a mighty lever which, rightly and universally applied, would lift the entire burden of sin and misery from the shoulders, that is, from the souls, of our fellow-men—a panacea, we believe it to be, for all the moral and spiritual woes of humanity, and in curing their spiritual plagues we should go far to cure their physical plagues also. We all profess to believe this. Christians have professed to believe this for generations gone by, ever since the time of which we have been reading, and yet look at the world, look at so-called Christian England, in this end of the nineteenth century! The great majority of the nation utterly ignoring God, and not even making any pretence of remembering Him one day in the week. And then look at the rest of the world. I have frequently got so depressed with this view of things that I have felt as if my heart would break. I don’t know how other Christians feel, but I can truly say that

‘rivers of water do often run down my eyes because men keep not His law,’ and because it seems to me that this dispensation, compared with what God intended it to be, has been, and still is, as great a failure as that which preceded it.

Now, I ask, how is this? I do not for a moment believe that this is in accordance with the purpose of God. Some people have a very convenient way of hiding behind God’s purposes, and saying, ‘Oh! He will do His own will.’ I wish He did! They say, ‘You know God’s will is done after all.’ I wish it were! He says it is not done, and over and over again laments the fact that it is not done. He wants it to be done, but it is NOT DONE! ‘It is of no use to stand up and propound theories that are at variance with things as they are.’ There has been a great deal too much of this, and it has had a very bad effect. The world is in this condition, and here is a system launched under such auspices, with such purposes, with such promises, and with such prospects, and yet nearly nineteen hundred years have rolled away and here we are. How little has been done, comparatively. What a little alteration has been effected in the habits and dispositions of the race. But some of you will say, ‘Well, but there is a good deal done.’ Thank God for that. It would be sad if there were nothing done; but it looks like a drop in the ocean compared with what should have been done. Now I cannot accept any theory which so far reflects upon the love and goodness of God as to make Him to blame for this effeteness of Christianity, and, so far as my influence extends, I will not allow the responsibility and the blame of all this to be rolled back upon God, who so loved the world that He gave His only Son to ignominy and death in order to redeem it. I do not believe it for a moment. I believe that the old arch-enemy has done in this dispensation what he did in former ones—so far circumvented the purposes of God, that he has succeeded in bringing about this state of things—in retarding the accomplishment of God’s purposes and keeping the world thus largely under his own power and influence, and I believe he has succeeded in doing this, as he has succeeded always before, by DECEIVING GOD’S OWN PEOPLE. He has always done so. He has always got up a caricature of God’s real thing, and the nearer he can get it to be like the original the more successful he is. He has succeeded in deceiving God’s people:

First—AS TO THE STANDARD OF THEIR OWN RELIGIOUS LIFE.

And, Secondly, he has succeeded in deceiving them AS TO THEIR DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS TO THE WORLD.

He has succeeded, first, in deceiving them as to the standard of their own religious life. He has got the Church, nearly as a whole, to receive what I call an ‘Oh, wretched man that I am’ religion! He has got them to lower the standard which Jesus Christ Himself established in this Book—a standard, not only to be aimed at, but to be attained unto—a standard of victory over sin, the world, the flesh, and the Devil, real, living, reigning, triumphing, Christianity! Satan knew what was the secret of the great success of those early disciples. It was their whole-hearted devotion, their absorbing love to Christ, their utter abnegation of the world. It was their entire absorption in the Salvation of their fellow-men and the glory of their God. It was an enthusiastic religion that swallowed them up, and made them willing to become wanderers and vagabonds on the face of the earth—for His sake to dwell in dens and caves, to be torn asunder, and to be persecuted in every form.

It was this degree of devotion before which Satan saw he had no chance. Such people as these, he knew, must ultimately subdue the world. It is not in human nature to stand before that kind of

spirit, that amount of love and zeal, and if Christians had only gone on as they began long since, the glorious prophecy would have been fulfilled, ‘The kingdoms of this world’ would have ‘become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.’

Therefore, the arch-enemy said, ‘What must I do? I shall be defeated after all. I shall lose my supremacy as the god of this world. What shall I do?’ No use to bring in a gigantic system of error, which everybody will see to be error. Oh, dear no! That has never been Satan’s way; but his plan has been to get hold of a good man here and there, who shall creep in, as the Apostle said, unawares, and preach another doctrine, and who shall deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. And he did it. He accomplished his design. He gradually lowered the standard of Christian life and character, and though, in every revival, God has raised it again to a certain extent, we have never got back thoroughly to the simplicity, purity, and devotion set before us in these Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles. And just in the degree that it has approximated thereto, in every age, Satan has got somebody to oppose and to show that this was too high a standard for human nature, altogether beyond us, and that, therefore, Christians must sit down and just be content to be ‘Oh, wretched man that I am’ people to the end of their days. He has got the Church into a condition that makes one, sometimes, positively ashamed to hear professing Christians talk, and ashamed also that the world should hear them talk. I do not wonder at thoughtful, intelligent men being driven from such Christianity as this. It would have driven me off, if I had not known the power of godliness. I believe this kind of Christianity has made more infidels than all the infidel books ever written.

Yes, Satan knew that he must get Christians down from the high pinnace of whole-hearted consecration to God. He knew that he had no chance till he tempted them down from that blessed vantage ground, qnd so he began to spread those false doctrines, to counteract which John wrote his epistles, for, before he died, he saw what was coming, and sounded down the ages—‘Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil.’ The Lord revive that doctrine! Help us afresh to put up the standard!

Oh! the great evil is, that dishonest-hearted people, because they feel it condemns them, lower the standard to their miserable experience. I said, when I was young, and I repeat it in my maturer years, that if it sent me to Hell I would never pull it down. Oh! that God’s people felt like that. There is the glorious standard put before us. The power is proffered, the conditions laid down, and we CAN all attain it if we will; but if we will not—for the sake of the children, and for generations yet unborn, do not let us drag it down, and try to make it meet our little, paltry, circumscribed experience. LET US KEEP IT UP. This is the way to get the world to look at it. Show the world a real, living, self-sacrificing, hard-working, toiling, triumphing religion, and the world will be influenced by it; but anything short of that they will turn round and spit upon.

Secondly—Satan has deceived even those whom he could not succeed in getting to lower the standard of their own lives with respect to their duties and obligations to the world. I have been reading of late the New Testament with special reference to the aggressive spirit of Primitive Christianity, and it is wonderful what floods of light come upon you when you read the Bible with reference to any particular topic on which you are seeking for help. When God sees you are

panting after the light, in order that you may use it, He pours it in upon you. It is an indispensable condition of receiving light that you are willing to follow it. People say they don't see this and that; no, because they do not wish to see. They are not willing to walk in it, and, therefore, they do not get it; but those who are willing to obey shall have all the light they want.

It seems to me that we come infinitely short of any right and rational idea of the aggressive spirit of the New Testament saints. Satan has got Christians to accept what I may call a namby-pamby, kid-glove kind of system of presenting the Gospel to people. 'Will they be so kind as to read this tract or book, or would they not like to hear this popular and eloquent preacher. They will be pleased with him quite apart from religion.' That is the sort of half-frightened, timid way of putting the truth before unconverted people, and of talking to them about the Salvation of their souls. It seems to me this is utterly antagonistic and repugnant to the spirit of the early saints: 'Go ye, and preach the Gospel to EVERY CREATURE'; and again the same idea—'Unto whom now I send thee.' Look what is implied in these commissions. It seems to me that no people have ever yet fathomed the meaning of these two Divine commissions. I believe we of The Salvation Army have come nearer to it than any people that have ever preceded us. Look at them. Would it ever occur to you that the language meant, 'Go and build chapels and churches and invite the people to come in, and if they will not, let them alone'? 'GO YE.' If you sent your servant to do something for you, and said, 'Go and accomplish that piece of business for me,' you know what it would involve. You know that he must see certain persons; and run about the city to certain offices and banks and agents, involving a deal of trouble and sacrifice; but you have nothing to do with that. He is your servant. He is employed by you to do that business, and you simply commission him to 'Go and do it.' What would you think if he went and took an office and sent out a number of circulars inviting your customers or clients to come and wait on his pleasure, and when they chose to come just to put your business before them? No, you would say, 'Ridiculous.' Divesting our minds of all conventionalities and traditionalisms, what would the language mean? 'Go ye!' 'To whom? 'To every creature.' Where am I to get at them? WHERE THEY ARE. 'Every creature.' There is the extent of your commission. Seek them out; run after them, wherever you can get at them. 'Every creature'—wherever you find a creature that has a soul—there go and preach My Gospel to him. If I understand it, that is the meaning and the spirit of the commission. And then again, to Paul He says, 'Unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.' They are asleep—go and wake them up. They do not see their danger. If they did, there would be no necessity for you to run after them. They are preoccupied. Open their eyes, and turn them round by your desperate earnestness and moral suasion and moral force; Oh! it makes me tremble to think what a great deal one man can do for another! 'Turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.' How did Paul understand it? He says, 'We persuade men.' Do not rest content with just putting it before them, giving them gentle invitations, and then leaving them alone. He ran after them, poor things, and pulled them out of the fire. Take the bandage off their eyes which Satan has bound round them; knock and hammer and burn in, with the fire of the Holy Ghost, your words into their poor, hardened, darkened hearts, until they begin to realize that they are IN DANGER; that there is something amiss. Go after them. If I understand it, that is the spirit of the Apostles and of the early Christians; for we read that when they were scattered by persecution, they 'went everywhere, preaching the Word.' The laity, the new converts, the young babes in Christ. It does not mean always in set discourses, and public assemblies, but they went after men and women, like ancient

Israel—‘Every man after his man,’ to try and win him for Christ.

Some people seem to think that the Apostles laid the foundations of all the churches. They are quite mistaken. Churches sprang up where the Apostles had never been. The Apostles went to visit and organize them after they had sprung up, as the result of the work of the early laymen and women going everywhere and preaching the Word. Oh! may the Lord shower upon us in this day the same spirit! We should build churches and chapels; we should invite the people to them; but do you think it is consistent with these two commissions, and with many others, that we should rest in this, when three parts of the population utterly ignore our invitations and take no notice whatever of our buildings and of our services? They will not come to us. That is an established fact. What is to be done? They have souls. You profess to believe that as much as I do, and that they must live for ever. Where are they going? What is to be done? Jesus Christ says, ‘Go after them.’ When all the civil methods have failed; when the genteel invitations have failed; when one man says that he has married a wife, and another that he has bought a yoke of oxen, and another that he has bought a piece of land—then does the Master of the feast say, ‘The ungrateful wretches, let them alone’? No. He says, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.’ ‘I will have guests, and if you can’t get them in by civil measures, use military measures. Go and COMPEL them to come in.’ It seems to me that we want more of this determined aggressive spirit. Those of you who are right with God this afternoon—you want more of this spirit to thrust the truth upon the attention of your fellow-men.

Oh! people say, you must be very careful, very judicious. You must not thrust religion down people’s throats. Then, I say, you will never get it down. What! Am I to wait till an unconverted, godless man wants to be saved before I try to save him? He will never want to be saved till the death-rattle is in his throat. What! Am I to let my unconverted friends and acquaintances drift down quietly to damnation, and never tell them about their souls, until they say, ‘If you please, I want you to preach to me’? Is this anything like the spirit of early Christianity? No. Verily we must make them look—tear the bandages off, open their eyes, make them bear it, and if they run away from you in one place, meet them in another, and let them have no peace until they submit to God and get their souls saved. This is what Christianity ought to be doing in this land, and there are plenty of Christians to do it. Why, we might give the world such a time of it that they would get saved in very self-defence, if we were only up and doing, and determined that they should have no peace in their sins. Where is our zeal for the Lord? We talk of Old Testament saints, but I would we were all like David. Rivers of water ran down his eyes because men kept not the Law of his God. But you say, ‘We cannot all hold services.’ Perhaps not. Go as you like. Go as quietly and softly as the morning dew. Have meetings like the Friends if you like. ONLY DO IT. Don’t let your relatives, and friends, and acquaintances die, and their blood be found on your skirts!!!

I shall never forget the agony depicted on the face of a young lady who once came to see me. My heart went out to her in pity. She told me her story. She said, ‘I had a proud, ungodly father, and the Lord converted me three years before his death, and, from the very day of my conversion, I felt I ought to talk to him, and plead, and pray with him about his soul, but I could not muster up courage. I kept intending to do it, and intending to do it, until he was taken ill. It was a sudden and serious illness. He lost his mind, and died unsaved,’ and she said, ‘I have never smiled since, and I think I never shall any more.’ Don’t be like that. Do it quietly, if you like; privately, if you like; but do it, and do it as if you felt the value of their souls, and as if you intended to save them, if by any

possible means in your power it could be done.

I had been speaking in a town, in the West of England, on the subject of responsibility of Christians for the Salvation of souls. The gentleman with whom I was staying had winced a bit under the truth, and instead of taking it to heart in love, and making it the means of drawing him nearer to God, and enabling him to serve Him better, he said, 'I thought you were rather hard on us this morning.' I said, 'Did you? I should be very sorry to be harder on anybody than the Lord Jesus Christ would be.' He said, 'You can push things to extremes, you know. You were talking about seeking souls, and making sacrifices. Now, you are aware that we build the chapels and churches, and pay the ministers, and if the people won't be saved, we can't help it.' (I think he had given pretty largely to a chapel in the town.) I said, 'It is very heartless and ungrateful of the people, I grant; but, my dear sir, you would not reason thus in any temporal matter. Suppose a plague were to break out in London, and suppose that the Board of Health were to meet and to appropriate all the hospitals and public buildings they could get to the treatment of those diseased, and suppose they were to issue proclamations to say that whoever would come to these buildings should be treated free of cost, and every care and kindness bestowed on them, and, moreover, that the treatment would certainly cure them; but, supposing the people were so blind to their own interests, so indifferent and besotted that they refused to come, and consequently, the plague was increasing and thousands dying, what would you in the provinces say? Would you say, "Well, the Board of Health have done what they could, and if the people will not go to be healed, they deserve to perish; let them alone"? No, you would say, "It is certainly very foolish and wicked of the people, but these men are in a superior position. They understand the matter. They know and are responsible for the consequences. What in the world are they going to do? Let the whole land be depopulated? No! If the people will not come to them, they must go to the people, and force upon them the means of health, and insist that proper measures should be used for the suppression of the plague."' It needed no application. He understood it, and I believe, by the Spirit of God, he was enabled to see his mistake, to take it home, and set to work to do something for perishing souls.

Men are preoccupied, and it is for us to go and force it upon their attention. Remember, you can do it. There is some one soul that you have more influence with than any other person on earth—some soul or souls. Are you doing all you can for their Salvation? Your relatives, friends, and acquaintances are to be rescued. Thank God! we are rescuing the poor people all over the land by thousands. There they are, to be looked at, and talked with, and questioned—people rescued from the depths of sin, degradation, and woe—saved from the worst forms of crime and infamy; and, if He can do that, He can save your genteel friends, if only you will go to them desperately and deter- determinedly minedly. Take them lovingly by the button-hole, and say, 'My dear friend, I never spoke to you closely, carefully, and prayerfully about your soul.' Let them see the tears in your eyes; or, if you cannot weep, let them hear the tears in your voice, and let them realize that you feel their danger, and are in distress for them. God will give His Holy Spirit, and they will be saved.

I was going to note that both texts imply opposition—for, He adds, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.' As much as if He had said, 'You will have need of My presence. Such aggressive, determined warfare as this will raise all earth and Hell against you'; and then He says to Paul, 'I will be with thee, delivering thee from the people and the Gentiles unto whom I send

thee.' Why would they need this? Because the Gentiles would soon be up in arms against Him—and indeed they were.

Opposition! It is a bad sign for the Christianity of this day that it provokes so little opposition. If there were no other evidence of it being wrong, I should know it from that. When the Church and the world can jog along comfortably together, you may be sure there is something wrong. The world has not altered. Its spirit is exactly the same as it ever was, and if Christians were equally faithful and devoted to the Lord, and separated from the world, living so that their lives were a reproof to all ungodliness, the world would hate them as much as ever it did. It is the Church that has altered, not the world. You say, 'We should be getting into endless turmoil.' Yes; 'I came not to bring peace on the earth, but a sword.' There would be uproar. Yes; and the Acts of the Apostles are full of stories of uproars. One uproar was so great that the Chief Captain had to get Paul over the shoulders of the people lest he should have been torn in pieces. 'What a commotion!' you say. Yes; and, bless God, if we had the like now we should have thousands of sinners saved.

'But,' you say, 'see what a very undignified position this would bring the Gospel into.' That depends on what sort of dignity you mean. You say, 'We should always be getting into collision with the powers that be, and with the world, and what very unpleasant consequences would result.' Yes, dear friends, there always have been unpleasant consequences to the flesh, when people were following God and doing His will. 'But,' you say, 'wouldn't it be inconsistent with the dignity of the Gospel?' It depends from what standpoint you look at it. It depends upon what really constitutes the dignity of the Gospel. What does constitute the dignity of the Gospel? Is it human dignity, or is it Divine? Is it earthly, or is it heavenly dignity? It was a very undignified thing, looked at humanly, to die on a cross between two thieves. That was the most undignified thing ever done in this world, and yet, looked at on moral and spiritual grounds, it was the grandest spectacle that ever earth or Heaven gazed upon, and methinks that the inhabitants of Heaven stood still and looked over the battlements at that glorious, illustrious Sufferer, as He hung there between Heaven and earth. The Pharisees, I know, spat upon the humbled Sufferer, and wagged their heads and said, 'He saved others, Himself He cannot save.' Ah! but He was intent on saving others. That was the dignity of Almighty strength allying itself with human weakness, in order to raise it. It was the dignity of eternal wisdom shrouding itself in human ignorance, in order to enlighten it. It was the dignity of everlasting, unquenchable love, baring its bosom to suffer in the stead of its rebellious creature—man. Ah! it was incarnate God standing in the place of condemned, apostate man —the dignity of love! love! LOVE!

Oh, precious Saviour! save us from maligning Thy Gospel and Thy name by clothing it with our paltry notions of earthly dignity, and forgetting the dignity which crowned Thy sacred brow as Thou didst hang upon the cross! That is the dignity for us, and it will never suffer by any gentleman here carrying the Gospel into the back slums or alleys of any town or city in which he lives. That dignity will never suffer by any employer talking lovingly to his servant maid or errand boy, and looking into his eyes with tears of sympathy and love and trying to bring his soul to Jesus. That dignity will never suffer even though you should have to be dragged through the streets with a howling mob at your heels, like Jesus Christ, if you have gone into those streets for the souls of your fellow-men and the glory of God. Though you should be tied to a stake, as were the martyrs of old, and surrounded by laughing and taunting fiends and their howling followers—that will be a dignity which shall be crowned in Heaven, crowned with everlasting glory. If I understand it, that is the

dignity of the Gospel—the dignity of love. I do not envy, I do not covet any other. I desire no other—God is my Witness—than the dignity of love.

Oh, friends! will you get this baptism of love! Then you will, like the Apostles, be willing to push your limbs into a basket, and so be let down by the wall, if need be, or suffer shipwreck, hunger, peril, nakedness, fire, or sword, or even go to the block itself, if thereby you may extend His Kingdom and win souls for whom He shed His Blood. The Lord fill us with this love and baptise us with this fire, and then the Gospel will arise and become glorious in the earth, and men will believe in us, and in it. They will feel its power, and they will go down under it by thousands, and, by the grace of God, they SHALL.

02.02. A Pure Gospel

A PURE GOSPEL

Acts 26:15-20.

—‘And I said, Who art Thou, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee: delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.’ THE second indispensable condition we are going to note this afternoon to Aggressive Christianity is, a Pure Gospel. I mean by that, God’s own pure metal—the unadulterated Gospel of Jesus Christ.

There seems, nowadays, in the Church and the world, as many different views of the Gospel as there are of secondary matters and of minor doctrines. One person has one notion of the Gospel, another has another, until there has come to be a fearful distraction in the minds of many who are constantly listening to what is called the Gospel. May God the Holy Ghost help us this afternoon to look at it impartially and carefully.

And, firstly, let me try to define what is the Gospel.

‘Oh!’ people say, ‘it is good news.’ Yes, thank God, it is good news, indeed—news without which we must all have been lost. It is the news of the free, measureless, undeserved, reconciling mercy of God, offered to me through the vicarious, infinite, glorious sacrifice of His Son, to the end that I may BE SAVED from sin here and from Hell hereafter!! But this news involves a great deal. It is the news of a definite, practical end, involving conditions; for even good news to me involves certain conditions on my part, if I am to procure the good which the news brings. Then, secondly, I will try to explain the conditions on which the Gospel is available to me.

Let me illustrate this; and I am particularly anxious that you should all understand me. Supposing that a province of this empire were in rebellion against our Sovereign. Supposing that the people of that province had trampled under foot our laws, and set up their own in opposition; and suppose the Queen, in her gracious clemency, desired not to destroy these rebels, but to save them, what would be the necessary and indispensable condition in the very nature of the case, in order for her to save them? Not merely a proclamation of pardon. That would be a glorious movement towards the result, but there would want something else; for a proclamation of pardon merely, whilst the rebels remained in an unchanged state, would only be giving them greater facilities for further rebellion. Evidently, in the nature of the case, it is a necessity that a change of mind should be

produced in the rebels themselves, for the Queen not only wants to save them from destruction, but to restore them to allegi- allegiance ance and obedience to herself, and, unless she does this, they will never become dutiful and obedient subjects. There will never be anything but anarchy, confusion, and rebellion in that province unless those rebels undergo a change of mind. They must be brought back to allegiance and obedience to the Queen.

Just so with God's proclamation of Salvation. The mischief is in us. Take the illustration of the Prodigal Son. The mischief was all in him—not in his father. The father loved him before he went away, and the father loved him afterwards. The father's benevolent heart yearned over him all the time he was away, and many a time, perchance, he went to the roof of his house to look over the expanse of country over which the rebellious lad had gone and wondered whether he would ever come back. The father's heart was yearning over him all the time. How was it that he could not be reinstated in the father's love and in the family privileges? Because there needed a change of heart—a change of mind in HIM. If he had come back to the old homestead with the same rebellious spirit in him, the same desire to be free from the father's oversight, the same unwillingness to be put under the FATHER's DOMINION and DISCIPLINE, he would still have been a rebel and a prodigal. In the very nature of the case, until there was the necessary change, a wise and righteous father could not pardon him; he must insist, though he loves him dearly, upon a certain change of mind before he can consistently pardon him.

Just so. The laws of mind are the same when operated upon by either God or man. This is not laying any necessity upon God any more than He has laid upon Himself. He has made us with a certain mental constitution, and therefore He must adapt the conditions and means of our Salvation to that mental constitution, otherwise He would reflect upon His own wisdom in having given it to us at the first. Therefore when He purposes to save man He must save him as man—not as a beast or a machine! He must save him as man, and He must propound such a scheme as will fit and adapt itself to man's nature. Just as the father might not pardon the prodigal, irrespective of the prodigal's state of mind and heart, so neither can God pardon the sinner irrespective of the state of his mind and heart.

I know, by personal contact with hundreds of souls, that there is an alarming amount of misunderstanding and of what I consider false apprehension of the Gospel of Christ at this point. Hence, you have speakers saying, without anything to guard or qualify their words, 'Only believe, and you shall be saved'; 'Whosoever believeth hath everlasting life.' Blessed and glorious truth, when rightly applied, and applied to the right characters; but dangerous error, in my opinion, when applied indiscriminately to unawakened, unrepenting, rebellious sinners. I have met with disastrous consequences of this all over the land—so disastrous that I would not like to repeat them here. Now, I say, we should be careful to let the people understand what we mean by the Gospel: I dare not do any other. I am so satisfied of the thousands of souls that are deceived at this point, that, while God gives me voice to speak, I dare not but try to warn them, and show them their fatal mistake.

Returning to our illustration—you say, 'The man is, so to speak, dead in trespasses and sins. How can he see his own error? How can he lay down the weapons of rebellion? How can he, by himself, come back to the Father?' Granted. Hence, God, in His wisdom and love, has provided for that incapacity which man has induced by his rebellion, by the gift of His Spirit. You say, 'The

parallel is not perfect between your illustration and the thing illustrated.' No, it is not in that point; because temporal rebels can find out by themselves the insanity and wickedness of their course. They can see where it will lead them. They can see the destructive consequences, and be sorry for the course they have taken. They can lay down their weapons of rebellion, and they can conform to the conditions on which the Queen issues her proclamation. You say, 'Yes, that they can do, but this man cannot.' Of course, because he has so hardened his heart that even if he can, he never will without the Holy Spirit of God. Hence, God has taken compassion on us, and sent His Spirit into the world for this purpose—'To convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.' Thus He opens our eyes, and shows us our lost estate. Having, by the Holy Ghost, made us realize our desperate condition, then comes the Gospel to meet us just where we are, on condition that we abandon our evil ways, and do the works meet for repentance, which we are able to do by the power of the Holy Spirit, as well as to lay down the weapons of our rebellion and accept of Christ, put our neck under His yoke, and pledge ourselves in heart to FOLLOW HIM ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIFE. These are the conditions involved, and this is the end the Gospel contemplates, and there you see the Gospel accomplishes its END in this case. The heart of the rebel is won back to its Lord, and the indispensable change has taken place in the being himself. He has come back to God. His eyes are opened to see the evil of sin, and the desperate state he is in. Tired of himself, and tired of his evil ways, as the Prodigal was of the swineyard, he arises, leaves them, and goes to his father. But now I must stop to meet a difficulty which I know will arise in many sincere minds. I feel myself such a tender jealousy for the glory of God, that I do highly respect this feeling in others, and if any one disagrees with my views, or my way of putting them, through a feeling of jealousy for the glory of God, they have my profound respect. You will say, 'If we are able to abandon our evil courses, and lay down the weapons of rebellion, is that not saving ourselves?' No, dear friends; it is altogether different. You see it is the indispensable condition of Salvation in every one of the nine passages we read, and in many others—that we abandon our evil ways. Now, what does that mean? A gentleman in a letter to me said, 'We cannot save ourselves from heart sins.' Granted; but we can will to be saved from them. Then, there is a great distinction between those sins of the heart, which are involuntary, and those deliberate transgressions of God's law, which unregenerate men commit. God requires me to abandon all that I CAN, as a condition of Salvation, and then, when He saves, He will give me power to abandon all that I could; not before. The Prodigal had to come away from the swine-yard, the filth, and the husks, before he got into the father's house, and sat down at the father's feast, but when he had done so, then the father said, 'Come in,' and he brought the best robe and put it on him, and killed the fatted calf, and put the ring of forgiveness upon his hand. Hence, as the old divines used to put it, 'You must wait for the Lord in the path of His ordinances,' the path of obedience, as far as is possible to you. And is there any other way? Can the drunkard wait for Him while he abides at his cup? Can the thief wait for Him while he continues in his diabolical trade? Can any man indulging in absolute open sin find the Lord? Must he not, as the Saviour says, cut off that right hand, and pluck out that right eye? He never can cleanse his guilt, but he CAN cut off his hand, and when he does that, then the Holy Spirit will come in and apply the Blood, and do the cleansing.

Therefore, you perceive, I take the Gospel to be aiming not merely at saving, but restoring us. If it were merely to save me without restoring me, what would it do for me? As a moral agent, if the Gospel fails to PUT ME RIGHT it will fail eternally to make me happy; and if you were to transplant

me before the throne, and put me down in the inner circle of archangels with a sense of wrong in my heart, being morally out of harmony with the laws of God, and the moral laws of the universe, I should be as miserable as if I were in Hell, and should want to get away. I must be MADE RIGHT, as well as treated as if I were right. I must be changed as well as justified. This is the Gospel put as clearly in our text as it could be, and also the Epistles written by the Apostle Paul, the great expounder of the doctrine of justification by faith. It was through the lips of the glorified Lord Himself, after He had risen to the great Apostle of the Gentiles, after the Gospel dispensation was fully opened, that this most unmistakable commission was given, 'Unto whom now I send thee to open their eyes.' What to? Their sins. As Peter opened the eyes of the murderers of our Lord, on the Day of Pentecost, 'Whom ye have crucified and slain,' driving in the convicting truth of God until, in their agony, they cried out, 'WHAT MUST WE DO?' He tore off the bandages which Satan had wrapped around them, and drove them as with the schoolmaster's lash, until he drove them to the Cross of the crucified One. 'Open their eyes'—that is the first thing. Oh! how my soul has often shrunk and wept under the sense of the awful responsibility this brings upon us Christians. The world is asleep. Yes, friends, your relations, your neighbours—they are asleep. They are preoccupied. They are full of the world, and the things of the world. They will not think—they will not see—they will not look into the Word of Life. Your responsibility comes here tenfold. Go AND WAKE THEM! You CAN DO IT, if you have the Holy Ghost in you!

Some people would have said to the Lord Jesus, 'What a great deal you are making of human agency, for, after all, Paul is but a man, and you are setting him to open the eyes of the unconverted, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Are you not making too much of human effort? But the Lord Jesus knew what He was about. He knew that Paul had a power in him which every really renewed child of God has—the Holy Ghost—to equip him for this work; and He says, 'Unto whom now I send thee to open their eyes.' Go and awake them to a sense of their danger. Take them, metaphorically speaking, by the collar and shake them and make them realize their peril, as you would if they were asleep in a burning house!! And then when you have awakened them, what are you to do? Leave them alone? No, no, for Christ's sake, no! Take hold of them by the mighty power of your moral suasion and zeal, and love, and energy, and turn them right round from sin and Satan unto God.

Jesus Christ set Paul to do this, and Paul did it. He says, 'Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.' His was no meek and mild putting of the truth, and leaving people to do as they liked. 'Knowing, therefore, the TERROR of the Lord, we PERSUADE men, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead'; and, oh! what success the Lord gave him in his desperate enterprise. What multitudes did he persuade, and succeed in turning round from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God! Turn them round! 'Oh! but,' you say, 'if they are turned round from darkness, which represents evil, to light, which represents righteousness, are they not saved?' No, not yet. This is only the change effected in their will, which is beautifully exemplified by Paul in Romans vii.—willing to keep the law, willing to obey God, willing to do His will, and follow Him; yea, struggling, but yet unable; though they are brought round from the voluntary choice or embrace of evil, and the voluntary service of the Devil, round to the voluntary choice and embrace of righteousness and the service of God, they are not yet able to do it.

Now, friends, don't say I said they were able. Don't misrepresent me, as some people do. I will try to be clear, and I say there is all the difference in the world between BEING WILLING TO LET JESUS CHRIST SAVE ME FROM MY SINS, AND SAVING MYSELF FROM THEM. It is exactly this change in the attitude of the will which God demands as a CONDITION OF THE EXERCISE OF HIS POWER. It is so in all the miracles. 'Wilt thou be made whole?' He says to the man with the withered hand, 'Stretch out thy hand.' The man might have said, 'Lord, what an unreasonable request. Are You come to mock me in my misery?' Oh! but Jesus Christ knew what He wanted in the man. He wanted the response of the MAN'S WILL. He wanted the man to say, 'Yes, Lord'; and when He said that, the Lord put the strength into the shoulder-bone, and He stretched it out, and it was made whole. There are many souls just there—they will not say, 'Yes, Lord,' to some condition which the Spirit puts upon them. I could give you some heartrending illustrations on this point. I am satisfied that this Gospel-enlightened England of ours is full of people just at this point, who come crying, and praying, and longing, as they call it, after God. They come up to Jesus Christ again and again. They try to believe; they want to follow Him, but they are kept back by the right hand and the right eye which the Holy Ghost has told them they must cut off and pluck out before He will receive them. They will not do it, and so they are ever learning, and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. You must renounce evil in your will. You must will to 'obey the truth.' You must say, 'Yes, Lord.'

I remember, on one occasion, in the West of England, I had been delivering week-day morning addresses. We had a blessed Meeting on this particular day. We began at half-past ten, and the Lord was so with us that He supplied the want of refreshment till we had it at 5.30. He made up for the want of dinner or tea. A gentleman was there, with whose appearance I was struck. He was tall, and intelligent, a man of about forty or forty-five. He knelt down without any emotion, more than deep solemnity, at the end of the Communion rail. I had been talking about the reason people walked in darkness—controversy with the Holy Spirit. I said to him, 'My dear sir, have you had a controversy with the Holy Spirit?' 'Yes,' he said, 'I have had one for fifteen years. I am ashamed to say it, and it has eaten up all the joy and power of my Christian life, and I have been a useless cumberer of the ground.' I did not know till afterwards that he was a deacon of the church, and had come up there in the sight of all the congregation. I said, 'Well, my dear sir, you know the Gospel as well as I do. It is of no use to preach faith to you until you are willing to renounce your idol.' He said, most emphatically, 'I know it.' I said, 'Are you willing?' Oh, with what tenacity the human heart holds on to its idols! Though he had come up to the rail in the face of that congregation, so deeply was he under the power of the Spirit, yet he hesitated. I said, 'Well, my dear sir, you must make up your mind. In your case, it is between the choice of this, whatever it may be, and Christ'; and I retired under the pulpit pillars for a minute, and left him to himself and the Lord. I lifted up my heart to God for him, and then I went back, and said, 'Will you renounce it?' and, lifting up his eyes to Heaven, and, bringing his hand down upon the Communion rail, he said, 'By the grace of God, I do,' and his whole frame heaved with agony, but he stepped into immediate liberty. His blessed Saviour was waiting with arms wide open. There was only this accursed thing which had stood between them, and when he trampled it under his feet, and was willing to forsake it, as a natural consequence, he sprang into the everlasting arms, and received the assurance of Salvation. It was all over the town for the next fortnight. People remarked, 'Did you ever see such a change come over a man, as has come over Mr. So-and-so? He is like a new man. He prays in the Prayer Meeting with such fervour. He was at the chapel doors, speaking to the unconverted, and inviting

them to come back. He is visiting up and down the town—why, he's a new man!' Was there any change in the Gospel? Had he received any fresh light? It was only the old story—only that he had put away the idol, and trampled under foot that which was keeping the life-power of God out of his soul.

Here is another case. At some services in the West of England, a gentleman, largely interested in an unlawful business, came every night for five weeks, and used to sit there, the picture of despair and wretchedness, till after ten o'clock. He went on in this way until his friends thought he would lose his reason. He was walking about his bedroom with his Bible open, kneeling down every now and then, struggling and wrestling and trying to believe; but every time he thought of this ungodly business which he could not give up, despair seized him, for he thought of his money—he thought of the consequences to his family; until at last he said, 'Money or no money, I will settle it.' He gave it up, came out, and got saved at once.

Now I think these illustrations make clear what I mean, by the abandonment, the turning from the embrace of evil to the embrace of righteousness as an indispensable condition of forgiveness. Hence the Holy Ghost has carefully maintained this order—'to open their eyes and to turn them (round) from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me.' You see what a different thing this is to presenting Christ to people just as they are, where they are, doing what they like. You see what a different Gospel it comes to, insisting upon a thorough renouncement and abandonment of evil as a condition of Jesus Christ receiving the sinner. This was Paul's Gospel. Will you give me any other definition of it? Can you explain it in any other way? Paul goes on to show us, how he understood: 'Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus and at Jerusalem: and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. Was this like saying 'Only believe'? without respect to any antecedent change of mind? Can anybody show me anything here in the slightest degree approximating to the Antinomian Gospel which has been grafted on to some other of Paul's utterances? And yet surely the Apostle could not contradict himself. His writings about faith must be in harmony with this most unmistakable putting of the Gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. Moreover, did he tell Agrippa and Festus to believe? No, he left them trembling at his words, because they were not willing to abandon their sins and put away the accursed thing; but to the Philippian jailer, who said, 'Men and brethren, what must I do?' and who brought them out and began to wash their stripes, thus doing works meet for repentance at once, he said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' Ah, my friend, you may try to get hold of Christ to your dying hour and at the last be lost, while you are holding on to your idols. If He could have saved us after that fashion, we needed no Christ, we could have gone into Heaven without a Saviour; but He came to save His people from their sins, and while you are in love with your sins, you may struggle and tremble as Agrippa and Felix did, and as the young Ruler did, and you will meet a similar fate. You must let go your idols and be willing that Jesus should come and save you; not down among the dirt and mud of sin, but lift you out of it: wash you: make you clean: and keep you clean: circumcise your hearts; and put His law in them; and then you shall know the gladness of His Salvation!

I have some people writing to me in this condition. If they are here this afternoon, let me say to them—This is what you have to do—let go your idols and say as the gentleman said of whom I

have told you, ‘Poverty or no poverty, business or no business, position or no position, suffering or prosperity; never mind—Christ, Christ, I let go all for Thee!’ Have you forsaken evil? Have you cut off the right hand? Have you plucked out the right eye? I have people coming to me in services of this character, groaning and sometimes worn to skeletons. They tell me they are in distress, they have got into bondage, they want the joy of the Lord and His daily fellowship; and when I ask the reason, they generally say, ‘Well, I don’t know, but it seems to be want of faith.’ Now, I say to such people:

‘Now let us see what this want of faith arises from.’ There must be a cause. I am afraid that sin lieth at the door, and when we come to close quarters, we generally find there is some idol, some course of conduct, or some doubtful conduct which keeps God out of the soul, and when this is confessed and renounced people get the presence of God and go away rejoicing in Him. It is so in nearly every case. God does not arbitrarily withdraw Himself from His people. He wants to dwell with them. We are His proper abode. He has promised to come and abide with his people, and if He does not, depend upon it there is something in the temple offensive to Him, something with which He will not dwell. Will you put that away, and consecrate your hearts this day unto the Lord to be His temple, His temple only, and leave consequences with Him? He will be able to look after His own.

Then, lastly, when you have come to this decision, then look and live; take the final leap into the arms of a crucified Saviour. With some souls who have been the subjects of the drawings of the Spirit for years, the difficulty is in the surrendering of their wills. They have learned to reason with God; they have lost the little children’s way; they are afraid to take the final leap, and there they stand before the Cross, not conscious of anything between them and Christ. What are you to do? What Paul told the Philippian jailer to do—‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ’; and you say, ‘What is that, and how am I to believe?’ Wonderful how it has got mystified! Believe what? That He just means what He says; and that when you come, He does receive—not He will to-morrow, nor He did yesterday, but that He does now, this moment. When did He receive the sinners who came to Him on earth? When they came. Just the same will He receive you. ‘Oh, but,’ you say, ‘I do not feel right.’ No, of course not. Do you not see, you are to be saved by faith. If you are to be saved by faith, you must exercise faith before you will be saved. If it is by faith you are to be saved, you must believe first, and be saved afterwards; if it is only the next second. ‘But,’ you say, ‘I do not feel it.’ No, but you will feel it when you have got it. You must believe it before you get it, on the testimony of His Word—‘I will in no wise cast you out’; ‘Him that cometh’; ‘Now I come, Lord, I come. I have put away my idols; I have put away everything that consciously stood between me and Thee. I will to serve Thee, I will to follow Thee, I will to put my neck under Thy yoke for ever, asking no more questions, but being willing for Thee to lead me whithersoever Thou wilt. Now, Lord, I come—Thou dost receive.’ Leap off the poor old stranded wreck of your own effort, or your own righteousness, or your own sinfulness, or your own unworthiness, or anything else of your own, into the glorious life-boat. It is on the top of the wave this afternoon—another step, and you will be in—one bound, and you will feel the loving arms of your Saviour around you. Faith is trust, TRUST. He will do for you what He promised. Believe that God does now accept you wholly for the sake of the sacrifice of His blessed Son; that He justifies you freely from all things from which you could not be justified by the law. You stand a condemned, guilty, Hell-bound criminal, and nothing but His free, sovereign mercy can save you. Throw yourself upon this, and the moment

you do so in real faith you will be saved. Perhaps you will say, as a curate of the Church of England, writing to me last week, said, ‘I refuse to be saved by logic.’ Amen, amen. So did I, and I struggled for six weeks because I refused to be saved by logic—because I would have a living, personal Christ. I admire your decision, my brother, if you are here, but let this logic help you: nevertheless, Jesus Christ has promised, if I come, that He will receive me—then, I do come, and He does receive me, for He cannot lie. Let that help you. Faith is not logic, but logic may help faith.

Oh! how I should rejoice if some of you were to launch into the arms of Jesus this afternoon. It often happens that while I am speaking souls do get into the ark of God’s mercy, and come, or write to tell me afterwards that the Spirit has come, and he is crying ‘Abba Father,’ and now they KNOW they have passed from death unto life. They don’t want logic then. It is a matter of demonstration with them. When you have come up to the place where saving faith is possible to you, you have no more to do, no more to suffer, no more to pay. By simple trust we are saved. This is the way every saint on earth was saved. This is the way every saint in glory was saved. This is the way we are kept saved too, by LIVING DAILY, OBEDIENT FAITH. The Lord help you just now. Let the idol go. Put away the ungodly companion. Give up the unlawful business, or the worldly conformity. Put away whatever has stood between you and Jesus. Trample it under foot and press through the crowd of difficulties as the woman did, and go right up and touch Him with this touch of faith, and you shall LIVE and KNOW THAT YOU ARE HEALED. Then this Gospel will be good news indeed to you, and Jesus will be the author of eternal Salvation to you, because you OBEY HIM!

02.03. Adaptation of Measures

ADAPTATION OF MEASURES

I HAVE chosen this afternoon five or six different passages all exhibiting the principle of Adaptation, on which I am to speak. The first is 1 Corinthians 9:20-22 :

‘And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ), that I might gain them that are without law.’ To them that are without law as without law; but here he carefully guards himself by a parenthesis, lest he should seem to favour a lawless Antinomian Gospel, ‘not without law to God,’ not independent of the great moral law, ‘but under the law to Christ,’ in which is fulfilled ALL LAW.

‘To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.’

‘To the weak became I as weak’—masterpiece of human humility! Most people want to appear strong, but here is a man coming down, and appearing a weak man, that he might win the weak. That is the humility of Jesus Christ: The Lord give us the like spirit! Again, 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 :

‘Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; and there are differences of administration, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.’

Some people want the Spirit to work in every one alike, and in all times the same, but He chooses to have diversities. Again, Galatians 3:27-28 :

‘For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.’ That is, so far as the privileges, duties, and obligations of Christ’s kingdom are concerned, there is neither nationality nor sex; and Galatians 5:6 :

‘For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.’

All mere ordinances and ceremonies come under the Apostle’s term ‘circumcision.’ And 2 Timothy 4:2 :

‘Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.’

What a hue and cry there is because we Salvation Army people save men ‘out of season’! And Jude 1:22-23 :

‘And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.’

‘Oh, no,’ say some of our conventional friends, ‘you should not make a difference.’ Nevertheless, in all these six texts the principle of Adaptation is most distinctly laid down.

Now, we have spent the two last Sabbath afternoons in trying to point out our view of the characteristics of a pure Gospel, and I think we have succeeded in doing this so clearly that no person who followed us carefully can imagine for a moment that we would hold or teach any adaptation of the Gospel itself. As we stated before, we deemed this so above all adaptation—so above any change, that we would not be responsible for transposing its order, much less altering its matter, that we would not take a dot off one of the ‘i’s,’ so sacredly intact do we believe the Gospel of Christ in its matter ought to be kept. We believe also that the ORDER of God ought to be strictly maintained; that it is as rational and true in philosophy as it is in divinity; and that the way the Spirit operates upon the minds of men is just the same as ever. This we clearly and most carefully pointed out, so that what we have to say this afternoon, you will please bear in mind, has nothing to do with the GOSPEL MESSAGE ITSELF. We have tried to show our idea (or what we believe to be the Holy Spirit’s idea) of a pure Gospel; but when we come to speak of modes and measures, that is quite another thing. I think, from the texts we have read, and from many others equally plain and relevant, that we find a most easily gathered truth running all the way through the New Testament, namely, that forms and ceremonies are nothing except as they embody and express real spiritual life and truth. That circumcision is nothing, and that uncircumcision is nothing; baptism is nothing, and being unbaptized is nothing; the Lord’s Supper is nothing, and abstaining from the Lord’s Supper is nothing, in itself, as a matter of form, for he embraces under circumcision all mere outward forms and ceremonies; all these are nothing, but ‘KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD’: that is, you may have all these performed upon you, and regularly perform them yourselves, and be but sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, if you keep not the commandments of God; for circumcision availeth nothing, in another place, and uncircumcision availeth nothing, but faith—of what sort?—that WORKETH BY LOVE: that proves its obedience by its deeds. Therefore, we start with that fundamental truth lying clearly before us in every page of the New Testament, that forms and ceremonies, whatsoever they may be, are nothing except as they embody and represent REAL SPIRITUAL LIFE, and truth and action—action! Now, it was the great sin—the crowning condemnation of the Jews—that they had frittered away the spirituality and practical bearing of the Divine Law, clinging to those forms and ceremonies which were instituted only to embody and symbolize it. Would to God they had let go the form when they let go the spirit. Jesus Christ wishes they had. He tells them it would have been far better. He told them they were children of the Devil, notwithstanding their holding on to their relationship to Abraham and all the outward forms and ceremonies of their ritual.

They had better have come out and avowed themselves unbelievers, than have gone on professing to be the children of God, while they were doing the work of the Devil. But they would not receive this teaching. It was too cutting for them, and so they would not have it. It was true, nevertheless. They held on to the form whilst the spirit had gone. They were ‘making clean the outside of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess, appearing beautiful outward, but within they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.’ And, dear friends, all corpses are very much alike, when the spirit is gone out of them—no is found to be about as good as

another.

Alas! there is this tendency still in our fallen human nature. It is so much easier, or Satan makes it look so much easier, to an unregenerate man, to rest in a form, than to seek till he finds the spiritual grace which that form represents. That is to say, it is so much easier for an unregenerate man to be circumcised, or to be baptized, as the case may be, to partake of the Lord's Supper, to keep outwardly the Sabbath Day, to abstain from acts of immorality and open sin, and to be decently moral and religious—all this he can understand and do for himself, and it looks to him so much easier, and so it is, in the first instance, than bringing his evil, unregenerate heart to God for Him to circumcise it, and write His law in it, as He promises to do under the new covenant.

Now, that is what God wants every man to do. He wants him to bring this heart to Him, and let Him renew it. He says, 'I will circumcise your hearts to keep My law.' But, no! the unregenerate man rests in the outward form. He will not be at the trouble to sacrifice his idols, and cry mightily unto God. He will not seek until he attains the fulfilment of these promises; so he sits down and rests in the form.

Alas! alas! how many thousands in this so-called Christian England of ours to-day are just there. They have got the form; they are like the Jews—they are Pharisees with a Christian creed instead of a Jewish, the same in CHARACTER, only different in name. That is all the difference, hanging on to the creed of Jesus Christ, while they know nothing of its spirit; the form without the power; and they deny their professed Lord every day. Oh! are there any of this class here? My friend, my friend, if you never find it out until you come to die, you will find it out then, but it may be too late. May God, the Holy Spirit, help you to find it out this afternoon, and bring that unrenewed, unrepentant, evil heart of yours to the Cross; bring it to God, and wait, and weep, if need be, and struggle, and knock, and cry, as He tells you, until He does renew it and write His law in it; then the outward form will be the expression of the inward grace. Then the fruit will be good, because it springs from a good root inside. The Lord help you! This tendency to rest in form is just as great as ever, and instead of putting away their idols, and bringing their conscience to be cleansed and kept clean by the precious Blood, prayerfully and carefully walking before God, striving in all things to please Him, people get an outside form, but LIVE just like the world around them, calling Jesus, 'Lord, Lord,' but doing not the things that He says. Now, I say that a pure Gospel requires that we bring our evil HEARTS to God to be renewed, and that we resolutely put away our idols, and that we wait on Him by the Cross until He renews our motives, tempers, tendencies, feelings, and dispositions, and makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus. Instead of doing this, people go on being circumcised or baptized, as the Jews did, and they call themselves 'Israel,' as they did; whereas, of the spiritual Israel they are utterly ignorant. They are the children of Hagar (as Paul says), and not the children of the promise. May the Lord help you to come and be made children of the promise!

Now, as in the individual there is such a tendency to rest in form, so in the Church collectively; hence this tendency to a formal religion. Just as it was with the Jews—their Temple service and the paraphernalia of Judaism was all in all to them, and they thought that Jesus Christ was the most awfully severe and uncharitable person who ever appeared on the face of the earth, because He told them the truth. And the same class of character presents the same attitude now. We shall see when we get to the Judgment-seat of Christ which is the true charity—that which covers up

things, or that which tears off the bandages and shows people their hypocrisy and, as we have just read, reveals to them the secrets of their hearts. I fear that we are very largely in the same condition as the Jews were when Christ came. I say ‘very largely,’ for I know that there are grand and glorious exceptions; but I speak of the great whole, and I am backed up in this opinion by some of the most thoughtful and spiritual men of this age. It is the lamentation everywhere this formality and death. It reaches us from all parts of the land, yea, from all parts of all lands. I once heard a great divine, a leader of spiritual thought in his day, who has recently passed to Heaven, say, ‘I consider that the writings of the Prophets are far more applicable to the state of the churches now than the writings of the New Testament, for we are in the same lapsed and fallen condition, as churches, as Israel of old was.’ So many think, and so many teach.

If this be the case, WHAT IS TO BE DONE? What would strike you should be done in this state of comparative—spiritual eclipse? Evidently it would be madness to go on as we are. That will mend nothing! Somebody must strike and do something worthy of the emergency. ‘There is no improving the future, without disturbing the present,’ and the difficulty is to get people to be willing to be disturbed! We are so conservative by nature—especially some of us. We have such a rooted dislike to have anything rooted up, disturbed, or knocked down. It is as much the work of God, however, to ‘root out, and to pull down, and to destroy,’ as ‘to build and to plant’; and God’s real ambassadors frequently have to do as much of the one kind of work as of the other. This is not pleasant work; but what is necessary to be done? Is it not manifestly necessary that we should go back to the simplicity and SPIRITUALITY of the Gospel, and to the early modes of propagating it amongst men? On the two last Sunday afternoons we tried to show what was the pure Acts of the Apostles Gospel—calling men to forsake their sins, to cast away their idols, come out from the world of the ungodly and be separate in order that their sins might be forgiven, and that God might receive them, and they become His sons and His daughters. Last Sunday we spoke of faith and what it would do for us.

Now, with respect to the outward manifestations and propagation of the Gospel it is equally necessary to go back. We have such a heap of rubbish to carry away—the accumulated traditionalism of ages to go through and dig under—that it sometimes takes a considerable amount of time, and force of character, and a great deal of the Spirit of God to enable us to do it. Nevertheless, it must be done if we are to reach a better state of things.

It seems to me, in order to do this we should not shrink from a recognition of our lapsed and fallen condition. That was what the Jews did at the teaching of Jesus. They would not have His reproach. They would not have the light because it condemned them. They rejected it. They persisted they were the children of Abraham—the children of the promise. They persisted they were all right, and they pointed to the Temple and to their ceremonialism as a proof of it; they would not have His testimony, would not admit that they were wrong. Do not let us imitate them. Let us recognize this state of things. Let us look it fairly in the face. Honesty is always the best policy both in spiritual and in temporal things. There is nothing gained by ignoring a disagreeable truth. It is best to face it. Now there it is, and the best wav is to hail any ray of light that comes to us from any part of the heavens, even though a carpenter should bring it, as He brought it to them—or a fisherman, or a woman. Never mind—let us hail the light and apply it to ourselves. Let us bring our hearts and lives out into its blaze, and examine them by it, and improve it to our own Salvation and to the Salvation of others. If the Jews had done that they would have been saved,

and their nation. ‘If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day’—this twelfth hour of the last day—‘the things that belong unto thy peace; but now’—because of thy obstinate rejection—‘they are hid from thine eyes.’ The Lord help us to take the light home to ourselves, each one.

We have seen that it is clearly laid down in the texts I have read this afternoon that the law of adaptation is the only law laid down in the New Testament with respect to modes and measures. I challenge anybody to find me any other. While the Gospel message is laid down with unerring exactness, we are left at perfect freedom to adapt our measures and modes of bringing it to bear upon men to the circumstances, times, and conditions in which we live—free as air. ‘I became all things to all men.’ The great Apostle of the Gentiles who had thrown off the paraphernalia of Judaism years before, yet became as a Jew that he might win the Jews. The great, strong intellect became as a weak man that he might win the weak. He conformed himself to the conditions and circumstances of his hearers, in all lawful things, that he might win them; he let no mere conventionalifies, or ideas of propriety, stand in his way when it was necessary to abandon them. He who was brave as a lion, and hailed a crown of martyrdom like a conquering hero, as he was, yet was willing to submit to anything when the requirements of his mission rendered it necessary. He suffered his limbs to be ignominiously thrust into a basket, and himself let down over the wall, when necessary for the success of his work. He adapted himself to the circumstances. He was instant in season and out of season. Oh! what a hue and cry there is about out-of-season Christianity; ‘of some making a difference’—pulling them out of the fire by the hair of the head, if needful! Never mind—save them, SAVE THEM. That is the great desideratum. Save them—pulling them out of the fire. Adapt your measures to your circumstances and to the necessities of the times in which you live. Now, here it seems to me that the Church—I speak universally—has made a grand mistake, the same old mistake which we are so prone to fall into, of exalting the traditions of the elders into the same importance and authority as the Word of God, as the clearly laid down principles of the New Testament.

People contend that we must have quiet, proper, decorous services. I say, WHERE IS YOUR AUTHORITY FOR THIS? Not here. I defy any man to show it. I have a great deal more authority in this book for such a lively, gushing, spontaneous, and what you call disorderly, service, as our Army services sometimes are, in 1 Corinthians 14:1-40 than you can find for yours. The best insight we get into the internal working of a religious service in Apostolic times is in this chapter, and I ask you—is it anything like the ordinary services of to-day? Can the utmost stretch of ingenuity make it into anything like them? But even that is not complete. We cannot get the order of a single service from the New Testament, nor can we get the form of govern- government ment of a single church. Hence one denomination think theirs is the best form, and another theirs; so Christendom has been divided into so many camps ever since; but this very quarrelling shows the impossibility of getting from the New Testament the routine, the order, and the fashion of mere modes. They cannot get it, because it is not there!! Do you think God had no purpose in this omission? The form, modes, and measures are not laid down as in the Old Testament dispensation. There is nothing of this stereotyped routinism in the whole of the New Testament. Why? Now there may be some who may have difficulties in this matter. I said to a gentleman, who came to me with this and that difficulty about our modes and measures, ‘I will meet your difficulties by bringing them face to face with the bare principles of the New Testament. If I cannot

substantiate and defend them by that I will give them up for ever. I am not wedded to any forms and measures. To many of them I have been driven by the necessities of the case. God has driven me to them as at the point of the bayonet, as well as led me by the pillar of cloud, and when I have brought my reluctance and all my own conventional notions, in which I was brought up like other people, face to face with the naked bare principles of the New Testament, I have not found anything to stand upon! I find things here far more extravagant and extreme than anvthing we do—looked at carefully.' Here is the principle laid down that you are to adapt your measures to the necessity of the people to whom you minister; you are to take the Gospel to them in such modes and habitudes of thought and expression and circumstances, as will gain for it from them a HEARING. You are to speak in other tongues—go and preach it to them in such a way as they will look at it and listen to it! Oh! in that lesson we read what beautiful freedom from all set form and formula there was! What freedom for the gushing freshness, enthusiasm, and love of those new Converts! What scope for the different manifestations of the same spirit. Everything was not cut and dried. Everything was not pre-arranged. It was left to the operation of the Spirit, and the argument that this has been abused is no argument against it, for then you might argue against every privilege. Here is abundant evidence that these new Converts, each one, had opportunity to witness for Jesus, opportunity and scope to give forth the gushing utterance of his soul, and tell other people how he got saved, or the experience the Holy Ghost has wrought in him. And look at the result! 'If there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all; and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.' What unkind things have been said of The Salvation Army, because people have fallen on their faces under the convicting power of the Spirit at our Meetings, but you see this is Apostolic! And, Oh, friends, what a glorious service this would be! You say, it would look so strange. More the pity. More the pity that this natural, easy, domestic, familiar kind of testimony and witnessing of divine things should have become strange. May it not be because the experience which prompted it has become strange? May it not be that there is no more desire to testify because there is little to testify about? May it not be that there is want of the utterance of the Holy Spirit through the tongue because there is less of it in the soul? Oh! then, should we not make haste back to those days of simplicity and power? Should we not pray to be set free from the traditionalism and routinism in which Satan has succeeded in lulling us to sleep? I ask any saved man—Do you not remember the gushing love and enthusiasm of your first-found liberty? how you longed to tell everybody, and if you had been placed in such circumstances as these Corinthian converts, how gladly you would have testified to what Jesus had done for you? It was only the repressing, keeping down, and ultimately, I am afraid, the all-but extinguishing of the Holy Spirit's urgings that has led to the state in which many of you now are, and also to the dead wav in which many of our services are conducted.

Now, let us look fairly at these things. I maintain that the only qualification—the only indispensable qualification—for witnessing for Christ is the Holy Ghost. Paul, expressly, over and over again, abjures all merely human equipment. He expressly declares that these things were not the power, even where they existed, but that it was the Holy Ghost. Therefore, give me man, woman, or child, with the Holy Ghost, full of love and zeal for God, and I say it is a great strength and joy to that Convert to testify to the Church and to the world, and it is the bounden duty of the Church to give him the opportunity to do so. The Lord is going to demonstrate in this land that He is not going to evangelize it by finished sermons and disquisitions, but by the simple testimony of people saved

from sin and the Devil, by His power and His grace. He is going to do it by WITNESSING, as He began.

Now, I say, read your New Testament on this point, and you will be struck with the amazing amount of evidence for this unconventional kind of service. The world wants some more PENTECOSTS. When shall Peters and Marys be so filled with the Spirit that they cannot help telling what God has done for them—male and female, men, women, and children—like the woman of Samaria, who, when she had found Him of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote, went and fetched her fellow-townsmen and women to hear Him? He wishes you to do the same, and this is the way the Lord is going to gather out His great and glorious kingdom in these latter days by the power of testimony in the Holy Ghost. He only wants witnesses to be able to go and say, 'We speak that we do know'—that is the qualification. The Lord is multiplying such witnesses. Bless His holy name. But you may say—what did the Master Himself do? Well, He adopted these very measures. I was so struck with this, when some one said, 'Why, you are sending people to preach who cannot read or write.' For a moment I was staggered, but I asked him, 'How many of the Apostles do you suppose could read and write when they were first sent out?' And then it was the questioner's turn to be staggered. There is no reason to suppose, with but two or three exceptions, that any of them could. Education then was far more uncommon than now. It was not reading and writing that was the great qualification for preaching Christ; it was KNOWING AND SEEING! It was not the power of eloquence, but it was being able to cast out devils, that was the test. Give me somebody able to cast out devils, and I don't care whether they can read or write, or put a grammatical sentence together. That is of no consequence whatever. Why did not Jesus Christ call the doctors and scribes of His day? There were plenty of them—highly educated men with trained and disciplined minds. He was amongst them in the Temple, when He was twelve years old. He knew them. How was it He did not select these? He who could have commanded a legion of angels, could surely have commanded a few scribes and doctors to go to preach the Gospel. Why not? He acted on the law of adaptation. He wanted His Gospel preached to the great masses—not to the select few. Not to the educated 'upper ten,' but to the great masses of mankind. How was He to have His Gospel so preached, but by men like unto themselves? They fled from the educated doctors. They would not listen to the doctors, and they will not now. It may be very wicked, and obstinate, and foolish, but such is the fact—they never have and they never will. Hence, Jesus Christ, instead of working a miracle, which He never did when it was unnecessary, chose the weak things of the earth to confound the mighty. He would, in the other case, have had first to have untaught all those scribes and doctors almost all they had learned.

He would have had to set them free from the bonds of traditionalism. He would have had to remould their minds, and then equip them. There was no necessity for this, when He found the fishermen ready to His hand. They were just the men He wanted. They only required tempering with the Holy Ghost, and they were ready for the work. They thought as the people thought; they spoke with and associated with the people, and, in fact, were of them. As He wanted the masses of men evangelized, He chose men from amongst the masses to evangelize them. Here was infinite wisdom: 'I thank Thee, O Father, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.' But He had a purpose in it, and the purpose was this—that the Gospel might be propagated in all climes and conditions of men, through any kind of an agent—Greek, Jew, Barbarian, Scythian,

man, woman, child. Any person who has experienced its power in their souls may go and speak it to anybody they can get to hear them and everywhere! We are free as air and sunlight as to our choice of agencies, and it is time the Church woke up to this. The Lord have mercy on us! Is there not work enough to do? It makes my ears tingle and burn with shame when I hear people saying, 'You must not send agencies here and there, and we can't have our organization interfered with.' I say, 'Are all the sinners converted in your neighbourhood?' Nay; has every poor, lost, wretched soul heard the name of Jesus, and the testimony of His Gospel? Are there not teeming thousands round about you who never heard His name, and who care nothing for Him, who live every day trampling His law under their feet? For Christ's sake, send somebody after them. If they will not have your doctors of divinity and your polished divines, get hold of fishermen and costermongers and send them! Let the people have a chance for their souls. Let them hear, for if they hear not, how shall they believe? Oh, they are dying for lack of knowledge—they are, friends; thousands are dying for the lack of knowledge. It is quite a common thing for us to get people into our services who say, 'I never knew there was anything so pretty as that in the Bible. I didn't know you were reading from the Bible. We never heard anything like that before.' Hundreds of men in this country were never in a place of worship, save to be christened or to be married, and a good many, sad to say, are living without being married. While we have been standing UPON OUR DIGNITY, WHOLE GENERATIONS HAVE GONE TO HELL!—if the Bible is true. How much longer shall we stand there? If Jesus had stood upon His dignity He would never have come to die between two thieves. The whole work of redemption is a work of humiliation, selfsacrifice, and suffering; and if we are not willing to follow Him in that, we may as well give up professing His name. The Lord help us to go down, down amongst the fishermen, amongst the poor, the weak, the unlearned, the vulgar, to 'condescend to men of low estate.'

02.04. Assurance of Salvation

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Romans 8:3-4.

—‘For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’

I WILL try, by God’s grace, as much as in me lies, to deal with this subject in a way that shall not provoke controversy. I do deplore this. I wish there was a way of improving the future without disturbing the present, but it is a misfortune, I suppose, that there is not, and, however carefully one may guard oneself in trying to lead the Lord’s people higher, there is always somebody who will quibble and make objections and take exceptions. But we cannot help this. We must be true to our convictions of God’s truth, and to what He has taught us, and revealed to us by His Spirit, for we speak the things that we do know, and do see, and do handle, of the Word of Life. However, I will try to keep to ground on which I think all really spiritual people will be agreed. We may go a bit farther some day, but this afternoon we will just go so far as we believe every real disciple of the Lord Jesus will be willing to go with us, and, Oh! may the Holy Spirit give us one mind and help us to see in His light, and if there is anything we do not see in His light, Oh! that this very hour He may show it to us, for He knows that we are all willing to see, and only longing and desiring to know the whole truth, as it is in Jesus. Let every sincere soul put up this prayer for himself and for me, as I put it up for myself and for you, that the Holy Spirit may lead us into all truth, at any rate as far as it is important to our own Salvation and our practical exhibition of the Salvation of Christ to other people, for a dying world is hanging upon our skirts. They are looking at us to find out what religion is. They will not come to this Book. They will not even hear about it, but they are looking to us to find it out; how momentously important it is, therefore, that we should be truly living Epistles, known and read of all men. We are epistles, whatever sort of doctrine our lives teach. We cannot help ourselves, for while we profess to be the Lord’s we are living epistles, known and read of all men.

Specially, then, I want first to look at the third verse of the eighth chapter. Now, I thought it would, perhaps, be the most profitable way to look at this subject, and would meet the experience of some who I know are here, to try to answer the question—

Wherein does the Law fail to save us? Then we shall be able to see wherein and how Jesus Christ transcends the Law.

First, then, the Law does not fail in giving a knowledge of sin, for it is by the Law, as the Apostle says, that I know sin. Without the Law I was dead, so dead in sin that I did not realize it at all. Its power was so complete over me that I did not realize it was sin, and, therefore, was asleep and comparatively happy; but when the commandment came, ‘sin revived and I died’—that is, to all hope of making myself righteous. The commandment showed me the awful chasm there was

between me and it. The Holy Commandment, just and pure and good—and myself unholy, impure, and unrighteous. A light from Sinai flashed upon it, and I died in despair and utter helplessness. Thus, I say, the Law does not fail in giving knowledge of sin, for it is by the Law that I get the knowledge of sin.

Secondly.—Neither does the Law fail in begetting a sense of guilt and condemnation on account of sin, for it is by the Law again that I get this. I not only get the knowledge of sin by the Law, but I get the sense of guilt and condemnation for sin by the Law, for the Law comes in and condemns me. It is the spirit of death and condemnation to me: it says, 'You should have done this; and because you have not done it, you shall die.' I feel that the Law is just and good, and yet I feel that I do not keep it; and, therefore, I have the sentence of condemnation upon me because I do not keep it. Then the Law does not fail in begetting a sense of condemnation and guilt on account of sin.

Thirdly.—Neither does the Law fail in producing desire after righteousness and effort to attain it. The Law begets in me the desire after righteousness, by contrasting my condition with the purity and Holiness of God's law. I see the Law to be good and holy, I see it to be desirable, and I desire to attain the righteousness of the Law. I am speaking now of a convicted sinner, as the Apostle did when speaking of the same character. A convicted sinner sees the righteousness and beauty of the Law of God.

He sees that it is holy, just, and good. He sees that it is intended to make him holy, just, and good, for the Law is not sin, as the Apostle says, but is ordained unto righteousness, which the sinner has failed to attain because of weakness, but struggles to attain. The first thing is to set himself to strive to attain the righteousness of the Law by his own efforts. This was the case with the Apostle. He longed to do what he could not, and he constantly did what he would not; and, as it was with the Apostle, so it is with every convicted sinner on earth. We were constantly longing after righteousness. We could not help looking on the beautiful, pure, and holy law of God, and we longed to keep it, and tried again and again, until we were tripped down again and again, and died in utter despair, never being able to attain it for ourselves and of ourselves. So you see the Law begets first a knowledge of sin; secondly, it begets guilt and condemnation on account of sin; and, thirdly, desire after righteousness and effort to attain it.

Thus far I think we must all be agreed. Wherein does the Law fail? It does all this for me. It brings me right up, as it were, my schoolmaster lashing me right up to the cross, opening my eyes, creating intense desire after Holiness and efforts for it, and then it just fails me. Where? At the vital point. It cannot give me power. That is where the Law fails. It cannot give me power to fulfil itself. I am strengthless through the weakness of the flesh and the sinfulness of my nature to keep it, and so I struggle and wrestle for power to keep it, but I have not power. 'What the Law could not do, in that it was weak, God sent his Son to do,' and I maintain HE DOES IT, and that is the one vital point where the Son transcends the Law.

Oh! but there is a Gospel nowadays, a Law-Gospel. A great deal of the Gospel of these days never gets any farther than the Law, and some people tell me that it is never intended to do so, and then I ask, Wherein does Christ Jesus advantage me? What am I better for such a Gospel, if my Gospel cannot deliver me from the power of sin? If through the Gospel I cannot get deliverance from this 'I-would-if-I-could religion,' this 'Oh!-wretched-man-that-I-am religion,' wherein am I benefited by it? Wherein does your Gospel do more for me than the Law? The Law convinced me

of sin, and set me desiring and longing after righteousness; but wherein is the superiority of Jesus Christ, if He cannot lead me further than that? And I say, ‘Very well; your faith is vain, and Christ died in vain, and you are yet in your sins, if that is all it can do.’ If that is all Jesus Christ can do, His coming is vain, and I am yet in my sins, and am doomed to hug this dead corpse to the last, and go down to Hell; for death will never do for me what the Blood and sacrifice of Jesus Christ cannot do for me. If Christ cannot supersede the Law, then I am lost, and lost for ever. Wherein then does this ‘Oh!-wretched-man Gospel’ supersede the Law? Will anybody point it out to me?

Oh! but the real Gospel does. The Gospel that represents Jesus Christ, not as a system of truth to be received into the mind, as I should receive a system of philosophy, or astronomy, but it represents Him as a REAL, LIVING, MIGHTY Saviour, ABLE TO SAVE ME now.

I said to a lady once, who was seeking this deliverance, and who was struggling and wrestling, as I kneeled by her side, ‘Wait a minute. Suppose Jesus Christ were here in His flesh, as He once was. Suppose He were to come to your side now, and put His hand upon you and say, ‘Hush! I know your desire; I see your heart; I know what you are longing after. You are longing to be delivered from everything that grieves Me, upon which My pure eyes cannot look with allowance. You are wanting to be brought into full conformity to My will, and that is what I have come to do now. I have come to live with you. I am taking up My abode under this roof, and I will never leave your side. I will be with you by day, and I will be with you by night. I will sit at the dinner-table and tea-table with you, and walk out with you, and go to bed with you, and rise up with you. Don’t be troubled. I will never leave you and never forsake you.’ Do you think if He were to come and say that, you would be able to trust Him?’

‘Oh! yes.’

‘You would not be afraid?’

‘Oh! no.’

‘Now, what would it be that would save you? Would it be the bodily presence of Jesus, which they laid in the sepulchre, and which was as dead and helpless as any other clay when the spirit was gone out of it? NO. It would be His spiritual presence, would it not? and His spiritual eyes seeing you, and His spiritual tongue speaking to you?’

‘Yes.’

‘Well, then, this is just the presence that He has promised to be with every one of His people, and now He is here and able to do this, and will abide with you and enable you to abide in Him, if you will just trust Him. Now, just trust Him.’ And the Lord, by His blessed Spirit, did take and reveal this truth unto her, and just then and there she did leap into the arms of her Saviour and realize that He did save her.

Oh! friends, some people do not think we make enough of Christ. We make all of Christ, only it is a living Christ instead of a dead one. It is Christ in us, as well as for us. We believe in Christ for us, and we should not have been here at all, but for Christ for us up there for ever and ever, and nobody will hasten to throw the crown at His feet readier than I shall; but we believe in order to do it we must have Him in us, and if He is not in us, then it is sounding brass and tinkling cymbal to call upon Him for us. He must be in us. Christ in us as well as for us, and those whom He is not in

He will not be for. If He dwell not ‘in you,’ ye are ‘reprobates.’ But Christ in us—an ever-loving, ever-present, Almighty Saviour—is just able to do what the angels said He should do, that for which He was called Jesus, viz. to save His people from their sin.

Then how does He this? Wherein does He supersede the Law? Wherein does Christ do for me and wherein is He made to me, what the Law could not do or be to me? We have seen what the Law could do and how far it could go. We have seen that it fails just at the vital point of power. Now, how does Christ become this power to me? How is He made unto me—not for me, up in Heaven; He is there, too; but how is He made unto me down here—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption? How does He deliver His people from their sins? How does He save us from the power of sin? Now, you who are longing to get free, try to listen to me, and, Oh! may the HOLY GHOST TEACH US.

He does this, first, by giving—

Assurance of Salvation. He saves and then He makes us conscious of the fact, which the Law could not do. All it could do was to set us struggling after it. It could not give us assurance. Now, by assurance, I mean the personal realization of my acceptance in Christ; my acceptance by the Father; my present acceptance—I mean the inward assurance, which men and women find for themselves, or have revealed in themselves, which they know as a matter of consciousness. Not that which their minister tells them; not that which they learn from books; not even that which the Bible only tells them, for there are thousands of people who read the Bible, who are not saved, and who know they are not. You all know there are thousands of people who believe it in vain.

I was walking down the Anxious Room at one of Mr. Moody’s meetings, when two ladies came and said:

‘Will you please speak to us?’

I don’t know why they came to me, except it was my plain dress which made them think I ought to know, even if I did not, how to deal with souls. We took three chairs and sat down. The youngest was a lady about thirty or thirty-three, and very intelligent, evidently an educated person, and the elder was an old lady, gorgeously attired. They sat down; and as to the younger one there was no mistake about her earnestness. Mr. Moody had been preaching on ‘The Cities of Refuge,’ and showing how the soul who desired to be saved had nothing to do and nothing to suffer, but only to run into the Cities of Refuge and be saved—a beautiful sermon for convicted sinners—and this lady said to me, almost passionately—‘How is it? there must be something wrong somewhere; there must be a mistake somewhere. I believe all that Mr. Moody has been saying, every word of it. I have believed every word since I was a little girl; in fact, I believe the whole of the New Testament—all about Jesus Christ, and I believe, moreover, that He died for me, and that He makes intercession for me, and yet I’m not saved a bit. I have no more power over sin than other people, and I know I am not saved. Now, what can be the reason? I am afraid it is want of faith.’ That is the universal resort to fall back upon by all souls in that condition. I said, ‘Will you be honest with me? It is of no use coming to a spiritual doctor any more than to a physical doctor if you are not frank; you would only mislead him. If you really want to be saved, be honest with me, and I will try, by the help of the Spirit, to help you.’

‘I do indeed want to be saved,’ she said. ‘I often go into my room, and weep, and struggle, and pray for hours. I try to believe. I think I have believed, and I come out and I am no better.’

‘Oh,’ I said to myself, ‘alas! here is the experience of thousands.’ ‘Tell me, in these times when you say you go into your room, and struggle, and pray, and strive, and believe; tell me, is there anything that comes up before the eye of your soul as an obstacle and difficulty that has to be put away or embraced; anything that comes up and that the Spirit of God said “You must sacrifice this, or cut off that, or do the other?” Just tell me that.’

She was quiet for a moment and speechless. She waited; then she drew her breath and said, ‘Well, yes, I am afraid there is.’

‘Ah!’ I said, ‘that is it; it is not want of faith, it is want of obedience. Now you may go on another ten years, going into your room, struggling and striving, and until you trample that under your feet, and say, “Lord, I will follow Thee at all costs,” you will not be able to believe. I don’t want you to tell me what it is; sufficient that you know it, and that the Lord knows it; but, after an experience of dealing with hundreds of souls just at this point, I tell you: you must give up that idol or embrace that cross, whatever it may be; I believe that here is the cause of your trouble.’

‘Then,’ she said, ‘I will make no secret of it. I am the only member of an unconverted family that has any desire after God. My husband is a worldly, unconverted man, and I am in a worldly, unconverted circle, and always when I come to the Lord Jesus it comes up before me that I will have to confess Him and to live like a Christian, and I am not willing to do so.’

‘Then, my dear lady, it is the old story over again of the Young Ruler. Now, you know, I should be untrue to your soul if I were to go on plastering you with untempered mortar. There you are; make your choice. You cannot be a Christian, and not confess Christ. You cannot be a Christian, and not live like one before your unconverted relatives; and, therefore, if you are not willing to take up the cross and follow Him, you cannot become His disciple.’

Then I went down on my knees with her, and we talked and prayed, and, at last, she said:

‘By the grace of God, I WILL confess Him.’

Bless the Lord! and the light of Salvation soon gladdened her eye, for it shone through her face. She found herself able to believe at once, and this is just the condition of thousands of souls. She got assurance then. She got saved. Before, she had being trying to believe she was saved, when she was not—quite a different thing to getting saved and then knowing it. People are told to believe this, that, and the other. As a gentleman said, at whose house I once stayed:

‘I had a curious episode the other morning. I have had a gentleman here of some note in the evangelistic world for two or three days, and he came in the other morning at breakfast-time and said, ‘I am happy to tell you that both your gardeners are converted.’ I was very thankful to hear it; and surprised to hear that the work had been so quickly and thoroughly done. Well, I was walking in the grounds, and saw one of the gardeners. ‘John,’ I said, ‘I am glad to hear the happy news.’ He didn’t seem to know what I meant.

‘“What news, sir?”

“‘Well, I hear you have given your heart to God this morning. You are converted, saved?”

“‘Well,” John said, “I could hardly say that, sir.”

“‘Then what has happened? Something has happened in your experience—some change taken place?”

“‘Well,” he said, “I don’t hardly know that. The gentleman brought a Bible to me and read two or three verses, and asked me if I believed, and talked very nicely to me, and asked me again if I believed; then I said I did, and then he said I was all right; but I can’t say I feel any different.”’

Now, I am afraid there has been sadly too much of that. There is all the difference between believing the letter of the Word and knowing that you are saved. I say, that man was not saved—was he? I say, the lady who spoke to me in the Anxious Room was not saved—was she? And I say there are, alas! thousands to-day in just that position. They are not saved. They manifest it by their fruits. They confess it. They write it to me in their letters on the right hand and on the left. Members of churches ten, fifteen, and twenty years, some of them Ministers of the Gospel, and yet they tell me they are NOT SAVED!!

Thus, you see it is something more than the belief after all. It is something more than what my minister tells me, something more than what books tell me, and what the Bible tells me. It implies and includes this, but something more than this. It is believing in a living, personal, and almighty Saviour, and believing in Him now, and that faith brings the realization. The other brings nothing. When people believe thus, the Spirit comes into their hearts, crying, ‘Abba, Father!’ To them there is no condemnation. They have the witness of the Spirit that they are in Christ Jesus. The Spirit of the Son comes into their hearts, crying, ‘Abba, Father!’ and they know by demonstration, by inward consciousness, that they have passed from death unto life. You see there is all the difference between the means of Salvation and Salvation itself. The means of Salvation is not Salvation. The means only brings Salvation. ‘Thy faith hath saved thee.’ ‘By faith are ye saved,’ and when you are saved by faith, then consciousness attests the fact. Your own spirit attests the fact, and God’s Spirit attests the fact, and you know it beyond controversy. You have assurance, and this is the first indispensable condition of power over sin, for while I remain unassured of my Salvation, Oh! what power the Devil has over me. ‘Oh,’ he says, ‘you’re not saved at all. What is the good of your standing out on this point, for you are not saved at all. You may as well go all the way. You are under the power of sin, and may as well remain there. You have not got the witness of your Salvation, and, therefore, what is the use of standing out here or there? ‘But when we have the witness of the Spirit in our souls of our acceptance with God, that He does now for Christ’s sake pardon and receive us, what power it brings! This is what the old Divines called assurance of faith, a conviction wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost that Jesus Christ has given Himself for me, that God has accepted that offering in view of my sin and transgression, and for its sake, and its sake only, has justified me freely from all things by which I could not be justified by the Law of Moses, and that in Him God becomes my Father, and now accepts me and looks upon me well pleased—a conviction wrought in my soul by the Holy Spirit; for, as the Apostle says, ‘No man can call Jesus “Lord” but by the Holy Ghost.’ There must he the spiritual realization of Him as Lord. Why, anybody can call Him ‘Lord.’ Tens of thousands of people call Him ‘Lord’ nowadays, whom nobody supposes to have the Spirit. What did he mean? He must have meant a confession of Jesus out of a heart which has a revelation and recognizes its Lord; such a confession as Thomas

made when the conviction of His Master's Deity shone into his doubting soul: 'My Lord and my God.' To this relationship only the Holy Ghost can testify. Don't ever tell anybody he is saved. I never do. I leave that for the Holy Ghost to do. I tell them how to get saved. I try to help them to the way of faith. I will bring them up as close as ever I can to the blessed broken body of their Lord, and I will try to show them how willing He is to receive them, and I know that when really they do receive Him, the Spirit of God will tell them quickly enough that they are saved. He will not want my assistance to tell that. I have proved it in hundreds of cases. Nobody knows the soul but God. Nobody can see the secret windings of the depraved heart but God. Nobody can tell when a full surrender is made but God. Nobody can tell when the right hand is cut off, or the right eye plucked out, but God.

Nobody can tell when a soul is whole-hearted but God, and as soon as He sees it He will tell that soul that it is saved; but, if God has not told you, be up and stirring, and strive to make your calling and election sure, for you are not saved yet, or you would know it. What are you to believe unto? Hope? Oh, dear, no! you don't believe unto hope. Effort? Oh, no! you had that before in the Law. SALVATION? Yes! and if you 'believe unto Salvation,' you will get 'saved,' and if you are not saved, you have never believed unto Salvation. Instead of trying to make yourself happy in this state of uncertainty and misery, for Christ's sake get up and get saved. It is a great deal easier to get saved than it is to make yourself believe you are saved, when you are not. The one is a philosophical impossibility; the other is a glorious possibility at any moment, when you get low enough before God, and give up all, and take His Son as your precious and almighty Saviour. God's Gospel is beautifully adjusted to the laws of our mental constitution. He who wrote, framed, and conceived it, created us, and He has made it like a key to fit the lock, and knows just the conditions that are necessary, and He has conformed His Gospel to those conditions. My friend, if you want to know you are saved, this is the only response I can give, and the only way I know, and I have talked to hundreds of souls of all grades and conditions, to many ministers of the Gospel, deacons and leaders, in just this state. For years my labours were exclusively carried on in churches and chapels, where, naturally, church members have come, and they have told me by hundreds with their own lips that they have been members so many years and were never saved. I am not, therefore, speaking without experience in this matter. I tell you, when you 'believe' in a Scriptural sense, you will get 'saved' in a Scriptural sense. When you put out of your head all these new-fangled notions about faith, and cease to credit any faith that does not save the soul and bring it into conscious union with Jesus Christ, and resolve to have such a faith as will do that for you, then you will get Salvation. I never in my life knew a soul come to that resolve who did not get saved. I have had people before me who were worn almost to skeletons and were driven almost mad, and the first thing they have said has been, when I have asked the reason, 'Oh! I have no faith. It is want of faith!' This is the universal lament, and, when we have come to close quarters, I have invariably found it has been no such thing, but want of OBEDIENCE, which spiritual teachers have not had the wisdom to discern, as Christ did in the heart of the young Ruler, 'one thing thou lackest.' He saw that young man's besetting sin to be covetousness. I do not know that He would have said the same to every rich man, but in the case of the young Ruler He saw that the love of his possessions was so paramount, that unless he let them go and made a clean sweep, he could not follow Him and be a consistent disciple; and so He said, 'Sell all, and come, follow Me,' and the young man went away sorrowful; and, mark you, Jesus Christ did not call him back, and yet He looked after him and loved him. His great, bene- benevolent volent heart panted after him, and He

desired to have him; but He saw it would be a greater evil to call him back and compromise the conditions of Salvation, than to let him be lost. And yet, methinks, if there was any case in which a compromise could be made, it would have been in this. He did not do, as many would have done in our day—call him back and say, ‘Here, young man, I think I have been a little too hard on you. You shall sell half, and keep the other half and come and follow me.’ Oh, no! Everybody would be saved at that rate. There would be no test of whole-hearted consecration to Him then. If you can let people into Heaven on terms like these, they would be only too ready to close with them. But whether ministers teach people the truth or not, the Holy Ghost does; and He puts His finger on the sore spot, and says, ‘If you want to follow Me, you will have to renounce this, and give up that, or embrace the other,’ and if the soul says, ‘No, Lord, I would follow, but suffer me first to go and hug this idol’; then Jesus Christ says, ‘Very well, go!’ That is the sort of faith most people are resting in.

I see we shall not get any farther in this address than assurance of Salvation. You are panting after it. You are longing for it. You may have it. God wants every one of His people to have it. Get saved, and you will know it. Use your Heavenly Father’s letter to find your way up to Him. It is not the letter you are to rest in: it is the God who wrote it. Use the letter to get at the Spirit, for the letter will not save you—it is the Spirit that saves you. Hug his volume to your heart as the expres-expressionsion of your Father’s will and the record through which you are to believe on His Son, but it is the Son who is to save you. People talk about exalting Christ. I think this is His glory, that He can save His people and make them know it, and make them feel it, and carry them as He did Paul and Silas through the prison and the stocks singing His praises, and make them unspeakably happy in His love. Assurance of Salvation! All want it when they come to die. Why don’t people get it while they live? Did you ever know a professing Christian come to die who did not want it? Did you ever know one dare to die without it? or, if you ever knew such, you know what a miserable death it was. Then, I contend, that what is necessary to die with, is necessary to live with. Why not get it while you live? Assurance! Assurance! And you can have it just now. Hallelujah! Amen.

02.05. How Christ Transcends the Law

HOW CHRIST TRANSCENDS THE LAW

Romans 7:4.

—'Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.' IN answer to letters received since last Sabbath, I would just say that the writers tell me that they have been struggling for years for assurance; that thev do receive the testimony of God concerning His Son; that they do believe that Jesus Christ died for their sins; still they have no peace or joy. I want you to mark well that assurance of Salvation is the testimony of God's Spirit to a fact which has transpired, and if that fact has not transpired, God's Spirit will never testify to it. You may think you believe; but, Oh, I feel sure numbers of people are deluded here. They think they believe because they receive into their minds the written record that God has given of His Son; but they have not believed and rested on the promise in such a way as to bring the witness of the Spirit. They have stopped short of that. They have been satisfied with the letter.

Now, do not think, friends, that I underestimate the letter. Perhaps few of you, if any, value this word more than I do, but I have known very few of those who have rested merely in the letter (and I have known many do so), who, when I have come into close conversation with them, have not been miserably dissatisfied, unassured, sin-conquered souls; and that fact alone convinces me that there is something wrong. That is not the glorious liberty of the children of God. That is not knowing God in the scriptural sense.

Take God's way, and then the witnessing Spirit will come. Of course, people are not assured because they have nothing to be assured of! They have no Salvation, and, therefore, they cannot be assured of it. Get Salvation, and you will get assurance. Oh! friends. This is what you want. IT IS FOR YOU. Here it is. There is no other religion recognized in this Book. All the saints to whom Paul wrote, knew they were saved. Here and there was an exception, where they had fallen back and got into bondage, as some of you have; but, as a rule, be recognizes the fact that they all were saved, and were rejoicing in the assurance of it, and this is the normal condition of the children of God. I do not say such a person may not occasionally slip. He may occasionally. He may lose his scroll, as Pilgrim did, but he cannot, will not rest till he finds it again!

Then you say, 'I am not to believe, I suppose.' Oh, yes! you are. Take the blessed record to your heart, but do not rest in the letter. Do not rest in the letter. GO ON until you find the substance of things hoped for—the substance. There is a substance in spiritual things quite as much as there is in natural things, and those who really and truly believe, know it. No one can testify when you do really and truly believe but God's Spirit, for the things of a man knoweth no man save the spirit of a man that is in him, and just so with the things of God. He searcheth the hearts and minds, and knows when you are sincere and real and true; and when you seek Him with all your heart you will find Him, and He will come and testify to that fact—and, Oh! if you have not this testimony suspect

yourself. Do not throw discredit upon God. Begin over again and get assurance.

Oh! what POWER assurance of Salvation gives! when the individual can say I know; not merely I believe, but I know. St. John seems to have written his First Epistle mainly to enable the believers to know: and then several times shows how we may ‘know’ we are saved. Faith is the means to assurance, but assurance is not faith, and faith is not assurance. Assurance is the result of faith, and when you have the right sort of faith you will have assurance. ‘He that believeth hath the witness in himself,’ and until you get assurance do not trust yourself. Persevere until you get it. God will never leave a sincere soul in the dark. You must come down to the foot of the Cross in the little children’s way—give up all for Christ, and make up your mind that you will follow Him at all costs, and then cast your guilty soul upon His broken, bleeding sacrifice, and, as soon as you do this, God will send the answer of His Spirit. But this afternoon I want to go a little farther in showing how Christ supersedes the Law.

We have noted in a former sermon that He does so, first, by giving assurance.

Secondly, I want to show that He does so, by giving POWER OVER SIN. Now we shall be safe here. I trust this will not be controverted ground. I believe He can do a great deal more for His people than this, but we will stop here this afternoon. By and by we may, perhaps, go farther. Christ gives His people power over sin. Now, this is a necessity of our position. We have, as we saw last Sunday, been all slaves of sin. Sin is, indeed, the sting of death. Now, how is it, if there is no deliverance from this dreadful plague and scourge of God’s people—how is it that the Holy Ghost sets every real child of God struggling after it? Whatever may be a man’s theory in his creed, you get him on his knees, and he will begin to pray to God to save him from sin. Sin is the abominable thing which he hates, and longs to be delivered from; and the universal experience of God’s people is that the Spirit urges them to seek to be saved from sin. I have heard people argue powerfully against the possibility of being delivered from sin, and the next time I have heard them pray they have asked God for the very thing, and I have said, ‘Thank God, that is the Holy Ghost teaching him now; he cannot help praying for it, whether he believes in it or not.’ If I have been under the power of sin, so as to become its complete slave, and Jesus Christ comes and pardons me for the past, and delivers me from the guilt and condemnation which came upon me in consequence of the past, what do I want? I want some new power. I want something besides pardon. I want power to stand, or I shall be down again the next minute.

What God does for us through Jesus Christ outside of us is one thing, and what He does in us by Jesus Christ is another thing, but the two are simultaneous, or one so immediately succeeds the other, that we hardly discern the interval. Now, I say, I want power to enable me to meet that temptation which is coming on me to-morrow, as it came on me yesterday, and, if Jesus Christ pardons me ever so, and leaves me under the reigning power of my old appetites, what has He done for me? I shall be down in the mud, and to-morrow night I shall be as condemned as ever. I want power. I want regeneration—as the Holy Spirit has put it. I want the renewing of the spirit of my mind. I want to be created anew in Christ Jesus; ‘made a new creature.’

Now, this is where Jesus Christ transcends the Law. The Law could not renew the spirit of my mind. It could only show me what a guilty rebel I was. It could not put a better spirit in me. It could not extract the venom, but only show it to me, and make me writhe on account of it. But Jesus Christ comes and does this for me—gives me power. How?

Now, I hope those friends who think that I do not sufficiently exalt the Saviour, will mark this. How does He give it to me? He unites me to Himself. I am dead to the Law. He delivers me from the condemning power of the Law when He pardons me, and then He does not leave me there, but He 'marries' me to Himself. He unites me 'to another' husband, and then I attain power to bring forth fruit unto God. A beautiful—a wonderful figure! We may not pursue it; but, Oh! what a wonderful figure! Alone under the Law's power, my old husband, I could do nothing but agonize, wrestle, and desire. There was no power in me but when Jesus Christ comes and unites me to Himself; then He gives me power to bring forth fruit unto God. It is by the UNION OF MY SOUL WITH HIM. You say, 'Explain it!' I cannot. God Himself cannot explain it. We cannot explain it, but we know it. As Jesus said to Nicodemus: 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' The mystery is too great to be explained, but there is the beautiful illustration; united to Christ I have power to conquer, to subdue, to trample under foot those things which heretofore have been my master, and by virtue of Him I retain the power, and no other way. Oh! dear friends, what a delusion there is on the subject of Christian knowledge. If knowledge could save people, what a wonderful world we should have to-day.

Knowledge is as powerless as ignorance. A man is not a whit nearer God, or more like Christ, because he has his head crammed with this Word. In fact, some I have known who have been best acquainted with the Word, who have been the greatest slaves of sin; and even ministers of Jesus Christ have confessed to me that they have been bond-slaves of some besetting sin. The power is not in knowledge—and God is raising up thousands of witnesses to this fact, that it is not in knowledge —it is in union with Him, and the little child in intellect and intelligence, who has the real, vital union with Jesus, has more power than the most cultivated theologian has without Christ. The things of God can only be understood by those who have the Spirit of God. The world by wisdom knows not God any more now than it did in Paul's days. The things of the Spirit are only spiritually comprehended. Hence this beautiful union cannot be explained; I only know it is spoken of all through the Bible, both in the Old Testament and in the New, as knowing God. After God has summed up the failures of His people, He gives them a promise, and says, 'I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness for ever, and thou shalt KNOW the Lord,' as though that were the end of the whole matter, really and truly to know Him. When they come to that living union of soul with Him, it brings the vital sap as it were into the branch of the tree—another of his own beautiful illustrations. 'Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.' You know what the branch is when it is broken off. It is a branch. It retains the form of a branch; and for a while the beauty and the greenness of a branch, but it is broken off. There is no power in it. Suppose it could maintain that form. Alas! human branches often maintain their verdure in a certain beauty, as when first lopped off. But it can never bear fruit. Why? Because the communication is cut between itself and the vine, and there is no sap in its fibre. Its life is cut off. Now, my friends, you can see why a soul who has never been truly united to Christ in this living spiritual marriage, cannot bear fruit unto God.

You can be like a branch. You can get so much scriptural knowledge, that you can look just like a real Christian. Alas! You can get many of the feelings of a Christian, and of the sentiments, as well as a great many of the aspirations and desires, of a Christian. You can be so like a branch that nobody, but Jesus Christ, may know you are not in that true Vine, and yet you have never, as the

Apostle says, been grafted on to the olive tree. And, therefore, you go on weeping, and struggling, and trying to perform the function of a living branch, when all the while you are a dead one. You go on trying to bring forth fruit unto God when the one indispensable condition of fruitfulness is wanting. You have got every other condition. You may even be nailed up to the wall close to the vine. You may be such a professor that nobody may ever doubt you. You may be so close to the vine that nobody can detect your want of union, excepting the Gardener who comes and closely inspects you, and yet you may not have one fibre truly circulating the real spiritual sap. HENCE YOU HAVE NO POWER, and down you go when the temptation comes. Ah! what weary years of strife some professing Christians have—they would be ashamed to tell; death sometimes forces it from their lips before they die—trying to perform the functions of living men when they have never been spiritually made alive. All they have ever had has been what Paul depicts as the struggle of a poor convicted sinner unable to bring forth any fruit unto God.

Now, you say, this union with Him—what is it? Well, I cannot explain it. You, who know what it is cannot explain it—so to know the Lord as to be conscious of the living sap circulating through your soul, anointing your eyes with eye-salve, giving you eyes to see, a voice to speak, feet to run, and hands to serve—making you in all respects a ‘new creature.’

Now, my dear friends, those of you who have not experienced this, never mind who comes to you and brings a Bible, and says, ‘Do you believe this and that? if you do you are saved.’ Say, ‘Miserable comforters are ye all: I will never be content until I know God.’

I made up my mind to this when I was fifteen years of age. I had had the strivings of God’s Spirit all my life, since I was about two years old. My dear mother has often told me how she went upstairs to find me crying, and when she questioned me, I said I was crying because I had sinned against God. Thank the Lord, I do not say this boastingly. I have good cause to be ashamed that I was so long before I fully gave myself up; but all through my childhood I was graciously sheltered by a watchful mother from outward sin, and, in fact, brought up as a Christian. When I came to be between fifteen and sixteen, when I believe I was thoroughly converted, the great temptation of Satan to me was this: ‘You must not expect such a change as you read of in books. You have been half a Christian all your life. You always feared God. You must content yourself with this.’ Oh! how I was frightened! It must have been the Spirit of God that taught me. I was frightened at it. I said, ‘No. no.’ My heart is as bad as other people’s, and if I have not sinned outwardly I have inwardly. I cried to God to show me the evil of my heart, and said, ‘I will never rest till I am as thoroughly and truly changed, and know it, as any thief, or any great outward sinner.’ I went on seeking God in this way for six weeks, often till two o’clock in the morning, wrestling, and I told the Lord I would never give up, if I died in the search, until I found God, and I did find Him, as every soul does, when it comes to him in that way. I cried for nothing on earth or in Heaven but that I might find Him whom my soul panted after, and I did find Him, and you can find Him. I knew Him. I can’t tell how, but I knew Him. I knew He was well pleased with me. I knew that we held sweet converse often to the small hours of the morning together, and I know that I was as happy in His love, and far more happy than I ever was in any human love before or since.

Now, friends, you can all have this union. He is no respecter of persons. He has bought it for us. He saw our weakness. He contemplated our moral inability. He need not have come if we could have known God by the Law. If that old covenant had been perfect, there would have been no

room for a second. It brought us not into the full realization and enjoyment of God, but the new covenant does. It cleanses the conscience from dead works to serve the living God, and God is henceforth revealed to His people, and they walk with Him. ‘If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make Our abode with him.’ And when a man has got the Father and the Son, he is a match for Satan and all his forces. Union with Christ!

Oh! do you think this is a mere allegory of the Apostle’s? It is a beautiful illustration. When He delivers us from the condemning, reigning power of the Law, we become married to Jesus Christ. Then we get a power to produce, in our affections, and hearts, and lives, and all about us, such things as God delights in.

Now, mark, all through the New Testament, and, indeed, the Bible, no truth is taught with greater force and frequency than this, that without a vital union of soul with Christ, all ceremonies, creeds, beliefs, professions, church ordinances, are sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, and all who trust in them will be deceived. This is the very essence of the Gospel. This is what He came for, and (Oh! how my heart bleeds to think and say it) all who do not attain to this real vital union with Him will be lost. Everything else falls short of our need and the purpose and end of the Gospel of Christ. He came on purpose for us to have this union with Himself. Neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision, nor anything else availeth anything, but this faith, which worketh by love, and brings the Spirit of Christ into our hearts. Oh! bear with me; dear friends, have you got it? Have you got this vital union with Christ? Are you bringing forth fruit unto God? If not, I beseech you give up daubing yourselves with untempered mortar, and trying to make yourselves believe you are right, when you are all wrong. However much desire, purpose, hope, aspiration, struggle, or whatever else you have, if you have not attained to this, you are not saved yet, and you are not in the Kingdom. In conclusion, ‘bring forth fruit unto God,’ or, as the Apostle has it, ‘having your fruit unto Holiness and the end everlasting life’—and in another place, for the ‘end of the commandment,’ the purpose of the commandment, the ultimatum of the commandment, ‘is charity,’ love, ‘out of a pure heart,’ and so in many other passages; but we just take these at random. The result! What is the result? ‘That we may bring forth fruit unto God.’ Jesus Christ in this union recognizes the fact that we are still in the body; still in the world; and that we are open to the attacks of Satan. He knows—has foreseen, and has provided for, the temptations of the flesh, that is, the temptations which come to us through our natural appetites, and instincts, and desires, as they came to Him. He was hungry after enduring the great temptation in the wilderness. There was no sin in being hungry. He was intensely hungry, for He had nerves, and a brain, and a heart, as we have. He was a perfect man, and He suffered all the consequences of that lengthened strain upon His nervous system, and the Devil took advantage of the existence of that intensely excited condition of His body by tempting Him unlawfully to gratify it. For he said, ‘Command these stones that they be made bread.’ This was unlawful under the circumstances (we will not stop now to inquire why), and, therefore, He said, ‘Get thee behind Me, Satan.’ He would rather suffer the hunger than unlawfully gratify it, and, therefore, He did not commit sin. It matters not (and this will meet the case of some who have written to me) how intensely excited any physical appetite may be—that is not sin. The more you suffer through the excitement of the physical appetite, of whatever kind it may be, the more Jesus Christ sympathizes with you, for He was tempted in all points, like as we are, yet without sin; and if you endure temptation, He will sympathize with you,

more than with the man who does not have to endure and resist. You do not sin because of the appetite merely being excited. I think Satan gets some sincere souls to bring themselves into condemnation when God does not condemn them. If you resist as He did; if you say, ‘Get thee behind me, Satan’—you sin not. What was Eve’s sin? Unlawful self-gratification. The Devil might have tempted her until now, if she had lived so long; but if she had steadily resisted him, she would not have brought sin into the world.

Under the Law you see that it is sin, and you struggle against it, but you have no power to resist, and down you go. United to Christ, you see that it is sin, and you have power to resist, and you resist it, and the Devil runs away; and that is the difference. You are married to a new husband now, and He is more than a match for the old Devil. He is a conquered foe, while you abide in Christ. He can torment, harass, and excite you, and stimulate your natural appetites, but he cannot make you sin, while you abide in Christ. ‘He that is begotten of God keepeth himself and that Wicked One toucheth him not.’ ‘Ye are strong and have overcome the Wicked One.’

Then, again, we are open to the temptations of the world, but this is provided for. Jesus Christ knows that we are susceptible to the liking of nice things like other people, and great things, and ambitious schemes, and the world’s praises and censures. God’s people are only sadly too familiar with this, and the weak part of their nature would respond to it, and they would fall; but now they are united to Christ, and He opens their eyes to see that it is Satan and the world. When the Devil takes them to the top of the pinnacle, and shows them all the glory of the world, he tries to make them think it would be very nice to have it; he tempts them to think it hard that they should be regarded as such paltry and mean people, because they belong to Christ; but when they are thoroughly and truly united to Jesus, He gives them power to say, as He did, ‘Get thee behind Me, Satan,’ for it is written, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and Him ONLY shalt thou serve’—not Him and the world. Oh! thank God, if you have got there. Praise the Lord, if you understand that.

Then he comes not only through these avenues, but he comes again with direct, subtle, spiritual influence, with his old insinuation, as he came to Eve, and says, ‘Hath God said’ this, or that? He tries to inject doubts as to God’s goodness and veracity into the believer’s soul, as he used to do under the Law, and under the Law the convicted sinner’s soul used to swell with rebellion, and say, ‘Yes, it is hard and cruel.’

Now, Satan still comes and vomits these thoughts, and tries to excite these ill feelings and these chargings of God foolishly in the believer’s soul, but by virtue of his union with Christ, who came not to do His own will, but His Father’s, and who spoke only the things that His Father bade Him, the believer says, ‘Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.’ ‘Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?’—and the Devil is gone. And then when the Devil is foiled at all these points, he tries higher ground. ‘Really you are a wonderful Christian—you are. You have had special grace, for surely very few people can have resisted the amount of temptation that you have. Really you must be one of God’s specially favoured ones. Now cast yourself down. It is written, “He shall give His angels charge concerning you.”’ Spiritual presumption next. When he is foiled through the world, and the flesh, and the Devil, and then he doffs his old robe and comes as an angel of light. But the soul’s Bridegroom is hard by, and He says, ‘Be not ignorant of Satan’s devices. Behold I am thy Salvation. Trust and be not afraid.’ And so the soul refuses to cast itself into unnecessary troubles, and is content to abide in, and walk with its Lord. That is how He gives us the victory. He shows us

Satan's devices, and gives us power. I cannot tell you how. We don't know how. We only know that He gives it to us, and we only know that if one instant separated from Him we fall and become as other men. We only know that in those seasons when our faith has relaxed its grasp, we have gone down in the mud and been overcome as others. It is by faith we stand, and while, like Peter, we keep our eye on Him, and hold Him fast, the waves may roar, and the winds may howl, but He holds us by virtue of this union, and we bring forth fruit unto God. We have power over the Devil. He said, 'I will give you power over all the power of the enemy.' This is the deliverance of the SAINTS. This is the life of the saints. This is the fight of faith. THIS IS THE JOY OF SALVATION. This is the SORT OF RELIGION THAT DOES TO DIE WITH!!!

People all over the land are astounded at our poor, weak, illiterate Salvation Army Soldiers. A gentleman, in a Meeting on Easter Monday, a leading man of thought and experience in the Holiness world, who was there all day—when my daughter said, 'Why don't you speak?'—said, 'One feels as if one can't speak in these Meetings.' 'Why?' These people have such unction from the Holy One that they are wiser than their teachers. Another gentleman, of considerable position, too, in the religious world, said, 'I feel like getting down at their feet. I feel as if they could teach me.' How is it that they have such power—these babes in intellect and intelligence? All over the land people say this to me. People who talk and go ahead in other meetings, when they get into our Meetings, say, 'I can't. They are so far ahead of me that, to tell you the truth, I have nothing to say.' I say, the Lord have mercy upon you, and make haste and come up after them. Only get down from your high mightiness as low as these people, and you will get it. It is not because they are poor and illiterate, that they have power, but because they are babes in spirit. Even as Christ said, 'I thank Thee, O Father, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.' The simple spirit, the teachable, believing soul—Oh! how much more it learns of God, in one hour's precious communion, than Doctors of Divinity learn in weeks of close study, who have not got it, because it is the SPIRIT that teaches the things of God. This is union with Jesus that bringeth forth fruit unto God, and, Oh! the wonderful things it enables us to bring forth. If you would all follow me, as far as I have gone this afternoon, and make the resolution I made at fifteen years of age, not to be put off with theories, but that you will KNOW THE LORD, that you will have this Divine union, and that you will never rest till you get it and know you have it—if we could all get thus far by next Sunday—what happiness there would be amongst you. There would be some Hallelujahs. Many of you would be surprised—how you would find your tongues. A gentleman once said to me, 'I never did shout in my life, but upon my word I couldn't help it.' I said, 'Amen. It's time, then, you began.' I hope it may be the same with many of you. When the Lord comes to His Temple and fills it with His glory, you won't know what to do. You must find vent somewhere, or you will be as the poor old negro said he was—'Ready to bust his waistcoat.'

We feel so about temporal things. People drop down dead with joy. People shriek with grief. People's hearts stand still with wonder at the news they have heard, perhaps from some prodigal boy. I heard of a mother, not long ago, whom some one injudiciously told of the sudden return of her son, who dropped down dead, and never spoke. And when the Master cames to His Temple, that glorious blessed Holy Saviour, whom you profess so to long after and to love, and who has been absent so many years, and whom you have been seeking after with strong crying and tears, when He comes, do you think it will be too much to shout your song, or go on your face, or do any

extravagant thing? Oh! no, if there is reality, you cannot help yourself. The manifestation will be according to your nature. One will fall down and weep in quietness, and the other will get up and shout and jump. You cannot help it. I have read of two martyrs one of whom rejoiced in the realization of God's presence, and the other was in darkness, yet did not deny his Lord. He continued in the way of obedience, and the other was encouraging him to hope and believe that the Master would come; but He had not come, when they started from the dungeon to the stake; so they fixed upon a sign, and the one said to the other, 'If He comes, you will give me the sign on the road.' The Master did come, but the martyr could not confine himself to the sign. He shouted, raising his arms to his fellow-martyr, 'He's come, He's come, He's come.' He couldn't help it. When He comes you won't be ashamed who knows it. When you really get a living Christ for your husband, you will be prouder than the bride, you will have got a husband worth being proud of, and you will love to acknowledge and praise Him, and the day is coming when you will crown Him before all the host of Heaven. The Lord help you to accept Him, and put away everything that hinders His coming. Amen.

02.06. The Fruites of Union with Christ

THE FRUITS OF UNION WITH CHRIST

Romans 8:4.

—‘That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’

WE dealt, on Sunday week, with ‘What the Law could not do’; and last Sabbath afternoon we dealt with ‘What Jesus Christ could do,’ by uniting us with Himself and giving us power. I want, this afternoon, to direct your attention to the fruits of this union—THE LAW FULFILLED IN US. What does it mean? FIRST.—I want just to say two or three words about Law in the abstract. There seems to me to be an awful misconception of the Apostle’s writings respecting the Law, caused by ‘wresting’ and misapplying what he says on justification by faith. People should bear in mind that much of this Epistle, and some others, was written on purpose to meet the extreme legal notions of the Jews, who had no other idea of righteousness than that of their own efforts to keep the Law (Romans 10:3), and that, therefore, the Apostle was bound, as any other writer would be in such circumstances, to put the extreme view on the other side. Many, not considering this, separate these passages from their explanatory connections, and from all the rest of the Word of God, and preach, nowadays, that we have nothing to do with the Law. Hence, there has come to be a spirit of Antinomianism abroad in the land, compared with which the Antinomianism of bygone ages was harmless. God helping me, I shall never cease to lift up my voice against it.

Now please, first note that there is, in this writing, talking, and singing about the Law a great deal of mental fog and confusion. People should be very careful, when they come to such matters as these, to be clear in their own minds as to what the Apostle is writing about; but I find frequently in such writings and songs a total misapprehension as to the meaning of the Apostle, and a total confounding of the Moral with the Ceremonial Law. Now, always mind, when you read anything about the Law, to examine and find out which Law is meant, whether it is the great Moral Law, which never has been, and never can be, abrogated, or the Ceremonial Law, which, in Christ, confessedly was done away. Mind which, because your Salvation may depend upon that point. If you make a mistake there, you may be lost through it; therefore, be very careful. Now, I say that people confound these, and, consequently, there is a perfect hotch-potch of theology in this day, which I defy anybody to understand. People do not know what they are to believe, or what they are not to believe. As a gentleman said, not long ago, ‘It is confusion confounded. I go to one meeting and hear this, and then I go to another meeting and hear that, and, very often, in the very same meeting, the speakers will get up and flatly contradict each other!’

‘Exactly,’ I said, ‘but you have got the Bible. Why don’t you study that for yourself? Why not use your own common sense—why not let your conscience speak?’ ‘But,’ said he, ‘why do not our ministers do it?’ ‘Because,’ said I, ‘many of them do not know it themselves. Let your conscience speak, and God will not let you go wrong.’ It is an honest heart people want, and then they will get

the light. People sing about the Law, talk about the Law, and glory in being free from the Law, in a lawless, Antinomian spirit, as far from anything Paul ever wrote or meant, as Hell is from Heaven! Oh, it is an awfully bad sign, when people are out of love with the Law of God. David made his boast in the Law of his God, he meditated on it by day and by night, and its precepts were his delight; he loved it with all his soul, and so did David's Son, and He is too much in love with His Father's Law and Will to hold fellowship with anybody who does not love it. As He said to the Jews, 'He that is of God, heareth God's words; ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God'; and, again, of His disciples, 'For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest me.' So, mind, if you do not love the words, the expression of the will of God, you do not love God, and if you do not love the Father, neither do you love the Son. This is the very accusation which He brought against the Jews, that they had made void His Father's Law. Let us mind, then, the distinction always made between the great Moral and the Ceremonial Law. In the second place: I want you to note, that when you have ascertained that the Apostle is speaking of the Moral Law—and he appears to speak disparagingly of it—he is always referring to its inability to justify a sinner, or to produce spiritual life. This, he says, it could not do; but he never speaks disparagingly of it as the guide and standard of spiritual life, after life is given. No! he goes back to it as the only standard, and so did Jesus Christ. They continually refer to the Law as the highest expression of the holiness and righteousness of God, and as the standard by which we are to set our souls and consciences. What other standard have we but the Law? How am I to judge of my thoughts, words, and actions but by the Law? Where has Jesus Christ given me any other gauge? And if people would but read on, and let the Apostle explain himself, they would understand him better, and not get into such tanglements and mazes! Paul is most careful to guard himself against the Antinomian conclusions which he saw might be drawn from isolated parts of his writings. He says, 'Do we, then, make void the Law through faith? nay, we establish the Law.' And, again, 'Wherefore the Law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good'; and, again, when he says, that 'To them that are without Law He became as without Law'; he guards himself by a parenthesis, 'Being not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ.' That is under the great universal Law of love, which fulfils all other law; for 'Love is the fulfilling of the Law.' Love is the very spirit and essence of the Law. The Law is to me the highest expression of what I OUGHT to be, in my relations to my Creator and in my rela- relations tions to my fellow-creatures. Now, can what ought to be ever be abrogated? Does it stand to sense? Can the rightness of things ever be altered? Can God ever make two and two five, and can God make evil good and good evil? He can make an evil person good, by saving him from the evil and making him good; but God cannot make evil itself good, and good evil, and He never professes to do it.

Oh, this confounding of things! how it does ruin and befog poor souls: How can it ever be less the duty of the creature to love and serve the Creator, than it was when he first came pure and spotless from His hand? How can it ever be less my duty to love my neighbour as myself, than it was at the beginning, or how can I satisfy my conscience with less than loving all men with a pure, benevolent love such as God bears to them, in my measure and according to my capacity? The same standard remains, and the difference between God's scheme of Salvation and the scheme of Salvation so widely preached now, is that man's scheme proposes to get me into Heaven without fulfilling this Law, while God's scheme proposes to give me power to FULFIL IT. Alas! I am afraid many will not find out which is the right one, man's or God's, till they get to the Judgment Seat and find it out too late!

Now, I say, that there is not a word, rightly understood and interpreted by correlative Scriptures, in the whole New Testament that disparages or ignores or sets aside the Law of God—not a word! Do you think the Apostle was as unphilosophical as many nowadays? Did he not know what he wrote? Is he not as clear as a bell? And now he comes to the climax of his argument, the great end and purpose towards which he has been advancing in his preceding reasonings: 'THAT the righteousness of the Law might be FULFILLED in us.' As though he had said, 'This great and glorious end which was lost in Adam shall be re-found and restored.' So the old serpent shall be circumvented at last, and God's people shall be able to fulfil this beautiful ideal of rectitude and righteousness which God has planned for man—Jesus Christ shall destroy the work of the Devil, restore man, and enable him to walk in the light, even as He is in the light. What the Law tried to do by a restraining power from without, the Gospel does by an inspiring power from within. That is the difference. I could not keep it in the letter, but, united to my heavenly Bridegroom, I can keep it in the Spirit. He fills me with His love, and this enables me to keep the Law, for love is the furfilling of the Law. 'Love worketh no ill to his neighbour' of any kind, and, again, the great Teacher said, 'For all the Law is fulfilled in one word—Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' If you do that, will you injure your neighbour? See how the Spirit fulfils the Law! If you love your neighbour, will you misrepresent him, cheat him, envy him anything that he possesses or enjoys? 'No,' you say, 'of course not; it is a contradiction.' Very well, then, get this love in your soul and you will fulfil the Law. Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and he that loveth in this sense dwelleth in God and God in him. Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and the great glory of the Gospel of Christ is that it brings us back to love His Law, and as the angels delight in it, and as all holy intelligences delight in it, so we delight in it, and the righteousness of the Law—high, deep, and broad, and long as it is—shall be fulfilled in us, 'who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'

Then, I say, the Apostle evidently considered this fulfilment of the Law of Righteousness in us as the highest end of our existence and of redemption; for, he says, God sent His Son that the righteousness of the Law may be fulfilled in us. Mark, not that its claims shall be abated: Oh! not one jot or tittle shall ever be abated. They cannot. God could not abate them. Not that the righteousness of the Law shall cease to have a claim upon you. Oh! if He could have saved us like that, Christ need not have come at all. He could have saved us without a Mediator. No, no! but that the righteousness of the Law may be FULFILLED in us as it was in Him. That we should be brought to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus, that we should have this spirit of our heavenly Bridegroom, by which we fulfil the Law, and the servant, in his measure, shall be as his Lord.

How? As I explained, last Sunday, first: We shall be delivered from the reigning, condemning power of the Law by virtue of an infinite, vicarious sacrifice punished in our stead, and then, married to Him, we shall serve in the newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

I want to be eminently and intensely practical, for the sake of the hungering and thirsting souls who are asking me in their letters, 'Tell me how? Help me?'

Just let us look at this result (in fourth verse).

People talk about glorifying Christ; but, it seems to me, this does glorify Him. It seems to me here is something to glory in, that He has circumvented the old serpent and snatched the prey from his teeth, and restored it, and enabled man, after all, to fulfil the righteousness of God. Not only in

what Christ does for us; but what He does IN US, that God should look on you and say, ‘I am well pleased. There is nothing there contrary to My will.’ He will give you the testimony, as He did Enoch, that your ways please Him, that your thoughts please Him, that your motives, and purposes and desires, and actions please Him. That is what the Gospel proposes to do. We have seen how this spirit is produced. Now let us look at the fruits, and first: This fruit is brought forth in THE AFFECTIONS!

Those people who are thus united to Christ fulfil the Law in their affections. You know it is commonly said that if you get hold of the affections of a man or a woman you get hold of him or her. So you do. This is the touchstone, and there is nothing in which I have been so grieved and disappointed as in the manifest want of quickness, livingness in the affections of God’s people for Him. Oh! how I have seen this come out. The coldness, the unsympathetic character of a great many people’s religion, and yet people whom one would not like to unchristianize. I cannot explain it by any better term than want of quickness. I have often been struck with the difference when you touch individuals on some point that affects them personally, and on those which relate to the Kingdom of God, and have been tempted to say with the Apostle, ‘All men seek their own, and not the things that are Jesus Christ’s.’ Alas! I fear it is very largely so. You talk with a lady about the Salvation of her children’s souls, the souls of her neighbours, and her servants, or about the cause of God in general, and she will talk ‘good’ with you, so to speak, and you will feel, ‘yes, it is all very well,’ but it doesn’t seem to come up from the depths. It seems to come from the throat, so to speak; a sort of superficial, surface kind of thing. But, if a child is dangerously ill, how quick the mother’s sympathies, how ready to listen, how willing to do anything that you suggest to help the child. If the business is in danger, if a man has got into difficulties and you can suggest any plan by which he may get out of them, how quickly his attention is aroused. His interest doesn’t flag, because the subject touches him to the quick. It is his concern, and just so in many other things. God forbid I should judge all Christians. No, no, no!—there are blessed exceptions. There are many like David—rivers of water do run down their eyes; but I am speaking of the mass of professors. I am afraid that in their affections there is a great deal of this lukewarm superficiality. Why is it? Because such people do not abide in Christ, if ever they were in Him. They do not keep the freshness and the quickness of the Spirit of Jesus. They do not give themselves time to do it for one thing, or care about it for another. We want the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit to quicken our spiritual perceptions and keep us awake. It is Satan’s great desire to rock us to sleep, and there is no quality in which the dis- disciples ciples have been more conspicuous than in going to sleep since the time when the professed watchers went to sleep in the garden; but Jesus, in His mercy and love, is always wakening them. But, oh! this disposition to go to sleep, to lose our quickness of perception. Now, friends, what must you do? You must do as you did at first. Cry and believe till your soul is filled with the love of God.

I shall never forget reading, when only fourteen years of age, a sentiment of a precious and valiant soldier of the Lord Jesus, who is now in Glory. Speaking of putting a test, he said that people might easily find out whether they loved God or themselves best: ‘Suppose you were in business in a little village, and were doing pretty well, and everything was going smoothly with you; but there was nothing for you to do there for the Kingdom of God, no particular way in which you could serve or glorify God; and, suppose there was another little village hard by, where there was nothing whatever doing for the Kingdom, and you felt it laid upon your soul to go there in order that you

might preach to unconverted people and raise a church, and do something for souls. Ah! but you have got a nice business and you don't know whether you would prosper or not in the other village. Now you may know whether you are serving God or yourself first, by this test. If you are serving God, you will be ready to go to that strange village and trust Him with the consequences; but, if you are serving yourself, you will stop where you are. The Lord has helped me to apply that many a time to many things besides business, and to keep the Kingdom of God FIRST, as I made up my mind it should be first always—not in time merely, but in degree—all the way through. If I love Him best, I shall feel for Him deepest, and shall act for Him first. If I love Him best, I shall feel for Him more deeply than for my husband or children, near and precious as they are and dearer than my own life a thousand times; but He will be dearer still, and His interests; and if, as Jesus Christ says, His interests require me to sacrifice these precious and beloved ones of my soul, then I shall sacrifice them; for the philosophical reason that I love Him better than I love them, and, therefore, I shall lay them on His altar, to promote His glory. If I understand it, this is the fruit of the Spirit in the affections—God first. I am afraid, in a great many instances, it is husband first, wife first, children first, and, I am afraid, in some cases, business first, and then God may take what there is left and be thankful for that! Now, if you are in this condition you need not expect joy, peace, power. You will never get it if you do. God will have to make you over again before you can get it, and to alter the conditions of His Salvation. Oh! but if you will lay it all on His altar, that is quite another thing. As I said to a lady, a little time ago, 'The Lord can take your husband, if you refuse to give him to Him'; and I am afraid God's people often compel Him to take their darlings, because they make them idols; whereas, if they had laid them on His altar, they might have had them back, as Abraham received back Isaac. I said to a gentleman, 'Mind that God does not burn down your barns, wreck your ships, and take away your riches. God loves your soul enough to do it, if you let these things prevent that whole-hearted consecration which He requires.' We are in His hands. 'Whom He loveth He chasteneth,' and if you want to keep the precious things you have, oh! put them at His feet, and hold them in subordination to Him. First, in your affections! He is a jealous God, and jealousy in God is very much like jealousy in us. It is the same characteristic of mind, only purified from selfishness. He is a jealous God, and if you will love these things better than Him, and if you will not give Him your affections, then He will chastise you, or—what is worse still—He will take His Holy Spirit from you.

Fruit in your affections. Oh, if Christ had your affections, how it would operate in everything! The wife would not be always grumbling because the husband had to go out three or four evenings a week on the Lord's errands—only let them be the Lord's errands. The husband would not grudge to give his wife up to go to help to win souls, because it deprived him of her society or a few comforts that she might provide for him if she were near. The parents would not grudge to restrain their children, as Eli did. He did not restrain them from that which they liked, and you know the fruit it brought. Parents who love God best will not allow their children to learn anything which could not be pressed into the service of God. They will not allow them to run with the giddy multitude, to dance, or do anything the Devil might inspire them to desire. 'No!' they will say, 'my children belong to God, and I am going to train them for God and God only.' Bless the Lord, He helped me to make up my mind to do that before I became a mother; and He has helped me to keep that promise (though I have not been as faithful to it as I ought), casting aside resolutely every temptation to the contrary. And now He is giving me the fruit of my self-denial in the souls and labours of my precious children. One after another, as they grow up, they take their natural place

in the temple of the Lord, and I believe they shall go out no more for ever. Oh, that parents would do it! Parents might save their children. I know what a mother's feelings are. I know the temptation there is to see them shine in competition with others, and to excel others. I know it all; but I said, 'No; "Get thee behind me, Satan." I will keep them for God'; and He has enabled me to keep them for Him. Bless His holy name!

I loved Him better than I loved them, and, much as I loved them (and those who know me know I do love them), I would see them all in a row laid in their coffins before I would sacrifice His interests and lose their souls. Do you love Him best? Test yourself. Do you love Him more than all else? Are you holding everything in subordination to Him?

Further, this fruit will come out in our members—our bodies; and oh! there is a deep spiritual meaning which, I trust, many of you know, in those words of the Apostle, 'The body is dead because of sin'; but 'He shall quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit, that dwelleth in you.' It is killed to the Devil, as well as to sin, and all the uses of Satan; but it is quickened by the Spirit for the use of God, so that you can render not only the calves of your lips, but your hands, and eyes, and brain, and heart, and feet, and the whole of your body to Him—your members instruments of righteousness unto God. Hence, such a person will not feel his eyes are his own, to rove at random wherever he lists. Such a person will not feel his tongue is his own, to speak as he pleases. He will 'bridle it,' as James says, when tempted to speak unadvisedly. Such a person will not feel that his hands are his own, to waste the time in which he ought to be doing something for God. Such a person will not feel his feet his own, to carry him where he likes, but where his Master would have him go—his whole body consecrated, and, especially, his tongue—consecrated to God, to testify for Him. He will feel that he must feed his body, as my husband often says, on the same principle that a man feeds his horse—to keep it in the best working condition for God—never eating anything that will bring the devils of dyspepsia dancing round his soul. And, not only so, with eating and drinking, but all his surroundings and deportment must be in keeping. It is the Lord's body; and, if you love Him best, you will keep it for Him: as the bride and the bridegroom keep themselves for each other, so you will keep it for Him. This fruit will also appear in our family relations. We shall fulfil the Law to our neighbours. You see, God wants only what we have to give Him. He is not a hard master reaping where He has not sown, and the Great Teacher said, 'This is the first and great commandment,' embracing all the rest, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and mind, and soul, and strength,' and the second is like unto it, 'And thy neighbour as thyself'; and the man who does these is a perfect man, and fulfils the law; and when you have the fullness of love that enables you to love God best and your neighbour as yourself—enables you to do for the souls and bodies of your fellows what you would like that they should do for you, if you changed places, then the Law is fulfilled in you. Such people cannot sit 365 days in the year at the table with unconverted people, and never try to get them saved. Such people cannot abide in the same house with unbelievers, and not make them miserable. Oh, no. The unconverted say, 'It's too wretched to live here. I must get out of this crying and praying for me all day long.' As a servant once said, she couldn't stand it. She had had praying enough at home, without coming there to have it. She did stand it for six weeks, and broke down at the family altar and GOT SAVED, and became a preacher afterwards. This spirit of love will make every unconverted sinner within your reach so miserable that they will have to be converted or run away. How would you do if they were DYING? You would run about in every direction to get a minister. What a pity you did not feel like

this twelve years ago. You might have got the sinner converted then, and he have been serving the Lord all the time? But, now he is dying, what a stir you make. What a purely selfish religion that is. You want him saved, so that he may get into HEAVEN, not that he might serve, honour, and glorify God. You don't care at all about that. He might live on in disobedience. Oh, be as much concerned for the honour of God as you are for your friend's Salvation at the last, and then God will know how to save them. This fruit will also appear in your church relations. It will bring forth fruit. As the Apostle says, 'Exhorting one another daily,' not suffering sin in your neighbour; reproving each other, and 'confessing your faults one to the other.' Where is any of it done? I should like very much to attend such a meeting, if you invite me, where Christians really and honestly confess their faults one to the other, and pray for one another, beseeching the Lord to heal them in those particular points where they have failed, telling one another of the deep things of God and talking lovingly and freely to one another as they used to do. It is part of the communion of saints—'exhort one another daily.' The devil is at work daily. The world is plying for us daily. The flesh is pleading daily. Everything evil goes on daily. Why should not this exhorting one another, confessing your faults to one another, and praying for one another go on daily too? Is it a fact that we are each other's keepers? Is it a fact that God will require for our influence over other souls, I believe it.

Then in our relations to the world—. But I forestalled this in my address on 'Aggressive Effort.' And now let us go down on our knees before God and ask Him to work this love in us, and give us this spirit, that we may thus FULFIL THIS LAW in all its relations.

02.07. Witnessing for Christ

WITNESSING FOR CHRIST Acts 1:8 (latter clause).

—'Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.'

Acts 5:32.

—'And ye are His witnesses of these things.'

AGAIN and again the same vocation and commission is bestowed upon the apostles and disciples. To the ends of the earth and to the end of time this commission comes down to every one of the Lord's own, for He says: 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' That embraces us. And to every disciple who has preceded, or is to follow us, is promised His Divine Presence in this glorious work of testifying for Him.

God needs witnesses in this world.

Why? Because the whole world is in revolt against Him. The world has gone away from God. The world ignores God, denies and contradicts His testimony, misunderstands His character, government, and purposes, and is gone off into utter and universal revolt and rebellion. Now if God is to keep any hold upon man at all, and have any influence with him, He must be represented down here. There was no other way of doing it. If a province of this realm were in anarchy and rebellion, unless there be some persons in the province whose duty it is to represent the King and his Government, it will lapse altogether and be lost to the kingdom for ever. So God must be represented, and, praise His name, He has had His faithful witnesses from the beginning until now. As the apostle says—'He left not Himself without witness.' Down from the days of Enoch, who walked with God, to this present hour, God has always had His true and faithful witnesses. In the worst times there have been some burning and shining lights. Sometimes few and far between, sometimes, like Noah, one solitary man in a whole generation of men, witnessing for God—but one, at least, there has been. God has not left Himself without witness. But Jesus Christ the Son—the well-beloved of the Father—He was the great witness. He came especially to manifest, to testify of, and to reveal the Father to men. This was His great work. He came not to testify of Himself, but of His Father; not to speak His own words, but the words His Father gave Him to speak. He came to reveal God to men. He was the 'Faithful and True Witness.' And when He had to leave the world and go back to His Father, then He commissioned His disciples to take His place, and to be God's witnesses on earth. And Oh! friends, God's real people are His only witnesses. He will not allow angels—we do not know why—to witness for Him here. He has called man to witness for Him—His people—'Ye shall be witnesses unto Me.'

Jesus 'witnessed a good confession,' did He not? He witnessed nobly, consistently, bravely of His Father, and sealed His testimony with His blood. The world treated Him as it has treated most of

God's faithful witnesses from the beginning: it persecuted Him; it slew Him, as it would every faithful witness for God—if God allowed it—and would leave itself without a single spiritual light: for the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience hath an eternal and devilish hatred of every real, living, spiritual child of God. It hates him as it hates the Son Himself, and it is not the Devil's fault if he does not extinguish and exterminate every such witness. It is because God will not allow him, but holds us, keeps us, saves us, in spite of him. The Lord commissioned, then, His disciples to be His witnesses, and He said—oh! beautiful words, and yet, how much they involve which few understand—'As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so send I them into the world.' Even so: as Thou hast sent Me to be Thy representative in the world, to spend and be spent for Thee, and shed My blood for Thee; if necessary, so send I them; and so He did send them, and they had just the same fare as their Master, and many of them just the same end. But they were faithful witnesses, and they went forward and testified everywhere, to the Jews and to the Gentiles, in the Temple and in the Market Place, by the wayside and in the highways and hedges—they went and testified of this Saviour, and charged the wicked Jews with His crucifixion, and God accompanied their testimony by the Spirit, and thousands upon thousands were converted—turned from their rebellion to God.

Now, the fact that witnessing is necessary shows that there is controversy going on in the world as to the things and claims of God—that there are twu sides to this. The great mass of mankind say, that God's truth is a lie. They say it virtually, if they do not say it in words; and many thousands of them, alas! in words, also. They deny, many of them, His very existence, and say there is neither Heaven nor Hell—that Jesus Christ was a mere man—that religion is a myth, and that there is no such thing as the knowledge of forgiveness of sins—that this witnessing is a grand delusion of the imagination, and nothing further.

Now, Christ calls His people to go and be witnesses to these facts. Witnesses, you know, must deal with facts, not theories—not what they merely think, or suppose, or have heard, but what they know. Now God wants His people to witness to facts—to something that has been done, and is being done—something that is and continues to be—fact. And He wants us to be GOOD witnesses, too. Oh! how much depends upon the character of a witness even in an earthly court. If you can cast a reflection upon the character or the veracity of a witness, you shake his testimony, and take away its value. Oh! how important that Christ's witnesses should be good witnesses-that is, that they should fairly and truly represent Him and His truth—for, if they misrepresent Him, somebody is sure to be damned through their inconsistency—and, how awful to have the blood of souls upon our skirts! To misrepresent a man, or woman, or child, is bad enough, but to misrepresent God!—to show a caricature of the religion of Jesus Christ!—to live a wrong life and still profess to be a Christian, saying to people, virtually, 'Look at me:—the way I live and act—WHAT I AM—this is the religion of Jesus Christ.' I say, such a man had far better have a millstone hanged about his neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea. There would, then, be an end of his mischief; but a false witness on behalf of Jesus Christ is the most mischievous traitor on the face of the earth. He does more harm than a thousand false hostile witnesses against Him. Oh! my friends, to be good witnesses for Jesus Christ. The more a witness is supposed to know of the truth to which he testified, the greater his responsibility. Oh! for a minister to be a bad witness, as some of the prophets of old were. Look at the awful things God says about them that lead His people into the ditch, caring more about the fleece than the sheep—awful! For a mother to be a

bad witness in her family, and to take her little children, clinging on to her skirts, right to the edge of the pit! For a master to be a bad witness—to profess to be a Christian, and to be a bad witness before his men; for a Sunday-school teacher to be a bad, inconsistent, false witness of Jesus Christ in his class; for members of Christian Churches to be bad witnesses to one another, and to the world; who can tell the awful results? Oh! it is this inconsistent witnessing that has lowered and lowered the standard of practical Christianity till we have not got any standard left—till the landmarks are so obliterated, that there are not any to be seen.

FAITHFUL witnesses! He wants us to be faithful witnesses.

I want to note one or two qualifications of a faithful witness, and, oh, may the Holy Spirit help us. The first qualification, then, of a faithful witness, is A personal knowledge of the facts to which he witnesses. If a witness in a court of justice begins to talk of what he thinks, feels, and believes, 'Oh! hush, hush,' says the judge, 'we can't have that; we want to know what you KNOW—what you have seen, heard, and felt of this case'; and these are the sort of witnesses Jesus Christ wants, who can get up and say, 'I KNOW!' The sort of witness that St. Paul was, who could look his judge in the face and say, 'I would that thou wert altogether such as I am, save these bonds.' What an impudent man he must have been, if he was not a sanctified man. What a supreme egotist! Those are the sort of witnesses. How Agrippa must have felt, just then. How the tables were turned. 'Oh, I am turned into the dock, and here is the prisoner taking his seat upon the bench.' That is the sort of witnessing we want. 'I would that thou wert altogether such as I am, except these bonds.' Could you stand up in the dock and say that? Could you stand up in your own house and say it? Could you stand up anywhere and say it? That is what the Lord Jesus Christ wants—people who know, who experience, who realize, who live the things they witness to. This is what the world is dying for—people who can get up and say, 'I KNOW.' The Lord wants people to tell the world they are saved. Can you? They will begin to listen to you then. You will begin to have some effect on them. They will begin to open their eyes and ears, and wonder whether it will be possible for God to save them. This is altogether different from a fine-spun theory about religion—this telling them that God has SAVED YOU. Not what we have learned in books. The world is sick of that. I don't wonder at intelligent men flying off from religion. I can make great excuse when I think what many of them have to listen to from Sunday to Sunday. As a gentleman said to me, 'It's enough to sicken anybody. We do get something in The Times, but, upon my word, I can't keep awake at church. It is not that I would not, if I could, but I can't.' Poor fellow! how I pitied him.

No! not what is got from books; not a dry, fine-spun theory, from mere hearsay. When a witness begins with what he heard some one say, 'Oh, hush!' says the judge, 'we don't want that! we want to know what you have seen. Keep to the facts.' Jesus Christ wants you to keep to the facts. Tell them, as John says, what you have seen, and heard, and handled, and realized of the truth of God. Personal knowledge! It is wonderful how simple Salvation language is, when you have learnt it by experience and are prepared to speak plainly to the people.

Then, a faithful witness must tell the truth, and the whole truth. He must not hold back anything on account of personal inconvenience, suffering, loss, or gain, but must tell the whole truth! Oh! I tremble to think what will be the fate of some who set themselves up as teachers, and who have 'kept back part' of the truth because, to their apprehension, it was not palatable or profitable to

mankind.

What have I got to do with that? I have to preach the truth—the beautiful, whole, round, diamond, luminous with Divine light, and not a base, muddy, paste imitation, half truths manufactured into damning errors, by which Satan is decoying thousands to Hell. Give men the whole truth—both sides: the side that relates to God; and the side that relates to man; and be done with the nonsense of making God contradict Himself, for ‘God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.’ If there were contradictions, there would be darkness. No; the darkness is in our own poor, blind, puny brains, and not in God or in His Book. In His Book, rightly interpreted, there is no contradiction whatsoever. The whole truth: the convicting truth as well as the healing truth; the sword as well as the balm; the running in of the Divine knife as well as the pouring in of the Divine oil. As Paul says, in the 26th chapter and 18th verse, ‘To open their eves, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins.’ He says he preached to the Jews and Gentiles that they should repent. This is the Apostle Paul, the great expounder of Justification by Faith, ‘That they should repent,’ and what?—oh, you legal Paul, what?—‘Do works meet for repentance.’ Oh, Paul, I thought you were saved from works altogether and had done with the Law. Oh! you preach works, and doing works meet for repentance. That is not Gospel, Paul! He significantly adds, ‘For this cause the Jews caught me, and tried to kill me’: and for that cause the Pharisees have been trying to kill God’s true, whole-truth witnesses ever since, for they don’t like the doctrine that cuts idols and sin in twain, and that says, ‘Bring forth fruits meet for repentance.’ The faithful witness must give the whole truth; and he must give it personally, too. A faithful witness must give it himself. He can’t witness by proxy. He may pay one hundred and fifty evangelists to go and witness in his place: that is all right. It is no more than he ought to do—two hundred and fifty, if he has money enough—because the Master claims all that he has, little or much, every farthing of it, however many preachers he may send and maintain.

Therefore, he can never do any more than he ought, but that will not exonerate him from the personal obligation. God will say to him: If I have put My candle in you, it is that it may shine for somebody else’s benefit. If I have given you the bread of life, it is for you to go and break it to the famishing multitudes round about you. YE are My witnesses. You may pay the minister and the missionary, but you must do it yourself, too, for how can one witness make up for two? True, God wants the minister to witness, and it is no more than his duty if he witnesses all day long as long as he lives. But that will never make up for your lack of service. YOU must witness; and there are some souls with whom you have more influence than any other living being—some souls that you can better get at than any other person—some souls that, if you do not save, will, probably, never be saved at all. Ye are My witnesses, and, if ye have the grace and love and light of God, it is at the peril of your soul if you hide it.

Then, in the next place, faithful witnesses must speak out, not mince the mnatter—not ‘mumble,’ as they say in court. The judge makes the witness speak up so that everybody may hear him. He must be heard. ‘Speak out.’ And why should not the Lord’s witnesses speak out? I wonder when we shall be done with this sneaking, hole-and-corner, shame-faced religion. I wonder when Christian England will cease to be ashamed of its God! The only nation under Heaven ashamed of its religion and its God is the one that has got the true God to worship and to love. What an anomaly; Speak out!

David knew nothing about this mincing, half-and-half, milk-and-water sort of religion. David rejoiced to tell of his righteousness before the great congregation. He was always telling about His goodness, and His Law, and singing about it all the day long, dancing before the ark sometimes, and doing all manner of demonstrative things to glorify his God. And that was not enough, for when he had called upon all human kind to praise Him, he called on the hills and the trees to clap their hands and to dance for joy. We want some of that sort of religion nowadays. Talk of the new dispensation, I wish we could get a bit of the old one back. The interests of truth demand this outspokenness. How is error to be met but by the bold proclamation of the truth? How are the emissaries of Satan palming upon mankind his lies—always at it, night and day—how are they to be silenced but by witnesses faithfully crying in their ears, 'This is a lie, and that is a lie. This is the truth and this is the way; we know, we see, we feel—walk ye in it.' Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die? They want outspoken witnesses. There are plenty of false witnesses now, as there ever were, and what does Jesus Christ want? He wants His true witnesses to come out and face them, and be a match for them—not to sneak away in holes and corners, and be ashamed of their religion, and talk about an 'unobtrusive religion'—unobtrusive nonsense. There is no such thing! Come out before the world. As Elijah said, 'If the Lord be God, follow Him,' serve Him, speak for Him; 'but if Baal' be God, 'then follow him.' Then away with all this nonsense, your sanctuaries, and Bibles, and profession—have done with it all and follow Baal. Be one thing or the other. Methinks there wants an Elijah now to come and ring it through all England. I would like to see any man get up and make a straightforward recognition of, and appeal to, God in our Houses of Parliament, and I would like to see how he would be greeted.

I was thinking, as I was passing the Royal Exchange and saw on the top, 'The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,' how many believed it who walked beneath its shadow. I wonder what any one would be thought of, were he practically to recognize the fact. 'Oh!' they would say, 'he's not fit for his post—you'll have to take him away; he's a little affected in his head.' Oh! you know it is so; but God is not mocked, though men think He is. God sits in the circle of Heaven, and though the people do rage, and the heathen imagine a vain thing, and the kings of the earth set themselves, He is laughing at them, and by and by will come their calamity.

We say the world is dying; what for? Sermons? No. Periodicals? No. Religious stories? Oh! dear no. There is no chance of a want of them for many a long year to come. Dying for disquisitions? No. For fine-spun theories? No. For creeds and faiths? Oh! you might have them by the dozen. What is it dying for?—downright, straightforward, honest, loving, earnest testimony about what God can DO FOR SOULS. That is what it wants. That is what those poor men in the shops, those walking up and down Oxford Street, in the theatres, in the dancing saloons, in the concert rooms, everywhere, that is what men want: somebody to come and take them lovingly by the collar, and tell them that GOD IS GOD, and that He can save them. 'He has saved me, my brother, and He can save you!' That is what the world wants. One word like that is better than a sermon, and it will do more for God and the Salvation of the world. Oh, yes, men are saying, in fact all over this land—thousands, 'Here I am; I am a poor slave of sin. I know it.' They say it in their consciences, though they do not say it to you. They say it often to us when they are pushed into a corner by the sword of the Spirit. 'I know I am wrong, sinful, wicked.' As that dear John Allen, whose life I have been telling about, said once when sitting swearing, surrounded by his companions, and somebody said to him, 'Jock, if you were to die, what would become of you?' 'I should go to Hell,

straight!' He was an honest fellow. He knew where he was going, and he said it.

I said to a gentleman, 'Mr. So-and-so, what about your soul?' He said, 'It's in a devilish state.' Poor man! He knew where he was going, and there are thousands like him. Do you think they don't feel their bondage? Have they not got a mind and a conscience? Have they not a better side, as you call it, to their nature? Has not God flashed the light of His Holy Spirit upon their dark souls, and have they not struggled and striven? Yes, but they say, 'There is no health in us; there is no help for us. We have done making resolutions and trying to be better; we cannot. There is no hope in us.' And there they are waiting for somebody to come and tell them there is HELP IN GOD. They say, 'I see precious little difference in you religious folks. I have never known anybody that religion has seemed to do much for.' And, when they are told to believe, they laugh at you, and I don't wonder at it. The poor human conscience is better instructed than many of its teachers. It wants to be put RIGHT, and it says, 'Is there any hope? Can God save such as I am? Has He saved anybody like me from this thraldom, from this slavery, from this misery, from this constantly going down in the mud? Did He ever save anybody LIKE ME?' And sometimes he goes to chapel or church, and hopes the minister will tell him, when lo, he begins a dissertation about the resurrection, or the divinity of Christ, or something the man has believed all his life, and so he is disappointed again, and he says, 'This is of no use to me.' Oh! friends, I speak the things I know from testimony of scores of souls. In fact, I could not repeat it, it would make your faces burn to hear what men of intelligence, thought, and standing have said to me in many an ante-room where I have been labouring. It is time there was a change. The world is famishing for lack of real spiritual bread. It wants something to eat, and you give it a stone! but God is raising a people who know what it wants and how to give it, who know how to break the bread of life, and testify what God has done for them, and what He can do for other poor famishing souls; who can go and say: 'Here, my friend, He can save such as you. I was such a one once. I was a slave of sin, the slave of drink, or a blasphemer, or a liar, or a thief, or addicted to some bad secret habit worse than any of these. I was such a slave, and He has saved me. He has broken my fetters and set me free, and I am the Lord's free-man. He has saved me and He can save you,' That is what the world wants—TESTIMONY WITNESSING. Has He saved any of you? Are you testifying to your poor, famishing, sinking fellow-men? Do you ever look at them and think where they are going? Do you pity them, love them, long after them in the bowels of Jesus Christ? Do you know anything of that longing? If so, how can you forbear testifying? 'Ye are My witnesses of these things,' everywhere, at all times, amongst all people!

It is in the nature of the case that a witness must witness before other people, before living hearers. That is the place to witness, and before enemies, and when he does not know which way the wind will blow, or how the words of God will be received. He must be a true witness, even if he has to seal his testimony with his blood. This was the kind of witnessing the martyrs did. I often wonder whether there would be any martyrs now. Sometimes I think that the greatest boon to the Church of Christ would be a time of persecution. I believe it would. I believe it would drive us up to God and each other. We should find out, then, whether we were willing to forsake all to follow Him. You know that if the martyrs had taken the standard of religious life that exists now, they would never have been martyrs. They would have looked after their own skins, and left the Lord to look after the Gospel. If they might have been allowed a little latitude, and gone halfway, there would not have been any martyrs, because they could nearly all have got off with that; but they felt it

necessary to be faithful right through, and to stand by the whole truth to the very last jot and tittle, and when they could have got off by saying three words on a paper, they refused to do it, and vent to the stake, and let the flames lick up their blood. Those are the witnesses the Lord wants—outside, everywhere, always at it. Always witnessing. ‘Always?’ you say. Yes; always. Why? Because men are always dying and being damned! If the Bible is true—everywhere—your friends and your neighbours around you. You get a letter: ‘Oh! Mr. So-and-so is dead—only ill three days—thirty-six hours—twenty-four hours—gone!’ Ah! and the echo in many a soul afterwards is, ‘What would I give for a chance to go and have one talk with him.’ But he’s gone—somewhere! Where is he gone? If he were unwashed and unpardoned and unsaved—where is he gone? I got so wrought up once upon this point that I thought I should have lost my reason. I could not sleep at night with thinking of the state of those who die unsaved. Dare I think about it? WHERE IS HE GONE? Oh! it was this view of the case that led me to open my mouth first in public for God.

I have promised some friends here to-night to give this illustration from my own experience, or else I rarely refer to it. I had long had a controversy on this question in my soul. In fact, from the time I was converted, the Spirit of God had constantly been urging me into paths of usefulness and labour, which seemed to me impossible. Perhaps some of you would hardly credit that I was one of the most timid and bashful disciples the Lord Jesus ever saved. For ten years of my Christian life my life was one daily battle with the cross—not because I wilfully rejected, as many do, for that I never dared to do. Oh, no! I used to make up my mind I would, and resolve and intend, and then, when the hour came, I used to fail for want of courage. I need not have failed. I now see how foolish I was, and how wrong; but, for some four or five months before I commenced speaking, the controversy had been signally roused in my soul which God had awakened years before, but which, through mistaken notions, fear, and timidity, I had allowed almost to die out. I was brought to very severe heart-searchings at this time. I had not been realizing so much of the Divine presence. I had lost a great deal of the power and happiness I once enjoyed. During a season of sickness, one day it seemed as if the Lord revealed it all to me by His Spirit. I had no vision, but a revelation to my mind. He seemed to take me back to the time when I was fifteen and sixteen, when I first gave my heart to Him. He seemed to show me, all the bitter way, how this one thing had been the fly in the pot of ointment, the bitter in the cup, and prevented me from realizing what I should otherwise have done. I felt how it had hindered the revelation of Himself to me, and hindered me from growing in grace, and learning more of the deep things of God. He showed it to me, and then I remember prostrating myself upon my face before Him, and I promised Him there in the sick room: ‘Lord, if Thou wilt return unto me, as in the days of old, and re-visit me with those urgings of Thy Spirit which I used to have, I will obey, if I die in the attempt. I care not; I will obey.’ However, the Lord did not revisit me immediately. He let me recover, and I went out again. About three months after that I went to the chapel of which my husband was a minister, and he had an extraordinary service. Even then he was ever trying something new to get the outside people. They were having a meeting in which ministers and friends in the town were taking part, and all giving their testimony and speaking for God. I was in the minister’s pew, with my eldest boy, then four years old, and there were some thousand people present. I felt much more depressed than usual in spirit, and not expecting anything particular, but, as the testimonies went on, I felt the Spirit come upon me. You alone who have felt it know what it means. It cannot be described. I felt it to the extremities of my fingers and toes. It seemed as if a voice said to me, ‘Now, if you were to

go and testify, you know I would bless it to your own soul as well as to the souls of the people,' and I gasped again, and I said, in my soul, 'Yes, Lord, I believe Thou wouldst, but I cannot do it.' I had forgotten my vow—it did not occur to me at all. All in a moment, after I had said that to the Lord I seemed to see the bedroom where I had lain, and to see myself as though I had been there prostrate before the Lord promising Him that, and then the voice seemed to say to me, 'Is this consistent with that promise?' and I almost jumped up and said, 'No, Lord, it is the old thing over again, but I cannot do it,' and I felt as though I would sooner die than do it. And then the Devil said, 'Besides, you are not prepared to speak. You will look like a fool, and have nothing to say.' He made a mistake. He overdid himself for once. It was that word settled it. I said, 'Ah! this is just the point. I have never yet been willing to be a fool for Christ, now I will be one'; and without stopping another moment, I rose up in the seat, and walked up the chapel. My dear husband was just going to conclude. He thought something had happened to me, and so did the people. We had been there two years, and they knew my timid, bashful nature. He stepped down to ask me, 'What is the matter, my dear.' I said, 'I want to say a word.' He was so taken by surprise, he could only say, 'My dear wife wants to say a word,' and sat down. He had been trying to persuade me to do it for ten years. He and a lady in the church, only that very week, had been trying to persuade me to go and address a little cottage meeting, of some twenty working people, but could not. I got up—God only knows how—and if any mortal ever did hang on the arm of Omnipotence, I did. I felt as if I were clinging to some human arm—and yet it was a Divine arm—to hold me. I just got up and told the people how it came about. I confessed, as I think everybody should, when they have been in the wrong and misrepresented the religion of Jesus Christ. I told the people, although I had been occupying all the ordinary positions of a minister's wife, though I was young then, I had been doing a great deal more than many an elderly one does in the Church of God, in the way of meeting believers, and visiting and working behind the scenes, so that they had all been regarding me as a very devoted woman, and I told them so. I said, 'I dare say many of you have been looking upon me as a very devoted woman, and one who has been living faithfully to God, but I have come to know that I have been living in disobedience, and to that extent I have brought darkness and leanness into my soul, but I promised the Lord three or four months ago, and I dare not disobey. I have come to tell you this, and to promise the Lord that I will be obedient to the Heavenly vision.' But oh! how little I saw then what it involved. I never imagined the life of publicity it was going to lead me into, and of trial also; for I was never allowed to have another quiet Sabbath, when I could speak or stand up. All I took there was the present step. I did not see in advance, but the Lord, as He always does, when His people are honest with Him, and obedient, opened the windows of Heaven, and poured out such a blessing, that there was not room to contain it.

There was more weeping, they said, in the chapel that day, than ever there had been before. Many dated a renewal in righteousness from that very moment, and began a life of devotion and consecration to God.

Now, I might have 'talked good' to them till now, and that would never have happened . That honest confession, coming out and testifying the truth, did what twenty years' talk would never have done. The work went on. Whenever I spoke, the chapel used to be crowded to its utmost capacity, and numbers were converted. Not to me but to God be all the glory. Shame to me that I did not begin sooner. It was not I that did this, but the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit of God. The Lord dealt with me in a very wonderful way. Three months after this, my dear husband fell sick for the

first time, and he was obliged to go away into the country. A deputation waited on me, to ask me to take his town appointments. I said I could not think of such a thing. What could I do with that great congregation? They must not ask me—and away they went. They came back again to know if I would take the nights, they implored and importuned me until I promised. So you see, God forced me to begin to think and work. I was obliged, and I did it with four little children, the eldest then four years and three months old. It looked an inopportune time, did it not, to begin to preach? It looked as though the Lord must have made a mistake. However, He gave me grace and strength, and enabled me to do it; and while I was nursing my baby, many a time I was thinking of what I was going to say next Sunday, and between times noted down with a pencil the thoughts as they struck me. And then I would appear sometimes, with an outline scratched in pencil, trusting in tho Lord to give me the power of His Holy Spirit; and I think I can say that from that day—and it is about nineteen years and nine months since—He has never allowed me to open my mouth without giving me signs of His presence and blessing. Don't you see that while the Devil kept me silent, he kept me comparatively fruitless; now I have ground to hope and expect to meet hundreds in Glory, whom God has made me instrumental in saving. The Lord dealt very tenderly with me: giving me great encouragement, but some things were dreadful to me at first. I would not go into pulpits till the people demanded it. And the first time I saw my name on a wall!—I shall never forget the sensation. Then my dear husband said, 'When you gave yourself to the Lord, did you not give Him your name?' Thus he used to go from one thing to another, until now I have learned to glory in the Cross. When a dear friend was talking, the other day about the tremendous undertaking it was to go to France and begin there; I said, 'My dear sir, I should not feel any more discomposed to go to France, and open there next Sunday, than I should to appear in St. Andrew's Hall, simply for this reason, that I believe God is the same in every place, and the same faith, and the same truths and the same faithfulness will bring Him to our help.' 'Ye are my witnesses,' saith the Lord, 'And, lo, I am with you ALWAYS!' Will you be encouraged, my sister? Never mind trembling. I trembled. Never mind your heart beating. Mine beat nearly through. Never mind how weak you are. I have gone many a time from the bed to the pulpit, and back from the pulpit to bed. It is not by human power, wisdom, might, or strength—it is by My Spirit, saith the Lord. He loves to use the weak things, that the excellency may be seen to be of God. If your neighbours were sick of some devastating plague, and you could go and help them, would not you do it? Would you say, 'I am only a woman, and I cannot'? 'Oh,' you would say, 'let me go, like Miss Nightingale did to the sick and wounded soldiers. Let me go.' And these are not the bodies, but the souls. They are dying. They are going to an eternal death. Will you not rise up? Oh! suppose all the Christians in this hall to-night were to begin, from this hour, to be faithful, and consistently testifying everywhere for Jesus, what a commotion there would be! How many, think you, would be converted in a month's time? How would they begin flocking like doves to the windows? How would the ministers, some of them, begin to wake up? The people would go and beseech them morning, noon, and night. God wants you to witness right out everywhere, in the darkest courts and alleys and in Oxford Street alike. Begin, and the Spirit of God will fall upon you, and however they may try to get rid of the Holy Ghost, they will not be able to do it when God has got hold of them. We catch thousands of people in this way who never intended to be converted. Every day I live, the more I am convinced that if God's people were to be in desperate earnest, thousands would be won; but they are not likely to be won by the genteel fashion of putting the truth before them—so common nowadays—because nobody thinks they are in any danger! If you believe it, begin. The Apostle

says you are to be good, valiant soldiers of Jesus Christ: the old Christians were all this; they fought a good warfare, and they overcame the Devil by the ‘Blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.’ Be soldiers for the Lord, and He will give the victory, and you shall go and take prisoners. Great big giants, black-hearted infidels, black-hearted blasphemers, they shall go down before you like little children, because the Lord of Hosts will put His Spirit in you. ‘Ye are My witnesses.’ Witness! WITNESS! of Me everywhere and always. The Lord help you. Amen.

Chapter 25

02.08. Filled with the Spirit

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Acts 1:4.

—‘And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father.’

Ephesians 5:18.

—‘Be filled with the Spirit.’

I THOUGHT, perhaps, it would meet a difficulty of some who are present this afternoon, to state, with respect to last Sabbath’s address, that this exhortation to be filled with the Spirit is given broadly to all believers. If my remarks, at that time, conveyed the idea to any one that there were merely a privileged few who are called to be thus filled with the Spirit—to be, as it were, the leaders of the rest, and others were to abide, and must abide, on a lower platform of Christian experience, I certainly did not intend them to do so. God forbid that I should insinuate anything of the kind, because I do not believe it. I believe that this injunction is given broadly to all believers everywhere, and in all times, and it is as much the privilege of the youngest and weakest believer here to be filled with the Spirit, as it is of the most advanced, if the believer will comply with the conditions, and conform to the injunctions of the Saviour, on which He has promised this gift. I do not find two standards of Christian experience here at all. I do not believe God ever intended there should be a lower life and a higher life, and I am afraid that those people who rest in the lower life will find themselves awfully mistaken at last. I believe that religion is all or nothing. God is either first or He is nowhere with us, individually. The very essence and core of religion is, ‘God first,’ and allegiance and obedience to Him first.

If I cannot keep my father and mother and be faithful to God, then I must forsake my father and mother. If I cannot keep my husband or wife, and be faithful to Him, then I must forsake husband or wife. If I cannot keep my children and be faithful to Him, then, Jesus Christ says, forsake them. And if I cannot keep my houses and lands and be faithful to Him, then I must forsake them. If I cannot keep my business and be faithful to Him, then I must sacrifice my business, and if I cannot keep my health and be faithful to him, then I must sacrifice it; and, last of all, if I cannot keep my life and be faithful to Him, then I must be prepared to lose it, and lay my neck on the block, if need be. That is my religion, and I do not know any other. I do not believe any other will stand on the right hand of the throne; and, if that be so, why, all other sorts must stand on the left. If this be not true, I am utterly and thoroughly mistaken in the first principles of Christianity, and I will come and sit down at anybody’s feet who can convince me that I am wrong. So, pray, do not attach that idea to me that I think that any person can sit down, providing he has light, or with opportunities of getting light, without embracing this higher-life religion, and then get into Heaven in this shame-faced, sneaking way. No, no!—God will have you, or He will not have you. He will know you, or will say, ‘Depart from Me, I know you not.’ The Lord help you every one. This Pentecost is

offered to all believers. It comes, or it would come, in the experience of every believer, if he would have it. God wants you to have it. God calls you to it. Jesus Christ has bought it for you, and you may have it and live in its power as much as these apostles did, if you will—every one of you. My dear friends, you may have it, be filled with it, and no one but God knows what He would do with you, and what He would make of you if you were thus filled, for the experience of Peter shows you how utterly different a man is before he gets a Pentecostal baptism and after he gets it. The man who could not stand the questionings of a servant-maid before he got this power, dared to be crucified after he got it. I may just say, that here is the great cause of the decline of so many who begin well. Oh! there is no more common lament on the lips of really spiritual teachers, everywhere, than this, that so many begin well. 'Ye did run well,' we might truly say of thousands in this land to-day, 'Ye did run well.' They begin in the Spirit, and then, as the Apostle says, 'They go on to be made perfect by the flesh.' How is this? Because, you see, the Spirit puts before every soul this walk of full consecration and whole-hearted devotedness to God, and, instead of being obedient to the heavenly vision, the soul shrinks back and says, 'That is too much—that is too close—that is too great a sacrifice,' and they decline, and, instead of giving up a profession and going back into the world (there would be ten times more hope of them if they did that), they cling on to the profession and kindle a fire of their own, and walk in the sparks they have kindled. But He says He is against them, and 'they shall lie down in sorrow.' Oh! there is a deal of this. People must have a God and a religion. They will have one, and when they shrink from the true one, and will not follow the Divine counsel, then they make one for themselves, and a great many of them go to sleep and never wake again. They go out of the world comfortably under the influence of narcotics, and they never wake. They die deceived; or, if they do awake, we know what sort of an awakening it is, and what sort of deathbed theirs is. Our poor Salvation Army people—these 'fishermen'—these young women—are sent for to pray with these people when they get awakened. And Oh! what scenes are witnessed. Oh! see to it that you get awake and keep awake, and be willing to follow the Spirit's teaching, in everything, at all costs and sacrifices.

I want you to note, first, how these people waited. 'Tarry at Jerusalem till ye be endued with POWER.' Mark, that is not truth merely. They had got truth before. There is something besides truth needed. Paul says his Gospel and his preaching were not merely in word, but in power, and in the demonstration of the Spirit. What would be the first thing that would strike you that these disciples would be thinking of, as they wended their way back from Olivet, having taken leave of their now glorified Master? Back again to the upper room at Jeru- Jerusalem salem. Imagine what state of mind would be theirs. How would they wait for the promise?

Methinks the first feeling would be that of deep self-abasement. As they thought of the past; now that the full glory of His Divinity, and the Divinity of His mission, had burst upon them, and, as they thought of their three years' sojourn with Him, and of all their darkness and blindness of heart, and all they had lost—all that they might have known—all He would have revealed to them, if they would have received it—as the thought of it all burst upon them—just as, next day, when you find out who a person was, or some particular circumstance respecting a person that you did not fully understand at the time, and, when the person is gone, and it all breaks upon you, you say, 'What a fool I was,' and so methinks these Apostles would say. Indeed, as He said, 'O fools, and slow of heart to believe!' They were cured—Peter certainly was—of self-sufficiency, of pride, and all of them would go back again in deep self-abasement. Can you not think you see them, as they

assembled in the upper room? I should not be surprised at all if Peter, with his impulsive nature—and it is a glorious thing to have an impulsive nature when it is impulsive for good—to be zealously affected always in a good cause—threw himself on his face before his risen Master in deepest humiliation and broken-heartedness for his base ingratitude in having denied Him. And how do you think Thomas and all of them would feel as they remembered the scene in the Garden, and how they all, in the hour of His agony, forsook Him and fled? How would they all feel? Oh! they would feel indeed unholy, untrue, cowards, and would go down, over and over again, on their faces, to wait in deep self-abasement. And now, friends, this is the very first and indispensable condition of receiving the Holy Ghost. You must first realize your past impurity, unholiness, disobedience, and ingratitude. You must not be afraid to know the worst of yourselves. You must look back at the time when your hand has been with Him on the table, and yet you have virtually betrayed Him. You must look at your unfaithfulness and disobedience, at your shrinking from the cross, at your cleaving to the world, and if you want to be filled with the Spirit, you must be willing to know the worst of yourself, and tell the Lord the worst of yourself. You must say, 'Now, Lord, am I low enough? Now, Lord, am I down far enough in the dust for Thee to come and lift me up? I abhor myself. I loathe myself in dust and ashes, and I want Thee to come and fill me with Thy Spirit.' You will have to be emptied of self. When people are self-sufficient, God always leaves them alone to prove their self-sufficiency. When people think they can do for themselves, He lets them fall down and see their weakness. We must realize our utter helplessness and weakness—we must be utterly lost in our own sight. Some of you, I think, have come to that, and others are not quite low enough. You must get down lower, my brother. God's way to exaltation is through the Valley of Humiliation. You must get lower—lower. You can never get too low in your own estimation in order to be filled with the Spirit of God. They waited, secondly, in earnest appreciation of its importance. Ah! they had enough to make them do it. How do you think they felt when they got into the upper room? We are told that there were about one hundred and twenty of them. How do you think they felt as they thought of the past, remembered the ignominious crucifixion of their Lord, looked forward to the future, and contemplated the work to which He had called them? And what was it? It was not to go and set up an idol of Jesus Christ alongside of other idols in the temples of heathen gods, but it was to go into the city of Jerusalem, where they had just crucified Him between two thieves, and proclaim Him as the long-expected Messiah of the Jews. It was to begin to set up the Royal Spiritual Kingdom in contradistinction to their temporal and earthly kingdom, and then to go out from Jerusalem and subjugate the world to His sway! How would they feel? Poor Peter, and Thomas, and John, and Mary and the rest of the women (thanks to the Holy Ghost, He has taken care to put it in that they were there)—how would they feel? They would feel, 'We might as well stop and die here, as go out as we are, until we do get the equipment of power. We want something more than we have got.' And there they waited, and they said, 'Lord, pour it out upon us; we are ready. We are helpless, we are powerless—we can do nothing. Thou knowest what Thou hast called us to do, and Thou hast promised this power to perform it. Now, here we are. It is useless for us to begin until we get power.' They appreciated its importance. God never gave this gift to any human soul who had not come to the point that he would sell all he had to get it. Oh! it is the most precious gift He has to give in earth or in Heaven—to be filled with the Spirit, filled with Himself (as we said last Sunday), taken possession of by God; moved, inspired, energized, empowered by God, by the great indwelling Spirit moving through all our faculties, and energizing our whole being for Him. That is the greatest and most

glorious gift He has. He is not likely to give it to people who do not highly appreciate it, and so highly that they are willing to forgo all other gifts for it—everything else, creature love, creature comfort, ease, enjoyment, and aggrandizement for this one thing. Have you come to that? Are you telling the Lord so? Are you sincere? If you are really sincere in what some of you write me, then some of you have come to it; but, Oh, how people can deceive themselves! My heart has been awfully pained during this last week with one or two instances of this kind that have come to my notice. I have been half the week, I think, with Elijah under the juniper tree. I have cried, 'Lord, who hath believed our report?' Who will thus take hold of God for this special and full salvation? Alas! how few. One draws back for one reason, and another for another. One feels how far they come with us. You can hear the tread of their feet, and you can hear how they falter and draw back. None but those who travail for souls can ever understand the agony of feeling that souls are drawing back when you have brought them on the road so far. I have thought many a time of the Saviour, when so many who had been hearing Him forsook Him and fled. It was after He had been trying to lead them higher, even to real spiritual union with Himself.

They were not willing to go all the way—to pay all the price—to suffer all the consequences—but, if you want this blessing, I know no other way. I had to come to this before I got it. The last idol of my soul had to be renounced, and it was hard work, as it always is, because we love idols. Idols would not be idols if they were not beloved. But we have to lay our real Isaac, our beloved and only Isaac, upon the altar. It is hard work, but it has to be done, because He is a jealous God, and will have no rivals. Do you so appreciate this blessing that you are willing to give up your Isaac? If so, you may have it this afternoon. He will fill you with His Spirit.

Third, and lastly, they waited in obedient faith. How do we know? Because they did as He bid them—that is the evidence. He said, 'Go, tarry in the city of Jerusalem.' Peter might have said, when he had seen his Lord off to Heaven, 'Well, what am I going to do now? I have been a long time running after the Lord in Palestine, I must betake myself to the fishing. I can wait as well on the sea beach as in Jerusalem. I wonder why the Lord told me to go to Jerusalem? I think it was rather unreasonable. He might have thought of my old father and mother at home. I think I shall go back to my fishing-nets.' No, no, they had been cured of their unbelief by the last few days' experience. They had learned better than to dictate to their Master, and they knew He had a good purpose in sending them to Jerusalem, and so they went there and did as He bade them—straight. Back to that upper room they went.

Mary might have said, 'I have been running about ministering to the Saviour a long time, I'm afraid my friends will think I am neglecting home duties and the claims of old friends. I really must go home and see to matters a bit; I may as well wait there for the Holy Ghost as at Jerusalem.' No, Mary had learned better. She went back to Jerusalem. We have got their names. And they entered into the upper room, and shut the door, and waited-obedient faith! One of your poets said:

Obedient faith that waits on Thee, Thou never wilt reprove.

No, it is the disobedient faith that is sent empty away. Oh! people are crying out about their faith, but it is their disobedient faith. If the Lord has told you to wait in any particular place, or way, or company, or time, and you disobey Him, you will never get it, and you will have to come to those conditions at last, even if it is on your dying bed! Obedient faith! While there is a spark of insubordination, or rebellion, or dictation, you will never get it. Truly submissive and obedient souls

only enter this kingdom. Anywhere He tells you to go, anything He tells you to sacrifice, or fly from, you will have to do. This is one of His choice gifts that He has reserved for His choice servants, those who serve Him with all their hearts.—Obedient faith! But you say, ‘How do you know it was faith?’ Oh, because we know they did as He bade them. Now faith inserable from expectation. Where there is real faith there is always expectation, and when I hear people praying, as I often do, from their throats, for the Holy Ghost, and see how they talk the minute they get up from their knees, and know how they live and whom they associate with, and how they spend their time, I say, ‘Yes, you may pray till your dying day, but you will never get it.’ If they expected anything, they would wait for it: common sense tells us that.

Those people waited. How long? What a hue and cry there is now about us Salvation Army people spending whole nights in prayer. People—Christians, grey-headed Christians, up and down the country—say to me, ‘I don’t know how you get the time over. It must be such an immensely long time. Do you really mean to say that you spend all night in prayer?’ I say, ‘Yes, with just an interval for putting the truth and showing the people how to apply it to their own consciences.’ Then they say, ‘It must seem an awfully long time.’ I suppose it does, to them, to spend one whole night in prayer; but here, we are told, they waited ten days, till the Day of Pentecost was fully come. I have no doubt they went as far into the night as they could keep their natural powers awake. They waited. They did not set the Lord a time. They were wiser. They did not say, ‘Now we will go and have a couple of days of it. That will be a long time. We will just shut out all else and wait on the Lord for a couple of days, and if He does not come by that time, it will be outrageous to wait beyond it. Whoever heard of a prayer meeting two days and two nights long?’ They did not set the Lord a time! They went and waited till it came.

You say, ‘No; I have not got it.’ No; because you did not wait until it came. You got hungry, or you fell asleep, or hugged your idol. You did not wait TILL IT CAME.

Suppose they had given up on the fifth day and said, ‘There must be some mistake. He knows we are here, all ready, and the world is perishing for our message. There must be some mistake. We had better begin.’ But no, they waited on, and on, and on, until it came. Can you imagine what sort of prayers went up from the upper room? Do you think they were the lazy, lackadaisical prayers that we hear every now and then for the Holy Spirit?

Oh! how would Peter agonize and wrestle: how would Thomas plead; how would Mary weep, beseech, and entreat, and how were they all of one heart and of one accord. They wanted the one thing, and they were there to get it. They cared for nothing else but that. They cried for it as hungry children cry for bread. They wanted it. Did the Lord ever disappoint anybody who waited like that? Can anybody say so here? Did you ever hear of such a case? Never. HE CAME.

Oh! but there are some people, nowadays, who set God times in everything. They think a good deal more about their dinners than about Him. They think a great deal more about intercourse with their friends and doing the polite to them, than they do about the precious waiting Holy Spirit of God. They think a great deal more about their businesses. ‘Oh!’ they say, ‘it is business, and business must be attended to.’ But what about the Holy Ghost and the Kingdom? Must not the Kingdom of God be attended to? Must not your soul be saved, and must you not become a temple of the indwelling Spirit of God? Put a MUST in there, if you please. Far more important is the soul than the body. Friends, are these things so, or am I only imagining them? Are these great truths,

or are they fables? These are the most common-sense, simple exhibitions and illustrations of these truths that could possibly be given. Was it not so? Did they not thus wait, and did not the Holy Ghost come?—and when He came He sat upon each of them. Bless His name.

People have a wonderful habit of losing sight of the little words of the Bible—the people who make a great to-do about the Word in other ways, often say ‘I never saw that till you directed my attention to it.’ Suppose I were to say that this afternoon something happened to each person, would you imagine I meant the men, and not the women? Of course you would say, I meant every one. And it filled them all—the women as well as the men, and they began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. He came.

And, my friends, He comes yet. My bodily senses have been quite cognizant of His coming sometimes. We only know that we feel something that so influences our bodies that we cannot describe it. In the North, when I was there, we had an all-night of prayer, at which one thousand people, admitted by ticket, waited all night on God. The meeting began at ten, and went on until six in the morning, and there were strong men, men in middle life, and old men, lying on their faces on the floor. There were doctors there, who examined them and tried to account for it from physical causes, but they could not. It was the power of God. The Holy Ghost does come, and because, in coming thus into our souls, and thus filling us, He sometimes prostrates our bodies, people rebel, as they did on this occasion, and reject the manifestation, and say, ‘Excitement! fanaticism!’ What right have you to say that the Holy Spirit coming into a human soul can operate upon that soul to the full extent without, to some degree, prostrating the body? We know how people fall under great emotions of anger, grief, and joy. Why? Because the influence of the mind has so affected the body that the body cannot bear it, and when the Holy Spirit of God comes into a human soul and opens its eyes, and quickens its perceptions, and enlarges its capacity, and swells it with glory, is it an unlikely or improbable thing that the body should sometimes be prostrated under His power? What did Paul say?—‘I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus,’ and I have been into ‘the third heaven and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful to utter.’ Do you think God intended such experiences and visions only for Paul and the Apostles? Ah! there have been many since his day who have had such experiences, and many more of God’s people might have them, if they would, but they are not willing to be wrapped in His arms; they are not willing to be pressed to His bosom; they are not willing to know Him in the Scriptural sense; they are not willing to be given up and consumed by His Spirit. Their heart and flesh do not cry out after the living God, as David’s did. They are not panting after Him as the hart after the water-brooks. They are not longing to come and appear before God. If they were so longing that they could not live without it, then God would come and be revealed to them. Will you, then, wait in obedient faith?

Oh! I have the most awful realization that you will be eternally better or worse for these services, and so I want you to come up higher, I don’t want you to go back, and get cold and indifferent to these things, because here is the hope of the world, if there is any hope for it, in people getting filled with the Spirit, people getting so woke up to God and His glory, and the interests of His kingdom, that they should be just as anxious for souls as other people are for sovereigns. Filled with the Spirit, having eyes to see spiritual sights which others do not see, ears to hear the crying of the famishing multitudes who are dying for lack of knowledge; hearts to feel so that they could go and weep over them. Hands to break the bread of life; and, if need be, a zeal that will lead them to die for them. This is what we want, and it only comes with the fullness of the Spirit. Are you

willing, my brother? are you willing, my sister? If so, stop with us this afternoon. Never mind the dinner; never mind the tea. You have taken care of the outer man long enough, now look after the inner man. Never mind the children, mother, just now, the Lord will take care of them. Never mind anything, you who are athirst, but getting this blessed Holy Spirit of God, this full baptism of it on your souls. The Lord help you. Amen!

02.09. The World's Need

THE WORLD'S NEED

Matthew 21:28.

—'Son, go work to-day in My vineyard.'

Luke 14:23.

—'And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that My house may be filled.'

WE might have enumerated other texts, teaching the same truths. There are plenty of them, but the general tenor and bearing of the Word of God, especially of the New Testament, is more significant than even direct and isolated texts. It seems to me that no one can disinterestedly and dispassionately study the New Testament without arriving at the conclusion that it is a fundamental principle, underlying the whole, that His light and grace is expansive; that is, God has in no case given His light, His truth, and His grace to any individual soul, without holding that soul responsible for communicating that light and grace to others. Real Christianity is, in its very nature and essence, aggressive. We get this principle fully exhibited and illustrated in the Parables of Jesus Christ. If you will study them, you will find that He has not given us anything to be used merely for ourselves, but that we hold and possess every talent which He has committed to us for the good of others, and for the Salvation of man. If I understand it, I say this is a fundamenal principle of the New Testament.

How wonderfully this principle was exhibited in the lives of the Apostles and early Christians! How utterly careless they seemed to be of everything compared with this—this was the first thing with them everywhere! How Paul, at the very threshold, counted nothing else of any consequence, but willingly, cheerfully gave up every other consideration to live for this; and how he speaks of other Apostles and helpers in the Gospel who had been nigh unto death, and laid down their necks for the work's sake; and we know how he travelled, worked, prayed, wept, and suffered, bled and died, for this one end. And so with the early Christians, who were scattered through the persecutions, how they went everywhere preaching the Word; how earnest and zealous they were, even after the Apostolic age, we learn from ecclesiastical history—how they would push themselves in everywhere; how they made converts, and won real, self-denying followers even in kings' courts; how they would not be kept out, and could not be put down, and could not be hindered or silenced. 'These Christians are everywhere,' said one of their bitterest persecutors. Yes, they were instant in season and out of season; they won men and women on every hand, to the vexation and annoyance of those who hated them. Like their Master, they could not be hid; they could not be repressed; so aggressive, so constraining, was the spirit which inspired and urged them on.

It becomes a greater puzzle every day to me, coming in contact with individual souls, how people read their Bibles! They do not seem to understand what they read. Well might a Philip or an angel come to them and say, 'Understandest thou what thou readest?' Oh! friends, study your New Testament on this question, and you will be alarmed to find to what an awful extent you are your brother's keeper—to what an awful and alarming extent God holds you responsible for the Salvation of those around you.

I want to glance, FIRST, at our call to work for God; and, SECONDLY, at two or three indispensable qualifications for successful labour.

And, first, as I have just said, we are called by the Word not only in these direct passages, but by the underlying principle running through it all, and laying upon us the obligation to save men. In fact, the world is cast upon us: we are the only people who CAN save the unconverted.

Oh! I wish I could get this thought thoroughly into your minds. It has been, perhaps, one of the most potent, with respect to any little service I have rendered in the vineyard—the thought, that Jesus Christ has nobody else to represent Him here but us Christians—His real people: nobody else to work for Him. These poor people of the world, who are in darkness and ignorance, have nobody else to show them the way of mercy. If we do not go to them with loving earnestness and determination to rescue them from the grasp of the great enemy; if we do not, by the power of the Holy Ghost, bind the strong man and take his goods, who is to do it? God has devolved it upon us. I say this is an alarming and awful consideration.

Secondly, we are called by the Spirit. The very first aspiration, as I said the other night, of a newly-born soul is after some other soul. The very first utterance, after the first burst of praise to God for deliverance from the bondage of sin and death, is a prayer gasped to the throne for some other soul still in darkness. And is not this the legitimate fruit of the Spirit? Is not this what we should expect? I take any one here, who has been truly saved, to record if the first gushings of his soul, after his own deliverance, was not for somebody else—father, mother, child, brother, sister, friend? Oh! yes, some of you could not go to sleep until you had written to a distant relative, and poured out your soul in anxious longings for his Salvation; you could not take your necessary food until you had spoken or written to somebody in whose soul you were deeply interested. The Spirit began at once to urge you to seek for souls; and so it is frequently the last cry of the Spirit in the believer's soul before it leaves the body. You have sat beside many a dying saint, and what has been the last prayer? Has it been anything about self, money, family, circumstances? Oh! those things are now all left behind, and the last expressed anxiety has been for some prodigal soul outside the kingdom of God. When the light of eternity comes streaming upon the soul, and its eyes get wide open to the value of souls, it neither hears nor sees anything else! It goes out of time into eternity, praying as the Redeemer did, for the souls it is leaving behind. This is the first and last utterance of the Spirit in the believer's soul on earth; and oh! if Christians were only true to the promptings of this blessed Spirit, it would be the prevailing impulse, the first desire and effort all the way through life. It is not God's fault that it is not so. In personal dealing with souls there is no point comes out more frequently than this: nothing which those who have really been converted and have become backsliders in heart more frequently confess and bemoan than their unfaithfulness to the monitions of the Spirit with respect to other souls. In fact, backsliding begins here in thousands of instances. Satan gets people to yield to considerations of ease, propriety,

being out of season, being injudicious, and so on; and they lose opportunities of dealing with souls, and so the Spirit is grieved and grieved. Oh! what numbers of people have confessed this to me. A gentleman, in advanced life, said: ‘When I was a young man, and in my first love, the zeal of the Lord’s house so consumed me that I used to neglect my daily business, and could scarcely sleep at night; but, alas! that was many years ago.’ ‘Was it not better with you then than now?’ I asked; and the tears came welling up into his eyes. Oh, yes! the Lord says of him, ‘I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown; Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the first-fruits of His increase.’ And, alas! there are many such to-day. They have it all to do over again; they have to repent and do their first works; they have to come back and get forgiven, and washed, and saved, if they are to go into the kingdom on high, all for want of systematically and resolutely obeying the urgings of the Holy Spirit towards their fellow-men.

Now, you have, some of you, been hearing, the last few Sundays, about grieving the Spirit, and about being filled with the Spirit; and some of you are puzzled as to how you ought to wait—whether you ought to go on with your lawful avocations and wait. I say: My friends, I could quite justify the position I took up last Sunday, but I will not stop, for I do not care about circumstantials; but mind, this is the great point—you must so wait, wherever it may be—so plead, and wrestle, and believe—SO THAT YOU GET IT. Then I care not whether it be in Jerusalem, in the Upper Room, or anywhere else—only, get it. Don’t let us lose the substance in quibbling about the way. Wait in that way congenial to your present circumstances; but, Oh! wait for it until you get it, for this is the life of your souls, and the life of many souls, perchance, besides yours. You want this spirit—the spirit that yearns over the souls of your fellow-men; to weep over them as you look at them in their sin, and folly, and misery; the spirit that cannot be satisfied with your own enjoyments or with feeling that you are safe, or even that your children are safe; but that yearns over every living soul while there is one left unsaved, and can never rest satisfied until it is brought into the kingdom.

Such are the urgings of the Spirit; and if people would only be obedient to them, they would never lose these urgings. Why, what an anomaly it is! Does it look reasonable, or like God’s dealings, that people should begin so strong, like the old man felt when he was young, and, instead of waving stronger, and having this holy zeal and desire increased, get weaker and weaker, and less and less? Does it look like God’s way of doing things? Oh, no! This eclipse is through grieving and quenching the Spirit.

Now, my friend, you are called by the Spirit to this work. Obey the call—DO IT. Never mind if it chokes you—do it. Say, ‘I had better die in obedience than live in disobedience.’ Oh! these everlasting likes and dislikes. ‘I don’t like to speak to that person,’ ‘I so dislike writing that letter.’ ‘Oh! you don’t know what might be the consequences.’ Never mind the consequences—do it. God will stand between you and consequences; and, if He lets you suffer, never mind—then suffer; but obey the voice of the Spirit. There would have been thousands of souls saved if all those who have had these urgings had obeyed them. Pray, where do these urgings come from? Do they come from your own evil hearts? Then you are better than the Apostle. Separated from the Spirit that dwells in you, and disunited from Christ, your living Head, you are selfish, devilish. Then where do these urgings come from? Do they come from the Devil? Satan, then, would indeed be divided against himself. Where do they come from? It is the Spirit of the living God that is urging

you to come out and seek to save the lost. Will you obey these urgings? Will you give up your reasonings? Will you give up your likes and dislikes, and OBEY? If you will, then He will come to you more and more, till, like David, you will feel the interests of His kingdom to be more to you than meat or drink, than silver or gold. Nay, you will become like him who said, ‘The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up.’

But, further, we are called to this work by what He has done for us. And what is that? Oh! you say, I cannot tell. No, no; we shall have to get home first, and then we shall never be able to tell. We shall never be able to cast up that sum, not even for the gratification of the angels. That will remain an unexplored quantity for ever, what He has done for us! We shall have to find out what it would have been to have been lost! and what it is to be saved in all its fullness and eternity, before we can tell what He has done for us!

What has He done for us? Oh! if we had a tithe of the love to sinners that He had for us, of His forbearing patience, of His persevering effort, when He followed us day and night, reasoned and reasoned with us, wooed and allured us, what could we not do?

I remember reading, somewhere, the story of a nobleman who was (I think) a backslider. He was stopping at some country inn, and he went up into a room in which, over the mantelpiece, there was a very good picture of the Crucifixion by a good old master, and under it was written, ‘I suffered this for thee—what hast thou done for Me?’ This question went home. It struck deep. He thought—Yes, what indeed? He went out into the stables to his horses, to try to get rid of the uncomfortable impression, but he could not forget it. A soft, pathetic voice seemed to follow him—‘I suffered this for thee—what hast thou done for Me!’ At last it broke him down, and he went to his knees. He said: ‘True, Lord, I have never done anything for Thee, but now I give myself and my all to Thee, to be used up in Thy service.’ And have you never heard that voice in your soul, as you have been kneeling at the Cross? Did you ever gaze upon that illustrious sufferer, and hear His voice, as you looked back into the paltry past? ‘What hast thou done for Me?’

Now, there have been, at the least, something like three hundred and fifty people, who have come forward, so far, in these services, professing to give themselves afresh and fully to Jesus. I am sure, in the main, they have been sincere. They have come for the witness of the Spirit to their adoption, and for power for service. Now, friends, I want to know what this is to come to—what is to be the end of it?

What are you going to do, brother?

What are you going to do? And sister, too. Is it going to die out in sentiment? Is it going to evaporate in sighs and wishings, and end in ‘I CANNOT’? God forbid! What are you GOING TO DO? What HAVE you been doing for Him the last week? Ask yourselves. You say—‘Well, I have read my Bible more.’ Very good, so far as it goes. What have you read it for? ‘Well,’ you say, ‘to get to know the Lord’s will, and to get instruction and comfort.’ Aye, exactly, but that is all for yourself, you see. ‘I have prayed a great deal.’ Very good. I wish everybody would pray. The Apostles say all men everywhere ought to pray. What for? ‘I have been asking the Lord for great things.’ Very good, praise the Lord; but those are for yourself, mainly. If you have been led out in agonizing supplication for souls, thank God for it, and go on, as the Apostle says, ‘watching thereunto, with all perseverance,’ ‘praying in the Holy Ghost’; but if it has been merely praying to

get all you can for yourself, what profit is that to the Lord? But you say—'I am bringing up my family.' Exactly; so are the worldly people around you, but what for? For God or for yourself? Oh, let us look at these things, friends. I am afraid a great deal of the religion is a mere transition of the selfishness of the human heart from the world to religion. I am afraid a great deal of the religion of this day ends in getting all you can and doing as little as you can—like some of your servants. You know the sort, who will do no more than they are forced—just get through, because they are hired. There is a great deal of that kind of service in these days, both towards man and towards God.

Now, friends, what have you been doing for HIM—for the promotion of His blessed, glorious, saving purposes in the world? What have you been denying yourself for the sake of His kingdom? What labour have you gone through of mind, or brain, or heart? How many letters have you written? How many people have you spoken to? How many visits have you made? What self-denying labour have you been doing for Him who has done (as you say) so much for you? What have you been suffering for Him? Have you been trying in some measure to fill up behind the measure of His sufferings 'for His body's sake, the church?' Have you been carrying the sins and sorrows of a guilty world on your heart before God, and pleading with Him for His own name's sake, to pour out His Spirit upon the ungodly multitudes outside, and to quicken half-asleep professors inside? Have you been subjecting yourself to reproach and contempt—not only from the world, but from half-hearted professors and Pharisees, bearing the Cross, enduring the shame of unkind reproaches in living and striving to save them? Oh, what have you been doing, brother and sister?

Come, now, friends, I want a practical result. He suffered that for you. He is up yonder, interceding for you. Five bleeding wounds He always bears in the presence of His Father for you. If He were to forget you for a single moment, or cease His intercession, what would happen? What are you doing for Him? He has left you an example that you should follow His steps. What were they? They were blood-tracked; they were humiliated steps. They were steps scorned by the world. He was ignored, and traduced, and rejected of men. He had not where to lay His head. He carried in His body and in His soul the sorrows and sufferings of all our race. He was a man of sorrows—not His own. He had no reason to be sorrowful. He was the Father's own beloved, and He knew it, but He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. The griefs of this poor, lost, half-damned world He bore, and they were sometimes so intolerable that they squeezed the blood out of His veins. Have you been following in His footsteps, in any measure? He lived not for Himself. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and took upon Him the form of a servant. What are you doing? Oh! my friends, up, up, and be doing. Begin, if you have not begun—begin to-day. Ask Him to baptize you with His Spirit, and let you begin at once to follow Him in the regeneration of the Spirit. You are called by what He did for you!

Then, you are called by the wants of the world. I have said so much about this at other times that I will not say more now, only methinks it is a theme that is never exhausted, and never will be while there are any more sinners to save. Oh! the wants of the world! To me it is an overwhelming, a prodigious thought, that He shed His Blood for every soul of man, and that, as He hung there, He saw, under all the vileness, and sin, and ruin of the Fall—the human soul created originally in His own image, and capable of infinite and eternal development and progress. The soul to be rescued, washed, redeemed, saved, sanctified, and glorified—He saw this glorious jewel, and He gave HIMSELF for it. Look at these souls. There is not one of them so mean, or vile, or base, but can be

rescued by the power of His Spirit, and by His living, glorious Gospel brought to bear upon them. The Saviour, quoting from the Prophets, says, ‘Ye are gods’ (and adds), ‘the Scriptures cannot be broken.’ He had no such little, mean, insignificant estimate of the worth of human souls, as some people have nowadays, who consign whole generations to Hell without any bowels of mercy or compassion. Oh! the Lord fill us with the pity of Jesus Christ, who, when He saw the multitudes, wept over them.

O friends, think of one such soul! What is your gold, or houses, or lands—what your respectability, what your reputation, what all the prizes of this world? We talk about it, but who realizes it—who, WHO?—the value of one precious, immortal soul saved, redeemed, sanctified? Oh, the wants of the world! They are dying, THEY ARE DYING! When people come to me with their fastidious objections, I say—‘My friends, all I know is—souls are dying, dying.’

If your homes were being decimated by the cholera, you would not be very particular about the means you used to stay it, and if anybody came with objections to the roughness of your measures, you would say, ‘the people are dying, they are dying,’ and that would be the end of all argument. I say, they are dying, and they ARE to be saved. Satan is getting them: I want God to have them. Jesus Christ has bought them. He was the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. They belong to Him, and He shall have every one I can reach, and every one I can inspire others to reach also. The world is dying. Do you believe it? You are called by the wants of the world. Begin nearest home if you like, by all means, I have little faith in those people’s ministrations who go abroad after others, while their own are perishing at their firesides. Begin at home, but do not end there. ‘Oh! yes,’ people say, ‘begin at home,’ but they end there; you never hear of them anywhere else, and it comes to very little what they do at home, after all. God has ordained that the two shall go together. Get them saved by all means, but get somebody else saved as well. Set yourself to work for God. Go to Him to ask Him how to do it. Go to Him for the equipment of power and then begin. Never mind how you tremble. I dare say your trembling will do more good than if you were ever so brave. Never mind the tears. I wish Christians would weep the Gospel into people; it would often go deeper than it does. Never mind if you do stammer. They will believe you when it comes from the heart. They will say, ‘He talked to me quite natural,’ as a man said, some time ago—wondering that he should be talked to about religion in a natural way; but mind, no mock feeling, for they will detect it in a minute. Go to the closet until you get filled with the Spirit, and then go and let it out upon them. Finney says ‘I went and let my heart out on the people.’ Get your heart full of the living water and then open the gates and let it flow out. Look them in the face and take hold of them lovingly by the hand and say, ‘My friend, you are dying, you are going to everlasting death. If nobody has ever told you till now—I have come to tell you. My friend, you have a precious soul. Is it saved?’ They can understand that! not beginning in a roundabout way, but talking to them straight: ‘Do you ever think about your precious soul? Is it saved? Are your sins pardoned? Are you ready to die?’ Your rich neighbours and your servant-girls and your stable-men alike, can understand that. A lady said to my daughter, ‘I have begun talking to people about their souls in quite a different way to what I used. I begin asking them if they do not know they are sinners and if ready to die, and it produces quite a different effect.’ For one reason she has her own heart full of the Love and Spirit of God, and that burns her words in. Begin in that way and see what God will do through you, for, of course, I only recognize you as the instrumentality which He has chosen, and those who reflect upon the instrumentality reflect upon His wisdom. You go and

put your hand to the plough and He will give you strength to push it along. The Lord help you to go home thinking about the wants of the world, and next Sabbath we will consider the qualifications for labour.

02.10. The Holy Ghost

THE HOLY GHOST

Luke 24:49.

—‘And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.’

Acts 1:8.

—‘But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.’

FRIENDS who were present at former services will remember our line of thought, without my stopping to recapitulate. My chief reason for taking up this subject again, after having preached four sermons on it, is to meet the difficulties of some whom I believe to be anxious and honest inquirers. Taking those who have written and spoken to me as representatives of a class, it occurred to me that there might be many others in a similar state of mind, and it is a great joy to me if the Lord uses me to meet real difficulties, and to help those who are exercised by them into a higher state of grace, and a more thorough and complete devotion to the Lord. This is my end—God is my witness—in every service.

Now, I do not want to make any reflections, and will not do so any further than I can help; but in dealing with such a subject we cannot avoid this, to a certain extent, as I have said before; if the truth reveals error, and if trying to get into a better track necessarily in some measure reflects on the old track—we cannot help it, and we must not eschew the former for the latter. It must be manifest, I think, to every spiritual and thoughtful Christian that there is a great want somewhere in connexion with the preaching of the Gospel, and the instrumentalities of the church at large. That there are many blessed exceptions I joyfully and gladly admit. No one hails them with greater gladness than I do. That there are blessed green spots here and there in the wilderness is quite true, and when these are gathered together and descanted on in articles, they look very nice, and we are apt to take the flattering unction to our souls that things are not so bad after all; but, when we come to travel the country over and find how few and far between these green spots are, and hear what a tide of lamentation and mourning reaches us all round the land as to the deadness, coldness, and dearth of Christian churches, we cannot help feeling that there is a GREAT WANT SOMEWHERE! This is not only my opinion, but it is almost universally admitted, that, with the enormous expenditure of means, the great amount of human effort, the multiplication of instrumentalities during the past century, there has not been a corresponding result.

People say to me, on every hand, we have meetings without number, services, societies, conventions, conferences, but what comes of them all, comparatively? And I may just say here that numbers of ministers and clergymen, in private conversation, admit the same thing. In fact, none are more ready to admit this comparative lack of results than many dear spiritual ministers. They say, when talking with us behind the scenes—‘Yes, it is a sad fact. I think I preach the truth. I

pray about it. I am anxious for results, but, alas! alas! the conversions are but few and far between.' And then, not only are those conversions few, but in the mass of instances superficial—we should expect from such a putting of the truth as that we have been reading about, numerous and continual turnings to the Lord as in those days—we should expect men coming out openly from sin and from God-dishonouring courses, businesses, and professions—coming out from fashionable and worldly circles, abjuring the world, and literally and absolutely following the Christ as in those days. That is what we have a right to expect, and yet how comparatively rare they are, so that when people do this, there is quite a commotion, and it is talked about all over the land. Now I say this is universally admitted, and it behoves us to ask before God and with an earnest heart-yearning, desiring to improve this state of things, Where is the lack, what is the want?

Now note, secondly, this want is not the truth. Oh! what a great deal of talk we have about the truth, and not any too much. I would not yield to any man or woman in this audience in my love for this Bible. I love this Word and regard it as the standard of all faith and practice, and our guide to live by; but it is not enough of itself. The great want is not the truth, for you see facts would contradict this theory. If it were the truth, then there would be no lack at this day, compared with other times, because we never had so much of the truth. There never was so much preaching of the truth, or such a wide dissemination of the Word of God, yet, comparatively, where are the results?

Further, not only as to quantity, but as to quality am I discouraged. Not only are there comparatively few conversions, but a great many of these are of a questionable kind. We should not only ask—are people converted, but what are they converted to? What SORT OF SAINTS ARE THEY? Because, I contend, you had far better let a man alone in sin than give him a sham conversion, and make him believe he is a Christian when he is nothing of the kind. So you see we must look after the quality as well as the quantity, and I fear, we have an awful amount of spurious production, and it behoves us—and I will, for one, if I were to be crucified for it to-morrow—be true to what the Spirit of God has taught me on this point, I will never pander to things as they are for fear of the persecution which follows trying to put them right. God forbid!

Then, I say, the lack is not truth. There will be thousands of sermons preached to-day—the truth and nothing but the truth. Nobody will pretend to say they were not in perfect keeping with the Word of God; and yet they will be perfect failures, and nobody will know it better than they who preach them! These are facts.

I was talking, on this point, a while ago, with a good man, who said, 'Ah! yes, I have not seen a conversion in my church for these two years.' Now, what was the reason? There was a reason, and I am afraid many might say the same. Yet there are the unconverted. They come to be operated upon. Take a church where there is a congregation of, say, eight hundred or one thousand, suppose with a membership of two hundred or three hundred.

What becomes of the five hundred or seven hundred unbelievers, who come and go, Sunday after Sunday, like a door on its hinges, neither the better nor worse?—nay, God grant it might be so, but they are worse. They get enough light to light them down to damnation, but they do not get enough power to lift them into Salvation. What IS THE MATTER? There must be something wrong. Will you account for it? It ought to be accounted for! It ought not so to be. God is not changed. Surely

He is as anxious for the Salvation of men now as He ever was. Human hearts are not changed; they are neither better nor worse; they are depraved, vile, devilish—just the same. The Gospel is exactly the same power it ever was, rightly experienced, lived, and preached. It is still the power of God unto Salvation. Then what is the matter? The truth is preached. The people hear it, and yet they remain as they were. Where is the lack?

Now, I say, and I most unhesitatingly assert, that the great want is POWER—this power of which we have been reading. And I want to remark, thirdly, that this power is as distinct, and deftnite, and separate, a gift of God, as was this Book, as was the Son, or any other gift which He has given us.

It is distinctly recognized, not only in our texts, but, as we read to you again and again, as a distinct and definite gift accompanying the efforts of those who live on the conditions on which God can give it to them. We cannot explain this gift, but it is the power of the Holy Spirit of God in the soul of the speaker accompanying His word, making it cut and pierce to the dividing asunder soul and spirit. ‘You shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.’ ‘Until you be endued with’—not the truth, not faith (they had faith before that), but-‘power’; and, as He says in another place, ‘I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.’ Though they may stone you, as they did Stephen, they shall be cut to the heart, and made to feel the power of your testimony.

Now, I find people who go to work, which is all right, because the power comes to us in obedient faith; but they go trusting in their own efforts. They are without this endowment of power, and they see no result. The work is a comparative failure. Oh! what numbers of people have come to me who have been at work in different directions, in churches, as ministers, elders, deacons, leaders, Sabbath-school teachers, tract distributors, and the like, confessing that they had been working for more or less lengthened periods, and had seen comparatively little result. They say, ‘Do you think this is right? Do you think I ought to go on?’ Go on, assuredly, but not in the same track. Go on, most decidedly, but seek a fresh inspiration. There is something wrong, or you would have seen some fruit of your labour—not all the fruit. God does not give to any of us to see it all; but we do see enough to assure us that the Holy Ghost is accompanying our testimony. God’s people have always done that when they have worked in conformity with the conditions on which the power can be given.

Now, this is how I account for the want of results —the want of the direct, pungent, enlightening, convicting, restoring, transforming power of the Holy Ghost; and I care not how gigantic the intellect of the agent, or how equipped from the school of human learning, I would rather have a Hallelujah Lass, a little child, with the power of the Holy Ghost, hardly able to put two sentences of the Queen’s English together, to come to help, bless, and benefit my soul, than I would have the most learned divine in the kingdom without it, for it is ‘not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit.’ Oh! that you would learn it. When you have learnt that, you will be made: when you experience it, you will lay hold on God. It is not by might, any kind of might—might or intellect, or learning, or eloquence, or position, or influence; it is not by might, nor by power—man’s power—of any sort, but by My Spirit. That is as true as it ever was. HERE IS THE SECRET OF THE CHURCH’S FAILURE! She is like Israel of old. She hath multiplied her defenced cities and her palaces, but she hath forgotten the God of Israel, in whom her strength is. If you will read the history of the church from the beginning you will find that true which I say, that just to the degree that the church

has increased in the material she has decreased in the spiritual. I do not say it ought to be so; I do not say that is a necessity. I only give you a significant fact that it has been so.

You say—'How do you account for it?' I account for it because we poor, wretched, tiny, helpless creatures, although we cannot get anything good in the creature, yet put some TRUST in it. But when God teaches us that we have nothing to trust in, when He makes us realize our own nothingness and utter helplesness, and gives us hold of Him with the grasp of despair, then we will begin to be of some use—and never till them. It is God worketh in us and by us. The Apostle labours all the way through to show and convince everybody that it was God in him and not of himself at all. Though he could have preached with enticing words of man's wisdom, and, no doubt, had many a temptation to do it, as everybody has who has dipped into the flowery paths of human rhetoric and learning, yet he eschewed this as he would the Devil. He said, no!—'this one thing I do'—putting aside absolutely all else, he went on straight to that work, till they cut his head off.

I believe you do perceive; but, if you do not, take the Book and examine it yourself. Be at the trouble. You will not get at the mind of the Lord without a great deal of trouble on these matters of power, spiritual union, and the like. Take the Bible with you on your knees before the Lord; show Him the words, and say, 'Now, Lord, show me the meaning of this.' Wait, and there will come a voice from the excellent glory. There will come light as from the Shekinah, which will reveal it in your spiritual consciousness, and you will thus know that thing for ever. You will be wiser than your teachers with respect to that particular point.

Further, you say, 'Can we have this power equally with the early disciples?' I say, reasoning by analogy, assuming that what God has done in the past He will continue to do in the future, is it not likely that He will give it to us, because we equally need it?—we poor things, in our day, as they did in theirs, we equally need it: first, because the character of the agents is the same. We are very much like them, and they were very much like us. Thank God. It has often encouraged me. If they had been men of gigantic intellects and extraordinary education, training, and position; if they had possessed all human equipment and qualifications, we might have looked back through the ages in despair, and said, 'I can never be such as they were.' Look what they were, naturally, apart from this gift of power. The Holy Ghost has taken care to give us their true characters. They were men of like passions, weaknesses, tendencies, liability to fall, with ourselves—just such poor, frail, weak, easily-tripped-up creatures, and, in many instances, unbelieving and disobedient, before Pentecost. Now, I say this is encouraging for us all.

You remember what Jesus said to Mary—'Go and tell My disciples AND PETER.' Mary, perhaps, would have left Peter out after his shameful denial of the Lord; for fear of this, Jesus said, 'Go and tell My disciples AND PETER.'

Ah! there are some here saying, 'But Peter was not so bad as I am.' Well, we don't know anything about that, but, whether you are worse or not, the Holy Ghost is equal to the emergency. He can cure you. He can baptize you with His power. You may have denied Him, if not as Peter did, yet practically as badly. It makes no difference to God whether you have been a little bad or very bad; whether you have denied Him once or thrice, or whether you have denied Him with oaths and curses. If you will only come and comply with the conditions, He will look on you, heal you, and baptize you with power. Did they not all forsake Him and flee, except a few poor faithful women?

All the world forsook Him and fled in the hour of His extremity. ‘Ah!’ you say, ‘well, I have done the same myself. I would not watch with Him one hour. I have betrayed Him before my friends and acquaintances in the world, where I have been brought into circumstances that have tested my fidelity. My courage has failed, and I have failed to witness for Him.’ Yes, I know and agree with you that it was base ingratitude. You were a traitor, indeed, but still, if you will come back. ‘Peter,’ and repent, and do your first works, He will receive you—baptize you with power. Oh! what they were before Pentecost, and what they were after! Poor Peter, who could not stand the questionings of a servant maid, who could not dare to have it said that he was one of the despised Nazarenes, what a valiant soldier he afterwards became for the Lord Jesus Christ, and how tradition says he was crucified for his Master at the last. Anyway, we know he was a faithful and valiant soldier to the end of his journey.

Now, this baptism will transform you as it did them; it will make you all prophets and prophetesses, according to your measure. Will you come and let Him baptize you? Will you learn, once and for ever, that it is not a question of human merit, strength, or deserving at all, but simply a question of submission, obedience, faith?

Then we need it because not only are the agents the same, but our work is essentially the same.

It may differ in its outward manifestations because we live in an age of greater toleration, but it is just the same in essence, and I do not know, as to the manifestation, when you come to do it in Apostolic fashion, with the Apostolic spirit, whether you do not get very much the same Apostolic treatment. They gnash upon you with their teeth, and do as much as the law will let them, and sometimes a little more, in the way of stoning and persecuting you. The great thing to be done by this power of God is to subdue the naturally evil, wicked, and rebellious heart of man. Now God alone is able to do that. That is a superhuman work. You may enlighten a man’s intellect, civilize his manners, reform his habits, make him a respectable, honest, industrious member of society, without the power of God, but you cannot transform HIS SOUL. That is too much for any human reformer. That is the prerogative of the Holy Ghost, and I have not a shadow of a doubt that the eternal day will reveal every other kind of work to be wood, hay, stubble. All the sham conversions, all the people whose lives and opinions have been changed by anything short of this power will be wood, hay, stubble. It is the prerogative of the Spirit of God. Therefore, God never pretends to do it by any other means; and all the way through the Bible this power is ascribed to the Spirit of God. Therefore, we want this Spirit to do this work. What! you set yourself to enlighten a darkened human soul, to convince a hardened, rebellious sinner, to convert a rebel in arms against God, with an inveterate hatred in the very core of his soul against God and all about God. You set yourself to bring down that—to transform that evil, wicked heart, to subdue that soul to submission and obedience!—you try it, try it without the Spirit of God. Oh! no, you want that Spirit. You want the same measure of that Spirit, just the same, which Paul had. And what is our work? To go and subjugate the world to Jesus; everybody we can reach, everybody we can influence, and bring them to the feet of Jesus, and make them realize that He is their lawful King and lawgiver; that the Devil is a usurper, and that they are to come and serve Christ all the days of their lives. Dare any of us think of it without this equipment of power? Talk about ‘Can we have it?’—we are of no use without it. What can we do without it? This is the reason of the effeteness of so much professed Christianity; there is no Holy Ghost in it. It is all rotten. It is like a very pretty corpse—you cannot say there is this wanting or the other wanting; it is a perfect form, but dead. It is like a good

galvanic battery. It is all right—perfect in all its parts—but when you touch it there is no effect—there is no fire or shock. What is the matter? It only wants the fire—the power.

O friends, we want the power that we may be able to go and stretch ourselves upon the dead in trespasses and sins, and breathe into him the breath of spiritual life. We want to be able to go and touch his eyes that he may see, and speak to the dead and deaf with the voice of God and make them hear. This is what we want—POWER.

If we equally need it, is it likely that God will withhold it? Why, the Book, rightly read and understood, is full of promise and exhortation to get it. Is it likely that if we are as frail as they were, if the work is the same, is it likely that the God of all grace, and our Father as much as theirs, and as much in sympathy with the souls of men, will withhold it from us? No, no. But our Saviour distinctly told us that He bought it for us—that it was more expedient that His people should have it than that He should remain with them. It is promised to all believers to the end of time. The conditions you know—simply putting away everything that hinders, casting aside every doubtful thing, trampling it in the dust; then a full, whole-hearted surrender to Him, embracing the Cross, embracing His will at all costs and sacrifices, and then a determined march to the upper room at Jerusalem and a determined abiding there until you get it—these are the conditions. Anybody can have it on these terms.

Then, in conclusion, let me remind you—and it makes my own soul almost reel when I think of it—that God holds us responsible. He holds you responsible for all the good you might do if you had it. Do not deceive yourself. He will have the five talents with their increase. He will not have an excuse for one, and you will not dare to go up to the throne, and say, ‘Thou wast a hard Master, reaping where Thou hast not sown, and gathering where Thou hadst not strewn. Thou badest me to save souls when Thou knewest I had not the power.’ What will He say to you? ‘Wicked and slothful servant, out of thine own mouth will I judge thee.

You knew where you could have got the power. You knew the conditions. You might have had it. Where are the souls you might have saved? Where are the children that I would have given you? Where is the fruit?’ O friends, these are solemn and awful realities. If I did not believe them I should not stand here. Oh, what you might do! Who can tell? Who would ever have thought, twenty years ago, when I first raised my voice, a feeble, trembling woman, one of the most timid and bashful the Lord ever saved, the hundreds of precious souls that would be given me? I only refer to myself because I know my own case better than that of another; but, let me ask you—supposing I had held back and been disobedient to the Heavenly vision, what would God have said to me for the loss of all this fruit? Thank God, much of it is already gathered into Heaven, people who have sent me word from their dying beds, that they blessed God they had ever heard my voice, saying that they should wait for me on the other side, prepared to lead me to the throne—what would have become of the fruit? I should not have had it, anyway. They would never have become my crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord. Oh, who can tell what God can do by any man or woman, however timid, however faint, if only fully given up to Him? My brother, He holds you responsible. He holds you responsible, my sister—you, who wrote me about your difficulties and temptations in testifying of Jesus—He holds you responsible. What are you going to do? Ask yourself. It is coming. You believe it. You say you do. Unless you are a confirmed hypocrite, you do believe—that you are going to stand before the throne of His glory. You believe

you are going to stand before Him by and by, when you shall receive according to the things you have done in your body. What shall you say? The world is dying—souls are being damned at an awful rate every day. Men are running to destruction. Torrents of iniquity are rolling down our streets and through our world. God is almost tired of the cry of our sins and iniquities going up into His ears. What are you going to do, brother? What are you going to do? Will you set to work? Will you get this power? Will you put away everything that hinders? Will you have it at all costs?

We had a letter only on Friday, about a gentleman who had been reconverted in the services of The Salvation Army, telling us that he has relinquished an income of £800 a year, in order to keep a conscience void of offence—this is the result of the power of the Holy Ghost. I heard of another gentleman who was invited to a party. After dinner, the card-table was got out, as usual, and when the cards were all spread and everybody was ready to begin, this gentleman jumped up, and pushed it away, and said, 'I have done with this for ever.' The lady who told me said, 'He was down on his knees before we had time to turn round, and was praying for us and for all the house.' 'Oh!' she added, 'you should have seen them.' Yes, of course, every man felt like the people round the Saviour. Every man's own conscience condemned him. 'They went off home, without any more card-playing, or dancing, or wine-drinking that night.' Come out from amongst the ungodly. Testify against them. Reprove them. Entreat them with tears. But be determined to deliver your soul of their blood. God will give you the power, and He holds you responsible for doing this—you people who have been coming here who have received the light. WILL YOU DO IT? If you will, we shall meet again, and rejoice with joy unspeakable. If you do, we shall praise God for ever that He brought us inside the walls of this building, long after it has mouldered into dust. There shall be children and grandchildren, and great grandchildren from you spiritually, if you will only be faithful.

02.11. Salvation Army Publications

Salvation Army Publications BY THE FOUNDER The Founder's Messages. A series of Letters originally intended to be read at weekly gatherings. They contain much of the essence of Salvationism, and are warmly recommended to the Soldiers and friends of The Army everywhere. Cloth. The General's Letters. A series of Letters dealing with various phases of Christian life. They glow with Salvation warmth and fervour. A book to inspire. Cloth.

Salvation Soldiery. Stirring addresses on essentials in true service for Christ. Every page full of burning truth. Illustrated. Cloth.

Sergeant-Major Do-Your-Best of Darkington I; or, The Inner Working of a Salvation Army Corps. In this stirring narrative the characters all have their counterpart in Army life. It is written in a style that carries the reader irresistibly along, and is deeply moving. Cloth.

Religion for every Day. Religion in personal life is discussed in many relationships. Problems are stated and solutions offered. Cloth and Paper.

Love, Marriage, and Home. Volume II of above book. Cloth and Paper. Also Double Volume. Cloth.

Purity of Heart. A fine Collection of Letters on Personal Holiness. There have been many books written on Purity and Holiness of Heart, but there is none that explains more distinctly and concisely, or in plainer language, what Holiness is; what it is not; how it can be obtained, and how retained. Cloth and Paper. The Training of Children. Important to parents. This book shows how to train children for God. Cloth. The Seven Spirits; or, What I teach My Officers. Cloth.

Visions. A remarkable dream and its lessons. Cloth. BY THE ARMY MOTHER

Popular Christianity. A series of stirring lectures. One of the best of Mrs. Booth's works. It was her last, and embodies the fruits of her riper experience and matured convictions on the topics discussed in its pages. Cloth and Paper.

Papers on Godliness. In this book Mrs. Booth corrects the mistaken view that Holiness is beyond the reach of all but a privileged few. She puts the case in a remarkably practical form, bringing the truth close down to everyday life. Cloth.

Life and Death. Stirring addresses to the unsaved. Thoughtful and powerful appeals. 206 pages. Cloth.

Papers on Aggressive Christianity. Series of papers on Christian Warfare. A widely appreciated book. Cloth.

Practical Religion. The man or woman who desires to win others to the service of Christ, cannot do better than study earnestly the wonderful addresses in this volume. Cloth and Paper. BY THE GENERAL

Talks with Officers. A series of illuminating interviews on important aspects of service on The Salvation Army. They contain pronouncements on vital matters concerning Army principle, method, and practice. Paper.

Papers on Life and Religion. A series of articles dealing with many of the facts of existence as measured by the well-known standards of Army teaching. They are well within the grasp of the least educated, and not above the comprehension of persons little acquainted with Biblical truth. Cloth. Our Master; or, Thoughts for Salvationists about their Lord. A series of studies from the earthly life of Jesus. A work that compels thought, helps reason, and adds to courage. Open the book where you will you discover something applying helpfully to yourself and your circumstances. Cloth.

Bible Battle-Axes. Twenty stirring and illuminating chapters. The book exalts the Bible as the great guide of thought and life. A mine of treasure for teachers and preachers. Cloth.

Servants of All. With unique understanding the General reveals the inner motive and outward expression of that service for God and man rendered by Salvation Army Officers. Cloth. On the Banks of the River. A touching history of the last days on earth of the beloved Army Mother. Beautifully told, the story reveals Mrs. Booth's indomitable, self-forgetful, and loving spirit. Cloth and Paper.

Books that Bless. If we cannot manage to read all the books we would, we can at least read a review of the best. The General, in his 'Books that Bless,' gives valuable guidance in respect to reading for God's people. 190 pages. Cloth. BY AUTHORITY OF THE GENERAL

Handbook of Salvation Army Doctrine. What The Army believes and teaches is concisely set forth in this volume of 188 pages. A chapter is given on 'Last Things,' including Hell—Heaven—Death and After—Resurrection—Judgment—The Return of Jesus Christ. Also an Appendix deals with Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Cloth Boards and Limp Cloth. BY MRS. BRAMWELL BOOTH

Mothers and the Empire, and Other Addresses to Women. The papers touch upon a wide range of vital subjects from woman's point of view. The author writes from wide experience and out of a heart of sympathy for her fellows. Cloth.

Powers of Salvation Army Officers. A series of addresses setting forth high standards of life and service required of men and women bearing responsibility in the service of The Army. It illuminates the mind and stirs the heart. Cloth.

Friendship with Jesus. This book, which comprises a series of soulful and illuminating addresses, sets forth with unmistakable clearness and conviction The Army's lofty standards both in conduct and aim. Cloth.

Likeness to God. A series of papers on the life of Full Salvation and kindred subjects. The author's wide experience is drawn upon in this compact volume in setting forth the simplicities and beauties of the Divine life in the souls of the people. BY COMMISSIONER HOWARD Standards of Life and Service. Addresses delivered at Central Holiness Meetings. Cloth and Paper.

Fuel for Sacred Fire. A work on Sanctification. Written just before the author's death. It contains the best of the Commissioner's heart and mind in respect to the subject of Full Salvation. Cloth.

BY COLONEL BRENGLE When the Holy Ghost is Come. The work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the child of God. Cloth.

Helps to Holiness. Showing how to attain immediate enjoyment of Bible Holiness. Cloth.

Heart-Talks on Holiness. Experience and plain guidance in respect to the Life of Holiness. Cloth. The Way of Holiness. An invaluable work, suitable for both seekers and teachers. Cloth. The Soul-Winner's Secret. Helps to power in service. Cloth.

Love-Slaves. 'It is an encouraging message calculated to incite us to seek after the highest things.'—THE GENERAL. Cloth.

(All the works by Colonel Brengle may be obtained in a uniform crimson cloth binding.) BY MRS. COLONEL BRENGLE The Army Drum. Stories illustrating the service or the Drum in the warfare of The Salvation Army. Cloth.

Half-Hours with My 'Guide.' Thoughts upon some of the portions of 'The Soldier's Guide.' Blue Leather with Blue under Gold Edges, or Red Leather with Red under Gold Edges, also Cloth.

What Hinders You? Dealing with common obstacles encountered by persons seeking Full Salvation. Cloth or Paper.

ARMY BIOGRAPHIES

William Booth, the Founder of The Salvation Army. By HAROLD BEGBIE. A comprehensive and thrilling life-story, intensely arresting, a wonderful story of a wonderful man, and incidentally a record of the Genesis of The Salvation Army. Profusely illustrated. 2 volumes. Cloth, £2 2s.

General Booth, Life of the Founder. By Commissioner RAILTON. Cloth and Paper.

Catherine Booth, the Mother of The Salvation Army. By Commissioner BOOTH-TUCKER. The story of the Army Mother and of her wonderful labours for God and the people. This book has exercised a powerful influence in the lives of men and women in all walks of life. Three volumes profusely illustrated. Half Calf, £2 2s. Cloth, two volumes 16s. ABRIDGED EDITION, containing the bulk of the original matter. Cloth, two volumes, 7s. 6d.

Catherine Booth. A short but delightful sketch of the life of the Army Mother. By Commissioner DUFF. Cloth.

Consul Booth-Tucker. By Commissioner BOOTH-TUCKER, a life-sketch of Emma, the second daughter of the Founder. The story of a victorious life crowded with incessant toil and fighting, which closed tragically, but in triumph. Cloth and Paper.

Miriam Booth. The life-story of Captain Miriam Booth, the General's third daughter, by Mrs Colonel CARPENTER. While youth remains the pure and simple record will be loved. A story of high endeavour, victory, love, and romance. Cloth.

Commissioner Lawley. 'A Living Hallelujah.'—THE GENERAL. By Mrs. Colonel CARPENTER. A delightfully intimate life-sketch of a Christian Missioner, who became one of the Founder's trusted Armour-Bearers in his world campaigns.

Commissioner G.S. Railton. By Commissioner DUFF and Brigadier DOUGLAS. The wonderful life-story of The Army's Pioneer Commissioner. Cloth.

Three Great-Hearts. By Mrs. Colonel CARPENTER. Life-sketches of three prominent Army Social Workers. Commissioner Sturgess, Colonel J. Barker, and Brigadier F. Aspinall. These servants of God and men lived, fought, and died for those who needed them most. Cloth. The Angel Adjutant. By Mrs. Colonel CARPENTER. The life-story of Staff-Captain Kate Lee, who was the instrument used of God in winning the trophies described in Harold Begbie's 'Broken Earthenware.' Cloth.

Elizabeth Swift Brengle. By Brigadier EILEEN DOUGLAS. The life of Mrs. Colonel Brengle, author of a number of Salvation Army works.

Notable Officers of The Salvation Army. By Mrs. Colonel CARPENTER. The sketches in this volume have been brought together in response to many inquiries. They are sent forth with the hope that they may stimulate faith and courage in all who read them to a like devotion in the love and service of the Saviour of the world. Including the lives of Commissioner Howard, Commissioner Rees, Consul Booth-Tucker, Colonel Yuddha Bai, Colonel Alice Barker, Colonel John Dean, Colonel Weerasooriya, Colonel E. Sapsworth, Mrs. Colonel Yamamuro, Lieut.-Colonel David Thomas, Lieut.-Colonel Jacob Junker, and Brigadier von Haartman.

OTHER SALVATION ARMY PUBLICATIONS

Muktifauj; or, Forty Years with The Salvation Army in India and Ceylon. By Commissioner BOOTH-TUCKER. An interesting and informative sketch of The Army's rise and progress in these lands, by The Army's Pioneer Missionary.

Interesting pamphlets by Commissioner BOOTH-TUCKER Jesus in His Home at Nazareth ... Price 6d.

Daily Mottoes for a Month ... 4d.

Pen-Gems from Brother Lawrence ... 1d.

Pen-Gems from Madame Guyon ... 1d.

Pen-Gems from the Bible ... 1d.

India's Millions. By Mrs. BOOTH-TUCKER 1d.

Messages to Messengers. A series of Letters to former Cadets. By Lieut.-Colonel CATHERINE BOOTH. With portrait frontispiece. Cloth.

Joy in Sorrow. A fine collection of Poems selected by the late Captain MIRIAM BOOTH. Specially suitable for a present to people in circumstances of trial or sorrow. Cloth. A Curate's Promise. By JOHN LAW. Three weeks in the life of a Curate, whilst inquiring into Salvation Army Work in London during the Great War. Paper.

Savonaola; the Italian Preacher and Martyr. By Commissioner OLIPHANT. Cloth. The Angel of Kelly's Rints, and Other Stories. By MARGARET ALLEN and EILEEN DOUGLAS. A splendid collection of bright short stories written in dialect. Very suitable for reading at informal Meetings. They cannot fail to interest readers and hearers. Cloth.

Essays and Sketches on Salvation Army Work. A most useful and interesting collection of papers on the work of The Salvation Army. Among the writers are Sir WALTER BESANT, the late Dean FARRAR, CHARLES MORLEY, Esq., ARNOLD WHITE, Esq., ANNIE SWAN, and others. Cloth.

Practical Visionaries. By HUMPHREY WALLIS. With a Foreword by the General. Pen sketches illustrating Salvation Army work amongst the common people. They are vivid pictures drawn from the everyday work of the rank and file of The Army. Cloth. The New Testament Commentary (Salvation Army Edition). Just re-issued. Terse expositions and comments by well-known authorities and scholars, ALFORD, BENSON, EDERSHEIM, ELLICOT, MATTHEW HENRY, TRENCH, WESLEY, and others. Cloth.

Twentieth Century New Testament. In Modern English. Cloth and Paper.

Perfect Love; or, Plain Things for Those Who Need Them. A Treatise on Christian Holiness. By Rev. J.A. WOOD. Cloth.

What Entire Sanctification Is. By Rev. J. WOOD. 1d.

Broken Earthenware; or, Twice-Born Men. By HAROLD BEGBIE. This book tells of miraculous conversions of some of the worst type of men. The ‘Daily Chronicle’ says: ‘In “Broken Earthenware” Mr. Begbie has written a wonderful and convincing book.... It is only the religion which still believes in a miracle that can be of any avail.’ Cloth. The Light of India. By HAROLD BEGBIE. An intensely interesting study of the people of India, with special reference to the great conflict between Hinduism and Christianity. This book shows by interesting narrative that the gospel of Christ meets the need of every people, and is a striking story of missionary work. Cloth.

Forms and Ceremonies. By Commissioner KITCHING. What The Army teaches about sacraments. Paper, 3d. A Complete List, with prices, on application.

SALVATIONIST PUBLISHING AND SUPPLIES, LTD., 117, 119, and 121 Judd Street, King’s Cross, London, W.C.1.

Chapter 29

03.00. PAPERS ON PRACTICAL RELIGION.

PAPERS ON PRACTICAL RELIGION. BY

MRS. BOOTH.

London: S.W. PARTRIDGE AND CO., 9 PATERNOSTER ROW.

BOOK STORES OF THE SALVATION ARMY, 272 WHITECHAPEL ROAD,

CONTENTS. The Training of Children—An Address to Parents Strong Drink versus Christianity Worldly Wordly Amusements and Christianity Heart Backsliding Dealing with Anxious Souls—An Address to Christian Workers “Compel Them to Come In”

Female Ministry; or, Woman’s Right to Preach the Gospel Hot Saints—An Address on Revelation 3:15 : “I would Thou wert Cold or Hot”

Conscience

Aggression The Uses of Trial Prevailing Prayer

PREFACE

IT will be observed that these papers are mostly the reports of addresses delivered at various times, in various places where God has called me to witness for Him. I have frequently been asked to publish them in one volume by those who have listened to me with thankfulness to God and profit to themselves.

Compelled in great measure to desist for a season from public speaking by bodily infirmity, I seize the opportunity to repeat on paper what I have been privileged to express in (to me) brighter days.

I pray that I may thus be allowed to continue my testimony against the attempt, now so prevalent, to serve both God and mammon, and to warn and teach everyone to flee from the wrath to come by avoiding every sin and the very appearance of evil, and by devoting themselves without reserve to the service of God and the salvation of the world; and I trust that He who has given to me these thoughts and words may restore to me the power to speak again and to speak more boldly still.

CATHERINE BOOTH.

3, GORE ROAD, LONDON, E. CHRISTMAS, 1878.

Chapter 30

03.01. The Training of Children

THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN. AN ADDRESS TO PARENTS. MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I feel a special interest in addressing you on the present occasion; a sort of family feeling resulting from a community of interests which is always inspiring. I have sometimes thought, when I have heard men talking to women on their duties as wives and mothers, their trials and difficulties, and so on—"Ah, it is all very good, but you don't know much about it, after all." Now, I do not come to speak to you to■night under this disadvantage, at any rate. I do know something of the things of which I speak; having had a large and young family, I have had some experience of the anxiety, toil, and difficulty required in the training and management of young children. It is because I am so well acquainted with the weight of the trials and duties of maternity that I sympathise so deeply with mothers, and would fain help to lighten their burdens by a little practical advice and instruction.

I presume that all here are agreed as to the responsibility devolving on parents to give some sort of training to their children. There is not a mother here who would think it right to leave her child to grow up without discipline or training of some kind! Then the question for us to consider is, what sort of training does God, and our duty to our children, require from us? In order to get at the answer to this question the first important matter for a parent to settle in her own mind is this: To whom does this child belong? IS IT MINE, OR IS IT THE LORD'S? Surely, this question should not need any discussion, at least by Christian parents! For do we not recognise, even before they are born, that they are peculiarly and exclusively a heritage from the Lord; and when they came into the world, the first effort we put forth was to hold them up and offer them to Him? And again, in our baptismal vows we acknowledged that they belonged to Him, and promised to train them for His glory. Now the keeping of this one fact before the mind of a mother will be the best guiding principle in training, and it is because Christian parents so often forget whose their children are, that they make such mistakes in training them. I say then to you mothers here, settle it in your minds that your child belongs absolutely to God and not to you—that you are only stewards for God, holding your children to nurse them and train them for Him. This responsibility arises—1st. Out of the command and ordination of God. Both under the old and new dispensations, the Lord has, in the most emphatic and solemn manner, laid the obligation on parents to train their children for Him; He commands it, to whom both parents and children exclusively belong.

Secondly—This responsibility arises out of the nature of the relationship between parent and child. The parent is in the most complete sense the owner, the guardian, the director, and controller of the child; its utter helplessness and ignorance when it first comes into the world throws it completely under the power of, and at the discretion of, its parents. The poor little infant has no choice but to be led as its parents lead it—no option but to be directed, trained, and developed physically, mentally, and spiritually as its parents develop develope it; and it is during these early stages of helplessness and ignorance that the impetus is generally given to its future life. There is an old adage that "They who rock the cradle rule the world," and they certainly do; but I am afraid that the world has been very badly ruled, just because those who rock the cradle have not known

how to train the child. Napoleon once said, that the “great want of France was mothers,” and I am afraid we may say to a greater extent than ever before in our history, that the great want of England is mothers—right■minded, able, competent, Christian mothers, who realize their responsibility to God and to their children, and who are resolved at all costs and sacrifices to discharge it.

Thirdly—This responsibility arises out of our ability for the task. We are able to train our children in the way they should go, or God would not have enjoined it upon us. He required every father and mother in Israel to train their children for Him—He admitted of no exception, no excuse; and in the New Testament it is assumed as a first duty with believers to train up their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” The training God requires is a moral training—THE INSPIRING OF THE CHILD WITH THE LOVE OF GOODNESS, TRUTH, AND RIGHTEOUSNESS, and leading him to its practice and exercise in all the duties and emergencies of life.

Now, any parent, however poor, unlearned, or occupied, can do this if only she has the grace of God in her heart, and will take the TROUBLE. Training a child in the way he should go does not necessarily imply a scholastic training. All parents have not the power to educate their children, nor to do much for them temporally; they cannot put them in a position to get much of this world’s goods, but these things are not included in right training. A child may be trained for the highest moral and spiritual development without these; and, where there is natural ability, for the highest mental development also. This is abundantly established in the histories of some of our great men. We know what kind of homes some of them were trained in, what humble parentage some of them had, what little learning they had in their early days, but, nevertheless, they were trained in the way they should go, and having been set going in the right path, when they came to mature years they did not fail to help themselves. No poor parent need be discouraged because he cannot educate his children in the popular sense.

God does not require of us more than we can do, and if we train our children, as far as is possible to us, in the way they should go, they will then go in that way for themselves; God’s providence and spirit and their own bias will guide them on and on, as it has done many a son of poor parents, to prosperity, usefulness, and honour in this world, as well as to eternal glory in the next.

But, Fourthly—This responsibility is increased by the opportunity which parents possess, and especially mothers, to train their children. Being thrown constantly with them, having them continually under our eye by night and by day, when no one else is there, being acquainted with all their peculiarities of disposition, and entering into all their joys and sorrows, what splendid opportunities occur daily for pruning, correcting, inspiring, leading and encouraging them as the case may require.

Then, Fifthly—What an awful responsibility arises out of the influence which God has given us over our children. This influence is IRRESISTIBLE until parents by their own injudicious conduct fritter it away. A little child who has been rightly trained has unbounded, unquestioning confidence in its parents; what father or mother says, is to it, an end of all controversy, it never seeks for further proof. This influence wisely used will never wear out, but will spread like an atmosphere around the child’s moral nature, moulding and fashioning all his future life. I sometimes meet with parents who tell me that at the age of sixteen sixteeen or seventeen, their children have become quite unmanageable, and that they have lost all their influence over them. I cannot tell you which I

pity most, such children, or such parents. One of the worst signs of our times is the little respect which children seem to have for their parents. There are numbers of boys and girls of from twelve to seventeen years of age, over whom their parents have little or no control. But how has this come to pass? Did these children leap all at once from the restraints and barriers of parental affection and authority? Oh no, it has been the result of the imperceptible growth of years of insubordination and want of proper discipline—the gradual loss of parental influence until they have thrown it off altogether, and resolved to do as they pleased. Hence the terrible exhibitions we have of youthful depravity, lawlessness, and rebellion.

Well, I think I hear some mother say: I see, I feel my responsibility, and I long to train my children in the way they should go, but How am I to do it?

First let us look at the meaning of the word Train. It does not mean merely to teach. Some parents seem to have the notion that all they have to do in training their children aright is to teach them; so they cram them with religious sentiment and truth, making them commit to memory the Catechism, large portions of Scripture, a great many hymns, and so on. All very good as far as it goes, but which may all be done without a single stroke of real training such as God requires, and such as the hearts of our children need. Nay, this mere teaching, informing the head without interesting or influencing the heart, frequently drives children off from God and goodness, and makes them hate, instead of love, everything connected with religion. In the early part of my married life, when my dear husband was travelling very much from place to place, I was frequently thrown into the houses of leading families in churches for three or four weeks at a time, and I used to say to myself, “How is it that these children seem frequently to have a more inveterate dislike for religion and religious things, than the children of worldly people who make no profession”? Subsequent observation and experience has shown me the reason. It is because such parents inform the head without training the heart. They teach what they neither practise themselves nor take the trouble to see that their children practise, and the children see through the hollow sham, and learn to despise both their parents and their religion. Mother, if you want to TRAIN your child you must practise what you teach, and you must SHOW HIM how to practise it also, and you must, at all costs of trouble and care, see that he DOES it.

Suppose, by way of illustration, that you have a vine, and that this vine is endowed with reason, and will, and moral sense. You say to your vine-dresser, “Now, I want that vine trained”— i.e. id est , made to grow in a particular way, so that it may bear the largest amount of fruit possible to it. Suppose your vine■dresser goes to your vine, every morning, and says to it, “Now, you must let that branch grow in this direction, and that branch grow in another; you are not to put forth too many shoots here, nor too many tendrils there; you must not waste your sap in too many leaves;” and having told it what to do and how to grow, he shuts it up and leaves it to itself. This is precisely the way many good people act towards their children. But, lo! the vine grows as it likes; nature is too strong for mere theory; words will not curb its exuberance, nor check its waywardness. Your vine■dresser must do something more effectual than talking. He must nail that branch where he wishes it to grow; he must cut away what he sees to be superfluous; he must lop, and prune, and dress it, if it is to be trained for beauty and for fruitfulness. And just so, mother, if you want your child to be trained for God and righteousness; you must prune, and curb, and propel, and lead it in the way in which it should go. But some mother says, “What a deal of trouble!” Ah, that is just why many parents fail; they are afraid of trouble; but, as Mrs. Stowe says, “If you will not take the

trouble to train Charlie when he is a little boy, he will give you a great deal more trouble when he is a big one." Many a foolish mother, to spare herself trouble, has left her children to themselves, and "a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame!" Many parents teach their children in theory the right way, but by their negligence and indifference, train them in just the opposite. See that mother seated at some important piece of work which she is anxious to finish; her three little children are playing around her—one with his picture■book, another with his horse and cart, and baby with her doll. It is Monday afternoon, and only yesterday she was giving those children a lesson on the importance of love and good■will amongst themselves; that was the teaching, now comes the training. Presently Charlie gets tired of his pictures, and, without asking permission, takes the horse and cart from his younger brother, whereupon there is a scream, and presently a fight. Instead of laying aside her work, restoring the rightful property, explaining to Charlie that it is unjust and unkind to take his brother's toys, and to the younger one that he should rather suffer wrong than scream and fight, she goes on with her work, telling Charlie that he is a very naughty boy, and making the very common remark that she thinks there never were such troublesome children as hers! Now, who cannot see the different effect it would have had on these children if that mother had taken the trouble to make them realize and confess their fault, and voluntarily exchange the kiss of reconciliation and brotherly affection? What if it had taken half an hour of her precious time, would not the gain be greater than that which would accrue from any other occupation, however important? Mothers, if you want your children to walk in the way they should go, you must not only teach, you must be at the trouble to TRAIN.

But, Secondly, HOW IS THIS TRAINING TO BE GIVEN? The first and most important point is to secure OBEDIENCE. Obedience to properly constituted authority is the foundation of all moral excellence, not only in childhood, but all the way through life. And the secret of a great deal of the lawlessness of these times, both towards God and man, is, that when children, these people were never taught to submit to the authority of their parents; and now you may convince them ever so clearly that it is their duty, and would be their happiness, to submit to God, but their unrestrained, unsubdued wills have never been accustomed to submit to anybody, and it is like beginning to break in a wild horse in old age. Well may the Prophet enquire, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." God has laid it on parents to begin the work of bringing the will into subjection in childhood; and to help us in doing it, He has put in all children a tendency to obey. Watch any young child, and you will find that, as a rule, his instincts lead him to submit; insubordination is the exception, until this tendency has been trifled with by those who have the care of him. Now how important it is, in right training, to take advantage of this tendency to obedience, and not on any account allow it to be weakened by encouraging exceptional rebellion! In order to do this, you must begin EARLY ENOUGH. This is where multitudes of mothers miss their mark; they begin too late. The great majority of children are ruined for the formation of character before they are five years old by the foolish indulgence of mothers.

I am sometimes asked, "What do you consider the secret of successful training"? I answer, "BEGINNING SOON ENOUGH—not letting Satan get the advantage of us at the start." That is the secret of success. "Well, but," mothers say, "it is so hard to chastise an infant." There is seldom need for chastisement where mothers begin early and wisely. There is a way of speaking to and handling an infant compatible with the utmost love and tenderness, which teaches it that mother is

not to be trifled with; that, although she loves and caresses, she is to be obeyed, and will be obeyed, and a child that is trained in this way will not, as a rule, attempt to resist. In exceptional cases it may be tempted to become obstreperous, and then the mother must show her authority. Take an illustration. We will suppose that your son of six months old is in a fractious mood, and indisposed to take his morning nap; his nurse has put him in his cot and struggled with him till she is tired, and the child is tired too; at last you come and take the baby, after he has been rolling and tumbling about, and lay him down with a firm hand, saying with a firm voice, “Baby must lie still and go to sleep,” putting your hand on him at the same time to prevent his rising in the cot or turning over after you have spoken. Now, if this child for the previous three months has been trained in this line, if this is not the beginning, he will, as a natural consequence, lie still and go to sleep; but if he has not been accustomed to this kind of handling, he will perhaps become boisterous and resist you; if so, you must persevere. You must on no account give up; no, not if you stop till night. If he conquers you this time he will try harder next, and it will get more and more difficult. Almost all mothers mistake here; they give up because they will not inflict on themselves the pain of a struggle, forgetting that defeat now only ensures endless battles in the future.

Remember you MUST conquer in the FIRST battle, whatever it may be about, or you are undone. “Ah, but what time and patience this requires!” Yes, but it is only for once or twice; and what is that compared with the time and toil of conquering further on? But you say, “It is so hard.” Not half so hard as the other way; for when the child finds that mother is not to be got over, he will yield as a matter of course. I have proved it, I think, with some as strong■willed children as ever came into the world. I conquered them at six and ten months old, and seldom had to contend with any direct opposition after. I have a son who is now preaching the Gospel, and a great joy to my heart. The only decided battle I ever fought with him was at ten months old. I do not say that he never disobeyed me afterwards—he sometimes forgot himself and was disobedient—but I do say that I never remember him setting his will in direct antagonism to mine in all the succeeding years of his childhood. It was a painful struggle—that first contest, but has not the result paid for it a thousand thousand times? Oh, mothers, if you love your children, begin early to exact obedience. If chastisement be necessary, inflict it; and for every pang you suffer, every tear you shed, you shall reap comfort, honour, and glory. But, perhaps, there are some mothers who are saying, “Ah, I see it now; but it is too late; my children are too old.” I say: better late than never. Begin and do all you can. Perhaps you can never undo ALL the mischief, but you may a part of it. Call your children around you; confess your past unfaithfulness in your dealings with them, fall on your knees before the Lord with them, and tell Him of your failure to train them for Him, and ask His help to enable you to do it in the future. When you rise from your knees tell your children in the most solemn manner that you see your mistake, and feel how awful it would be, if they were to be lost through your fault, and that from this hour you are going to be obeyed in everything. Begin at once to exact obedience. Be judicious and forbearing, remembering that your children’s habits of disobedience are the result of your own folly, and deal as gently as the case will permit; but at all costs secure obedience, and never more allow your commands to be trifled with. Now is your only chance; a few more years, and your child is undone. Do not be afraid to use your authority. One would think, to hear some parents talk of their relations with their children, that they did not possess an iota of power over them. All they dare to do, seems to be to reason, to persuade, to coax. I have frequently heard mothers using all manner of persuasion instead of exerting the authority which God has given for the safeguard and guidance of their poor children. They give their commands in

such a voice as leaves it optional whether the child shall obey them or not, and this he understands very well; there is no command, no firmness, no decision, no authority, and the child knows it by its instincts just as an animal would. Men are much wiser in breaking in and training their horses than their sons, hence they generally get much better served by the former than the latter!

What has God given you authority for, if He did not intend you to use it—if your child can do as well without it? He has sent your child to you to be guided and restrained by your authority, as much as to be inspired and encouraged by your love. How will you answer for the neglect or abuse of this wonderful power? You recollect the fearful punishment that came upon Eli, one of the most terrible strokes of vengeance recorded in the whole Bible. What was it for? Not for using profane language before his children, not for training them in unrighteousness or immorality, for he was a good and righteous man, but “because he restrained them not:” that means he did not use his authority on the side of God and righteousness. Doubtless, this had been his failing all the way through; he had indulged his sons in their own way, until at last they set both him and his God at open defiance. Alas! this has been the case with millions since his day: having sown the wind they reaped the whirlwind. What a contrast the conduct and fate of Eli present in this respect to the conduct of Abraham! “I know him,” said Jehovah, “that he will command his children and his household after him.” Not merely remonstrate, persuade, and threaten, as Eli did, but “command”—he will use his authority on My side; and, as a consequence, the Lord promised that “they should keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.” Parents, if you fulfil your part of the covenant, never fear but that God will perform His. Only you train your children truly for Him, and He will charge Himself with their future; but do not expect, if you neglect your sacred trust, or abuse it by training them in the nurture and admonition of the world and the devil, that God will work a miracle to convert them when they come to mature years, because you cry and pray and ask Him to do so. He makes no such promise; and we see, alas! in the experience of multitudes of sorrowing parents, that He does not hold Himself bound to work for the salvation of their children on any such conditions.

Another important point in training a child in the way he should go is to train it in the practice of TRUTH and INTEGRITY. Human nature is said to go “astray from the birth—speaking lies;” and, doubtless, untruthfulness is one of the most easily besetting and prevalent sins of our race. To counteract this tendency, and to establish the soul in habits of truth and sincerity, must be one of the first objects of right training. In order to do this, parents should beware of palliating or excusing the tendency to falsehood in their children. In nothing have I been more amazed than in this. I have actually seen mothers smile at, and almost extol the little artifices of their children in their attempts to deceive them and to hide some childish delinquency. No wonder that such parents fail to inspire their off-spring with that wholesome dread of falseness which is one of the greatest safeguards to virtue in after-life. No mother will succeed in begetting in her child a greater antipathy towards any sin than she feels for it herself. Children are the quickest of all analysts, and instinctively detect in a moment all affectation of goodness. They judge not so much from what we say as HOW WE FEEL. They are not influenced so much by our teaching as by our spirit and example. For instance, a mother teaches her child that he is to be truthful, and on no account to tell a lie; but what effect will such teaching have if he hears her tell one, or sees her act one, the next day? Parents teach their children to be sincere, and take occasion occason to point out

examples of the meanness and wickedness of deception, but by their own example they very frequently train them in the grossest insincerity. Take an illustration. A person calls to see you whose society your child knows that you neither esteem nor desire, but you are all smiles and compliments, pressing her to come again, and assuring her that her visit has given you very great pleasure. What more effectual lesson could you give your wondering little one in deception and double■dealing than this? And yet how common is this kind of thing in many households? I once stayed in the house of a lady who had a fine promising boy of about eighteen months old. He used to kick and scream violently when he found that she was going out of the house. This, of course, was the result of previous bad training. but what did she do? Instead of facing the difficulty, and in a calm, firm, and affectionate manner curing her little son of this bad habit, she used to promise every time that she would bring him a pony that he could ride on, and the little fellow believed and believed until he got tired, and then put down his mother, in his baby-mind, as a liar. Of course he would not have understood such a definition, but the deception would be burned into his soul never to be eradicated. A child hurts himself against the table: the mother strikes it, and says, “Oh! naughty table! you have hurt baby;” but the child soon learns that the table was not to blame, and at the same time learns to distrust his mother, who said it was. A mother invites some little friends to spend an afternoon with her children, during which games are played requiring skill and tact in the winner. Her little boy wins several of the games, and although his brother or one of his little friends says that he was not fair—that is, that he cheated—she does not appear to notice it, but contents herself by saying, “Oh, you must be good children and not quarrel;” thus inflicting an unjust reflection on the child of honour and integrity, while encouraging the other in the meanest and most selfish form of sin—allowing him to rejoice over the victory won, through fraud or sleight■of■hand. Can such a mother wonder if her boy turns out a thief or a gambler? Well, but you say how unpleasant it would be in such a case to go into particular investigation, spoil the enjoyment of the party, and expose your child as a cheat before them! Certainly it would be very unpleasant, and to a mother who is more concerned about her son appearing to be a cheat than she is about his being one the result would not be worth the fuss; but, to a mother who esteems the honour and integrity of her boy more than all appearances or opinions in the world, such an opportunity of correcting his fault and fortifying him against future temptation is more than the breaking up of a dozen parties. Oh, how many a promising child has been ruined because his mother would not endure the pain and trouble of an investigation? “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper.” Neither does such a course win the good opinion of others. The children go away feeling that your son is a cheat just the same; and, what is worse, feeling that you are a party to his wickedness.

Again, Charlie is ill, and it is needful for him to take a dose of unpleasant medicine; but he has been so badly trained that his mother knows he will not take it if she tells him it is nasty. So she resorts to stratagem, and tells him that she has got something good, and thus coaxes him to take it into his mouth, but before it is swallowed he detects the cheat, and medicine and mother’s veracity are spit out together. In this way thousands of children are taught deception and untruth, and you may labour in vain in after years to make them truthful and sincere—the soil has been ruined by early abuse.

Mothers, if you want your child to be truthful and sincere you must not only teach it to be so, you must be so yourself, and see that your child practises what you teach. You must not wink at, or

cover up any kind of falseness or deception in him, because he is yours. Sin should be the more awful to you because you see it in those so dear, and those for whom you are responsible. If you have any reason to suspect your child of insincerity or falsehood, do not rest until you have bottomed the matter; never mind what trouble or pain it involves, drag it out, even though it should bring for the time exposure and disgrace. This may prove a useful chastisement, and a warning in the future. Anything is preferable to sin covered up, and consequently encouraged. Resolve that you will make your child truthful and sincere, if you can do it no other way, from very despair of being able to hide anything from you. God acts on this principle with adults: why should not we with our children? “Be sure your sin will find you out.”

I know some children amongst whom it is a common remark, “It is of no use trying to hide anything from mamma, for she is sure to find it out; so it is best to tell her at once.” How much misery it would save if it were thus in every family! Mothers, take the trouble to make your children TRUE, and God will enable you to do it. If you work for Him with your children, He will work with you in them, and you shall have the joy of seeing them grow up into Christ, their living Head in all things. But further. To train a child in the way it should go, we must not stop with those qualities and virtues which bear on man; but it must be trained in the exercise of devotion and piety towards God. Of course, none but truly Christian parents are equal to impart this kind of training. The Holy Ghost must needs be in the heart of the mother who undertakes to lead her child to God. The bias to evil is too strong to be turned aside by unassisted human wisdom or strength, however great. But, bless God! there is every encouragement to those parents who are truly His, to hope for success in training their children for Him.

And, perhaps, the first important point in such effort is, to lead our children to regard themselves as standing in a special relationship to God. “The promise is to you and to your children.” And there is a sense in which the children of believers are already set apart for Him. Many parents seem to lose sight of this covenant relation, and bring up their children under the idea that they must needs live in sin till they come to be fifteen or sixteen years old, and then they hope God will convert them in the same marvellous and sudden manner in which drunkards and profligates are converted. Now, I am as firm a believer in conversion as any one can be; and I also believe that the children of believers need to be converted as much as others, but I say this is not the way to teach our children to expect it. What is conversion but the renewal of the mind by the Holy Ghost through faith in a crucified Saviour? And as there are “diversities of operations by the same spirit,” why may not the minds of children be renewed very early? Why may they not be led to choose Christ and His yoke at seven or eight years old as well as at seventeen? If the will of a child be sincerely yielded to God, cannot the blessed spirit as easily and as effectually renew and actuate its heart and affections as those of an adult? And does not Jesus say “SUFFER the little ones to come unto Me”? Alas! how many Christian parents unwittingly forbid them?

Because in the case of those who have had no previous light or training, conversion is necessarily sudden and followed by a great outward change, is that any reason why in the case of a child carefully trained in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord,” the Holy Spirit should not work together with such training, adapting his operations to the capacity and requirements of the little ones who are already “of the kingdom of heaven”? thus gradually installing them in all the privileges, duties, and enjoyments of that kingdom. Of what advantage would it be to train them in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord,” if He did not purpose to bless this training to their

conversion and salvation? The very terms of this injunction show the sense in which the Holy Spirit uses them. “Nurture” means “nursing, feeding, strengthening, developing.” “Admonition” means “reproof, caution, instruction.” Here is the order of God, firstly, the feeding and strengthening of all that is good in them; and secondly, the reproof and caution against evil; and thirdly, instruction in righteousness. If parents would only take the Lord’s way, they would see their sons and their daughters taking their places in the temple of the Lord, as their natural and abiding home. Wisely and faithfully trained up for God, they would say, when solicited to go away, “To whom should we go”? “Ah,” says some mother, “It is very easy to talk, but you don’t know the natural antipathy which my children have to religion. I am sure I have tried to teach them the right way, and to make them love that which is good, but, so far, I see very little result of my labours.” Perhaps, my friend, the failure has been in that you have taught but have not trained. You have told them the way to take, but have not led them in it. If you are to succeed you must do both, and that continually. Of course right training includes right teaching, for though there may be much teaching without training, there cannot be good training without teaching. Doubtless many parents and teachers fail here for want of tact and wisdom in their methods of instruction. The one great rule to be observed in all teaching is to make your lessons INTERESTING. If you cannot awaken the interest of your child you had better give up, and school and inform yourself till you can. I have not a doubt that many an impetuous, earnest, high■spirited child is driven to hate the Bible the Sanctuary, and religious exercises in general by the cold, spiritless, insipid, canting manner in which he hears them read and performed. He knows by instinct that this is not the way people go through things in which their hearts are deeply concerned. He hears father and mother and friends talk in a natural, easy, interesting manner on business and family matters, and consequently he listens with interest, but the moment they begin with religion he feels there is no heart in it, he feels that it is because they MUST, not because they LIKE. He is taught to sing “Happy, happy Sunday, the brightest of the seven;” but he knows that in his home it is the dullest day of the week, and that the whole household are relieved when it is passed and they are able to be back at this world’s employments and enjoyments.

Now, if you want your child to love and enjoy the Sabbath you must make it the most INTERESTING day of the week. If you want him to love and read his Bible you must so tell him its stories, and elucidate its lessons as to make it INTEREST him. If you want him to love prayer you must so pray as to interest and draw out his mind and heart with your own, and teach him to go to God, as he comes to you, in his own natural voice and manner to tell Him his wants and to express his joys or sorrows. The themes of religion are of all themes most interesting to children when dealt with naturally and interestingly.

I used to take my eldest boy on my knee from the time when he was about two years old and tell him the stories of the Old Testament in baby language and adapted to baby comprehension, one at a time, so that he thoroughly drank them in and also the moral lessons they were calculated to convey. When between three and four years old I remember once going into the nursery and finding him mounted on his rocking■horse, in a high state of excitement, finishing the story of Joseph to his nurse and baby brother, showing them how Joseph galloped on his live “gee gee” when he went to fetch his father to show him to Pharaoh Pharoah . In the same way we subsequently went through the history of the flood, having a Noah’s Ark, which was kept for Sabbath use; making the Ark itself the foundation of one lesson, Noah and his family of another,

and the gathering of the animals of a third, and so on until the subject was exhausted. When my family increased, it was my custom before these Sabbath lessons to have a short lively tune. A short prayer, in which I let them all repeat after me, sentence by sentence, asking the Lord to help us to understand His word, and to bless our souls, and so on. After the lesson another short prayer, and then another tune or two. After this they would adjourn to the nursery, where frequently they would go through the whole service again, the eldest being the preacher. When baby was asleep their nurse would read interesting infantile stories to the elder ones, or teach them suitable bits of poetry by letting them all repeat it together after her. Thus the Sabbath was made a day of pleasure as well as of instruction and improvement. I never allowed my children to attend public services till they were old enough to take some interest in them. We had no mission services then, or they would have been able to understand, and enter into a great part of them, but I deemed it an evil to make a child sit still for an hour■and■a■half, dangling its legs on a high seat, listening to what it could neither understand nor appreciate, for alas, there is little in the ordinary services of our day to interest or profit children, and I am satisfied that a great deal of the distaste for religious services so common amongst them has been engendered in this way. My experience has been that my children have come so highly to appreciate the privilege of attending service, that a promise of it during the week would insure extra good behaviour and diligence. Of course, mothers who have no one to leave with their children cannot always stay at home, and must take them as often as is necessary for their own edification. To those parents who are able to keep servants, I would say, make any sacrifice to keep a really good Christian girl with your children. I have made it a rule never to have any other as a nurse, and have sometimes put up with great inexperience and incompetency, because it was associated with goodness. Better take a girl whom you have to teach how to wash a child's face, or to stitch a button on, if she is true and sincere, than have one ever so clever who will teach your children to lie and deceive. But to return to the subject of teaching. Not only must you make your teaching interesting, but also practical, in the highest degree. Your children want to know how to comport themselves now in the little duties, trials, and enjoyments of their daily life. It is to be feared that, as with adults so with children, a deal of so■called teaching is right away above their heads, dealing with abstract truths and far■off illustrations, instead of coming down to such every■day matters as obedience to parents and teachers; the learning of their lessons; their treatment of brothers, sisters, and servants; their companionships; their amusements; the spending and giving of their pocket■money; their dealings with the poor; their treatment of animals—in short, everything embraced in their daily life. The great end of Christian training is to lead children to realize the fact that they BELONG TO GOD, and are under a solemn obligation to do everything in a way which they think will please Him. Parents cannot begin too early, nor labour too continuously, to keep this fact before the minds of their children. In the family devotion in the morning, the father or mother, or whoever conducts it, should bring the children specially before the Lord, asking Him "to give them grace this day, to be obedient to those who have the care of them. To be diligent at their lessons, so that they many lay in knowledge, which shall make them useful to their fellow■creatures, and enable them to do something for God and souls, if He sees fit to spare them."

Above all things, parents should labour to counteract the natural selfishness of the hearts of their children by showing them that they are not to live unto themselves—that they are not to be good, and industrious, and studious, in order that THEY THEMSELVES may be learned, or happy, or successful in the world. For these are the things after which the Gentiles—the unbelieving

world—seek; but that they, as belonging to God, are to live unto Him, who hath given Himself for them, seeking first His kingdom and righteousness. Seeking first to glorify Him, and do good to their generation, leaving it with Him to fix the bounds of their habitation, and to choose their inheritance for them. Alas! how few Christian parents seem to understand this first principle of right training—hence their anxiety to push their children on, and up, in the learning, principles, customs, and ambitions of this world. Surely "God is not mocked, for as they sow to the flesh, they of the flesh reap corruption;" and, alas! their poor children's SOULS are sacrificed in the bargain.

Oh, mothers, don't be deceived if you want your children to be the Lord's when they grow up, if you want your boy to withstand the unknown temptations of the future—if you want him to come out a man of righteous principle, integrity, and honour—superior to all the doubleness, chicanery, and devilry of the world, you must train him to look upon all the world's prizes as dross compared with the joy of a pure conscience and a life of usefulness to his fellow■men. If you want your daughter to be a true woman, willing to sacrifice and to suffer in the interests of humanity and truth, you must inspire her NOW with a contempt for the baubles for which so many women barter their lives and their souls—you must teach her that she is an independent, responsible being, whom God will call to as severe a reckoning for the use or abuse of her talents as that of her brother man. Day by day, as it flies, you must labour to wake up your children's chiiren's souls to the realization of the fact that they belong to God, and that He has sent them into the world, not to look after their own little petty, personal interests, but to devote themselves to the promotion of His! and that, in doing this, they will find happiness, usefulness, and glory.—Matthew 25:14-16.

I would like, in conclusion, to add a few cautions against evils which I have seen to be very common in families, and which I believe exert a very baneful influence on the formation of character. First amongst these is an INORDINATE ESTIMATE OF THE VALUE OF MONEY. One would think, from the meanness and the discomfort of the ordering of many families, that money was the household god at whose shrine every consideration of comfort, health, friendship, and benevolence had been sacrificed. What will it cost? is the first question that meets every suggestion of improvement in any direction, and this frequently, not because money is scarce, but simply because it cannot be parted with!

Now, children soon find out the ruling principle in the family administration, and if they see it to be covetousness or avariciousness, parents may teach all the catalogue of Christian virtues from morning till night, but their children will grow up selfish in the very core of their souls. Like begets like the world over, and you show me a household where the spirit of covetousness reigns, and I will show you ungenerous, cunning children. "The LOVE OF MONEY is the root of all evil" is an axiom as true as it is neglected; and until parents, by their actions, show their children that they deem domestic comfort and religion, the claims of Christian hospitality, the blood and lives of their servants, the claims of the suffering and the destitute, and the crying need of the benighted multitude of more importance than the HOARDING OF MONEY, they must go on reaping the reward of their covetousness in the selfish indulgence, ungrateful neglect, and open profligacy of their children. Ah, how many a parent, who has sacrificed all the higher and nobler impulses of his own and his children's natures to money■making, has had it scattered by thousands by wicked, selfish sons?

Another great evil which I have seen even in families where there has in the main been much good training, is the yielding in an emergency on points of principle for the sake of expediency. Take an illustration. Here is a family who are trained in the principles of abstinence from intoxicating drinks, as all Christian families undoubtedly ought to be. These parents have wisely taught their children that strong drink is an evil and bitter thing, and that all traffic and countenance of it brings a curse; but on a certain day, a letter comes announcing that General So-and-so, or Captain Somebody is coming to pay a visit to his cousin, on his return from India. Of course there is much excitement and expectation among the junior members of the family, and a becoming anxiety on the part of the parents, worthily to entertain their guest, but a difficulty presents itself. The General is not an abstainer, he has always been accustomed to his wine and spirits. “What shall we do,” says the mother, “he will think it inhospitable and mean to deny him his favourite beverage”? “Well, yes,” says the father, “I don’t see how we can do it in this instance; you see he is an old man, and would not appreciate our views or our motives. I fear we shall have to order a little wine for him. I don’t like to bring it in sight of the children, but we must explain the circumstances to them, and we will hope no harm will come of it.” These parents sacrifice principle to expediency, and admit the mocker to their family circle. Can they be surprised if one of their sons turns out a drunkard? “Ah!” said a broken-hearted father once to my husband—“I trained my boy in abstinence principles, but I did not keep him out of the society of those who thought there was no harm in moderate drinking, and now he is an outcast and an alien whom I cannot allow to cross my threshold—he has killed his mother, and will bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.” “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works—or instruments of darkness—evil.” “Wine is a mocker.” WINE ITSELF, not the abuse of it. Here is the secret why so many thousands of the fair and promising fall by it. Christian parents, fear it as you would the bite of a serpent, and as you value the souls of your children keep it out of their very sight.

Another great enemy to the formation of righteous character is ambition for what is called position in society! Some parents are continually putting before their children future aggrandisement and fortune, as a stimulus to industry and effort, thus holding up to their young minds this world’s prosperity and applause as the great aim and object of life. To get to be more learned, more genteel, more wealthy than men of their own class, so that they may be received into higher circles of worldly society. Such parents often fail, and in the attempt to leap the chasm which bars his upward course, many a son falls headlong through the abyss of disappointed ambition, down to damnation, and many a daughter to that path, the steps of which “take hold on Hell.” Ah, but some succeed! Yes, and what reward do the parents often get? The son and daughter, whom they toiled and struggled so hard to push up, get so high they can scarcely see the poor, neglected parents down below, and often leave them to die with a broken heart. Truly “Godliness with contentment is—Great Gain.”

I cannot close these remarks without lifting up my voice against the practice now so prevalent amongst respectable families, of sending children to boarding schools before their principles are formed or their characters developed. Parents are led away by the professedly religious character of schools, forgetting that, even supposing the master or governess may be all that can be desired, a School is a little world where all the elements of unrenewed human nature are at work with as great variety, subtlety, and power as in the great world outside. You would shrink from exposing your child to the temptation and danger of association with unconverted worldly men and

women, why should you expose them to the influence of children of the same character, who are not unfrequently sent to these schools because they have become utterly vitiated and unmanageable at home? I have listened to many a sad story of the consequences of these school associations, and early made up my mind to keep my children under my own influence, at least until they had attained that maturity in grace and principle which would be an effectual safeguard against ungodly associations. To this end I have rejected several very tempting offers in the way of educational advantage, and every day I am increasingly thankful for having been enabled to do so. God has laid on you, parents, the responsibility of training your children, and you cannot possibly delegate that responsibility to another without endangering their highest interests for time and for eternity.

03.02. Strong Drink Versus Christianity

STRONG DRINK VERSUS CHRISTIANITY. THE subject upon which I have been requested to write a paper is, “The Value of Temperance in connection with Religious Aggressive Effort.”

Before entering directly on the subject, I want to make two or three preliminary remarks, and,

I. It may be well to explain that we understand religious aggressive effort to be, that interference on the part of Christians with the thoughts and actions of ungodly men which the Bible shows to be necessary, in order to secure their present and eternal well-being.

We, Christians, see around us everywhere men and women under the influence of false ideas, given up to selfish indulgences and evil practices, which enslave their faculties and render real happiness impossible to them, either in this life or in that which is to come. Now, religious aggressive effort implies measures taken for their deliverance from these evil habits, and from the bondage of Satan, and the actual bringing of these souls into the liberty, power, and blessedness of the family of God. It is, in short, a holy warfare, prosecuted under the direction and power of the Holy Spirit, to bring men from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God.

II. I want to remark that the very nature of Christianity renders this aggressive effort incumbent on all Christians. Not only are there many passages directly enforcing this duty, but it is assumed as a fundamental principle, underlying the whole economy of grace, that the truly regenerate will be benevolently active for the good of others. A desire to save the lost seems to be a divinely■inspired impulse in the soul of every real child of God, as it were a holy instinct, in which the disciple ever resembles his master, and the servant his lord. I am aware that there is a great deal of professed Christianity in these days which lacks this lineament of the Divine likeness, and makes so much of faith that love is deemed almost superfluous. An inspired apostle, however, declares that there is something greater even than faith, which is charity, and though we have a faith that will remove mountains, if we have not charity it profiteth us nothing. Truly an inoperative faith neither profiteth its possessor nor those around him, but is only as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. The faith which is of the operation of the Spirit “worketh by love,” and ever leads its possessor to follow Him who went about doing good, and who persistently taught His disciples that self■love, self■interest, and self■indulgence must be sacrificed to the utmost, whenever the interests of His kingdom or the salvation of their fellow■men should demand such sacrifice.

III. I want to observe further that THE USE OF INTOXICATING DRINKS AS A BEVERAGE IS THE CAUSE AND STRENGTH OF A VERY LARGE PROPORTION OF THE WICKEDNESS, CRIME, VICE, AND MISERY WHICH EXIST AROUND US. With this proposition many of us here are sadly too familiar; it needs neither proof nor illustration; indeed, with some little modification, it is coming to be admitted in almost all quarters, even amongst the greatest enemies of our principles. The time is fast passing in which there has existed a difference of opinion amongst the wise and good, as to the real character of these drinks. The baneful harvest of crime and misery which their consumption has entailed on us as a nation, has opened the eyes of almost every

thinking and patriotic mind to the fact that the drink, not the abuse of it, but the drink itself, is an evil thing, in very truth a “mocker,” the product of Satanic art and malice, to be rejected and eschewed by all who have any regard for their own or their neighbour’s well-being. We might adduce overwhelming evidence that strong drink is the natural ally of all wickedness. Unquestionable statistics have been produced which show that its stimulus is essential to the plotting and commission of almost every kind of villainy. The gambler seeks it to aid him in the craft and cunning by which he lures his victim on to financial ruin. The seducer has recourse to its deceptive power to pave the way for his cruel licentiousness. The burglar braces his courage and hardens his conscience by its exhilarating fumes. The harlot drowns in the intoxicating cup her sense of shame, and from it gathers strength to trample out the deepest, tenderest instincts of womanhood. The murderer is powerless to strike the fatal blow till maddened by its infernal stimulus. In short, all classes and sizes of criminals unite to testify, “By the influence of drink we are what we are,” and missionaries, Bible-women, chaplains, jailors, magistrates, and judges, say, “Amen” to their testimony.

We have no hesitation in affirming that strong drink is Satan’s chief instrumentality for keeping the masses of this country under his power.

IV. If the foregoing propositions are correct—If Christians are bound to aggress on the kingdom of Satan, and if strong drink constitutes one of the mightiest forces of that kingdom, then it follows inevitably that TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN AGGRESSIVE EFFORT CHRISTIANS MUST DEAL WITH THE DRINK. To attempt to make war on the enemy’s territory without contemplating this gigantic force, is kindred folly to that of France in going to war with Prussia without having duly estimated the strategic skill of their great general. Such folly must always be followed by failure and defeat. Doubtless one secret of the church’s failure in nearly all aggressive measures has been her ignoring the power of this great adversary. Why, even heathen chiefs, the heads of savage tribes, have sent us word that “it is of no use to send them the Bible, if at the same time we send them strong drink.” Alas! that Christians have been so slow to learn the power of this mitrailleuse of hell, but, thank God, some of them are beginning to appreciate it at last, and these are crying, What is to be done? How shall we deal with the drink? We answer, in the name of Christ and humanity, deal with it as you do with all other Satan■invented, Christ■dishonouring, soul■ruining abominations. Wash your hands of it at once, and for ever! And give a united and straightforward testimony to the world that you consider it an enemy of all righteousness and the legitimate offspring of Satan!

I submit that there is no other way for Christians to deal with strong drink. All other ways have been tried and have failed. The time has come for Christians to denounce the use of intoxicating drinks as irreligious and immoral; and God Almighty will put immortal renown on those of His servants who are sufficiently true, and brave, and self■sacrificing first to run the gauntlet of earth and hell in doing this. “They shall be had in everlasting remembrance,” and counted amongst the greatest benefactors of their race.

We contend that the attempt to make what is termed the moderate use of strong drink consistent with a profession of religion has signally and ignominiously failed; and the common sense of mankind is turning upon those who have made it with these most pertinent questions—How can that which produces all this crime and misery be a good thing? and if it be an evil thing, how can it

be moderately used? This question comes with overwhelming force to those who stand forth as labourers for the spiritual benefit of mankind. At every step the drink difficulty meets them. They can no longer ignore it, it must be met and grappled with. In America, the importance of this question in its bearing on Christianity has been so fully recognised, that almost every Christian minister has become an abstainer; and I venture to affirm, that the religious instinct of Christians in both countries has pronounced this action to be consistent and praiseworthy. If consistent and praiseworthy in America, would it not be equally so in England? God grant that such may soon be the case here! But I must hasten to point out two or three particulars in which this principle is specially valuable in connection with religious aggressive effort.

I. ABSTINENCE IS VALUABLE TO THOSE WHO ARE CALLED TO MAKE SUCH EFFORT—1st. As a source of strength. No man can deny himself, constrained by Divine love for the good of others, without improving his own moral nature and giving increased scope for the operation of the Divine Spirit within him. “Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.”

2. Abstinence is valuable to the Christian labourer as a safeguard against temptation. It is well known that a large majority of those who become subjects for church discipline, owe their fall directly or indirectly to drink. The man who never uses it can never fall through its influence. He is safe thus far, because he goes not into temptation.

3. Abstinence is valuable to the labourer, because it helps to beget a conviction of his disinterestedness in the minds of those whom he seeks to benefit, which conviction is indispensable to his success. Doubtless the unwillingness of religious teachers to forego their own indulgence in the use of wine and spirits has greatly diminished their influence, and helped largely to beget that prejudice with which great numbers of the common people regard them. We are satisfied that if the Gospel is to make any great advance on the masses of this country, those who seek to propagate it must abandon the use of drink. As Dr. Guthrie remarks, in his preface to “Scriptural Claims of Teetotalism,” “I am astonished that so many ministers of the Gospel and Christian people can turn aside from the fight as they do. When I laboured among the lower, and, indeed, lowest classes of society in this city, I was met at every corner by the demon of drink. I found it utterly useless to attempt to evangelise the heathen and raise the lapsed masses without the aid of total abstinence. With all my trust in the promises of God, and blessings of the Holy Spirit, I felt that I must be able to say to the people not ‘Forward,’ but ‘Follow.’ This first induced me to become an abstainer; and I am convinced that it is the duty of every man, who would do his utmost for the glory of God and the good of his fellow■creatures, to discountenance by his example the use of intoxicating stimulants.”

II. WE REMARK FURTHER THE VALUE OF ABSTINENCE TO THOSE ON WHOM HE HAS TO AGGRESS. 1st. It is indispensable as a pioneer in reaching the drunkard. The motives, arguments, and persuasions of the Gospel are addressed to the reason, conscience, and feelings of men, and, of course, presuppose a sane condition of mind. Everybody knows that it is useless to present these to a man when intoxicated; therefore, in the case of thousands who live in a perpetual state of intoxication, the only chance of salvation is to rescue them from the influence of drink. Drunkenness is a physical, as well as moral disease, and if we would remove it, we must proceed on the same principle as we do with the insane; we must restore the reason before we

can sanctify the heart. Some of our Christian friends object to this, and say, “Then it is the Gospel and total abstinence.” We say emphatically, Yes, just in the same sense as in the case of a lunatic or a man raving in a fever; it is the Gospel and the Physician.

If any of our friends doubt whether so many are thus perpetually under the influence of drink, let them pay us a visit in the East of London; and, alas! we can point them to multitudes of besotted, benighted beings, who are never sufficiently sober to be able intelligently to comprehend the truth, even if they could be got to listen to it. Their mental faculties are so benumbed with the imbruting drink, that a vacant stare is often the only response to the first attempt at arousing and reclaiming them; and all our labourers feel that there is but little hope unless they can by some means be kept from the drink, until reason and conscience have a chance to operate. Thanks be to God, many of this class have been reclaimed and transformed in connection with our mission work; but I am not acquainted with a single instance in which the drink has not been entirely abandoned. In our last year’s report, “The Masses Reached,” Mr. Booth has selected one hundred instances, out of hundreds of a similar character, of the power of the Gospel to save the vilest and worst of sinners, and at least eighty of these were drunkards of the most terrible description. Let any friends, sceptical as to the thoroughly imbruting effects of drunkenness, read these instances. It would be difficult to believe that man could fall so low, unless one had indisputable proof.

We would ask those who object to the use of abstinence as an instrumentality in saving the drunkard, what plan they would suggest for his restoration to sense and reason? The plan hitherto adopted by many of them, we lament to say, has been simply to leave him to his fate. While giving countenance and patronage to the drink which has made him what he is, they have left him in his helplessness and misery to sink into a drunkard’s hell! We might ask how it has come to pass that with such a confessedly alarming number of drunkards in our midst, there has not been put in operation one Christian organisation specially adapted to reach and save them! Has not the felt inconsistency of trying to save the drunkard while patronising the drink, had something to do with this anomaly? It is a significant fact, that we rarely find any who are not abstainers who care for the drunkard. We admit, however, and believe, that the pioneering work to be done in order to reach the drunkard, and bring him under the influence of the Gospel, ought to be done by Christians; but until Christian ministers and people will forego their own indulgence, and undertake the labour of hunting down the drunkard, we say, for pity’s sake, let those do it who will, for any man has a better chance of salvation sober than drunk, under any circumstances.

2nd. Total abstinence is valuable in separating men from those associations and habits which prevent them hearing the Gospel. How shall they believe except they hear? We find large numbers of people who, though not drunkards, are so mixed up with, and hedged in by drinking customs, that it is impossible to get at them with religious truth. The streets and public thoroughfares are the only places where even a solitary sentence of Divine truth can be sounded in their ears, and, alas! there are but few Christians who attempt to catch them in this vulgar and out■of■season fashion: consequently, tens of thousands of them never hear at all that Word by which alone they can be saved. Now, abstinence reaches many of these, and by separating them from old associations, and creating a vacuum in their social life, throws them in the way of religious teaching and influence. When a man, who has been accustomed to spend his Sabbath evenings, as thousands do, in pleasure■parties, tea■gardens, or in family gatherings, where the social glass forms the principal bond of union, when such a one becomes an abstainer, he is thrown out of his orbit, and

necessarily looks round for some way of disposing of himself. He wants somewhere to go, and somebody with whom to associate, and in numbers of instances betakes Himself to the House of God, because this offers the readiest way of meeting his difficulty.

We know of numbers who have thus been won to Christ and happiness, and doubtless there will be many more when the Church learns better to adapt her measures messures and services to the capacities and necessities of this class of hearers.

3rd. Abstinence is a valuable ally of the Gospel in the case of those already under its influence, because it tends to keep the intellect clear and the conscience awake for the perception and application of Divine truth. There is every reason to believe that vast numbers who regularly sit under Scriptural teaching are enabled to stifle the voice of conscience and resist the claims of God, through the exhilarating or stupifying effects of what is termed moderate quantities of stimulating drinks. We have spoken with numbers of people after religious services whose breath has been laden with the fumes of wine or brandy, indicating that sufficient has been taken during the afternoon to blunt the moral susceptibilities and to beget a self■complacency just the reverse of that state of mind necessary for the proper reception of Divine truth. Satan seems to have got wiser for his malicious purposes since our Lord uttered the parable of the sower. He does not wait now till the seed is sown, but is, in the case of thousands, beforehand with the sower, rendering the soul impervious to the precious seed by deadly opiates of diabolical concoction. We believe this indirect result of drinking to be even more widespread and ruinous than the more direct; and that in the great day of account it will be found that multitudes in this Gospel■enlightened land of ours were enabled to resist the most pungent appeals of truth, to silence conscience, and effectually to resist the strivings of the Holy Ghost, only through the influence of strong drink.

III. TOTAL ABSTINENCE IS A VALUABLE ALLY OF THE GOSPEL, AS A CONSERVING POWER. We must not only aggress on the kingdom of darkness, but we must use every means to keep the spoils. When the evil spirit is cast out we must do our utmost to keep him out, or the last state of our convert will be worse than the first. When a man is brought under the influence of the Spirit, to see himself a sinner, and to embrace the Saviour, he should be taught that he has only just entered on his heavenward course, and in order that he may so run as to obtain, he must cast aside every weight, keep his body under, watch and pray, and keep out of temptation. In the case of those who have been addicted to intemperance, all but universal experience proves that there is absolutely no hope of their “standing fast” without the entire abandonment of the drink. Our Lord taught His disciples to pray to be kept out of temptation; and again and again we are warned and enjoined to keep ourselves out, and on this condition all His promises of grace and deliverance are suspended. God has nowhere promised to keep the man who needlessly, and for the sake of his own indulgence, runs into temptation. How fearful, then, the responsibility of those Christians who tell the reclaimed inebriate, aye who tell any man, “You may safely tamper with the drink! You may play with this fire of hell, and trust in God to keep you from being burnt.” Alas, how do such counsellors unwittingly play the part of Satan in his cunning approaches to our Lord. “Cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.” Oh, that all our brethren and sisters would ever bear in mind the memorable answer, “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord Thy God.”

But, further, not only is abstinence valuable, nay, indispensable, in order to preserve those rescued out of the power of this great destroyer, but it is equally valuable to prevent others from falling into it. We all profess to believe that prevention is better than cure; seeing, then, that strong drink is proved to be the most dangerous foe to perseverance in righteousness, and the most potent cause of declension, inconsistency, and apostasy, ought not Christians to strive, both by example and precept, to warn the young, the weak, and the inexperienced from touching it? Can any man answer for the consequences of putting a bottle to his neighbour's mouth, be it ever such a small one, or ever such a genteel one? God has recorded His curse against the man who does this, and thousands of hoary■headed parents, broken■hearted wives, and weeping, blighted children groan their amens to the dreadful sentence! Perchance, there are some men who can take these drinks in what they call moderation, and suffer no visible injury; nevertheless, let that man beware who touches that which God has cursed, for there are injuries invisible more to be dreaded than all the plagues of Egypt!

But, suppose some people could take these drinks without hurting themselves, will they dare answer for their children? Alas! there are thousands of parents to■day in connection with the various churches of our land, whose gray hairs are sinking in sorrow to the grave through the intemperance of sons and daughters, who first acquired a taste for drink by sipping out of their own glasses, never used but in moderation! I ask these parents, I ask you, Christians, was not the curse of God on the liquor rather than on the size of the glass which contained it; and might not these parents have known, if they did not, that if they sowed the east wind they must reap the whirlwind. If time would permit, we might give illustrations here that would almost wring tears from demons, but doubtless you are familiar with too many already. Christian parents, save your children from this moral pestilence; oh! as you value their happiness, their chastity, their godliness in this life, and their felicity in the next, save them from acquiring a taste for drink. Christian ministers, deacons, elders, members, warn your young people that they come not within the fatal gaze of this moral basilisk. Oh! warn them that they enter not the outermost circle of this eddying maelstrom of perdition, crimsoned already with the blood of myriads once as fair and pure, as virtuous and true, as they are now.

Oh, Christians! by your peace of conscience on a dying bed; by the eternal destinies of your children; by your concern for the glory of your God; by your care for never-dying souls; by the love you owe your Saviour, I beseech you BANISH THE DRINK. Banish it from your tables, banish it from your houses, and oh! for Christ's sake, banish it from His house. Put no longer the sacrifice of Christ and of devils on the same altar! Banish also those who manufacture this "distilled damnation" from your communion, aye, from your society. Have no fellowship with those who get rich by robbing man of his reason, woman of her virtue, and children of their patrimony and their bread. Cease to recognise, not only as Christians, but as men, those who fatten on the weakness, wickedness, and suffering of their fellow■men. Hoist the flag of death over their breweries, distilleries, and dram■shops, warning the unwary that death and damnation lurk behind their finely■decorated bars, and run like the lurid fires of perdition through their brightly■polished taps! CHRISTIANS OF ENGLAND! THE TIME HAS COME WHEN TO TRIM ON THIS DRINK QUESTION IS THE HIGHEST TREASON TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST, AND THE GROSSEST INHUMANITY TO SUFFERING, PERISHING MILLIONS. Tell me no more of charity towards brewers, distillers, and publicans. YOUR FALSE CHARITY TO THESE HAS ALREADY

CONSIGNED MILLIONS TO AN UNTIMELY HELL! Tell us not of a charity that takes sides with the Pharisees who devour widows' houses, and leaves the poor victims of avarice and power to groan, and suffer, and die.

Tell us not of the charity that would have welded the shackles on three millions of slaves in America yonder, rather than have disturbed the comfort and impoverished the wealth of a few rich planters. Such charity savoureth of the old serpent, its speech betrayeth it. Such was not the charity of Jesus. His charity went out after the suffering multitudes, while it consigned those who gloated on their wrongs and sorrows to their own place, notwithstanding that they garnished the tombs of the prophets and paid tithes of mint, anise, and cummin! But, say some of our Christian friends, we must have patience. We answer we have had long patience, and the times of ignorance both God and man were willing to wink at, but we submit the time for patience has passed. The land is flooded with light, and if these men do not see, it is because they will not. AND THIS IS THE CROWNING, FINISHING CONDEMNATION OF ANY CLASS OF SINNERS, THAT, "LIGHT IS COME INTO THE WORLD, AND MEN LOVE DARKNESS RATHER THAN LIGHT, BECAUSE THEIR DEEDS ARE EVIL," OR WE MIGHT INTERPRET IT, BECAUSE THEIR GAINS ARE GREAT.

Charity, were we speaking of? O Christians! look on the multitudes who are led as sheep to the shambles by this great destroyer. Look on thousands, yea, tens of thousands, of your fellow■countrymen, husbands and fathers, robbed at once of their earnings, their manhood, their reason, and turned loose on their hapless wives and children, worse, more unreasonable, tyrannical and savage, than the wild beasts of the forest. Look upon thousands of poor suffering women called wives, who have to endure all a drunkard's tyranny and fury, while working for the children's bread, and struggling vainly to keep a home where they may lay their heads. Look on multitudes of our youth, lured from their homes, inspired with contempt of parental counsel, drawn into gay and immoral societies, dragged down from comparative innocence and virtue to idleness, debauchery, and crime!

Look on hosts of helpless, neglected children, ten times more to be pitied than those whom the heathen mother casts into the Ganges or the Nile; look on their half-starved, half-clad bodies, their untaught, benighted minds and souls, and then say how long this modern Juggernauth shall roll down your streets unchallenged—this chief of Satan's Satin's empire sway his spectre over this vaunted Christian land!

ARISE, CHRISTIANS, ARISE, AND FIGHT THIS FOE! YOU, AND YOU ALONE, ARE ABLE, FOR YOUR GOD WILL FIGHT FOR YOU! OH, COME UP TO HIS HELP AGAINST THIS MIGHTY CHAMPION OF HELL, AND HE WILT EMPOWER YOU TO LAY HIM LOW, AND TAKE ALL HIS ARMOUR WHEREIN HE TRUSTED.

03.03. Worldly Amusement and Christianity

WORLDLY AMUSEMENT AND CHRISTIANITY.

WE are constantly meeting with persons in perplexity as to how far they may participate in worldly amusements without compromising their Christian profession. Many confess having been for years in controversy on the subject of attending or assisting at concerts, penny readings, and gatherings of a similar though more private and social character, and not a few have admitted having suffered spiritual loss and declension through being mixed up with such entertainments. On this question there seems to be amongst the Lord's professing people a sad indefiniteness indefinitencss of view. Indeed, many appear to have no settled convictions on the subject. Hence, we fear, arises much of the abounding worldliness, that prevails in the Church, and hence the extinction of the demarcation line between so many thousands of the professing Christians of our day and the ungodly throngs around them.

We Wr propose briefly brieffy in this paper to consider, First, is it lawful and secondly, is it expedient for CHRISTIANS either to provide or attend such entertainments as penny readings, concerts, private theatricals, and the like?

I.—Is it lawful? To the law and to the testimony. What saith the Scriptures? "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all the people that are upon the face of the earth." (Deuteronomy 7:6.) "And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine." (Leviticus 20:26.) "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:2.) "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:19.) "For all that is in the world, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:16.) "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye SEPARATE, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Corinthians 6:17-18) "Whosoever therefore will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God." (James 4:4.)

We presume that all Christians attach SOME meaning to such passages as these; but one says they do not apply to this worldly custom, and another says they do not apply to that, until, as in the case of the Mahometan pig, the whole is swallowed, and every worldly■minded professor manages to get the piece he likes best, or which appears most to his interest: thus the law of Christ is frittered away, and the whole body of his professing Church given over to the god of this world. What then is the conformity to, and friendship with the world, which these and a host of similar passages prohibit? In other words, what is worldliness?

We reply—1st. We take that to be worldly which professes to be so. Neither men nor things are, as a rule, better than they profess to be.

2nd. We take that to be worldly which, in sentiment and spirit, the children of the world love, esteem, and enjoy.

3rd. We count whatever has no reference to God, righteousness or eternity, which “savoureth not of the things of God,” as worldly.

4th. Everything that is adverse in spirit to the dignity, gravity, and usefulness of the Christian character we regard as worldly.

It seems to us that these propositions are so self■evident, that no thoughtful Christian can gainsay them. Some professors seem to regard nothing as worldly which is not absolutely devilish, such as profanity, blasphemy, or obscenity. But the Scriptures carefully and clearly distinguish between the two. They prohibit Christians conforming to the world in all the habits and usages of daily life.

They are not to talk like the world, in the way of foolish jesting, “swelling words,” “insincere speech,” &c. But, on the contrary, their conversation is to “be seasoned with salt, meet to administer grace to the hearers.” It is to be “pure, proceeding from a good (not a doubtful) conscience.” It is to be “in heaven, from whence we look for the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The Scriptures prohibit Christians dressing like the world. “Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel.” (1 Peter 3:3.) “In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but which becometh women professing godliness, with good works.” (1 Timothy 2:9-10.) “Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go: therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion.” (Isaiah 3:16-17) We commend this whole chapter to the consideration of all whom it may concern, and we would suggest that as the Lord Jehovah regarded the dress of those Israelitish women as a sign of their backslidden condition, and thought it sufficiently important to be recorded by his holy prophet, it may be well for us to consider how far the same signs are manifest amongst us in our day. The Scriptures prohibit Christians singing the songs of the world, for they expressly enjoin that when they are merry or glad they are to sing psalms and make melody in their heart UNTO THE LORD. The Scriptures prohibit Christians from joining in the amusements of the world; forbidding any fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, commanding to abstain from the very appearance of evil, and TO COME OUT FROM AMONGST THE UNGODLY AND BE SEPARATE; and our Lord declared that his real disciples were not of the world, even as he was not of the world.

Now in light of these Scriptures, and of the propositions we have laid down, let us examine the character of some of the entertainments so popular with many professing Christians. We find that it is no uncommon thing for entertainments to be held in private drawing■rooms and in rooms connected with churches and chapels, over which ministers and leading men in churches preside, at which Shakespearian readings are given, with extracts from the works of the most popular and worldly novelists, and the same songs sung as are echoed and applauded in the public■house and the dancing■room.

Now, viewed in the light of the Scriptures we have quoted and tried by the propositions we have drawn from them, how do these practices strike you, Christian reader?

1st. Are they not professedly worldly? Do they not savour of the world, all of the world, and of the world only? Were not the authors of the things said and sung at such entertainments thoroughly Christless men, and some of them professed infidels?

2nd. Are not these the songs and sentiments which worldlings have always claimed as their own? Are they not sung in their ball■rooms, theatres, and casinoes? And is not this proof enough that they are congenial to their tastes, and in keeping with their spirit?

3rd. Such songs, recitations, and performances have no reference whatever to God, righteousness, or eternity. God is not only “not in all their thoughts,” but he is not in any of them, therefore they must be thoroughly worldly.

4th. The spirit of such amusements is manifestly adverse to the dignity, gravity, and usefulness of the Christian character. What are its effects? Lightness, foolish jesting, a false estimate of creature delights, obtuseness to spiritual things, and frequently uproarious merriment and godless mirth.

We put it to any Christian who has ever allowed himself to take part in such amusements whether these are not their inevitable and bitter fruits, and whether he has not found their spirit to be utterly antagonistic to the spirit of Christ? We have heard many backsliders in heart attribute their declension to mingling in such scenes of folly and frivolity, and we never met with one whom we had reason to believe had been renewed in the spirit of his mind who could say he could enter into them without condemnation.

Doubtless there are thousands of professing Christians who live in perpetual strife with their consciences and with the Holy Spirit on this subject; and verily they have their reward. Trying to hold Christ in one hand and the world in the other, they lose both. They have no joy in their godless amusements, neither have they any joy in the Lord. All is darkness, condemnation, and death. “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?” The testimony of the Word is too explicit, and the voice of the Spirit too clear, for any child of God to err for want of light if he will but listen to his Divine counsellor. But, alas! too many seek to silence His voice by vain and worldly reasoning, lowering the standard which He has given them because somebody else does so. They do not hear him saying, “What is that to thee? follow thou me.” “Love not the world, neither the things of the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him.” Not only is the testimony of the Word and of the Spirit against these amusements, but the testimony and example of the most devoted and intelligent Christians of all ages have been against them. The following are a few extracts bearing on the subject:—

“There is no earthly pleasure which has not the inseparable attendance of grief—and that following it as closely as Jacob came after Esau. Yea, worldly delight is but a shadow; and when we catch after it, all that we grasp is substantial sorrow in its room. The honey should not be very delightful, when the sting is so near.”—

Alleine.

“If there be any sorceress upon earth it is Pleasure; which so enchanteth the minds of men, and worketh the disturbance of our peace with such secret delight, that foolish men think this want of tranquillity happiness. She turneth man into swine with such sweet charms, that they would not change their brutish nature for their former reason.”—

Bishop Hall.

“Consider, this is not the season that should be for pleasure! The apostle James lays it as a great charge upon many in his time, that they lived in pleasure on earth. This is the time to do the great business for which we were born.”—

Ambrose.

“How often shall it be protested to the Christian world, by men of the greatest seriousness and devotion, that it is vain to dream of entering the kingdom of heaven hereafter, except the kingdom of heaven enter into their souls in this life? How long shall the Son of God, who came into the world to be the most glorious example of purity, self■denial, and mortification—how long shall He lie by in his word as an antiquated pattern, only cut out for the apostolic ages, and only suited to some few morose and melancholy men? With what face can we pretend to true religion, or a feeling acquaintance with God, and the things of his kingdom, whilst the continual bleatings and lowings of our souls after creature good betray us so manifestly, and proclaim before all the world, that the beast, the brutish life, is still so powerful in us?”—

Shaw.

“I would, that you should use this world as not abusing it, that you should be crucified to the world, and the world to you, that you should declare plainly that you seek a better country, which is an heavenly. Ah! my dear brethren, I beseech you carry it like pilgrims and strangers, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul; FOR WHAT HAVE WE TO DO with the customs and fashions of this world, who are strangers in it? Be contented with travellers’ lots; know you not that you are in a strange land?”—

Joseph Alleine’s Letters.

“I would dissuade thee from unnecessary society of ungodly men, and unprofitable companions, though they be not so apparently ungodly. It is not only the openly profane, the swearer, the drunkard, that will prove hurtful to us; but the dead■hearted formalists, or persons merely civil and moral, or whose conference is empty, unsavoury, and barren, may much divert our thoughts from heaven. As mere idleness and forgetting God will keep a soul as certainly from heaven as a profane licentious life; so also will useless company as surely keep our hearts from heaven.”—

Baxter.

“In speaking of the laws and limits of recreation, observe generally, that whatever is offensive to God, whatever is injurious to others, whatever is hurtful, whether remotely or proximately to our own soul or body, is evil; to be avoided in ourselves and to be condemned in others. The principles involved in the foregoing remarks will answer the queries so frequently put—Is it right to frequent a theatre?—to attend the ball■room?—to sit at the card table?—to mingle indiscriminately in gay and fashionable society? The study of the Bible quotations so largely made will furnish a reply. Read and you will know.”—

Samuel Martin.

"'I bade farewell for ever,' she says, 'to assemblies which I had visited, to plays and diversions, dancing, unprofitable walks, and parties of pleasure. The amusements and pleasures, so much prized and esteemed by the world, now appeared to me dull and insipid—so much so, that I wondered how I ever could have enjoyed them.'"—

Madame Guyon.

"I heard also that this new clergyman preached against all my favourite diversions, such as going to plays, reading novels, attending balls, assemblies, card tables,&c.

"I asked, 'Is it true that he preaches against dancing?' I said I was resolved to take the first opportunity of conversing with him, being certain I could easily prove such amusements were not sinful. Being told what arguments he made use of, I revolved them in my mind, fully determined if I found upon reflection I could answer them, I would.

"I first considered if any Scripture example could be brought, .. but found nothing there which countenanced dancing in any measure. I then began to consider the objections urged against it. One of them was, that as it tends to lively and trifling mirth, so it enervates the mind, dissipates the thoughts, weakens if not stifles serious and good impressions, and quite indisposes the mind for prayer. I asked in my own mind, Is not this a truth? Conscience answered in the affirmative.

After much controversy, consideration, and prayer, she says:

"For my own part I was conscious that it led me to dress and expenses not suited to my present situation in life. These thoughts brought powerful convictions to my mind, notwithstanding my desire to resist them. I could not deny that truth, in particular, and those who habitually attend such pleasures lose all relish for spiritual things. God is shut out of their thoughts and hearts; prayer, if they use any, is full of wanderings, or perhaps, wholly neglected; and death put as far as possible out of sight, lest the thought should spoil their pleasure."—

Mrs. Rogers. Did our space permit we could give hundreds of quotations of similar bearing by such writers as Augustine, Thomas a'Kempis, Luther, Knox, Howe, Leighton, Newton, Cecil, Henry, Locke, Bunyan, Whitfield, Wesley, Clarke, Barnes, Steir, Doddridge, Young, and others. But our space prevents the calling of these witnesses. Christian reader, let those we have called suffice.

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as He which hath called you is holy, so ye be holy in all manner of conversation."

II. We come now to the question of expediency. The principal arguments brought forward by Christians in favour of providing and attending worldly amusements are—

1st. Seeing that our young people will have amusement, it is better to provide them with that which is moral and comparatively innocent, than to drive them to that which is positively vicious.

2nd. Seeing that we cannot get hold of the unconverted by the Gospel, it is better to meet them half way, and try, as it were, to catch them by guile.

These arguments look very plausible: let us honestly consider them in the light of Scripture and actual experience. 1st. On whose behalf are they urged? Are the young people referred to the children of Christian parents, or the children of votaries of this world? If the latter, we reply that

Christians are nowhere taught, either directly or indirectly, that it is any part of their duty to provide amusement for the children of this world; nay, the direct teaching and the whole tenor of Scripture go to prove that it is their duty to seek to alarm and convict them. There is not a line in the whole Bible on which an argument can be built for amusing people while yet in their sins. The Scriptures ever represent the unconverted as under condemnation, in imminent danger, ready to be destroyed, a state rendering them far more fit objects for pity, concern, and earnest Christian effort than for amusement. To keep them amused and self■satisfied is just what Satan desires, and all the better for his purpose if he can get it done by professed Christians.

Well, but, say some of our expediency friends, if by getting unconverted young people to attend our penny readings, moral concerts, and private parties where dancing, charades, and such like pastimes are practised, we can show them that religion is not such a melancholy thing as they have imagined, and that to become Christians need not exclude them from such recreations, may we not hope so to induce them to attend our sanctuaries, and thus get them converted by our more direct Christian instrumentalities? We answer, IF you could thus promote good by doing evil, the end would fail to justify the means, for God says,“to obey is better than sacrifice;” but there is the if still undisposed of. We ask, does this worldly policy succeed? Do your evening parties, your miniature pantomimes pantomines , dancing, and song singing, lead to the conversion of “Our young people?” Do the hodge■podge mixtures of Christ and Shakspeare, Paul and Dickens of our times, serve to fill our sanctuaries, and bring the people to Jesus? Nay, verily; the crowds who will go fast enough to hear their favourite songs and flippant rhymes piped through the instruments of the temple on the week night, remorselessly leave those who have stooped to pander to their taste to chant the songs of Zion to empty pews on the Sabbath. But supposing that in some instances worldlings are won by these means, what of all the mischief that is done? These amusements are pleaded for on the ground that they will save our young people from those of a vicious and immoral character, but we contend that they are quite as likely, in many instances, to pave the way to the vicious, as in others to save from it. They will do this:

1st. By throwing over that which is purely sensuous and godless, and therefore sinful, the sanctity of association with Christ and religion.

2nd. By lowering the standard of the purity and sanctity of the Christian character.

3rd. By destroying the respect and awe with which many of the unconverted have been accustomed to regard Christianity and Christian Ministers.

4th. By begetting a sense of security in sin, leading them to say,“We cannot be so very far wrong, or these Christians would not associate with us, and find pleasure in our amusements. There is not so much difference between us after all.” We fear that by these and similar means, the half■awakened conscience of many a young man and woman has been silenced, and their hearts hardened; and instead of being won from vice, they have been driven faster into it. Alas, who can tell the convictions that are stifled, the serious impressions that are lost, the good resolutions that are scattered, and the heavenly aspirations that are blasted in these religious pantomimes, these Christian■Belial festivities! Many sad stories come out, but eternity alone will reveal their full and awful consequences. But the argument of expediency is not only urged on behalf of our unconverted young people, but (O tell it not in Gath!) also on behalf of the children of professing Christians! “What are we to do?” say some professedly Christian parents. “Our children must have

recreation and amusement, and unless we allow them to mingle to some extent in fashionable society, and attend such parties as you refer to, we must needs keep them out of society altogether, and make recluses of them, for all our Christian friends patronise such entertainments, and consider them innocent and lawful." If this be true, we reply, that it reveals more clearly than anything we could say, the backslidden and awful state of the professing Church, and calls loudly for some attempt to stem the tide of worldly conformity, while there remains a spark of spiritual life in her midst.

Alas, and has it come to pass that there is no strictly Christian social intercourse and enjoyment? Have the topics of our glorious Christianity become so stale and uninteresting? Have the themes of Gospel enterprise and individual effort lost all their inspiration? Have the songs of Zion lost their enchanting and inspiriting influence? Has the voice of social prayer become quite silent? Has every spark of real enthusiasm in religion gone out, that when Christians want to find INTEREST and ENJOYMENT, they must seek it in themes and things peculiarly belonging to the god of this world, and his votaries? Has it come to pass that Christians have so little confidence in the God of the Bible, and the religion of Jesus, that they must seek an alliance between Christ and the world in order to interest their children and save them from open profligacy and vice? If so, how does this reflect on themselves? What sort of training does it imply? Have they trained their sons and daughters so truly in the spirit of the world, under the garb of a religious profession, that nothing but the most sensuous amusements of worldlings (who make any pretence to morality) will satisfy them? Has it come to pass that the children of CHRISTIANS must dress like harlots,—dance, sing songs, read novels, attend concerts, where worldly and even comic songs are sung, evoking uproarious laughter and unseemly jests? and all this for their amusement, their parents, and even ministers, looking on: and striving by the most blind and wicked perversion of the word of God, to justify their worldliness and salve their consciences? ALAS, IT HAS COME TO THIS! "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people."

Well, I think I hear some Christian say, "What is to be done?" Done! Let every one who has any convictions on this subject ACT ON THEM. Half the mischief has resulted from Christians turning away from the simple teachings of the word in order to pander to one another; "measuring themselves amongst themselves," instead of measuring themselves by the standard of the Word. We have heard them say, "Well, I never felt quite satisfied that such things were right or consistent; but then, many far higher in Christian attainments than I am allow them; and it seems like condemning others, and making one's self to be holier than they." Thus the voice of individual conscience has been stifled, and the standard gradually lowered, until Christ and Shakespeare are openly affianced, and Paul and Dickens bracketed together as equal benefactors of their race.

"But what am I to do?" is the still recurring cry of some timid Christian mother or father. "Must I keep my children out of society altogether?" Yes, verily, if you cannot find any truly Christian society for them. Humble yourself deeply before God for having trained your children with worldly tastes and associations, and set yourself, as far as possible, to remedy the evil. Get more spirituality, more real life, and you will find your religion astonishingly more interesting both to yourself and to your children. "Well, but my children must have companions." Oh no, there is no must in the case; better live without them than have such as lead them away from God, and into friendship with the world. If you have not yet learnt this, I fear you have never realised your

responsibility to God for your children's souls. Do you regard your children as your own or the Lord's?—If your own, you will train them on worldly principles; but if the Lord's, you will surely train them for Him, that they may serve their generation according to HIS WILL. You have nothing to do with consequences; it is yours to obey. God will take care of His own. Act on your convictions of duty. If you stand alone in your family—your circle—your church—never mind; ACT for yourself, as you must give account for yourself. Perhaps, if you make a beginning, somebody else will follow. Somebody must begin—somebody must make a stand, why not you? You say,"I am so uninfluential—so weak—and the cross will be so heavy." All the more blessing in carrying it; and He who chooses the weak things will bless your testimony, and use it for His glory. Only "honour God, and He will honour you." But I must hasten to consider the second argument urged in support of this expediency Christianity.

"Seeing that the Gospel fails to attract our young people, it is better to meet them half■way, and try, as it were, to catch them by guile." We reply, 1st, Is the success of the Gospel dependent on worldly expediency or on spiritual power? If on the former, we can see the force of this argument; but if on the latter, it is utterly irrelevant. There are but two kinds of influence or power in operation in the Church; the material and the spiritual. Jesus Christ utterly and continually abjured the material as being of any value in His kingdom. He systematically ignored, both by example and precept, all the influence of mere learning—traditional religion—wealth—position—worldly power and policy: and steadily maintained that "His kingdom was not of this world." He solemnly abjured all other kinds of influence or power save that of the DIVINE, and laboured incessantly to imbue His disciples with the conviction that nothing short of this endowment could empower them for their work. (Acts 1:4-5; Luke 24:48-49; John 15:1-27)

We all know how completely Paul and his fellow apostles learnt this lesson, and how they continually gloried in the testimony that it was "not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord," that they did all their wonderful works. While the early Christians were true to the example and teaching of their Master, we never find them bemoaning their lack of ability to attract or to convert the people. So mighty was their influence, though comparatively few in number, and insignificant in social position, that wherever they went they were said to have "turned the world upside down," and large and flourishing churches sprang up in all directions. THEY did not feel the necessity for any half■way meeting place between themselves and the world; they did not lower the tone of their Christian morality in order to meet the corrupt and heathenish notions of those around them; neither did they abjure their spirituality lest it should disgust them. On the contrary, the apostles and early Christians seem to have had the conviction that the more complete their devotion to their Master,—the more separate from the world,—the more truly spiritual and divine they were,—the greater would be their influence for God, and the greater their success in winning men to Christ. It never seems to have entered into their minds to descend from the high vantage ground on which their Lord had placed them, to fight the enemy with his own weapons, and to try to cast him out by a partial conformity to his darling lusts (1 John 2:16). The source of their power was DIVINE; therefore they needed no adjuncts of human policy, or of worldly expedience. They were mighty "THROUGH GOD," and could well dispense with the heathen poets and fashionable novelists of their times. Their preaching was "with the demonstration of the SPIRIT and of POWER;" consequently, multitudes listened, believed, and turned to the Lord.

It was not until the primitive Christians began to admit worldly principles of action, and to substitute the material for the spiritual, that their influence began to wane, and their testimony to lose its power. It was the gradual substitution of the human for the divine, the material for the spiritual, that overspread Christendom for ages with papal darkness and death. During that long night of error and suffering, however, God raised up many witnesses to the sufficiency of the Holy Ghost to attract and convert men—many making long pilgrimages, and suffering great privations, in order to visit and converse with those endued with this Divine Gift. And when at length the light of the Reformation broke over the nations, this one great lesson was again engraven on the hearts of God's chosen instruments: "It is not by might, nor by power, but by MY SPIRIT, saith the Lord of Hosts!" Thus, after the lapse of ages, we find the Gospel, when preached with the old power, the same mighty instrumentality, both for attracting the multitudes and converting the soul. From the Reformation down to the present time, we find that wherever the same Gospel has been preached with the same accompanying power, the same results have followed, even when the preacher has been trammelled by a false creed, or beset with hosts of opposing influences from earth and hell. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there spiritual miracles are wrought, and wherever miracles are wrought, the people will congregate; be it by the river-side, in the temple, in kirk, church, chapel, theatre, meeting■house, attic, or cellar. There is no quicker detective of the presence of the Spirit of Jesus than the spirit which worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience. But He has always been more than a match for would■be exorcists. "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?"

You will perceive, Christian reader, that we regard this plea, "that the Gospel fails to attract," as a very suspicious one. We ask those who urge it, in the light of the foregoing summary of facts, to tell us, WHY IT FAILS? We have no hesitation in saying ONLY for want of the HOLY GHOST. The great desideratum in connection with all our organisations, societies, churches, agencies, and instrumentalities, is LIFE! LIFE!! LIFE!!! The people want a LIVING GOSPEL, preached by LIVING SPIRIT■BAPTIZED SOULS. Dare we, in the light of the past, instead of this Divine bread, give them the stone of materialism? If so we must prepare for the consequences.

03.04. Heart Backslliding

HEART BACKSLIDING.

1. Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

2. I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

3. And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured and hast not fainted.

4. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5. Remember therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. AS introductory to my remarks on this passage, I want you to observe that this is a direct message from Christ Himself to a company of His own people in a certain state of religious experience. These Ephesians were Christians, born into the family of God, and for a long time, and to a great extent, had faithfully served Him. Hear what He says of them in this second verse: "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted." He sums up their character most carefully, giving them the utmost credit for all the fruits of the Spirit found in them. He remembers their labour, their patience, their hatred of evil, their zeal for His glory in their intolerance of false teachers, their constancy in suffering, their purity of motive, and their continuance in well doing. Not one of their good deeds is forgotten before Him; but the brilliancy and preciousness of the whole is marred by one defect which only he could see, but which his love and faithfulness compelled him to reveal and to reprove. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."

After such a repetition of their fidelities and graces, we, in our carnal wisdom, might have looked for a THEREFORE, instead of a NEVERTHELESS. We might have expected Him to say, "Thou hast has laboured for me with much zeal, patience, and perseverance; therefore, I will excuse and pass over thy declension in love, thy defection of heart." This is the way in which many of God's people seem to imagine that He regards heart unfaithfulness; but not so the Lord Himself. Notwithstanding all their labours, sufferings, patience, and zeal, He had a nevertheless against them, which compelled his reproof and endangered his anger. And oh, is not this his attitude towards thousands of his people now? Is not this message to these Ephesian Christians equally applicable to multitudes in our day, who are serving Him with much zeal and patience; but they have left their first love, and are, notwithstanding all their outward professions and labour, backsliders in heart? Some of you start at the use of such a phrase, and you say, "But these Ephesians were not backsliders." Not in the general acceptation of the term, but in the estimation of their Lord they were backsliders in heart. They had partially fallen, partially gone from that

whole-hearted service which once they rendered Him, and without which all outward works, however worthy or zealous, will not suffice. I fear that after this manner the great majority of Christians are backsliders. I have conversed with numbers up and down this land, and many who have occupied prominent positions in Christian Churches, who have confessed that they were secret backsliders, having lost much that they once enjoyed, and walking far less carefully than they once did. Taking these as representatives of others in similar circumstances I say, I cannot but fear that a very large majority of professing Christians have, like these Ephesian converts, left their first love. I have no doubt that there are many of this class here this morning, and I desire to speak especially to these.

Let me entreat you, my dear friends, to open your hearts to the reception of the truth. Forget the feeble instrumentality through which it comes, and if it commends itself to your consciences as God's truth, let it have its full weight upon your hearts. If you are right, it will do you no harm to examine yourselves. It will establish you and help you "to assure your hearts before Him." And if you are not right, who can tell the importance of making the discovery in time, while there is opportunity and grace offered by which you may be made right? I beseech you be honest with yourselves and with God. There is nothing to be gained by crying, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. It is of no use trying to persuade yourselves that you are right with God if your consciences tell you that you are not. You will find your consciousness too strong for all the false theories of men and devils, and true peace will be impossible to you until you come back to your first love. I think I hear some one say, "Ah! That is just what I want! But how am I to do it? I know that I am a backslider in heart; it is not with me now as it once was; but I have tried and tried in vain to get back what I once enjoyed, and to live as I once lived." My dear friend, you have not tried in the right way. Try your Lord's way; take his counsel, obey his commands, and you shall not only get back all you have lost, but an abundant increase of peace and power. This way, as pointed out here, seems to me to be—

1. Remember:—realise your unfaithfulness.

2. Repent:—humble yourself, confess and renounce your sin.

3. Do your first works:—consecration and faith.

1. Remember:—realise your unfaithfulness. Remember from whence thou art fallen. There are different degrees of backsliding; some have fallen from greater heights, and some to lower depths than others. But if you ever were higher on the ladder of Christian experience than you are this morning, to just that extent you are a backslider. Our Lord does not wish us to condemn ourselves for losing that which we never possessed; but to remember from whence, the exact degree of spiritual attainment we once realised, and to compare our present state with it. "Remember!" consider it, ponder over it; strive to realise it as the evil and bitter thing it is.

We fear that numbers of Christians reach a fearful degree of backsliding without knowing it. "Gray hairs are here and there upon Ephraim, and he knoweth it not;" and no wonder; they are so occupied with the externals of religion; they are so absorbed in business, or care, or pleasure, that they have no time to remember. They never stop to compare notes, to observe the landmarks, or take the soundings of their spiritual state. They have no time for the old■fashioned duty of self■examination; or if they have, it is so distasteful that they prefer to read, or hear, or talk.

Sometimes the Holy Spirit, by some word of God, some sermon, or providence, flashes the conviction on their minds that they have lost ground, that they “have forsaken Him, the fountain of living water, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” But the conviction is painful; they are afraid of the revelation, they shrink from the consequences of its admission even to themselves, and instead of honestly examining into the state of their hearts, they fall back upon their conversion and early experience, and say, “Surely it must be all right with me, although I have no communion with God, no sensible joy or peace, and but little power over sin. I must be a child of God. Salvation is by faith, not by works; God does not look at me, but at Jesus.” Instead of remembering from whence they have fallen, they look only to what they have fallen, and try to accommodate the requirements of the word to their miserable experience. Having lost the faith that purifies the heart and manifests its existence by obedience, they try to take refuge in an antinomian faith, which does neither the one or the other—a faith which makes void the law of God, and makes Christ the minister of sin. Thank God, however, they cannot get peace this way; their countenances belie their creed, and their powerless lives tell to all around that they have only got the shell without the kernel, the form without the power.

If there are any of this class here this morning, my friends, I beseech you take YOUR LORD’S counsel—“Remember from whence you have fallen.” Reflect on what you once enjoyed. How was it with you in days gone by? Let me help you to remember by a few practical questions. Did you not once realise a sweet and blessed sense of your acceptance with God? and did not His Spirit witness with your spirit that you were a child of God? and did you not realise that “there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit?” How is it with you now? As you received the Lord Jesus, have you so walked in Him that your path has been like that of the just, shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day? or have you lost your roll and with it your peace and the joy of the Lord which once was your strength? Again, did you not once walk in daily communion with God, your prayers being not merely petitions, but mediums of sensible intercourse with Him? and did not his candle shine brightly on your head? What of your present experience in this respect? Do you still rejoice in this light? or are you groping after Him as an absent and far■distant God? You once realised the power of Christ to rest upon you, so that you were more than conqueror over the world, the flesh, and the devil; sin had no more dominion over you ; “old things were passed away;” the old spirit of bondage and the helpless misery of a merely convicted state were passed away, and you could sing, “Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ;” and, “I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.”

How is it with you? Do you walk in the liberty wherewith Christ made you free? or are you gone back to the spirit of bondage again to fear, and to the helplessness of your convicted state, by reason of which you are crying, “O, wretched man that I am!” If so, oh, “remember from whence thou art fallen.” Your conscience was once tender as the apple of the eye; you eschewed evil, and kept as far from its very appearance as you could. You had no fellowship with the godless multitudes who crucified your Lord, and trampled under foot His blessed laws. You kept as far aloof from the world as you might, weeping over its sins, and looking down with pity on its hollow amusements. What is your present attitude in this matter? Are you still separate from sinners, following the Lamb wheresoever He goeth? or has the daughter of Zion come down from her holy mountain, and defiled herself with the abominations of the heathen round about? You were once

full of zeal for the glory of your Divine Deliverer, and the salvation of those for whom He died. You could then reprove sin, and weep over and expostulate with sinners. You could deny yourself almost your necessary sleep and food, in order to promote the interests of your Redeemer's kingdom. Where is now your zeal for the Lord of Hosts? Can you deny self, sacrifice your ease, honour, reputation, or wealth, for his glory, as you once did? Remember! Compare your present state with your former one. Let conscience speak, let facts speak, and honestly admit the truth; and if you are condemned, write yourself down—Backslider in heart. You say, "I do not like the conclusion." Perhaps not; but if it be true, honesty will be the best policy here, as in everything else. Look the fact in the face, and try to realise its desperate meaning. I fear too many Christians have far too light an estimate of heart■unfaithfulness. I have sometimes heard them speak of five or ten years' half■heartedness as a very light thing, slurring it over, as it were, with a very thin and superficial sort of confession; but our Lord does not so regard it; He looks upon it as a very serious matter, a very heinous sin, a most God■dishonouring experience; so much so, that He threatens these Ephesian backsliders that, unless they repent, notwithstanding all their good works, He will come unto them in judgment, and remove their candlestick out of its place. This is a far greater sin than any you ever committed before you were converted; and you must look at it, reflect on it, remember it, until you have realised its bitterness. Do not be afraid because of the painfulness of the process. Painful operations are often necessary to save life. If you had a bad wound, which required examining and probing, you would not say to the surgeon, "I cannot bear to look at it; I cannot endure the pain of dressing; cover it up, and let it alone." No! you would know that, painful as would be the process of probing and dressing, it was necessary to save your limb, and perhaps your life; and you would, like a reasonable being, endure the pain, and save your life. Just so, if you have spiritual wounds; they need probing, and perhaps cauterising, before they can be healed; and it is of no use to shrink from the knife of the Great Physician. He knows that it will cause pain; yea, bitter anguish; yet he says, "Remember!" Oh, my backsliding friend, bare your heart before Him who walks amid the golden candlesticks, and ask Him to search it as with a lighted candle. Ask for the realizing light of the Holy Spirit to reveal to you your backslidings, and to set your secret sins in the light of His countenance. Ask Him to help you to remember by quickening your spiritual perceptions, and opening your eyes, to see the monstrous ingratitude and cruel infidelity of which you have been guilty. Instead of refusing to remember, because of the mental suffering involved in the process, methinks we should rejoice to suffer. Seeing that we have wounded our Lord in the house of His friends, we ought to be willing to weep our lives away, at the remembrance of our sin, and if we could, to shed tears of blood, as an evidence of our penitence. To have been unfaithful to His saving grace; to have been untrue to His dying love; to have withheld from Him that which He purchased with His heart's blood, demands a deeper grief, a more bitter repentance, than that of our unconverted state. May the Lord help those of you who are convicted of this sin to remember; until the fallow ground of your heart is broken up, and your souls cry, "O, remember not against us former iniquities; let Thy tender mercies speedily prevent us, for we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our salvation, and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for Thy name's sake."

2. The next step is repentance. Now, true repentance implies humiliation, confession, and renunciation. When the backslider has remembered until he realises his unfaithfulness in its true heinousness, he will be so deeply humbled that he will be willing to confess his sin before God and his people. I have known Christians deeply convicted of backsliding, who were yet too proud to

confess it. I have known them cover up their sin, and struggle, and pray, and weep, and labour to get back their peace and power, till they were almost driven to distraction; but I never knew one succeed who refused to make an honest confession. While the backslider in heart is too proud to confess that he is one, the laws of mind, as well as the Word of God, forbid that he should be restored to pardon and peace.

“When I kept silence,” says David, describing such a state, “my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long; (then) I said I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.” If we sin against an earthly friend or benefactor, the laws of mind require that, before we can obtain a sense of reconciliation and peace, we must confess the wrong. And all God’s requirements and conditions are beautifully adjusted to the laws of our nature; therefore he requires us to confess our sins, and then “He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.” Perhaps some one asks, But if I confess to God is not that enough? We answer, it depends on the nature of the offence; if it has been against God only, it may be so; but if it has involved or injured others, it must be confessed to them. “If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” “Confess your faults one to another, that ye may be healed.” Now, the backslider in heart has necessarily influenced and injured others by his coldness, deadness, and inconsistency, and in many cases so deeply, that nothing but an honest straightforward confession on his part can win for the truth any influence over them. The backsliding Christian falsely represents the religion of Jesus, and indirectly teaches men that it is what he exhibits it to be. Now, on conviction of his unfaithfulness, he is bound in common honesty to redeem his Christianity from the stigma which his inconsistency has brought upon it, and to tell those who have witnessed his life, that its defects have been attributable, not to the religion of Jesus, but to the want of it. I have sometimes thought, on hearing the professions of the Lord’s people, that a little CONFESSION would do a great deal more good. There is a mighty power in confession. A thorough and honest confession of backsliding and inconsistency on the part of Christians would do more to convince and arouse the unconverted within their influence than all their professions have done for years gone by; because it would convince the unsaved that they were REAL AND SINCERE, which at present they do not believe. Many of you will remember reading a beautiful illustration of what I am saying in the Report of the American Revival some seven or eight years ago, respecting a Christian merchant in that country. He does not appear to have been by any means an indifferent professor; on the contrary, he had felt some anxiety about the young men in his employ, and had, as he tells us, lent them books, and invited them to hear earnest ministers, and talked piously to them in a general and indirect sort of way; but all this, as it generally does, had failed to win any of them to Christ, or even to convince them that they were sinners. One day as he was walking through the streets, reflecting on the failure of all his efforts, he was led, doubtless by the Divine Spirit, to see the reason of this failure. He REMEMBERED. “Is it any wonder,” said he to himself, “that I have failed, seeing how inconsistently I have often acted; what a worldly spirit I have exhibited, what an undue absorption in business, and how little real anxiety I have manifested about the souls of my young men? I never took one of them aside and spoke to him directly and feelingly of his accountability and danger. O, how cold and dead and indifferent I have been.” These reflections so filled him with grief and humiliation, that he resolved on taking the first opportunity for confessing his unfaithfulness, and speaking pointedly and faithfully to them about their souls. This he did, and in a

few weeks the majority of them were blessedly converted to God. This was the effect of confession. That merchant might have gone on talking good to those young men until now, and no effect would have been produced. While his practice was so o far below his profession, all his direct efforts were neutralised, and thus it is with thousands of professing Christians; they are altogether indifferent about others, they try to do a little for the Lord; but their endeavours are all lost, because of their half-heartedness and inconsistency.

If there are any here who feel this to be true in their case, my dear friends let me urge you to follow the example of the merchant. Remember your unfaithfulness, till you are sufficiently humbled to be willing to confess it to those whom you have injured by it. This is just what is needful, and ALL that is needful in many an instance where Christians have been praying for years for unconverted relatives and friends. Suppose a Christian wife here this morning: you have an unconverted husband for whom you have been praying for many years; but you are conscious that he has witnessed much in your conduct and spirit which has been at variance with the Christianity which you have professed. Now, this discrepancy between your practice and profession lies like an enemy in ambush, against all extraneous efforts to bring saving truth to bear on the conscience of your husband; and no doubt an honest confession on your part would do more to break his heart and win him to the Saviour than all the sermons he has heard for years gone by. If you are in doubt try it. If you are convicted of backsliding, go home, and with meekness and tears of bitter penitence tell your husband so; tell him that the Spirit has convinced you of your half■heartedness and inconsistency; tell him that you are ashamed of the past, and resolved by God's grace to lead a new life. Put your arm round his neck, and ask him to join you: then get on your knees and pour out your soul in confession to God, and see whether your husband's heart will not be moved, and admittance gained for the truth and Spirit of God. And vice versa, let the husband do so with his wife. I tell you that your confession will do more than all your professions have ever done. And just so in the case of Christian parents who have lived in a half■hearted state before their children. Oh, how much has been said and written as to the reasons why so few comparatively of the children of Christians get converted in early life.

I think the answer could be given, and the mystery explained in one word—unfaithfulness. How can parents expect to win their children to Christ if they constantly exhibit an un■Christ■like spirit, and trample under foot the plainest teachings of his word? How frequently the children of professing parents seem to entertain a greater malignity against the religion of Jesus than do the children of thorough worldlings; and no wonder, seeing that the very name of Christianity has been made to stink in their nostrils by the inconsistency of the parents. They are taught in precept that they are to be sincere, truthful, unselfish, unworldly, but they see in practice the constant exhibition of principles directly contrary; and hence they learn to despise both their parents and the religion which they profess. If there are any inconsistent parents here this morning, my friends, if you desire the conversion of your children, go home and take down the barriers which your unfaithfulness has raised in their hearts against the reception of the Gospel. Go and confess to your children, or, if their youth renders this inexpedient, gather them around the family altar, and confess it all to God in their presence; make a fresh and full dedication of yourselves, of your children, of your all to Him; beseeching Him with strong cries and tears to give you grace to live wholly for Him. Do this with godly sincerity, your own hearts being truly broken up, and no matter how careless or ungracious your children may have been, you will find them melted into

tenderness, and in all probability convinced of sin. So greatly does God delight in honesty of heart in his people, that He never fails to give the accompanying power of the Spirit to those who exercise it. I have not a doubt that an honest confession of backsliding on the part of all unfaithful ministers would open the windows of heaven, and bring down such a flood of grace on their barren and worldly churches as would shake our land from end to end.

I remember reading a very striking and affecting illustration of this some years ago, in connection with the experience of a dear man of God, who, during the early years of his Christian career, had been a man of extraordinary devotedness, zeal, and self■sacrifice, but gradually and almost imperceptibly to himself he had fallen from his first love. Though still abounding in good works, and looked up to by all as a pattern of piety, he had lost the power which once characterised him. The Lord showed him from whence he had fallen in a very simple and effective manner, by bringing him into close contact with a man filled with the Spirit, and burning with zeal for the salvation of souls, thus, by the law of contrast, flashing on him the conviction that he had lost his first love. The backslider in heart began to “remember.” He said to himself, “I was once like that man; I felt as he does; I rejoiced as he does; I prayed as he does; I laboured as he does; but I am not like him now. Oh, my God, I am a backslider in heart.” The discovery almost overwhelmed him. He realised its bitterness, and agonised over its consequences, until his distress reached a climax, and kneeling down he prayed in an agony, telling the Lord that if He would restore him to his first love, he would confess his heart■backsliding to his brethren, and do all in his power to counteract the evil effects of his former coldness and unfaithfulness. I need not say that the Lord heard and answered. This was all He wanted of His servant, in order to His pouring in the oil and wine of His love and consolation. Like the disciples on the day of Pentecost he rose from his knees filled with the Spirit. The next day there was an official meeting, in which he had to take part. At the appointed time some dozen of the leading men assembled. After the business was gone through, he asked to be allowed to make a few remarks; and then, with the simplicity of a little child, like an honest■hearted man as he was, he related the experience of the last few days. He confessed to his brethren his heart■backsliding, told them how the Lord had convinced him of it, and how graciously He had restored him to his first love. The brethren present were melted into tears; they sobbed and cried like children; and when he had done, broke out into a general confession of backsliding and unfaithfulness. They continued in the deepest humiliation of soul, confessing and bewailing their sins until midnight. As one after another poured out his soul in confession and supplication, the Holy Ghost fell on them, and there commenced in that room on that memorable night a revival which swept hundreds into the Church of Christ, many of whom are now in heaven. All this was brought about by the power of confession. That man might have preached on until the end of his days, and never have done one tithe of the good which this one open, honest confession did.

Oh, what a deal of praying there is for revivals, and for spiritual visitations, which is sheer hypocrisy. The Church might have a revival as wide and deep and powerful as she asks, if she would only comply with the conditions on which God can grant it—if she would remember her unfaithfulness, honestly confess and forsake her sins, and bring into God’s storehouse the tithes of which she is so flagrantly robbing Him; but it is easier to utter vain repetitions and leave the responsibility of the damnation of souls upon God, than for Christians to humble themselves, confess before the world their fallen and powerless condition, and pay their vows unto the Lord.

The Lord only wants a whole■hearted faithful people, and the walls of many a Jericho would fall, and a nation be born in a day. Oh, may the Lord send upon his backsliding Israel the spirit of conviction and of mourning! May He open her eyes to see from whence she has fallen, and enable her to repent, to come down into the dust, and cry “Unclean, unclean!” until her iniquity is purged, her backslidings healed, and her lips touched with living fire from off his pure and holy altar. But further, repentance not only implies humiliation and confession, but RENUNCIATION, sometimes the hardest of all. “Put away the evil of your doings,” is an indispensable condition of restoration to the favour and peace of God. Christ Jesus came to save his people from their sins, not in them and those who will not be saved from their sins prove beyond a question that they are none of his. I have known many professing Christians try hard to get peace while holding on to some sin, or allowing some idol, but I never knew one succeed. You may preach faith for ever to a soul thus temporising with evil, but its consciousness will be too strong for your theories. You must show that soul that it can never believe till it is willing to part with evil. Not that it must save itself, but that it must be WILLING TO BE SAVED FROM SIN. This was the principle on which Christ dealt with the young ruler, and which is insisted on again and again by Christ and His apostles. I am satisfied that thousands of professing Christians are kept in bondage and darkness through not understanding this fundamental principle of the economy of salvation. They hear so much about faith, and so little about the conditions of faith, that they get bewildered; and instead of repenting and putting away the evil, that their sins may be blotted out, they spend all their time in trying to work themselves up into a faith as unphilosophical as it is unscriptural. Consequently, they fail to get peace, and live in perpetual condemnation and misery. So it must ever be with those who ignore God’s way, and take their own.

I remember a striking illustration of this, in connection with some services I held in a distant part of the country. A gentleman called on me, and sent in to ask if I would see him without an introduction, as he did not wish to reveal his name. I said, “Oh, certainly; if I could be of any service to him, I did not wish to know who he was.” Accordingly, he came in, and told me his story. He said that he had been attending my Thursday morning meetings for believers, and he thought perhaps I could help him, as he was in a most difficult and painful position. I found that he had once lived very near to God, and known much of His grace and love; but, in a time of partial backsliding, he had been induced to enter into partnership in business with an unconverted man. His partner, though a respectable, moral man, after the standard of the world, practised and allowed things, in the management of the business, which my visitor’s conscience condemned; “and though,” said he, “I protest against them, and have no share in their preparation, yet I share in the profits of the business, and my name goes forth to the public as responsible for all that is done, and I feel condemned on account of it.” He told me that he had lost his peace, and had tried in every way to regain it. He had fasted and prayed, and wept and struggled, till his body was quite worn. He had been to seek the advice of every minister for miles around, and had sought the counsels and prayers of his Christian friends, in vain. “What am I to do?” said he. “I have considerable capital invested; my friends are very anxious that I should get on; and others are involved in my success.”

I felt the importance of the case, and truly sympathised with the young man; but to me his path seemed plain as daylight.

I looked up for a word that should convince him, and then said, “Well, my dear sir, I can only say, that for myself, I should as soon expect the favour of God in hell, as on earth, while I was doing or allowing anything for which my conscience condemned me.” The arrow went home. He said, “I see, I see; I shall have to come out at all costs.” I said, “I believe you will;” and then I tried to show him how much richer he would be with an approving conscience and the smile of God, even in poverty, if the Lord should so will, than with wealth and affluence in his present wretched state of mind. I afterwards learnt who he was, and was most thankful to find that he had followed the light, and given up the ungodly alliance. Now, I say, this young man might have wept himself into the grave, and never have regained his peace, unless he had RENOUNCED HIS SIN. It was utterly useless telling him to exercise faith for deliverance. It was as impossible for him to believe as it was for him to fly, while he was maintaining this controversy with his conscience and with the Spirit. He must FIRST put away the evil, and then it was easy to believe.

Another case illustrative of what I have been saying occurred in connection with my labours in the North of England. The gentleman in whose house I was staying said to me, one morning, on our return from the chapel, “Do you know what I have done? I have thrown my pipe and tobacco■box on to the dunghill and I have made up my mind to smoke no more.” He then said that he had waged a controversy with his conscience and with the Spirit of God for fifteen years about this paltry gratification, living in a state of perpetual condemnation, and sacrificing the power and usefulness which he had once realised for the sake of this Idol. Immediately on putting away the indulgence, peace was restored to his soul, and he began to labour for the Lord as in days gone by.

I could give numbers of similar illustrations; but these will suffice to show you that it matters not whether the controverted practice involves the loss of hundreds of pounds, or only of a pipe of tobacco. It is not the greatness or smallness of the matter in itself, but the principle of obedience which is involved in the controversy. While there is a vestige of insubordination to the requirements of conscience and of God, there can be no peace. On this point thousands of professing Christians mistake. They allow themselves in things which they feel to be unlawful, and then strive and pray to obtain a sense of acceptance through Christ. They want the Spirit to witness with their spirits that their ways please God, while they know that their ways are such as CANNOT please Him: therefore, they want the Spirit to witness to a lie, which is impossible.

No! my backsliding friend, there is but one way back to peace and joy and usefulness, and that is your Lord’s own way—repentance, which always implies forsaking sin, putting away the evil. Christ Jesus is too much in love with his Father’s will to dwell with those who will not obey it; the unalterable condition of his presence and his smile is doing the will of his Father. The “sons of God are led by the Spirit of God;” and if you refuse to be thus led lead , you cannot have the spirit of adoption. Do you see this? Do you feel it? If so, will you put away those sins and iniquities which have separated you from your God? Will you your let your idols go, and now for ever renounce all that is contrary to his holy will? If you will, you will find it easy to take the next step in your Lord’s way of restoration; nay, you will come with gladness to do “your first works.”

3. I think the Lord has enabled me to show you that restoration to first love is impossible without the renunciation of evil; so I think, by the aid of the Blessed Spirit, I shall be able to show that it is equally impossible without consecration to known duty. I have known backsliders in heart who

have “remembered” till their hearts have been well■nigh broken, and who, I believe, have honestly put away the occasions of their backsliding, who have nevertheless shrunk from embracing the cross in the form of some suffering or duty to which the Spirit has called them, and thus have found it impossible to exercise the faith necessary to their healing.

I once knew a widow lady, who, though she tried every method, and that for a long time, to regain her peace, could not, because she refused to conduct family prayer, to which duty the Spirit of God urged her. I have known others who have felt that they ought to confess their backsliding state, and they have tried anything and everything else in vain, but immediately on confessing have obtained a sense of acceptance. I have known some who have felt it a duty to be baptized, but refused because of the cross, but they got no peace till they yielded. I know a lady who maintained a controversy with the Spirit for four years, about giving up her husband to a work to which she believed God had called him, but which involved much sacrifice and trial. Many a time she said, with anguish of spirit, “Anything but this, Lord!” but this was the very thing which the Lord required; and not until, like Abraham, she gave up the best beloved of her soul to the will of God, did she recover her peace and joy. I am acquainted with a minister, who, after trying for a long time to lead a deeply convicted sinner into faith, paused, and said, “Excuse me, madam, but I think there is something that you are not willing to give up, or to do.” After a few minutes’ silence, she burst out weeping afresh, and, after a terrible struggle, said, “Oh, I cannot forgive the murderer of my husband.” Surely if any compromise in the conditions of salvation were possible in any case, it was in this. But no; the Spirit of God had already shown that lady what hindered her reception of Christ, and instead of urging her to believe, that minister, as a wise co■worker with the Spirit, told her that difficult as the duty might appear, she must embrace it and forgive the man who had so deeply injured her. She made the effort; that is, her will submitted; and immediately the Spirit helped her infirmities, and enabled her fully and freely to forgive. Almost at the same moment she was enabled to believe unto salvation.

I might give you numbers of similar cases which have come under my own observation, but I trust these will be sufficient to show what I mean by consecration as a condition of faith. I think I may say, without exaggeration, that I have conversed with hundreds of backsliders of different degrees, and I never knew one restored to first love who refused compliance with known duty. “To him who knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin;” and in wilful sin there is no salvation. Do you see this, my dear friends, you who are mourning an absent God? Are you willing to consecrate yourselves this day unto the Lord? Do you honestly renounce those things through which you have lost your peace, and brought leanness into your souls? Do you embrace the will, the whole will of God, as your rule of life? Will you bring into His store-house the tithes of a whole-hearted service, and a cheerful obedience? In short, will you give Him that which He claims,—yourself and your all? If so, His word to you is, “I will heal your backslidings, I will love you freely; for mine anger is turned away from you;” “I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies; I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness, and thou shall know the Lord.”

Satan tempts you to shrink from a full consecration for fear you should not be able to live up to it; but if you will comply with the conditions, God will fulfil this promise. If you will only yield yourself up without reserve, He will work in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. Hear your Lord’s word: “If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and we will come

unto him, and make our abode with him." Surely, with the father and Son, you will be able to do and suffer all things. The reason for your past failures has been the WANT of God. When God comes to dwell in you, when he betroths you to Him in faithfulness for ever, you will fail no more; His strength will be made perfect in your weakness; you will be able to do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth you.

I doubt not some of you are saying, "How shall I realise the fulfilment of these blessed promises?" I answer, by simple faith. Just as you trusted at first for justification, and rested not on your feelings, but on HIS PROMISES, so now you must cast yourself on His blessed assurances of healing and of strength. Having the testimony of your own spirit that you comply with the conditions, in putting away the evil and embracing the will of God, you have nothing to do but to throw yourself on His bosom, and rest in His love. The mercy-seat is sprinkled with the blood of an all■sufficient atonement, so that He can receive and pardon even backsliders, if they will only believe. He says, "Return unto me, and I will heal your backslidings." Now you DO return, will you not believe that He heals you? He says He will; dare you make Him a liar? You have no alternative. If you come, He either does, or does not receive you. He says He does. O believe Him, and He will betroth you unto Him in faithfulness for ever.

03.05. Dealing with Dealignnwith Anxious Souls

DEALING WITH DEALINGW ITH ANXIOUS SOULS. AN ADDRESS TO CHRISTIAN WORKERS.

I HAVE long desired to say a few words on the subject of dealing with the anxious. It seems to me that if there is one work in the vineyard more important than another it is that of guiding souls in this the most momentous crisis of their being. A mistake here will probably prove a fatal mistake, blighting all the joy and strength of future life.

I fear thousands have been mistaken here. Mere impression has been mistaken for conviction, and an intellectual faith for saving faith of the heart; hence so much of the spurious Christianity prevalent amongst us.

We should be very careful, in all our dealings with anxious souls, first to find out their exact position with regard to sin. In all spiritual awakenings there are always numbers of individuals who are partially awakened and sufficiently impressed to become anxious, like the young ruler and Agrippa, but who, like them, are not sufficiently so to be willing to give up their sins. Such individuals frequently present themselves as penitents desiring to be saved, and too often those who have to deal with them, instead of finding out their true state, and working together with the Holy Ghost to deepen conviction and drive them up to real submission to God, begin at once to talk of Christ having paid their debt and done everything for them, so that they have nothing to do but to believe and they are saved. Now it seems to me that to prevent such grievous mistake, with all its bitter consequences, every one who deals with souls should have a clear and definite understanding of the conditions on which alone God pardons and receives repenting sinners. These conditions always have been, and ever must remain, the same, seeing that the principles of the Divine government can never change.

Hence we find that, alike under the old and new dispensations, GOD'S UNALTERABLE CONDITION OF PARDON IS THE FORSAKING OF EVIL.

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and He will abundantly pardon." "Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel." Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked may die? saith the Lord God, and not that he should return from his ways and live? Of course the wicked were then to return in the appointed way of sacrifice and offering, but the condition of the acceptance of the offering, and the pardon of the transgressor, was the forsaking of evil. Just so now; the sinner must return to God by the new and living way, the "sacrifice once offered," but the condition of his acceptance through this sacrifice is the forsaking of evil. Unless he is willing to let go his sins and be separated from his idols, the sacrifice of Christ will avail him nothing but to increase his condemnation tenfold. It seems astounding that, with the Bible in their hands, so many professing to be guides of souls should mistake here; and, oh! it makes one's heart bleed to think of the consequences. We have thousands self■deceived, counting themselves believers, who never knew the pangs of real repentance; whose hearts never really

turned from sin to righteousness, from Satan to God; who suppose they have been converted, but who have manifestly never been regenerated: who live as the slaves and votaries of the world while they profess to be children of God; in short, who regard themselves as Christians while they are still in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity. Let us mind not to be partakers of other men's sins in this matter. Let us settle in our minds that there can be no conversion without conviction of sin, and such conviction as makes the soul willing to abandon evil. Casting ourselves on the Spirit for the necessary tenderness in doing it, let us not be afraid to prove the wounds with which every unregenerate soul is covered, and above all things let us avoid giving false comfort and pressing the inquirer into a mere intellectual faith, while he is cleaving to idols. Let us ever remember that saving faith is impossible while the soul's desires are set on that which is evil. It must be so awakened and convicted as to turn its face towards God, and so intensely desire His favour and love as to be willing to give up all evil as a condition of attaining it.

I repeat, it is astounding that, with the Bible in their hands, some teachers can so confound things that differ, and so, wrongly, "divide the word of truth as to make Christ the minister of sin," by preaching only "believe" to people who are holding on to sin. You will hear some of these good people asserting that we have nothing to do with conditions now, that repentance is not necessary to faith, &c. "Only believe and you shall be saved." "Jesus did it all, long, long ago." Truly! But what was it Jesus did? His own work, not mine? He lived, laboured, wept, suffered, and died and atoned for me, and He did it all—till he cried, "It is finished;" but I nowhere read that He "repented" and "turned to God," and did "works meet for repentance," and "believed" and "obeyed the Gospel" for me. This He commands every soul to do for itself, or perish. The only way in which Jesus is represented as saving men is in "turning them away from their iniquities," and until a soul is willing to let Him save it from sin, He cannot save it at all. Let us always try to find out whether inquirers are willing or desire to be saved from evil, and are coming to Christ for this end, or whether they are only desirous of being saved from hell, and consequently holding on to sin. Here is just the difference between the true and a spurious repentance, and on this hinges the result whether we shall bring into the Church another mere professor, a Simon Magus, or one who will follow Christ in the regeneration of the spirit, having his heart purified by a living faith. "Oh," but say some, "what did Paul say to the jailer? He did not say anything about conditions or repentance, but simply, 'Believe,' &c." I answer we do not know all that Paul said on this occasion, for in the next verse we read that "they (Paul and Silas) spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all his house." Mark! this was before his profession of faith and baptism.

Now, who can tell how much this word of the Lord implied? Doubtless the Apostle explained on this, as on other occasions, what constituted that "obedience to the truth" through which the jailer, in common with all other penitents, was to be purified. But, supposing that the Apostle had spoken no other words than "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," this would only prove that in this particular instance no other counsel was necessary, because the jailer was prepared for it. He had come to the point of full submission where saving faith first becomes possible. The whole tenour of the narrative shows that the jailer was a fully awakened, truly repenting, deeply humbled sinner, ready to do anything. "He sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Observe, "He brought them out." He began immediately to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. The earthquake had torn the bandages from his eyes, and the Spirit, through its instrumentality, had shaken his guilty soul and

made him realise his danger in the hands of a God who could avenge the wrongs of His people after such a fashion.

He was so deeply convicted, so fully turned round “from darkness to light,” that he was ready to do anything. He was not ashamed to confess his wickedness—to kneel before his prisoners and plead with them to show him what to do. And if Paul had told him, as Jesus did the young ruler, to sell his goods and give to the poor, there cannot be a doubt but he would have embraced the command at once, as Zacchæus did the obligation to make restitution. The intense earnestness of his gesture and question shows that he was willing to be saved at any cost—ready to do anything—and, therefore, nothing more remained to be done but to believe.

Now, wherever we find a soul in this attitude, be it our highest privilege—our chief joy—to point him to the Lamb of God, and to show him the way of faith more perfectly; but, oh! let us mind not to do it (except as a motive to submission) until this attitude is attained. Let us beware of a theoretical or sentimental faith, which leaves the heart unwashed, unrenewed, unsanctified. It is just here that thousands get the faith of devils, which is like the body without the spirit—dead! From this bitter root springs nearly all the Antinomianism of this age. With the untempered slime of the old serpent half the superstructure of the professing Church is joined together. Let us spurn it, and warn souls against it.

Let us mind the ORDER OF GOD in our dealing with souls. He made them, and He knows best how to dissect them. It seems astonishing that any difference of view can have obtained on the point with passages so direct, full, and relevant as Acts 26:18, Acts 26:20. Surely our glorified Lord understood the constitution of the human soul, and knew best as to the method or order in which His truth and spirit operate upon it.

There are two or three considerations which give this passage special weight. It comes from the lips of our risen Lord. It was given after the Gospel dispensation was opened in all its fulness. It was given to Paul, the principal expounder of the doctrine of justification by faith, and therefore his views of faith could not have been contradictory to its teaching.

It was applied alike to Jews and Gentiles. “To open their eyes”—to awaken and make them realise their danger as sinners, “and to turn them from darkness, or evil, to light or righteousness”—that is, from the choice or embrace of evil to the choice or embrace of righteousness, and “From the power of Satan unto God”—that is, from being committed to the power of Satan to committal to the power of God. “That they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” Observe here what a deal has to be done in the soul before it can receive forgiveness of sins. Its eyes must be opened—to what? Its own sinfulness and danger and misery. Then, under the sight of this, it must be turned right round from the embrace or desire of evil, to the embrace or desire of righteousness (though yet powerless to DO, it must choose and desire righteousness). The attitude of the WILL MUST CHANGE with respect to evil and good. It must turn round from the one to the other in purpose and desire. Then “it must be turned from committal to the power of Satan unto God.” It must abjure Satan as its rightful sovereign, and at least WILL to put itself under the power of God. And all this in order that it may receive forgiveness of sin. This is made an absolute condition of its receiving forgiveness. Now, I maintain that this is the only possible interpretation of this important text, not only of our version but of the original in all its purity; and if so, what becomes of the theory that there are no conditions, and that repentance

and forsaking of evil and choosing good is not necessary to saving faith? Further, we see in the 18th verse how literally Paul understood, and how implicitly he followed, this Divine order, for he says he “showed unto them of Damascus, and all Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and then to the Gentiles that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.”

Now, certainly Paul knew what he preached, and there could not be any contradiction in his mind between these necessary conditions of faith, and faith itself. Therefore, when he speaks of faith only being necessary to a sinner’s justification, he must always assume that these conditions are complied with, otherwise he contradicts himself and sets aside the order of this Divine commission.

I know that Paul teaches that faith alone is the hand that takes hold of Christ, but of course he assumes that the feet of repentance and submission have brought the soul near enough for this hand to reach Him; in other words, that, by the Spirit’s power, he is so convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, as to be willing to forsake every evil way, and aad to flee for refuge to the hope set before him. It seems difficult to imagine how any idea of pardon and reconciliation can have obtained in the Church which does not pre■suppose these conditions, seeing that Jesus laid it down again and again as a fundamental principle that no man could become His disciple, or follow Him, till he was willing to renounce every thing, and every being, antagonistic to His supreme love and dominion in the soul (Luke 14:26, Luke 14:30; Matthew 10:37; Matthew 5:29-30). We find also that the Apostles invariably acted on the assumption that until the soul turned round from evil to God it could not believe (Acts 24:25). I would ask, Why did not Paul press Felix to believe on the Lord Jesus? He trembled, as did the jailer. The reason is evident—he did not submit to God and forsake sin (Acts 8:22-23; Acts 20:21; Luke 24:47; Acts 5:31; Romans 1:18; Romans 2:3-10) The principle laid down in these texts is recognised by Jesus in His messages to the seven churches: there is no promise of pardon, even to backsliders, without such repentance as leads to the putting away of evil. This, then, is the test of genuine repentance,

WILLINGNESS TO PUT AWAY SIN. Until this is attained, let us not dare to attempt to comfort any soul, for in so doing we shall not be workers together with God, but the tools of Satan, doing exactly what he desires to be done. My dear friends, ponder on these suggestions: they will bear examination. Carefully compare scripture with scripture on this point, seeking the light of the Holy Spirit, and you will be saved from healing the health of the Lord’s people slightly—from increasing the number of those who have a form of godliness without the power. The next important step in dealing with anxious souls is to present them THE PROPER OBJECT OF FAITH, which is CHRIST JESUS HIMSELF, and not merely Divine testimony concerning Him.

There is a vast difference between these two objects of faith. The one ends with the intellect, the other purifies the heart. That method of leading souls into faith which presents the truth as a system, or declaration, on the reception or belief of which the soul is to reckon itself saved, fails to bring the soul into contact with a living, personal Christ, and possesses no living principle by which to graft it into the vine as a living branch.

Truly the Divine testimony concerning Christ must be received and believed; but this is not to be the ultimate object of faith, but only the medium through which the soul’s trust is to be transferred

to the living person testified of. Here arises another fatal error of this day, through which, I fear, numbers never realise any other God than the Bible, or any other Saviour than a powerless, intellectual belief in the letter of it. They believe the truth about Christ, about His life an death, His sacrifice and intercession; they believe, as inquirers often tell me they do, that Jesus died for them, and that He intercedes for them; but they do not believe that His sacrifice actually satisfies the Father for their sins, or that His intercession so far prevails with God for them that He does now actually pardon and receive them because of it. If they believed this, of course their anxiety would immediately cease, and they would begin to sing the new song of praise and thanksgiving. The mind is too often occupied with the theory of Divine truth instead of the living person whom the truth sets forth. Now, it seems clear to me that the Divine testimony concerning Christ may be believed, and frequently is believed, without there existing a particle of saving trust in Him as a personal Saviour. Here is the secret of so many apparently believing and devout people living in systematic disobedience to God. Their minds are convinced of the truth, and their emotions are frequently stirred by it; but they have no life, no spiritual power in them by which to resist temptation or live above the world, because their faith does not embrace a living Saviour able to save them to the uttermost, but only the truth about Him.

Take an illustration. Suppose you are sick almost unto death. A friend brings you a testimony concerning some wonderful physician who has cured many such cases, and is fully able and willing to undertake yours. Now, you may receive the record of your friend concerning the skill and success of this physician's treatment, and you may fully believe it, and yet there may be some reason why you shrink from putting yourself into his hands and trusting him with your life. You may believe all that is said about him, and yet fail so to trust in his person as to give yourself up fully into his power. Just so there are numbers who believe God's testimony concerning His Son, that Jesus has atoned for their sin, and that His treatment would cure them of its disease, who do not trust Him to do it for them—no, not for a single moment. Here is the difference between a dead and a living faith; between a faith that lies useless on the shelves of the intellect, or bubbles up on the waves of mere emotion, and that which renews the soul in righteousness, and makes it the abode of an indwelling Christ. The term faith is used in several different senses in the Scripture, but when used to designate that act through which the soul is justified before God, and renewed by His Spirit, it always signifies trust in, or committal to, a living Saviour. The word used to signify this trust is sometimes rendered "commit," as in John 2:24 : "But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men." He did not believe in them, or trust them with His person—He did not commit Himself into their power. This is just what God requires the sinner to do in order to be saved—to commit himself to the faithfulness and power of Jesus. Again, we have the same word in Luke 15:11 : "If, therefore, ye have not been unfaithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will 'commit' to your trust the true riches"—who shall give over into your keeping, or power, the true riches.

Now, it is evident that the Scriptural idea of saving faith is that of the absolute committal of the whole being over to the faithfulness and power of Jesus, and not merely a belief, however firm, of the records of certain facts concerning Him. I may believe that He is the Saviour—that He died for me—that He intercedes for me—that He has promised to save me, as thousands do; and yet I may have no trust in Him as now doing all this for me, and consequently draw no sap, no spiritual virtue, from Him.

Saving faith consists in a firm trust in the person of Jesus, and committal of the soul to Him by an unwavering act of confidence in Him for all that the Bible presents Him to be, as the Redeemer and Saviour of men—"For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). And as soon as this trust is exercised, the testimony of the Spirit is given to adoption, and the soul knows that it is passed from death unto life. Of course this trust is exercised through the testimony of God to His Son, but the SON is the object of trust, and not the testimony merely. This is most important to bear in mind in our efforts to lead souls into saving faith. And now it becomes a question of deepest interest—how best to lead true penitent sinners to exercise this trust. The first thing generally to be done is to present Jesus as willing to meet the realised desperateness of the sinner's case, as every true penitent thinks himself the chief of sinners, and his own a peculiarly bad case. We should try to show him that the question of salvation does not hinge on the greatness or smallness of a sinner's guilt, but on the fact of his accepting Jesus as a sufficient atonement for it. We should try to show him how almost all the instances of conversion recorded in the Bible were great sinners, and how Jesus came to seek that which was absolutely lost, and how the depths of His love can only be shown on very bad cases. When we have succeeded in leading the soul to apprehend the sufficiency of the atonement to cover, and the willingness of Jesus to pardon, the past, unbelief will generally fasten on the future, and the inquirer will say, "Ah! but if I were forgiven, I should fall again into sin." Now is the time to bring the soul face to face with a personal, living Saviour. We must present Christ's ABILITY to save to the uttermost—of the soul's need and circumstances—all them who come unto God by Him. We must get the soul's eye fixed on Jesus, not only as a sacrifice but as a SAVIOUR, a Deliverer, an Almighty Friend, who has promised to dwell and abide with the believer, delivering him out of the hands of all his enemies. We should not give up till, by the help of the Spirit, we can lead the soul to expect in Jesus the supply of all its needs. When this is accomplished, we should lead the soul on to claim this Saviour NOW. When arrived at this point, I have sometimes found it very helpful to ask, Well, now, when did Jesus pardon and receive the penitents who came to Him in the days of His flesh?—waiting for an answer, thus compelling the mind's attention to the point. The inquirer will generally say, "I suppose when they came to Him." I reply, Of course that was the only time to receive them—when they came, not an hour before or an hour after, but at the moment they came, and it is the same now. He receives returning sinners when they come. Now, you come, confessing and forsaking all your sins, and willing to follow Him wherever He may lead you. Does he receive you? He said He would in no wise cast you out if you came. Does He cast you out? The penitent will generally say, "No, I trust not." Then what does He? He must either take you in or cast you out just now, because you come just now. Which is it? Sometimes we get the answer, "I hope He takes me in." Then we try to show that this is not the place for hope. Only to HOPE that Jesus means what He says is to insult Him and drive Him away. You must trust Him and believe now that He takes you in. Oh, what struggles I have often witnessed just at this point! Satan understands the power of this committal, and withstands it with all his subtlety and malice; but if we are firm, and armed with the power of the Spirit, and persistently and relentlessly press the soul up to present trust, the result is certain. Condemnation is taken away, light breaks on the soul, and the new song bursts spontaneously from the lips, even praise and thanksgiving to our God. In some cases it requires no little sympathy, tact, and firmness to meet the wiles of unbelief and the stratagems of Satan even in dealing with very sincere and truly submissive souls. Fear of being deceived is generally one of

the greatest difficulties. In such cases it is well to explain to the penitent that there is no ground for this fear, seeing that this way of salvation is of God's own appointing, and that, although it seems an easy way to be saved, after living so long in sin and rebellion—the ease of it is all on the sinner's side, and not on the side of the Saviour—we should explain at what a terrible cost of sacrifice and suffering to the Son of God this simple, easy way was opened, and how ungrateful it is to put it away, as if it were too good to be true, because God has made it so simple.

It is well to encourage the inquirer to trust by reminding him that every truly saved soul on earth, and every redeemed spirit in heaven, was saved in this way—by simple faith alone. It is often very helpful to get the penitent to use the language of faith with his lips, even before his heart can fully go with it. I have seen many a one rise into faith while repeating after me the text, rendered in the first person, "He was wounded for my transgressions," &c; or, "Thou hast said, Him that cometh to Thee Thou wilt in no wise cast out. Lord, I come; Thou dost not cast me out; Thou takest me in;" or, "'Tis done—the great transaction done; I am my Lord's, and He is mine;" or, "I can believe—I do believe—that Jesus saves me now," repeating such passages or stanzas over and over again till the heart follows the tongue and the venture is made. Of course we cannot give counsels for every individual case; there are great diversities in the temperaments and circumstances of different individuals requiring a wise adaptation of treatment at the moment for which the spirit alone can endow us. Let us, however, only be clear and faithful on the two momentous points of a TRUE AND THOROUGH REPENTANCE, and an intelligent and implicit TRUST IN A LIVING SAVIOUR, and every minor question will easily be met, and the souls whom the Lord shall honour us to bring into His family will not be stillborn ghosts of a sinewless sentimentalism; but strong, hardy, cross■bearing, Christ■honouring, soul■winning men and women, able to open heaven and shake hell by their faith and zeal and effort in our Redeemer's kingdom.

03.06. "Compell Them to Come In"

“COMPEL THEM TO COME IN.” ON a certain Sabbath, some years ago, I was passing down a narrow, thickly■populated street on my way to hear a much■honoured minister of Christ, anticipating an evening’s enjoyment for myself, and hoping to see some anxious ones brought into the kingdom, when I chanced to look up at the thick rows of small windows above me, where numbers of women were sitting, peering through at the passers■by, or listlessly gossiping with each other. It was suggested to my mind with great power, “Would you not be doing God more service, and acting more like your Redeemer, by turning into some of these houses, speaking to these careless sinners, and inviting them to the service, than by going to enjoy it yourself?” I was startled; it was a new thought; and while I was reasoning about it, the same inaudible interrogator demanded, “What effort do Christians put forth, answerable to the command, ‘Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled’?” This was accompanied with a light and unction which I knew to be divine. I felt greatly agitated. I felt verily guilty. I knew that I had never thus laboured to bring lost sinners to Christ, and trembling with a sense of my utter weakness, I stood still for a moment, looked up to heaven, and said, “Lord, if Thou wilt help me, I will try;” and without stopping longer to confer with flesh and blood, turned back and commenced my work.

I spoke first to a group of women sitting on a doorstep; and oh! what that effort cost me, words cannot describe; but the Spirit helped my infirmities, and secured for me a patient and respectful hearing with a promise from some of them to attend the house of God. This much encouraged me: I began to taste the joy which lies hidden under the cross; and to realise, in some faint degree, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. With this timely, loving cordial from my blessed Master, I went on to the next group standing at the entrance of a low, dirty court. Here, again, I was received kindly, and promises were given—no rude repulse, no bitter ridicule were allowed to shake my new■found confidence, or chill my feeble zeal. I began to realise that my Master’s feet were behind me; nay, before me, smoothing my path and preparing my way. This blessed assurance so increased my courage and enkindled my hope, that I ventured to knock at the door of the next house, and when it was opened, to go in and speak to the inmates of Jesus, death, judgment, and eternity. The man, who appeared to be one of the better class of mechanics, seemed to be much interested and affected by my words, and promised with his wife to attend the revival services which were being held at the chapel farther on. With a heart full of gratitude and eyes full of tears, I was thinking where I should go next, when I observed a woman standing on an adjoining door■step, with a jug in her hand. My Divine Teacher said, “Speak to that woman.” Satan suggested, “Perhaps she is intoxicated;” but after a momentary struggle, I introduced myself to her by saying, “Are the people out who live on this floor?” observing that the lower part of the house was closed. “Yes,” she said, “they are gone to chapel;” and I thought I perceived a weary sadness in her voice and manner. I said, “Oh, I am so glad to hear that: how is it that you are not gone to a place of worship?” “Me!” she said, looking down upon her forlorn appearance; “I can’t go to chapel; I am kept at home by a drunken husband. I have to stop with him to keep him from the public■house, and I have just been fetching him some drink” I expressed my sorrow for her, and

asked if I might come in and see her husband. “No,” she said, “he is drunk; you could do nothing with him now.” I replied, “I do not mind his being drunk, if you will let me come in; I am not afraid; he will not hurt me.” “Well,” said the woman, “you can come if you like; but he will only abuse you.” I said, “Never mind that,” and followed her up the stairs.

I felt strong now in the Lord, and in the power of His might, and as safe as a babe in the arms of its mother. I felt that I was in the path of obedience, and I feared no evil. Oh, how much the Lord’s people lose through disobedience to the leadings of the Holy Spirit! If they would only keep His words, He would dwell with them, and then they need fear neither men nor devils. The woman led me to a small room on the first floor, where I found a fine, intelligent man, about forty, sitting almost double in a chair, with a jug by his side, out of which he had been drinking that which had reduced him beneath the level of the beasts that perish. I leaned on my heavenly Guide for strength and wisdom, love and power, and He gave me all I needed. He silenced the demon, Strong Drink, and quickened the man’s perceptions to receive my words. As I began to talk to him, with my heart full of sympathy, he gradually raised himself in his chair and listened with a surprised and half■vacant stare. I spoke to him of his present deplorable condition, of the folly and wickedness of his course, of the interests of his wife and children, until he was thoroughly waked up and aroused from the stupor in which I found him.

During this conversation his wife wept bitterly, and by fragments told me a little of their previous history. I found that she had once known the Lord, but had allowed herself to be dragged down by trouble, had cast away her confidence, and fallen into sin. She told me that her husband had a brother in the Wesleyan ministry, who had done all that a brother could do to save him; that they had buried a daughter two years before, who died triumphantly in the Lord, and besought her father with her dying breath to leave off drinking, and prepare to meet her in heaven; that she had a son, then about eighteen, who, she feared, was going into a consumption; that her husband was a clever workman, and could earn three or four pounds per week as a journeyman, but he drank it nearly all, so that they were compelled to live in two rooms, and often went without necessary food. I read to him the parable of the prodigal son, while the tears ran down his face like rain. I then prayed with him as the Spirit gave me utterance, and left, promising to call the next day with a temperance■pledge book, which he promised to sign.

I now felt that my work was done for that time. Exhausted in body, but happy in soul, I wended my way to the sanctuary, just in time for the conclusion of the service, and to lend a helping hand in the prayer-meeting. On the following day I visited this man again. He signed the pledge, and listened attentively to all I said. Full of hope I left him, to find others similarly lost and fallen. From that time I commenced a systematic course of house■to■house visitation, devoting two evenings per week to the work. The Lord so blessed my efforts that in a few weeks I succeeded in getting ten drunkards to abandon their soul■destroying habits, and to meet me once a week for reading and expounding the Scriptures, and prayer. We held three or four blessed little meetings, and I doubt not our numbers would have increased more and more, but, in the inscrutable workings of Divine Providence, my health gave way, and I was most reluctantly compelled to abandon my happy and promising sphere of labour.

I was shortly after removed from the town, and my way opened to a new and still more fruitful work in the vineyard.

You will not be surprised, dear reader, after this little sketch, to hear me say that I esteem this work of house■to■house visitation next in importance to the preaching of the Gospel itself. Who can tell the amount of influence and power which might be brought to bear on the careless, godless inhabitants of our large towns and cities—nay, on our whole nation—if all real Christians would only do a little of this kind of work! The masses of people look upon Christians as a separate and secluded class, with whom they have no concern and possess nothing in common. They watch them go past their houses to their various places of worship with utter indifference or bitter contempt; and, alas! has there not been too much in our past conduct calculated to beget this kind of feeling, much of Pharisaic pride and selfish unconcern? If the zeal of the Lord's house had eaten us up,—if we had realized more fellowship with Christ in his sufferings,—if we had understood the meaning of his words, "Compel them to come in," if we had been baptized with Paul's spirit, when he could almost have wished himself accursed from Christ for his brethren's sakes, should we not have gone out amongst the people as our Master did, by the road-side and into their houses, to have spoken to them the "words of this life,"—to have persuaded, implored, and compelled them to come in? Alas, we are verily guilty; nor has it been in many instances for want of light, or for want of the leadings of the Holy Spirit; but it has been for want of OBEDIENCE, and because of our pride, or shame, or fear.

O that, with all who read this, the time past might suffice to have walked after the flesh in this matter! O that from this hour you, my dear reader (if you are a child of God), would set yourself individually to this work; YOU CAN DO IT. However weak, timid, or "slow of speech," He says, "I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say;" and "It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak."

All that is needful is for you to give yourself up to the leadings of the Spirit. Lean on Him for all you want. He will inspire you with the constraining love, the melting sympathy, the holy zeal, and the mighty faith alone necessary for the task. This is the work that most needs doing of any work in the vineyard. There are teeming thousands who never cross the threshold of church, chapel, or mission■hall, to whom all connected with religion is as an old song, a byword, and a reproach. They need to be brought into contact with a living Christ in the characters and persons of His people. They want to see and handle the Word of Life in a living form. Christianity must come to them embodied in men and women, who are not ashamed to "eat with publicans and sinners"; they must see it looking through their eyes, and speaking in loving accents through their tongues, sympathising with their sorrows, bearing their burdens, reproving their sins, instructing their ignorance, inspiring their hope, and wooing them to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Dear reader, here is a sphere for you! You have long wished to do something for your "blessed, blessed Master." Here is work, boundless in extent, and momentous beyond an angel's power to conceive. For it, you need no human ordination, no long and tedious preparation, no high■flown language, no towering eloquence; all you want is the full baptism of the Spirit on your heart, the Bible in your hand, and humility and simplicity in your manner. Thus equipped, you will be mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. You will find your way to many a heart long since abandoned by hope and given up to despair; and in the great day of account you shall have many a sheaf as the result of your labour, and the reward of your self■denial.

I think I hear some timid one saying, "Ah! I wish I could: the Lord knows how I long to be doing some real work for him; but I am so weak, and so little adapted to this kind of labour, I fear I should

not succeed." My dear brother,—sister,—we are of little use in any department of the vineyard until we have been made to realise our own weakness. The weaker we feel ourselves to be, the better. It is not a question of our STRENGTH, but of our FAITH. "Why look ye so earnestly on us (said Peter to those who marvelled at the miracle wrought on the lame), as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? . . . Faith in the name of Jesus has made this man strong, whom ye see and know." God does not call us to any work in our own strength; He bids us go and do it in His. "Give ye them to eat," said He to the Disciples, but He knew who must supply the bread; so now He requires us to break the Bread of Life to the multitude, trusting in Him for the supply. He hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. Why? That the excellency of the power may be seen to be of God, and not of man. No matter how simple the words, or how tremulous the voice, if He blesses, then it shall be blessed. The "Does you love God?" of a little child, accompanied by the "demonstration of the Spirit and of power," will do more for Christ and souls than the most talented and eloquent sermon without it; for "it is not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." Dear reader, are you willing to be one of God's chosen ones? or will you anger Him by saying, "Send by who Thou wilt, but not by me?" Are you willing to trample on self, and, taking hold of the strength of omnipotence, to go in the power of His might, and do what you can? If so, His word to you is, "Fear not; be strong, and of a good courage; neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest;" and "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world."

03.07. Female Ministry

FEMALE MINISTRY;

OR, WOMAN'S RIGHT TO PREACH THE GOSPEL. THE first and most common objection urged against the public exercises of women, is, that they are unnatural and unfeminine. Many labour under a very great but common mistake, viz. that of confounding nature with custom. Use, or custom, makes things appear to us natural, which, in reality, are very unnatural; while, on the other hand, novelty and rarity make very natural things appear strange and contrary to nature. So universally has this power of custom been felt and admitted, that it has given birth to the proverb, "Use is second nature." Making allowance for the novelty of the thing, we cannot discover anything either unnatural or immodest in a Christian woman, becomingly attired, appearing on a platform or in a pulpit. By nature she seems fitted to grace either. God has given to woman a graceful form and attitude, winning manners, persuasive speech, and, above all, a finely■toned emotional nature, all of which appear to us eminent natural qualifications for public speaking. We admit that want of mental culture, the trammels of custom, the force of prejudice, and one■sided interpretations of Scripture, have hitherto almost excluded her from this sphere; but, before such a sphere is pronounced to be unnatural, it must be proved either that woman has not the ability to teach or to preach, or that the possession and exercise of this ability unnaturalizes her in other respects; that so soon as she presumes to step on the platform or into the pulpit, she loses the delicacy and grace of the female character. Whereas, we have numerous instances of her retaining all that is most esteemed in her sex, and faithfully discharging the duties peculiar to her own sphere, and at the same time taking her place with many of our most useful speakers and writers. Why should woman be confined exclusively to the kitchen and the distaff, any more than man to the field and workshop? Did not God, and has not nature, assigned to man his sphere of labour, "to till the ground, and to dress it"? And, if exemption is claimed from this kind of toil for a portion of the male sex, on the ground of their possessing ability for intellectual and moral pursuits, we must be allowed to claim the same privilege for woman; nor can we see the exception more unnatural in the one case than the other, or why God in this solitary instance has endowed a being with powers which He never intended her to employ.

There seems to be a great deal of unnecessary fear of women occupying any position which involves publicity, lest she should be rendered unfeminine by the indulgence of ambition or vanity; but why should woman any more than man be charged with ambition when impelled to use her talents for the good of her race? Moreover, as a labourer in the GOSPEL her position is much higher than in any other public capacity; she is at once shielded from all coarse and unrefined influences and associations; her very vocation tending to exalt and refine all the tenderest and most womanly instincts of her nature. As a matter of fact it is well known to those who have had opportunities of observing the private character and deportment of women engaged in preaching the gospel, that they have been amongst the most amiable, self■sacrificing, and unobtrusive of their sex.

“We well know,” says the late Mr. Gurney, a minister of the Society of Friends, “that there are no women among us more generally distinguished for modesty, gentleness, order, and right submission to their brethren, than those who have been called by their Divine Master into the exercise of the Christian ministry.” Who would dare to charge the sainted Madame Guyon, Lady Maxwell, the talented mother of the Wesleys, Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Whiteman, or Miss Marsh with being unwomanly or ambitious. Some of these ladies we know have adorned by their private virtues the highest ranks of society, and won alike from friends and enemies the highest eulogiums as to the devotedness, purity, and sweetness of their lives. Yet these were all more or less public women, every one of them expounding and exhorting from the Scriptures to mixed companies of men and women. Ambitious doubtless they were; but theirs was an ambition akin to His, who, for the “joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame:” and to his, who counted all things but dung and dross, and was willing to be regarded as the off■scouring of all things that he might win souls to Jesus and bring glory to God. Would that all the Lord’s people had more of this ambition.

Well, but, say our objecting friends, how is it that these whose names you mention, and many others, should venture to preach when female ministry is forbidden in the word of God? This is by far the most serious objection which we have to consider—and if capable of substantiation, should receive our immediate and cheerful acquiescence; but we think that we shall be able to show, by a fair and consistent interpretation, that the very opposite view is the truth; that not only is the public ministry of woman unforbidden, but absolutely enjoined by both precept and example in the word of God.

And, first, we will select the most prominent and explicit passages of the New Testament referring to the subject, beginning with 1 Corinthians 11:1-15 : “Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head; for that is all one as if she were shaven,” etc. “The character,” says a talented writer, “of the prophesying here referred to by the apostle is defined 1 Corinthians 14:3-4, and 1 Corinthians 14:31. The reader will see that it was directed to the ‘edification, exhortation, and comfort of believers;’ and the result anticipated was the conviction of unbelievers and unlearned persons. Such were the public services of women which the apostle allowed, and such was the ministry of females predicted by the prophet Joel, and described as a leading feature of the gospel dispensation. Women who speak in assemblies for worship under the influence of the Holy Spirit, assume thereby no personal authority over others; they simply deliver the messages of the gospel, which imply obedience, subjection, and responsibility, rather than authority and power.” Dr. A. Clarke, on this verse, says, “Whatever may be the meaning of praying and prophesying in respect to the man, they have precisely the same meaning in respect to the woman! So that some women at least, as well as some men, might speak to others to edification, exhortation, and comfort. And this kind of prophesying or teaching was predicted by Joel 2:28, and referred to by Peter (Acts 2:17). And, had there not been such gifts bestowed on woman, the prophecy could not have had its fulfilment. The only difference marked by the apostle was, the man had his head uncovered, because he was the representative of Christ; the woman had hers covered, because she was placed by the order of God in subjection to the man; and because it was the custom both among Greeks and Romans, and among the Jews an express law, that no woman should be seen abroad without a veil. This was and is a custom through all the East, and

none but public prostitutes go without veils; if a woman should appear in public without a veil, she would dishonour her head—her husband. And she must appear like to those women who have their hair shaven off as the punishment of adultery." See also Doddridge, Whitby, and Cobbin.

We think that the view above given is the only fair and common-sense interpretation of this passage. If Paul does not here recognise the fact that women did actually pray and prophesy in the primitive Churches, his language has no meaning at all; and if he does not recognise their right to do so by dictating the proprieties of their appearance while so engaged, we leave to objectors the task of educing any sense whatever from his language. If, according to the logic of Dr. Barnes, the apostle here, in arguing against an improper and indecorous mode of performance, forbids the performance itself, the prohibition extends to the men as well as to the women; for Paul as expressly reprehends a man praying with his head covered as he does a woman with hers uncovered. With as much force might the Doctor assert that in reproving the same Church for their improper celebration of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:20-21), Paul prohibits all Christians, in every age, celebrating it at all. "The question with the Corinthians was not whether or not the woman should pray or prophesy at all, that question had been settled on the day of Pentecost; but whether, as a matter of convenience, they might do so without their veils." The apostle kindly and clearly explains that by the law of nature and of society it would be improper to uncover her head while engaged in acts of public worship. We think that the reflections cast on these women by Dr. Barnes and other commentators are quite gratuitous and uncalled for. Here is no intimation that they ever had uncovered their heads while so engaged; the fairest presumption is that they had not, nor ever would till they knew the apostle's mind on the subject.

We have precisely the same evidence that the men prayed and preached with their hats on, as that women removed their veils, and wore their hair dishevelled, which is simply none at all. We cannot but regard it as a signal evidence of the power of prejudice, that a man of Dr. Barnes's general clearness and acumen should condescend to treat this passage in the manner he does. The doctor evidently feels the untenableness of his position; and endeavours, by muddling two passages of distinct and different bearing, to annihilate the argument fairly deducible from the first. We would like to ask the doctor on what authority he makes such an exception as to the following: "But this cannot be interpreted as meaning that it is improper for females to speak or to pray in meetings of their own sex." Indeed! but according to the most reliable statistics we possess, two■thirds of the whole Church is, and always has been, composed of their own sex. If, then, "no rule of the New Testament is more positive than this, viz. that women are to keep silence in the Churches," on whose authority does the doctor license them to speak to by far the larger portion of the Church? A barrister writing us on the above passage, says "Paul here takes for granted that women were in the habit of praying and prophesying; he expresses no surprise nor utters a syllable of censure, he was only anxious that they should not provoke unnecessary obloquy by laying aside their customary head■dress or departing from the dress which was indicative of modesty in the country in which they lived. This passage seems to prove beyond the possibility of dispute that in the early times women were permitted to speak to the 'edification and comfort' of Christians, and that the Lord graciously endowed them with grace and gifts for this service. What He did then may He not be doing now? It seems truly astonishing that Bible students, with the second chapter of the Acts before them, should not see that an imperative decree has gone forth from God, the execution of which women cannot escape; whether they like or not, they 'shall'

prophesy throughout the whole course of this dispensation; and they have been doing so, though they and their blessed labours are not much noticed."

Well, but say our objecting friends, hear what Paul says in another place:—"Let your women keep silence in the Churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn* anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the Church" (1 Corinthians 14:34-35). Now let it be borne in mind this is the same apostle, writing to the same Church, as in the above instance. Will any one maintain that Paul here refers to the same kind of speaking as before? If so, we insist on his supplying us with some rule of interpretation which will harmonise this unparalleled contradiction and absurdity. Taking the simple and common■sense view of the two passages, viz. that one refers to the devotional and religious exercises in the Church, and the other to inconvenient asking of questions, and imprudent or ignorant talking, there is no contradiction or discrepancy, no straining or twisting of either. If, on the other hand, we assume that the apostle refers in both instances to the same thing, we make him in one page give the most explicit directions how a thing shall be performed, which in a page or two further on, and writing to the same Church, he expressly forbids being performed at all. We admit that "it is a shame for women to speak in the Church," in the sense here intended by the Apostle; but before the argument based on these words can be deemed of any worth, objectors must prove that the "speaking" here is synonymous with that concerning that manner of which the Apostle legislates in 1 Corinthians 11:1-34.

[[* "Learning anything by asking their husbands at home," cannot mean preaching. That is not learning, but teaching "the way of God." It cannot mean being inspired by the Holy Ghost to foretell future events. No woman having either taught or prophesied, would have to ask her husband at home before she knew what she had done, or understood what she had said. Such women would be only fit to "learn in silence with all subjection." The reference is evidently to subjects under debate.]]

Dr. A. Clarke, on this passage, says, "according to the prediction of Joel, the Spirit of God was to be poured out on the women as well as the men, that they might prophesy, that is, teach. And that they did prophesy or teach is evident from what the apostle says (1 Corinthians 11:1-34), where he lays down rules to regulate this part of their conduct while ministering in the Church. All that the Apostle opposes here is their questioning, finding fault, disputing, etc., in the Christian Church, as the Jewish men were permitted to do in their synagogues (see Luke 2:46); together with attempts to usurp authority over men by setting up their judgment in opposition to them; for the Apostle has reference to acts of disobedience and arrogance, of which no woman would be guilty who was under the influence of the Spirit of God." The Rev. J. H. Robinson, writing on this passage, remarks: "The silence imposed here must be explained by the verb, to speak (λαλειν), used afterwards. Whatever that verb means in this verse, I admit and believe the women were forbidden to do in the Church. But what does it mean ? It is used nearly three hundred times in the New Testament, and scarcely any verb is used with so great a variety of adjuncts. In Schleusner's Lexicon, its meaning is traced under seventeen distinct heads, and he occupies two full pages of the book in explaining it. Among other meanings he gives respondeo, rationem reddo, præcipio, jubeo; I answer, I return a reason, I give rule or precept, I order, decree." In Robinson's Lexicon (Bloomfield's edition), two pages nearly are occupied with the explanation of this word; and he

gives instances of its meaning, “as modified by the context, where the sense lies, not so much in λαλειν (lalein) as in the adjuncts.” THE PASSAGE UNDER CONSIDERATION IS ONE OF THOSE TO WHICH HE REFERS AS BEING SO “MODIFIED BY THE CONTEXT.” Greenfield gives, with others, the following meanings of the word: “to prattle—be loquacious as a child; to speak in answer—to answer, as in John 19:10; harangue. plead, Acts 9:29-31. To direct, command, Acts 3:22.” In Liddel and Scott’s Lexicon, the following meanings are given: “to chatter, babble; of birds, to twitter, chirp; strictly, to make an inarticulate sound, opposed to articulate speech; but also generally, to talk, say.”

“It is clear then that λαλειν may mean something different from mere speaking, and that to use this word in a prohibition does not imply that absolute silence or abstinence from speaking is enjoined; but, on the contrary, that the prohibition applies to an improper kind of speaking, which is to be understood, not from the word itself, but, as Mr. Robinson says, from ‘the context.’ Now, ‘the context’ shows that it was not silence which was imposed upon women in the Church, but only a refraining from such speaking as was inconsistent with the words, ‘they are commanded to be under obedience,’ or, more literally, ‘to be obedient:’ that is, they were to refrain from such questionings, dogmatical assertions, and disputations, as would bring them into collision with the men—as would ruffle their tempers, and occasion an unamiable volubility of speech. This kind of speaking, and this alone, as it appears to me, was forbidden by the apostle in the passage before us. This kind of speaking was the only supposable antagonist to, and violation of ‘obedience.’ Absolute silence was not essential to that ‘obedience.’ My studies in ‘Biblical criticism,’ etc., have not informed me that a woman must cease to speak before she can obey; and I am therefore led to the irresistible conclusion, that it is not all speaking in the Church which the apostle forbids, and which he pronounces to be shameful; but, on the contrary, a pertinacious, inquisitive, domineering, dogmatical kind of speaking, which, while it is unbecoming in a man, is shameful and odious in a woman, and especially when that woman is in the Church, and is speaking on the deep things of religion.”

Parkhurst, in his lexicon, tells us that the Greek word “‘lalein,’ which our translation renders speak, is not the word used in Greek to signify to speak with premeditation and prudence, but is the word used to signify to speak imprudently and without consideration, and is that applied to one who lets his tongue run but does not speak to the purpose, but says nothing.” Now unless Parkhurst is utterly wrong in his Greek, which it is apprehended no one will venture to affirm, Paul’s fulmination is not launched against speech with premeditation and prudence, but against speech devoid of these qualities. It would be well if all speakers of the male as well as the female sex were obedient to this rule.

We think that with the light cast on this text by the four eminent Greek scholars above quoted, there can be no doubt in any unprejudiced mind as to the true meaning of “lalein” in this connection. And we find from Church history that the primitive Christians thus understood it, for that women did actually speak and preach amongst them we have indisputable proof. God had promised in the last days to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, and that the daughters as well as the sons of mankind should prophesy. And Peter says most emphatically, respecting the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, “This is that which is spoken of by the prophet Joel,” etc. (Acts 2:16, Acts 2:18) Words more explicit, and an application of Prophecy more direct than this does not occur within the range of the New Testament.

Commentators say, “If women have the gift of prophecy, they must not use that gift in public.” But God says, by His prophet Joel, they shall use it, just in the same sense as the sons use it. When the dictation of men so flatly opposes the express declaration of the “sure word of prophesy,” we make no apology for its utter and indignant rejection.

Presbuteros, a talented writer of the Protestant Electoral Union, in his reply to a priest of Rome, * says:—

“Habituated for ages, as men had been, to the diabolical

[[* We strongly commend this pamphlet to the perusal of our readers. It contains much valuable information as to the origin of much of the popish nonsense of our times. Published by the Protestant Frotestant Electoral Union 14, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, Price 6d.]] teaching and delusions practiced upon them by the papal ‘priesthood,’ it was difficult for them, when they did get possession of the Scriptures to discern therein the plain fact, that among the primitive Christians preaching was not confined to men, but women also, gifted with power by the Holy Spirit, preached the gospel; and hence the slowness with which, even at the present time, this truth has been admitted by those giving heed to the word of God, and especially those setting themselves up as a ‘priesthood’ or a ‘clergy.’ As shown in page 66, God had, according to His promise, on the day of Pentecost poured out His Holy Spirit upon believers—men and women, old and young—that they should prophesy, and they did so. The prophesying spoken of was not the foretelling of events, but the preaching to the world at large the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ. For this purpose it pleased God to make use of women as well as men. It is plainly the duty of every Christian to insist upon the fulfilment of the will of God, and the abrogation of every single thing inconsistent therewith. I would draw attention to the fact that Phebe, a Christian woman whom we find in our version of the Scripture (Romans 16:1) spoken of only as any common servant attached to a congregation, was nothing less than one of those gifted by the Holy Spirit for publishing the glad tidings, or preaching the gospel. The manner in which the apostle (whose only care was the propagation of evangelical truth) speaks of her, shows that she was what he in Greek styled her, a deacon (diaconon) or preacher of the word. Our translators speak of her (because she was a woman) only as ‘a servant of the Church which is at Cenchrea.’ The men ‘deacons’ they styled ministers, but a woman on the same level as themselves would be an anomaly, and therefore she was to be only the servant of men ministers, who, in the popish sense, constituted the Church!” The apostle says of her—“I commend unto you Phebe our sister, who is a minister (diaconon) of the Church which is at Cenchrea: that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatever business she hath need of you.” To the common sense of disinterested minds it will be evident that the apostle could not have requested more for any one of the most zealous of men preachers than he did for Phebe! They were to assist “her in whatever business she” might require their aid. Hence we discern that she had no such trifling position in the primitive Church as at the present time episcopal dignitaries attach to deacons and deaconesses! Observe, the same Greek word is used to designate her that was applied to all the apostles and to Jesus Himself. For example: “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister (diaconon) of the circumcision” (Romans 15:8). “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers (diaconoi) by whom ye believed” (1 Corinthians 3:5). “Our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers (diaconous) of the new testament” (2 Corinthians 3:6). “In all things approving ourselves as the ministers (diaconoi) of God” (2 Corinthians 6:4). The idea of a woman deacon in the “three

orders!”—it was intolerable, therefore let her be a “servant.” Theodoret however says, “The fame of Phebe was spoken of throughout the world. She was known not only to the Greeks and Romans, but also to the Barbarians,” which implies that she had travelled much, and propagated the gospel in foreign countries. See Doddridge, Cobbin, and Wesley, on this passage.

“Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles; who also were in Christ before me” (Romans 16:7). By the word “kinsmen” one would take Junia to have been a man; but Chrysostom and Theophylact, who were both Greeks, and consequently knew their mother tongue better than our translators, say Junia was a woman. Kinsmen should therefore have been rendered kinsfolk; but with our translators it was out of all character to have a woman of note amongst the apostles, and a fellow■prisoner with Paul for the gospel: therefore let them be kinsmen!

Justin Martyr, who lived till about A.D. 150, says, in his dialogue with Trypho, the Jew, “that both men and women were seen among them who had the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit of God, according as the prophet Joel had foretold, by which he endeavored to convince the Jews that the latter days were come.”

Dodwell, in his dissertations on Irenæus says, “that the gift of the spirit of prophecy was given to others besides the apostles; and, that not only in the first and second, but in the third century—even to the time of Constantine—all sorts and ranks of men had these gifts; yea, and women too.”

Eusebius speaks of Potomania Ammias, a prophetess, in Philadelphia, and others, “who were equally distinguished for their love and zeal in the cause of Christ.”

“The scriptural idea,” says Mrs. Palmer, “of the terms preach and prophesy, stands so inseparably connected as one and the same thing, that we should find it difficult to get aside from the fact that women did preach, or, in other words, prophesy, in the early ages of Christianity, and have continued to do so down to the present time to just the degree that the spirit of the Christian dispensation has been recognised. And it is also a significant fact, that to the degree denominations, who have once favoured the practice, lose the freshness of their zeal, and as a consequence, their primitive simplicity, and, as ancient Israel, yield to a desire to be like surrounding communities, in a corresponding ratio are the labours of females discountenanced.”

If any one still insists on a literal application of this text, we beg to ask how he disposes of the preceding part of the chapter where it occurs. Surely, if one verse be so authoritative and binding, the whole chapter is equally so; and therefore, those who insist on a literal application of the words of Paul, under all circumstances and through all time, will be careful to observe the apostle’s order of worship in their own congregations. But, we ask, where is the minister who lets his whole Church prophesy one by one, and himself sits still and listens while they are speaking, so that all things may be done decently and in order? But Paul as expressly lays down this order as he does the rule for women, and he adds, “The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (ver. 37). Why then do not ministers abide by these directions? We anticipate their reply—“Because these directions were given to the Corinthians as temporary arrangements; and, though they were the commandments of the Lord to them at that time, they do not apply to all Christians in all times.” Indeed; but unfortunately for their argument, the prohibition of women

speaking even if it meant what they wish, was given amongst those very directions, and to the Corinthians only: for it reads, “Let your women keep silence,” &c.; and, for aught this passage teaches to the contrary, Christian women of all other Churches might do what these women were forbidden to do; until, therefore, learned divines make a personal application of the rest of the chapter, they must excuse us declining to do so of the 24th verse; and we challenge them to show any breach of the Divine law in one case more than the other.

Another passage frequently cited as prohibitory of female labour in the Church, is 1 Timothy 2:12-13. Though we have never met with the slightest proof that this text has any reference to the public exercises of women; nevertheless, as it is often quoted, we will give it a fair and thorough examination. “It is primarily an injunction,” says the Rev. J. H. Robinson, “respecting her personal behavior at home. It stands in connection with precepts respecting her apparel and her domestic position; especially her relation to her husband. No one will suppose that the apostle forbids a woman to ‘teach’ absolutely and universally. Even objectors would allow her to teach her own sex in private; they would let her teach her servants and children, and perhaps, her husband too. If he were ignorant of the Saviour, might she not teach him the way to Christ? If she were acquainted with languages, arts or sciences, which he did not know, might she not teach him these things? Certainly she might! The ‘teaching,’ therefore which is forbidden by the apostle, is not every kind of teaching any more than, in the previous instance, his prohibition of speaking applied to every kind of speaking in the Church; but it is such teaching as is domineering, and as involves the usurpation of authority over the man. This is the only teaching forbidden by St. Paul in the passage under consideration.”

“If this passage be not a prohibition of every kind of teaching, we can only ascertain what kind of teaching is forbidden by the modifying expressions with which didaskein stands associated: and, for anything these modifying expressions affirm to the contrary, her teaching may be public, reiterated, urgent, and may comprehend a variety of subjects, provided it be not dictatorial, domineering, nor vociferous; for then, and then only, would it be incompatible with her obedience.” The Rev. Dr. Taft says, “This passage should be rendered ‘I suffer not a woman to teach by usurping authority over the man.’ This rendering removes all the difficulties and contradictions involved in the ordinary reading, and evidently gives the meaning of the apostle.” “If the nature of society,” says the same writer, “its good and prosperity; in which women are jointly and equally concerned with men; if in many cases their fitness and capacity for instructors, being admitted to be equal to the other sex, be not reasons sufficient to convince the candid reader of woman’s right to preach and teach because of two texts in Paul’s epistles, let him consult the paraphrase of Locke, where he has proved to a demonstration that the apostle, in these texts, never intended to prohibit women from praying and preaching in the Church provided they were dressed as became women professing godliness, and were qualified for the sacred office.”

“It will be found,” says another writer, “by an examination of this text with its connections, that the teaching here alluded to stands in necessary connection with usurping authority, as though the apostle had said, the gospel does not alter the relation of women in view of priority, for Adam was first formed, then Eve.”

“This prohibition,” says the before■named barrister, “refers exclusively to the private life and domestic character of woman, and simply means that an ignorant or unruly woman is not to force

her opinions on the man whether he will or no. It has no reference whatever to good women living in obedience to God and their husbands, or to women sent out to preach the gospel by the call of the Holy Spirit."

If this context is allowed to fix the meaning of didaskein in this text, as it would be in any other, there can be no doubt in any honest mind that the above is the only consistent interpretation; and if it be, then this prohibition has no bearing whatever on the religious exercises of women led and taught by the Spirit of God: and we cannot forbear asking on whose skirts the mischief resulting from the false application of this text will be found? Thank God the day is dawning with respect to this subject. Women are studying and investigating for themselves. They are claiming to be recognised as responsible human beings, answerable to GOD for their convictions of duty; and, urged by the Divine Spirit they are overstepping those unscriptural barriers which the Church has so long reared against its performance.

Whether the Church will allow women to speak in her assemblies can only be a question of time; common sense, public opinion, and the blessed results of female agency will force her to give us an honest and impartial rendering of the solitary text on which she grounds her prohibitions. Then, when the true light shines and God's words take the place of man's traditions, the Doctor of Divinity who shall teach that Paul commands woman to be silent when God's Spirit urges her to speak, will be regarded much the same as we should now regard an astronomer who should teach that the sun is the earth's satellite.

Another argument urged against female preaching is, that it is unnecessary; that there is plenty of scope for her efforts in private, in visiting the sick and poor and working for the temporalities of the Church. Doubtless woman ought to be thankful for any sphere for benefiting her race and glorifying God. But we cannot be blind to the supreme selfishness of making her so welcome to the hidden toil and self■sacrifice, the hewing of wood and the drawing of water, the watching and waiting, the reproach and persecution attaching to her Master's service, without allowing her a tittle of the honour which He has attached to the ministration of His gospel. Here, again, man's theory and God's order are at variance. God says, "Them that honour me I will honour." Our Lord links the joy with the suffering, the glory with the shame, the exaltation with the humiliation, the crown with the cross, the finding of life with the losing of it. Nor did He manifest any such horror at female publicity in His cause as many of His professed people appear to entertain in these days. We have no intimation of His reproving the Samaritan woman for her public proclamation of Him to her countrymen; not of His rebuking the women who followed Him amidst a taunting mob on His way to the cross. And yet, surely, privacy was their proper sphere. On one occasion He did say, with reference to a woman, "Verily, I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (Matthew 26:12; see also Luke 7:37-50). As to the obligation devolving on woman to labour for her Master, I presume there will be no controversy. The particular sphere in which each individual shall do this must be dictated by the teachings of the Holy Spirit and the gifts with which God has endowed her. If she have the necessary gifts, and feels herself called by the Spirit to preach, there is not a single word in the whole book of God to restrain her, but many, very many to urge and encourage her. God says she SHALL do so, and Paul prescribes the manner in which she shall do it, and Phebe, Junia, Philip's four daughters, and many other women actually did preach and speak in the primitive Churches. If this had not been the case, there would have been less

freedom under the new than under the old dispensation. A greater paucity of gifts and agencies under the Spirit than under the law. Fewer labourers when more work to be done. Instead of the destruction of caste and division between the priesthood and the people, and the setting up of a spiritual kingdom in which all true believers were “kings and priests unto God,” the division would have been more stringent and the disabilities of the common people greater. Whereas we are told again and again in effect, that in “Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free, male nor female, but ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”

We commend a few passages bearing in the ministrations of woman under the old dispensation to the careful consideration of our readers. “And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time,” etc. (Jude 1:4-10). There are two particulars in this passage worthy of note. First, the authority of Deborah as a prophetess, or revealer of God’s will to Israel, was acknowledged and submitted to as implicitly as in the cases of the male judges who succeeded her. Secondly, she is made the military head of ten thousand men, Barak refusing to go to battle without her.

Again, in 2 Kings 22:12■20, we have an account of the king sending the high■priest, the scribe, etc., to Huldah, the prophetess, the wife of Shallum, who dwelt at Jerusalem, in the college, to inquire at her mouth the will of God in reference to the book of the law which had been found in the house of the Lord. The authority and dignity of Huldah’s message to the king does not betray anything of that trembling diffidence or abject servility which some persons seem to think should characterize the religious exercises of woman. She answers him as the prophetess of the Lord, having the signet of the King of kings attached to her utterances.

“The Lord gave the word, and great was the company of those that published it” (Psalms 118:11). In the original Hebrew it is, “Great was the company of women publishers, or women evangelists.” Grotius explains this passage, “The Lord shall give the word, that is plentiful matter of speaking; so that he would call those which follow the great army of preaching women, victories, or female conquerers.” How comes it that the feminine word is actually excluded in this text? That it is there as plainly as any other word no Hebrew scholar will deny. It is too much to assume that as our translators could not alter it, as they did “Diaconon” when applied to Phebe, they preferred to leave it out altogether rather than give a prophecy so unpalatable to their prejudice. But the Lord gives the word and He will choose whom He pleases to publish it; not withstanding the condemnation of translators and divines.

“For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam” (Micah 6:4).

God here classes Miriam with Moses and Aaron, and declares that He sent her before His people. We fear that had some of our friends been men of Israel at that time, they would have disputed such a leadership. In the light of such passages as these, who will dare to dispute the fact that God did under the old dispensation endue his handmaidens with the gifts and calling of prophets answering to our present idea of preachers. Strange indeed would it be if under the fulness of the gospel dispensation, there were nothing analogous to this, but “positive and explicit rules,” to prevent any approximation thereto. We are thankful to find, however, abundant evidence that the “spirit of prophecy which is the testimony of Jesus,” was poured out on the female as fully as on the male disciple, and “His daughters and His handmaidens” prophesied. We commend the

following texts from the New Testament to the careful consideration of our readers.

“And she (Anna) was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption on Jerusalem” (Luke 2:37-38). Can any one explain wherein this exercise of Anna’s differed from that of Simeon, recorded just before? It was in the same public place, the temple. It was during the same service. It was equally public, for she “spake of Him to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem” (see Watson on this passage).

Jesus said to the two Marys, “All hail! And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go, tell my brethren that they go before me into Galilee” (Matthew 28:9-10). There are two or three points in this beautiful narrative to which we wish to call the attention of our readers.

First, it was the first announcement of the glorious news to a lost world and a company of forsaking disciples. Second, it was as public as the nature of the case demanded; and intended ultimately to be published to the ends of the earth. Third, Mary was expressly commissioned to reveal the fact to the apostles; and thus she literally became their teacher in that memorable occasion. Oh, glorious privilege, to be allowed to herald the glad tidings of a Savior risen! How could it be that our Lord chose a woman to this honour? Well, one reason might be that the male disciples were all missing at the time. They all forsook Him and fled. But woman was there, as she had ever been, ready to minister to her risen, as to her dying, Lord—

“Not she with traitorous lips her Savior stung, Not she denied Him with unholy tongue;

She, whilst apostles shrunk, could danger brave;

Last at the cross, and earliest at the grave.” But surely, if the dignity of our Lord of His message were likely to be imperiled by committing this sacred trust to a woman, He who was guarded by legions of angels could have commanded another messenger; but, as if intent on doing her honour and rewarding her unwavering fidelity, He reveals Himself first to her; and, as an evidence that He had taken out of the way the curse under which she had so long groaned, nailing it to His cross, He makes her who had been first in the transgression, first also in the glorious knowledge of complete redemption.

“Acts 1:14, and Acts 2:1, Acts 2:4. We are in the first of these passages expressly told that the women were assembled with the disciples on the day of Pentecost; and in the second, that the cloven tongues sat upon them each, and the Holy Ghost filled them all, and they spake as the Spirit gave them utterance. It is nothing to the point to argue that the gift of tongues was a miraculous gift, seeing that the Spirit was the primary bestowment. The tongues were only emblematical of the office which the Spirit was henceforth to sustain to His people. The Spirit was given alike to the female as to the male disciple, and this is cited by Peter (Acts 2:16, Acts 2:18), as the peculiar speciality of the latter dispensation. What a remarkable device of the devil that he has so long succeeded in hiding this characteristic of the latter day glory! He knows, whether the Church does or not, how eminently detrimental to the interests of his kingdom have been the religious labours of woman; and while her Seed has mortally bruised his head, he ceases not to bruise her heel; but the time of her deliverance draweth nigh.”

“PHILIP THE EVANGLELIST HAD FOUR DAUGHTERS, VIRGINS, WHICH DID PROPHESY.” FROM EUSEBIUS, THE ANCIENT ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORIAN, WE LEARN THAT PHILIP’S DAUGHTERS LIVED TO A GOOD OLD AGE, ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN THE WORK OF THE LORD. “MIGHTY LUMINARIES,” HE WRITES, “ HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP IN ASIA. PHILIP, AND TWO OF HIS VIRGIN DAUGHTERS, SLEEP AT HIERAPOLIS; THE OTHER, AND THE BELOVED DISCIPLE, JOHN, REST AT EPHESUS.”

“And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow■labourers” (Php 4:3). This is a recognition of female labourers, not concerning the gospel but in the gospel, whom Paul classes with Clement, and other his fellow■labourers. Precisely the same terms are applied to Timotheus, whom Paul styles a “minister of God, and his fellow■labourer in the gospel of Christ” (1 Thessalonians 3:2).

Again, “Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus; who have for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but all the Churches of the Gentiles” (Romans 16:3-4). THE WORD RENDERED HELPERS MEANS A FELLOW■LABOURER, ASSOCIATE, COADJUTOR,* WORKING TOGETHER, AN ASSISTANT, A JOINT LABOURER, A COLLEAGUE.† IN THE NEW TESTAMENT SPOKEN ONLY OF A CO■WORKER, HELPER IN A CHRISTIAN WORK, THAT IS OF CHRISTIAN TEACHERS.‡ HOW CAN THESE TERMS, WITH ANY SHOW OF CONSISTENCY, BE MADE TO APPLY MERELY TO THE EXERCISE OF HOSPITALITY TOWARDS THE APOSTLE, OR THE DUTY OF PRIVATE VISITATION. TO BE A PARTNER, COADJUTOR, OR JOINT WORKER WITH A PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL, MUST BE SOMETHING MORE THAN TO BE HIS WAITING■MAID.

Again, “Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord” (Romans 16:12). Dr. Clarke, on this verse, says, “Many have spent much useless labour in endeavouring to prove that these women did not preach. That there were prophetesses as well as prophets in the Church we learn, and that a woman might pray or prophesy provided that she had her head covered we know; and, according to St. Paul (1 Corinthians 14:3), whoever prophesied spoke unto others to edification, exhortation, and comfort, and that no preacher can do more every person must acknowledge. Because, to edify, exhort, and comfort, are the prime ends of the gospel ministry. If women thus prophesied, then women preached.”

[[* Greenfield.]] [[† Dunbar.]] [[‡ Robinson.]]

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). If this passage does not teach that in the privileges, duties, and responsibilities of Christ’s Kingdom, all differences of nation, caste, and sex are abolished, we should like to know what it does teach, and wherefore it was written (see also 1 Corinthians 7:22). As we have before observed, the text, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, is the only one in the whole book of God which even by a false translation can be made prohibitory of female speaking in the Church; how comes it then, that by this one isolated passage, which, according to our best Greek authorities,* is wrongly rendered and wrongly applied, woman’s lips have been sealed for centuries, and the “testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy,” silenced, when bestowed on her? How is it that this solitary text has been allowed to stand unexamined and unexplained, nay, that learned commentators who have known its true meaning as perfectly as either Robinson,

Bloomfield, Greenfield, Scott, Parkhurst, or Locke have upheld the delusion, and enforced it as a Divine precept binding on all female disciples through all time? Surely there must have been some unfaithfulness, “craftiness,” and “handling of the word of life deceitfully” somewhere. Surely the love of caste and unscriptural jealousy for a separated priesthood has had something to do with this anomaly. By this course divines and commentators have involved themselves in all sorts of inconsistencies and contradictions; and worse, they have nullified some of the most precious promises of God’s word. They have set the most explicit predictions of prophecy at variance with apostolic injunctions, and the most immediate and wonderful operations of the Holy Ghost in direct opposition “to positive, explicit, and universal rules.”

Notwithstanding, however, all this opposition to female ministry on the part of those deemed authorities in the Church, [[* Disinterested witnesses every one will allow.]] there have been some in all ages in whom the Holy Ghost has wrought so mightily, that at the sacrifice of reputation and all things most dear, they have been compelled to come out as witnesses for Jesus and ambassadors of His gospel. As a rule, these women have been amongst the most devoted and self■denying of the Lord’s people, giving indisputable evidence by the purity and beauty of their lives that they were led by the Spirit of God. Now, if the word of God forbids female ministry, we would ask how it happens that so many of the most devoted handmaidens of the Lord have felt themselves constrained by the Holy Ghost to exercise it? Surely there must be some mistake somewhere, for the word and the Spirit cannot contradict each other. Either the word does not condemn women preaching, or these confessedly holy women have been deceived. Will any one venture to assert that such women as Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, Mrs. Fletcher of Madely, and Mrs. Smith, have been deceived with respect to their call to deliver the gospel messages to their fellow■creatures? If not, then God does not call and qualify women to preach, and His word, rightly understood, cannot forbid what His Spirit enjoins. Further, it is a significant fact, which we commend to the consideration of all thoughtful Christians, that the public ministry of women has been eminently owned of God in the salvation of souls and the edification of His people. Paul refers to the fruits of his labours as evidence of His Divine commission (1 Corinthians 9:20). “If I am not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.” If this criterion be allowed to settle the question respecting woman’s call to preach, we have no fear as to the result. A few examples of the blessing which has attended the ministrations of females, may help to throw some light on this matter of a Divine call. At a missionary meeting held at Columbia, March 26th, 1824, the name of Mrs. Smith, of the Cape of Good Hope, was brought before the meeting, when Sir Richard Otley, the chairman, said, “The name of Mrs. Smith has been justly celebrated by the religious world and in the colony of the Cape of Good Hope. I heard a talented missionary state, that wherever he went in that colony, at 600 or 1,000 miles from the principal seat of government, among the natives of Africa, and wherever he saw persons converted to Christianity, the name of Mrs. Smith was hailed as the person from whom they received their religious impressions; and although no less than ten missionaries, all men of piety and industry, were stationed in that settlement, the exertions of Mrs. Smith alone were more efficacious, and had been attended with greater success than the labours of those missionaries combined.” The Rev. J. Campbell, missionary to Africa, says, “So extensive were the good effects of her pious exhortations, that on my first visit to the colony, wherever I met with persons of evangelical piety, I generally found that their first impressions of religion were ascribed to Mrs. Smith.”

Mrs. Mary Taft, the talented lady of the Rev. Dr. Taft, was another eminently successful labourer in the Lord's vineyard. "If," says Mrs. Palmer, "the criterion by which we may judge of a Divine call to proclaim salvation be by the proportion of fruit gathered, then to the commission Mrs. Taft is appended the Divine signature, to a degree pre■eminently unmistakable. In reviewing her diary, we are constrained to believe that not one minister in five hundred could produce so many seals to their ministry. An eminent minister informed us that of those who had been brought to Christ through her labours, over two hundred entered the ministry. She seldom opened her mouth in public assemblies, either in prayer or speaking, but the Holy Spirit accompanied her words in such a wonderful manner, that sinners were convicted, and, as in apostolic times, were constrained to cry out, 'What must we do to be saved?' She laboured under the sanction and was hailed as a fellow■helper in the gospel by the Revs. Messrs. Mather, Pawson, Hearnshaw, Blackborne, Marsden, Bramwell, Vasey, and many other equally distinguished ministers of her time." The Rev. Mr. Pawson, when President of the Wesleyan Conference, writes as follows to a circuit where Mrs. Taft was stationed with her husband, where she met with some gainsayers:—'It is well known that religion has been for some time at a very low ebb in Dover. I therefore could not help thinking that is was a kind providence that Mrs. Taft was stationed among you, and that, by the blessing of God, she might be the instrument of reviving the work of God among you. I seriously believe Mrs. Taft to be a deeply pious, prudent, modest woman. I believe the Lord hath owned and blessed her labours very much, and many, yea, very many souls have been brought to the saving knowledge of God by her preaching. Many have come to hear her out of curiosity, who would not have come to hear a man, and have been awakened and converted to God. I do assure you there is much fruit of her labours in many parts of our connection."

Mrs. Fletcher, the wife of the sainted vicar of Madeley, was another of the daughters of the Lord on whom was poured the spirit of prophecy. This eminently devoted lady opened an orphan house, and devoted her time, her heart, and her fortune, to the work of the Lord. The Rev. Mr. Hodson, in referring to her public labours, says, "Mrs. Fletcher was not only luminous but truly eloquent—her discourses displayed much good sense, and were fraught with the riches of the gospel. She excelled in the poetry of an orator which can alone supply the place of all the rest—that eloquence which goes directly to the heart. She was the honoured instrument of doing much good; and the fruit of her labours is now manifest in the lives and tempers of numbers who will be her crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord." The Rev. Henry Moore sums up a fine eulogium on her character and labours by saying, "May not every pious churchman say, Would to God all the Lord's people were such prophets and prophetesses!"

Miss Elizabeth Hurrell travelled through many counties in England, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ; and very many were, through her instrumentality, brought to a knowledge of the truth, not a few of whom were afterwards called to fill very honourable stations in the Church. From the Methodist Conference, held at Manchester, 1787, Mr. Wesley wrote to Miss Sarah Mallett, whose labours, while very acceptable to the people, had been opposed by some of the preachers:—"We give the right hand of fellowship to Sarah Mallett, and have no objection to her being a preacher in our connection, so long as she preaches Methodist doctrine, and attends to our discipline."

Such are a few examples of the success attending the public labours of females in the gospel. We might give many more, but our space only admits of a bare mention of Mrs. Wesley, Mrs. Rogers,

Mrs. President Edwards, Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Gilbert, Miss Lawrence, Miss Newman, Miss Miller, Miss Tooth, and Miss Cutler, whose holy lives and zealous labours were owned of God in the conversion of thousands of souls, and the abundant edification of the Lord's people. Nor are the instances of the spirit of prophecy bestowed on women confined to by■gone generations: the revival of this age, as well as of every other, has been marked by this endowment, and the labours of such pious and talented ladies as Mrs. Palmer, Mrs. Finney, Mrs. Wightman, Miss Marsh,* with numberless other Marys and Phebes, have contributed in no small degree to its extension and power.

We have endeavored in the foregoing pages to establish, what we sincerely believe, that woman has a right to teach. Here the whole question hinges. If she has the right, she has it independently of any man■made restrictions which do not equally refer to the opposite sex. If she has the right, and

[[* The record of this lady's labours has long been before the public. "English Hearts and Hands," in a truly fascinating manner, describes the wonderful success with which those labours have been attended. Well has it been for the spiritual interest of hundreds that no sacerdotal conclave has been able to place the seal of silence upon her lips, and assign her to 'privacy as her proper sphere.']] possesses the necessary qualifications, we maintain that, where the law of expediency does not prevent, she is at liberty to exercise it without any further pretensions to inspiration than those put forth by that male sex. If, on the other hand, it can be proved that she has not the right, but that imperative silence is imposed upon her by the word of God, we cannot see who has authority to relax or make exceptions to the law.

If commentators had dealt with the Bible on other subjects as they have dealt with it on this, taking isolated passages, separated from their explanatory connections, and insisting on a literal interpretation of the words of our version, what errors and contradictions would have been forced upon the acceptance of the Church, and what terrible results would have accrued to the world. On this principle the Universalist will have all men unconditionally saved, because bccause the Bible says, "Christ is the Saviour of all men," etc. The Antinomian, according to this rule of interpretation, has most unquestionable foundation for his dead faith and hollow profession, seeing that St. Paul declares over and over again that men are "saved by faith and not by works." The Unitarian, also, in support of that soul■withering doctrine, triumphantly refers to numerous passages which, taken alone, teach only the humanity of Jesus. In short, "there is no end to the errors in faith and practice which have resulted from taking isolated passages, wrested from their proper connections, or the light thrown upon them by other Scriptures, and applying them to sustain a favourite theory." Judging from the blessed results which have almost invariably followed the ministrations of women in the cause of Christ, we fear it will be found, in the great day of account, that a mistaken and unjustifiable application of the passage, "Let your women keep silence in the Churches," has resulted in more loss to the Church, evil to the world, and dishonour to God, than any of the errors we have already referred to. And feeling, as we have long felt, that this is a subject of vast importance to the interests of Christ's kingdom and the glory of God, we would most earnestly commend its consideration to those who have influence in the Churches. We think it a matter worthy of their consideration whether God intended woman to bury her talents and influence as she now does? And whether the circumscribed sphere of woman's religious labours may not have something to do with the comparative non■success of the gospel in these latter days.

03.08. Hot Saints

HOT SAINTS. BEING THE OUTLINE OF AN ADDRESS ON Revelation 3:15 : “I WOULD THOU WERT COLD OR HOT.”

WHY does God like people to be hot in His service?—For the same reasons that we like people to be hot in ours. We have no confidence in half-and-half, fast and loose friends; milk-warm adherents who in times of danger wait to see which way the wind blows before they commit themselves to our views, or interests—servants who will serve us, while at the same time they can serve themselves, but the moment our interests and theirs appear to clash will leave us to our fate. We like thorough, whole-hearted, all length friends and servants, and to such only do we confide our secrets, or trust our important enterprises. We may use the half-hearted as far as they serve our purpose, but we have no confidence in them—no heart-fellowship with them, no joy over them: we would rather they were hot or cold—out and out friends or foes.

Read in your own heart and mind, in this respect, a transcript of His, and see the reason why He says, “I would thou wert cold or hot.” I want you to note two or three characteristics of hot saints so that you may know whether you belong to the number. To be hot implies the possession of—I. Light; II. Purity; III. Pungency; IV. Power.

I. Light.—Hot saints have such a halo round about them that they reveal—make manifest sin in others. They do this—1st, by contrast. “What fellowship hath light with darkness?” The light of God flashed from a hot saint on the dark consciences of sinners makes them feel their sin, misery and danger, and if they will receive it, leads to their conversion. It “opens their eyes,” and if they will follow it, leads them to Jesus. “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.” “Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did.” “Ye are the light of the world.” If sinners reject this light their rejection seals their sins upon them, and renders their condemnation double. “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin.” What a fearful responsibility rests on all sinners who are brought into contact with saints who are filled with the light of God. Some of you here are living under this light: How are you using it? Beware!

2nd. Light reveals sin by antipathy. “Everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.” The presence of a certain degree of spiritual light must produce either repentance or opposition. A dark soul cannot dwell in the presence of a soul full of light without either repenting or opposing, if it does not submit it will rebel. It was under the hot blaze of this light that the Jews round about Stephen “were cut to the heart, and gnashed upon him with their teeth.” The effect of his light on their darkness was to reveal their enmity and scorch them into a fury of opposition. When intense spiritual light and darkness are brought in contact, their innate antipathy makes them reveal each other. The devil could not endure the presence of Jesus without crying out, “I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God.”

How is it with you saints here in this respect? Can you get along with dark souls without eliciting their enmity? If so, depend upon it you have not much light—not that light which accompanies

great heat. If you don't want to be spued out of the mouth of God see to it, that you get it!

3rd. Light reveals sin by reproof. Hot saints will "rebuke their neighbour and not suffer sin upon him." They are full of zeal for the glory of God, and jealousy for His honour; it breaks their hearts because men keep not His law. They know that they have the light of life, and they feel that they must hold it up over the wrong■doing, deception, and hypocrisy of their fellow men in order to "open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light." You never hear them apologising for sin or calling it by smooth names; they feel towards sin, in their measure, as God feels towards it. It is the abominable thing which they hate, and therefore they cannot in any case allow it, pander to it, or excuse it. Hot saints will mercilessly turn the blazing lamp of God's truth on the conscience of the sinner with reproof as pungent, pointed, and personal as Nathan gave to David, Jehu to Jehosaphat, or Jesus to the Jews.

II. Purity.—Heat cleanses, purges away dross, destroys noxious vapours. So the burning fire of the Holy Ghost purifies the soul which is filled, permeated with it, hence hot saints are pure. They purify themselves, as He is pure. Their garments are white, they keep themselves "unspotted from the world." They improve the moral atmosphere wherever they go. Their very presence reproves and holds in check the unfruitful works of darkness, and sinners feel as Peter felt when he said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

III. Pungency. Heat burns. Hot saints set on fire the hearts of other saints. They singe the consciences of sinners, burn the fingers of Pharisees, melt the hearts of backsliders, and warm up those who have left their first love.

IV. Power.—Hot saints are mighty. The spirit is not given by measure unto them. They may not be very intellectual or learned, but their heat makes more impression on the hearts of sinners, and stirs more opposition from hell than all the intellect and learning of a whole generation of lukewarm professors. The fishermen of Galilee produced more impression on the world in three years than all the learning of the Jewish had done in centuries, because they were hot in the love and service of God. Hot saints are more than a match for their enemies. Satan himself is afraid of them. "Paul I know, " said he; yea, and he knows and fears all such. Wicked men cannot stand before them; the power of their testimony cuts them to the heart, and makes them either cry out, "What must we do to be saved?" or, "Away with him! away with him." Hot people are not only able to work, but to suffer. They can endure hardness, suffer reproach, contend with principalities and powers, fight with wild beasts, hail persecution and death!

V. To be hot ensures opposition—1st, From Pharisees. They look with contempt on hot people, call them fanatics, extreme people, troublers of Israel, disturbers of the peace of the Church, occasions of reproach to the respectable and reasonable part of the Church. The Pharisees were the bitterest enemies of Him who said, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten Me up." And they are still the bitterest enemies of those who are filled with His Spirit. It matters not that they have now a Christian creed instead of a Jewish; the spirit is the same, and will not tolerate "God manifest in the flesh." A formal, ceremonious, respectable religion they do not object to; but a living, burning, enthusiastic Christianity is still Beelzebub! to them.

2nd. To be hot ensures opposition from the world. The world hates hot saints, because they look with contempt on its pleasures, set at naught its maxims and customs, trample on its ambition and

applause, ignore its rewards, abjure its spirit, and live altogether above its level. “Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” It can tolerate warm religionists—rational, decent people, who appreciate this world as well as the next, and can see how to make the best of it; but these “hot,” “pestilent,” “mad” “fools,” who obtrude their religion everywhere, who are at everybody about their souls, who are always talking about God, death, judgment, heaven, and hell—“Away with them! they are not fit to live.”

3rd. To be hot ensures opposition from the devil. Oh, how he hates these hot saints! What trouble he takes to trip them. He knows they are worth it. Many a council is held in hell over these. They set fire to his standing corn. They rout his best trained legions. They shake the foundations of his throne. They take the prey out of his very jaws; they pull it out of his fires. He must do something! He sets his principalities and powers to work on them. Loose and feeble fiends will do for lukewarm people, but these he must take in hand himself, and try all the guile and force of his gigantic intellect on them. He troubles them on every side, and at last, when God permits, he has their heads off. He got Paul’s, but they defy him even when they are between his teeth; he cannot swallow them; they escape out of his very jaws to glory, and who knows the mischief they work his kingdom, up there. Hallelujah! our arch enemy is a conquered foe. Let me remind you, in conclusion, that to be hot ensures God’s special favour, protection and fellowship, and our final victory. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” Whereas to be lukewarm is to be spued out of His mouth, which indicates special dislike, disgrace, and final abandonment. WHICH WILL YOU BE, HOT OR LUKEWARM?

03.09. Conscience

CONSCIENCE.

“And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men.”— Acts 24:16.

PERHAPS there is no complaint more frequently on the lips of those who mourn over leanness of soul than this: “My faith is so weak: I want more faith;” and doubtless a weak faith is the secret of a great deal of the barrenness and misery of many Christians; but it never seems to occur to them to ask why their faith is weak? why they find themselves powerless to appropriate the promises of God? “Yes,” said a dying backslider to a man of God who was trying to comfort him by quoting the promises; “yes, I believe they are true, but somehow they won’t stick!” The fault was in the state of his own heart. He could not appropriate the promises, because he knew that he was not the character to whom they were made.

Now it seems to me that a great deal of failure in faith is simply the result of a defiled conscience, and if those who find themselves weak and sickly in spiritual life would turn their attention to the condition of their consciences they would soon discover the reason for all their failure. The fact is, we have a great deal of so-called Christianity in these days which dispenses with conscience altogether. We sometimes meet with persons who tell us that they are not under the law, but under grace, and therefore they are not condemned, do what they will.

Now the question is, Does the Gospel contemplate such a state? Does it propose to depose or abjure conscience, or to purify and restore it to sovereign control?

I.—Let us define conscience.

Conscience is that faculty of the soul which pronounces on the character of our actions (Romans 2:15). This faculty is a constituent part of our nature, and is common to man everywhere and at all times. All men have a conscience; whether enlightened or unenlightened, active or torpid, there it is: it cannot be destroyed. therefore Christianity cannot propose to dispense with it , as God in no case proposes to destroy, but to sanctify, human nature.

There has been much philosophising as to the exact position of conscience in the soul—whether it be a separate faculty, as the will and the understanding, or whether it be a universal spiritual sense pervading and taking cognisance of all the faculties, as feeling in the body. It matters little which of these theories we accept, seeing that the vocation of conscience remains the same in both.

II.—Let us glance at the office which conscience sustains to the soul. This office is to determine or pronounce upon the moral quality of our actions—to say whether this or that is good or bad. Conscience is an independent witness standing as it were between God and man; it is in man, but for God, and it cannot be bribed or silenced. Some one has called it “God’s Spirit in man’s soul.” Another, “God’s viceregent in the soul of man;” and certainly it is the most wonderful part of man.

All other of our faculties can be subdued by our will; but this cannot; it stands erect, taking sides against ourselves whenever we transgress its fiat: something in us bearing witness against us when we offend its integrity.

Now it is a question of vital importance to our spiritual life whether the Gospel is intended to deliver us from this reigning power of conscience, and make us independent of its verdict; or whether it is intended to purify and enlighten conscience, and to endow us with power to live in obedience to its voice. Let us examine a few passages on this point. First, let us see what is done with conscience in regeneration. Hebrews 9:14 : “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” See also Hebrews 10:22. Second, let us see the office which conscience sustains in regenerate men. 1 Timothy 1:19 : “Holding faith and a good conscience, which some, having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck.” Romans 9:1: “I say the truth in Christ; I lie not; my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.” See 1 Timothy 3:9 and Acts 23:1. We have also set forth the consequences of allowing conscience to become defiled. 1 Timothy 4:2 : “Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron.” Also Titus 1:15.

There are many other texts quite as much to the point, but these are abundantly sufficient to show that Paul had no idea of a wild, lawless faith, which ignored the tribunal of conscience, and talked of liberty while leaving its possessor the bond■slave of his own lusts. The Apostles clearly show that true Christianity no more dispenses with conscience than it does with the great moral law by which conscience is set, and to which it is amenable. Hence Paul tells us in our text that he exercised himself to have always a conscience void of offence.

III. We want to point out what is implied in having a conscience void of offence. This implies,

First, a “purged” conscience made clean; must be made clean before it can be kept clean. The residuum of all sin settles on the conscience; and, as all have sinned, there can be no clean consciences by nature. There is only one way by which consciences can be purified—purged from guilt and made ready for new service. Hebrews 9:14 : “From dead works”—from all pollution, uncleanness, sterility. Conscience is not only polluted by sin, but outraged, incensed, made angry; it needs to be pacified as well as purged, and this can only be done by the blood of atonement. Every believer remembers the precious sense of purity and peace which spread over his soul when first he realised a saving interest in the blood of Christ; how sweet it was to feel that all the stains left by the sins of a past life were washed out—to realise that the anger and vengeance of an aggrieved conscience were appeased—that God, having accepted the Lamb as a sufficient atonement, conscience accepted Him also, and was pacified! The offence and condemnation of past sin is washed away, and now the conscience is void of offence, clean, and ready to serve the LIVING God. There is a beautiful significance in the word “living” in this connection; it seems to intimate that there is a fitness, an appropriateness, between the character of the Being to be served and the quality of that faculty of the soul which has specially to preside over His service. It is now not only made clean, but light, quick, tender, ready to detect and reject everything old, rotten, impure, unholy, and to keep it out of the sanctuary of the believer’s soul, as unfit for the service of the living God, who sees every thought, motive, and desire. And oh, how true is conscience to its trust if only the soul would exercise itself always to obey! The Apostle laboured to

have always a conscience void of offence. This must have been possible, or he could not have exercised himself to maintain it; he was too good a philosopher for that. What unpardonable and wilful mistakes are made about Paul's experience! His personification of the ineffectual struggles of a convicted sinner in the words, "Oh, wretched man that I am," I have been wrested from their explanatory connection and set in solitary and mocking contradiction to every exposition of his experience from the hour of his conversion to that of his martyrdom. Paul was either a sanctified man, "more than conqueror,"—"doing all things through Christ strengthening him"—counting all things but "loss and dung"—"knowing nothing amongst men save Jesus Christ and Him crucified," or he was the greatest egotist that ever lived. Neither was he honest, for we have not a word about failure or defeat after he once attained the liberty wherewith Christ Jesus made him free; and yet no Apostle gives us so much of his personal experience as Paul. He continually exhorts the churches to follow his example, to walk as he walked; and tells Agrippa that he would both he and all that heard him were altogether such as he was, save his bonds. He continually challenged his enemies to point out a single selfish or inconsistent action, declaring that whatever he did, or wherever he went, or whatever he suffered, it was all for the interests of his Redeemer's kingdom; and when his work was done, like some mighty conqueror about to seize the crown of victory, he stretches forth his hand and cries, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Surely Paul had found it possible to maintain a conscience void of offence! And so may we; but this implies, Secondly, systematic obedience to the dictates of conscience. Being made pure, light and quick, and set on the throne of the soul to communicate the light and truth of God, and to witness impartially whether it is obeyed or not, of course there can be but one way to keep this conscience void of offence, and that is by so acting as not to offend, grieve, or incense it again! You see, if the soul—nay, the whole being—refuses to be in subjection to it—will not obey it—then conscience must needs take offence again, because it cannot be cheated, or bribed, or silenced. To be kept void of offence it must be obeyed with promptness; to parley is to defile. How many a soul has dated its ruin to temporising with a suggestion which conscience asserted ought to have been put down at once!

Thirdly, to keep a conscience void of offence requires unremitting effort, exertion, "exercise," determination; a bringing up, so to speak, of all the other powers and faculties of the being; "herein do I exercise myself"—the whole man, soul, mind, body—myself.

Here is need for "exercise" indeed; this signifies no child's play, no mere effervescing emotion, expending itself in sentimental songs or idle speculations. Here is "the fight of faith" THE faith of the saints, which can dare, and do, and suffer anything rather than defile its garments. Only those who thus fight have the Apostle's kind of faith. Satan knows this, and he waylays such souls with every temptation possible to them. He tries considerations of ease, interest, honour, reputation, friends, fashion, health, life! and sometimes puts all these in one scale at the same time, over against a pure conscience in the other. Alas! how many for such considerations "have put away a good conscience, and concerning faith have made shipwreck."

It is no uncommon thing to meet with people in this condition, who, "having built again the things they once destroyed, have made themselves transgressors." Conscience is defiled and incensed, and demands that the evil shall be put away and repented of, and the soul cast afresh on the blood of atonement for pardon and healing. Instead of doing this, however, we are constantly

meeting with people who try to cling on to what they call faith, and who quibble and reason to try to make it out that they are right; but between their sentences we can hear their consciences mutter, “You know you are wrong, you know you are guilty; confess, and forsake your sin.” I know a young lady, a professing Christian, who was deeply convinced by the Spirit of God that the business in which she was engaged was inconsistent with her profession, and also with her becoming a real follower of Jesus. After much controversy she took three days to debate with conscience as to whether she should give it up or not. Minister, friends, everybody but conscience said, No. She yielded, and “put away a good conscience” in order to keep a good business. Shortly after she married a young man with the same sort of religion as her own; they rushed into imprudent and extravagant expenditure; he soon failed, and now she is in seas of trouble and sorrow. Surely “Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee.”

IV. To keep a conscience void of offence requires the subjection of the whole being to the will. As conscience is the reigning power of the soul, the will is the executive, and in order to keep a pure conscience the will must act out its teaching. When inclination lures, when the flesh incites to that which conscience condemns, the will must say, No! and be firm as adamant, counting all things but dung and dross. When Satan takes us up to the pinnacle and says, “All these things will I give thee” if thou wilt do this or that, the will must say, No! and repel the tempter. This is just the point where human nature has failed from the beginning. Our first parents fell here. Their consciences were on the right side, but their wills yielded to the persuasions of the enemy. This is sin. The committal of the will to unlawful self■gratification. Joseph’s conscience thundered the right path, and his will acted it out. Pilate’s conscience also thundered the right course, but his will failed to carry it out. In one we behold a hero, in the other a traitor!

Young man, when you have got the fiat of your conscience act on it. At all costs carry it out. Better be counted a fool, and die poor, than be damned as a traitor to God and righteousness!

Young woman! what says your own conscience about accepting that unconverted lover? I entreat you, obey! Never mind what friends say—what inclination says—what apparent interest says; they all lie if they contradict God! And miserable comforters will they all prove when His chastisements overtake you. Let your will be firm, though it slay you. Man of business! conscience intrudes even on the arena of trade. You hear its voice about this and that practice, or such and such a scheme. Does your will carry out its dictates? Do you resolutely say, I will not “do this thing and sin against God?” This is the test of faith. Real faith dares trust God with consequences; a spurious faith must look after consequences itself! It must save its life whatever becomes of a good conscience. Judge ye how much it is worth!

V. To keep a pure conscience requires great vigilance lest by surprise or inattention we defile it.

“What I say unto you, I say unto all—watch.” Our enemy is always watching to put an occasion of stumbling in our way. He knows the power of surprise. He lays many a snare to take us unawares; many a nicely■laid plot; many carefully■adjusted circumstances to catch us by guile. Oh, what need for vigilance! If by subtlety we ever get overcome, what must we do? Lie down in guilt and despair—allow conscience to remain polluted and incensed? No! up and confess, and forsake, and wash again.

VI. To keep a pure conscience requires patience.

Often necessitates our walking in an isolated path—taking a course which men condemn. Men judge from outward appearance; they do not see the intricacies of individual experience. The very course which they condemn may be that which conscience insists on, and which must be done or suffered, or conscience and God be grieved and offended.

Patience will wait till God, by time and providence, justifies our course. Paul said it was a small matter with him to be judged of man's judgment. Why? Because his conscience acquitted—justified, and God witnessed that he was right. Such a soul can go on with all the world up in arms against it. This is just what the martyrs did—nothing more, nothing less.

Lastly.—A pure conscience is its own reward. No matter who condemns, if it approves, there is peace and sunshine in the soul. And whatever our trials or persecutions, we can draw near to God without wavering, for "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God; and whatsoever we ask we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (1 John 3:21-2). As a clean conscience is its own reward, so an offended conscience is its own punishment. Conscience frequently offended soon becomes "seared"—mark, not destroyed; quick and raw enough underneath, ready to be probed and fretted by the worm that dieth not, and scorched by the fire that never goes out—but seared on the surface, of no use for present service; numbed, dark, useless. People with their consciences in this state often tell us they do not feel condemned for dispositions and practices which are evidently forbidden by the Word of God, nor for things which they once would have trembled to do. Poor things, they do not see that their consciences are seared. A lady once told us that early in her religious experience, she would have felt very much condemned if she had gone to a theatre, but now she could go there, and feel that she was sitting with Christ in heavenly places at the same time! She had got such an increase of light, or rather darkness, that the godless entertainment, the worldly multitude, the flippant jokes, and pothouse-songs, did not strike her as inconsistent with the teaching and profession of Him who said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Truly, it is an awful thing to have a seared conscience! There is but one step between that soul and everlasting death. Is there one of this class here? My friend, make haste back to the foot of the Cross, confessing and forsaking your sins, and get your "conscience purged again from dead works to serve the living God." For "without holiness no man shall see the Lord!"

03.10. Aggression

AGGRESSION.

Mark 16:15. Acts 26:15-18.

I WANT you to note that the great idea in both these texts is that of determined aggression on the territory of Satan. “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.” What a commission!! Who has ever yet grasped all that it implies? The vast obligations imposed on the people of God in this command have never yet been more than half realized. Go ye, not build temples or churches, and wait for them to come to you, but go ye, run after them, seek them out, and preach my Gospel to EVERY creature. Thrust yourselves and your message on the attention of men. The commission to Paul, and through him to us, embodies the same idea, “Unto whom now I send thee to open their eyes.” They are indifferent, preoccupied, asleep in their sin and danger. I send thee as my herald to arouse them, shake them, open their eyes, make them think, and realise the verities of eternal things! We are to do this as God’s ambassadors, whether men like it or not. We are not to wait for convenient seasons, but in this most urgent business to be instant “out of season.” We are not to shrink from pressing the truth on men’s attention for fear of giving offence. He who gave the commission has foreseen and provided for this result. “I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee” (Acts 26:17).

II. Then it is implied in both these commissions that this aggression will provoke opposition. Of course it will. Who ever heard of aggression on the territory of an enemy without opposition according to the power possessed by that enemy? Such a thing is impossible naturally, and even more so spiritually. “The whole world lieth in the arms of the wicked one.” “The strong man armed keepeth his goods;” and if we armed, by a stronger than he, take them, we must expect opposition. Our Lord systematically taught His disciples, to expect and prepare for persecution. He taught them that their principles, motives, and objects, would be so incomprehensible to men of a worldly spirit, whether Pharisees or worldlings, that they would inevitably persecute and oppose them. Such we find was the case wherever the Gospel was introduced. Magistrates, rulers, and mobs, set themselves in array against both the preachers and their truths. I take it as one of the worst signs of the Christianity of this age, that it provokes so little opposition, for it is as true now as it ever was, that if we are not of the world, the world will hate us, and he that is born after the flesh will persecute him who is born after the spirit.

III. I want you to note that the only law laid down in the New Testament for the prosecution of this aggressive warfare is the law of adaptation.

“I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some” (1 Corinthians 9:22). “And of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire” (Jude 1:22-23). The Gospel message is laid down with unerring accuracy, in unalterable terms. We are not at liberty to change even the order of it as given from the glorified lips of our

risen Lord to Paul. “To open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me.” Here is the Divine order—1st, conviction; 2nd, repentance; 3rd, forgiveness; and woe be to the man who transposes this order. He makes as great a mistake as one would make in putting the key into the lock upside down. He who made man laid down this order, and its fits our mental and spiritual constitution. Let us take care to preserve it intact. Let us keep the message itself unadulterated and the order of it undisturbed; but in our modes of bringing it to bear on men, we are left free as the air and sunlight.

Adaptation, expediency, is our only law. I may convey it in any kind of language so that it carries the true meaning to the mind of the hearer—words are nothing, only as they convey ideas. I may send it through any kind of agent, from the acute and polished intellect of a profound theologian down to the new■born babe in Christ, scarcely able to read a letter in the book. Any man, however common or unclean he may have been, if God hath cleansed him, may be used to open the eyes of his fellow■men, and turn them from darkness to light. Adaptation is the great thing we ought to consider. If one method or agent fails, we should try another—God does so. How He tries by various methods and strokes of providence to bring men to Himself! In how many ways did He strive with you, my brother, my sister. He did not try one providence, one sermon, one consideration, one call, but oh, how many, with some of us, before our stubborn hearts yielded to His grace! And as He works, so He calls us to work with Him. In this sense, to become all things to all men, if by any means we may save some; of some making a difference, pulling them out of the fire. That is, adapt ourselves and our measures to the social and spiritual condition of those whom we seek to benefit. It is here, I conceive, that our churches have fallen into such grievous mistakes with reference to the propagation of the Gospel in our own times. We have stood to our stereotyped forms, refusing to come down from the routine of our forefathers, although this routine has ceased to be attractive to the people, nay, in many instances, the very thing that drives them away. The most thoughtful writers on education tell us that the first essential in a teacher of youth is to be able to interest his pupils. True. This is equally true of the people—if you would benefit and bless them, you must interest them. You must clothe the truth in such garb and convey it by such mediums as will arouse their attention and interest their minds. In short, we must come down to them. Whatever has caused it, it is a fact, that the masses of the people have come to associate ideas of stiffness, formality, and uninteresting routine with our church and chapel worship, and if we are to be co■workers with God for them, we must move out of our jog■trot places and become all things to them in order to win them. If they will not come inside our consecrated buildings we must get at them in unconsecrated ones, or out under the canopy of heaven. And has not Jesus by His blood consecrated every spot of earth to soul■saving purposes? If they will not listen to our college■trained and polished divines, we must send them men of their own stamp, whose habits of thought and modes of expression are familiar and congenial to them, and who, washed and filled with the Holy Ghost, are as well adapted to preach to them as were the fishermen of Galilee to the men of their generation.

Why did not our Lord fit and call the divines of His own times to go to the people? He certainly could have done so! Surely he must have had a sound and philosophical reason for choosing fishermen. He acted on the principle of adaptation. Instead of working a miracle to unteach and set loose the divines for this work, He acted on existing natural law, as He always did when there was

no necessity to break it, and chose the best adapted instruments for His purpose; hence He chose men from amongst the people to be workers together with Himself, and sent them out into the bye-ways and hedges, the fields, the market-place, the sea-shore, and the hill-side; in short, He sent them wherever the people were to be got at. Oh! if the Church had steadily adhered to the tactics of our Lord, who can tell whether the kingdoms of this world would not long since have been subjected to His sway? For our part, at any rate, we cannot hesitate for a moment as to the conduct demanded of us by the teachings of our Master, and of experience, as well as by the exigencies of a perishing world. We would a thousand times rather err in too readily utilising men and means that are manifestly suitable to the accomplishment of the great end in view than in rejecting any man or any means as “common” or “improper” which may aid us in the gigantic labours which a dying world stands in such terrible need of.

03.11. The Uses of Trial

THE USES OF TRIAL.

“Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.”— James 5:11.

AFFLICTION occupies a large place in the economy of salvation, for though suffering is the result of sin, God takes hold of it and transmutes it into one of the richest blessings to His own people. From whatever secondary causes the afflictions of the righteous may arise, whether from the sins of their forefathers, the cruelty of their enemies, their own mistakes, or the mistakes of their friends, or the malice of Satan, it is their blessed privilege to realise that the Lord permits and overrules all, and that He has a gracious END in every sorrow which He allows to overtake them. Happy the Christian who, though he cannot see this “end” at present, is able to trust in the goodness which chastens, and cleave to the hand that smites.

It may help us, however, to “endure chastening” if we consider two or three of the gracious ends, or uses of our trials.

I. Trial reveals us to God.

There is a sense, doubtless, in which trial reveals us to God; makes manifest to Him what is in our heart. Perhaps some one may object, and say, no, no; we need nothing to make manifest to God what we are, He understands us perfectly. He knows what is in man, and needs not anything to tell Him. True! and yet He says of Abraham, “Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.” And to the Israelites, “And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep My commandments or no.” Now God knew that Abraham feared Him, and He also knew how far Israel would keep His commandments, but He did not know as a matter of actual fact until the fact transpired. He must have the latent principle developed in action before he could know it as action. Thus Abraham by his obedience to the painful command made his love manifest to God. Not that God had previously any doubts of Abraham’s love, but He desired a practical manifestation of it towards Himself, or to know it in action. The Divine love is like all other love in this respect, it delights in practical proof of love in return, nor will it be satisfied without. Remember this, Christian, in thy various afflictions. The Lord is leading thee about in the wilderness to prove thee, and to see (to make manifest to Himself) what is in thy heart, and whether thou wilt keep His commandments or no. Remember also that in nothing is love made so manifest as in willing, cheerful suffering for the sake of its object. It is easy, nay, joyful to labour, but patient, cheerful suffering requires a deeper love, a more perfect self■abandonment. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” “We glory in tribulations also.”

II. Trial also reveals us to ourselves.

Although we do not agree with the adage that untried grace is no grace at all, yet unquestionably much fancied grace has proved itself, in the hour of trial, to be but as the early cloud and the morning dew. “How many who have received the Word with joy and for a while have believed, in time of temptation have fallen away.” How many a professing Christian if he could have had predicted to him the effect of adversity upon his heart and life, would have said with Hazael, “Is thy servant a dog that he should do this?” And yet when the true test of character was applied he fell. When he had eaten and was full then his heart rebelled, or when he was chastened by the Lord he grew weary and said, “Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.” There is no surer test for the Christian as to the state of his heart than the way in which he receives affliction. How often when all has appeared prosperous and peaceful, and the child of God has been congratulating himself on spiritual growth and increased power over inward corruption has some fiery trial overtaken him, when, instead of being met with perfect submission and cheerful acquiescence, it has produced sudden confusion, dismay, and perhaps rebellion, revealing to him that his heart was far from that state of Divine conformity which he had hoped and supposed.

Thus the Christian often suffers more from a consciousness of insubordination under affliction than from the affliction itself. Dear reader, how is it with you in this respect? When trials overtake you, are you able to say, “It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good,” and “I know that Thou in faithfulness has afflicted me.” Are you able to realise that “whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth,” and that these light afflictions are working a future increase of glory? If so, happy are you. This is the best of all evidence to yourself that the Divine Spirit is working in you to will and to do of your Father’s good pleasure. This fruit does not grow on the corrupt soil of unregenerate nature; it springs only from a heart renewed by the Holy Ghost and baptized into fellowship with Christ in His sufferings. But is it otherwise with you? Does your heart chafe, and fret, and rebel? Are you saying, “All these things are against me?” If so, this is proof that the work of grace is at a low ebb in your soul, that your faith is weak, and your spiritual perceptions dim. It is high time for you to awake out of sleep and cry mightily unto God for a revival of His work in your heart and for a sanctified use of the affliction which has overtaken you. “If God dries up the water on the lake, it is to lead you to the unfailing fountain. If He blights the ground, it is to drive you to the tree of life. If He sends the cross, it is to brighten the crown. Nothing is so hard as our heart; and as they lay copper in aquafortis before they begin to engrave it, so the Lord usually prepares us by the searching, softening discipline of affliction for making a deep lasting impression upon our hearts.” The fire our graces shall refine, Till, moulded from above, We bear the character Divine, The stamp of perfect love.

III. Trial also reveals us to the world. As the greatest manifestation of God to the world was by suffering, so the most influential revelation of His people to the world has been by suffering. They are seen to the best advantage in the furnace. The blood of martyrs has ever been the seed of the Church. The patience, meekness, firmness, and happiness of God’s people in circumstances of suffering, persecution, and death, have paved the way for the gospel in almost all lands and all ages. A baptism of blood has prepared the hard and sterile soil of humanity for the good seed of the kingdom, and made it doubly fruitful. The exhibition of the meek and loving spirit of Christianity under suffering has doubtless won thousands of hearts to its Divine Author, and tamed and awed many a savage persecutor, besides Saul of Tarsus. When men see their fellow■men enduring

with patience and meekness what they know would fill them with hatred, anger, and revenge, they naturally conclude that there must be a different spirit in them. When they see Christians suffering the loss of all things, and cheerfully resigning themselves to bonds, imprisonment, and death, they cannot help feeling that they have sources of strength and springs of consolation all unknown to themselves.

Patient suffering, cheerful acquiescence in affliction and anguish, mental or physical, is the most convincing proof of the Divine in man which it is possible for humanity to give. “Truly this was the Son of God,” said those who stood by the cross when they saw how He suffered. And how many who have been thoroughly sceptical as to the professions of their converted kindred, and have most bitterly persecuted them, and withstood every argument and entreaty advanced in health and activity; have yielded almost without a word before the patience and peace with which the billows of suffering and death have been braved, nay, welcomed! Such evidence is too mighty, such proof too positive to be resisted, even by persecutors and blasphemers.

Abraham might have written a book and preached all his life long, as doubtless he did, but the whole, ten times told, would not have convinced his family, his contemporaries and posterity, of the depth and fervency of his love to God, as did that holy calm surrender of the best beloved of his soul to the requirements of God. Job might have been the upright, benevolent, righteous man he was, but probably we should never have heard of him but for his wonderful submission, patience, and faith, under suffering. It is this which lifts him up as an example and a teacher to all succeeding generations. It was when sitting on the dunghill, apparently forsaken of God and man, and suffering the direst physical agony which Satan could inflict, that Job attained his greatest victory and made that wonderful exhibition of trust in God which has been the comfort and admiration of God’s people from that day to this.

It was in the fiery furnace that Shadrach, Meschach and Abednego won such glory to the God of Israel, that even a heathen king proclaimed His majesty and dominion, and commanded his subjects to worship Him who could deliver after this manner. It was in the furnace of persecution that Stephen, Peter, James, John and Paul proved the divinity of their characters and the genuineness of their faith. Without suffering the world could never have known the strength of their faith, the fervency of their love, or the purity of their lives. Their trials made them “spectacles unto the world, to angels and to men,” and won for their Master the ears and hearts of thousands. When an apostle would present to us the mightiest achievements of faith and the most wonderful exhibitions of the power of Divine grace, he refers us not so much to the doings of God’s people, as to their cheerful and triumphant sufferings. (Hebrews 11:1-40) Dear reader, how are your afflictions revealing you to those around you? Are you adding your testimony to that of the cloud of witnesses who are gone before, to the sufficiency of Divine grace to sustain and comfort in the hour of sorrow and suffering? Is your patient endurance saying to those who are watching you, I can do (and suffer) all things through Christ which strengtheneth me?

03.12. Prevailing Prayer

PREVAILING PRAYER.

I FEAR there are comparatively few Christians who know what prevailing prayer is, because they do not comply with the conditions on which alone it can be offered. I regard these conditions as threefold:

1st. Living and abiding union with Jesus. “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” (John 15:7.)

2nd. Systematic obedience to the teaching of the word and of the Spirit. “Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” (1 John 3:21-22)

3rd. Unwavering faith in the veracity and faithfulness of God. “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.” (James 1:6-7) Of course there are many other passages of similar bearing and of equal weight, but I regard these three as clearly setting forth the conditions of prevailing prayer, constituting, as it were, the three steps of successful approach to the mercy seat. They are like three links of a golden chain connecting our souls with God, and if one be missing or defective, the power to prevail in prayer is lost. Does not this explain the reason why there is so much ineffectual prayer in our day? Christians get hold of a promise, and try to work themselves up to faith for its fulfilment, but, alas! one of the conditions is wanting, one of the links is broken; their own hearts condemn them; “then have they (no) confidence toward God, and whatsoever they ask they receive (not) of Him, because they keep (not) His commandments, and do (not) those things that are pleasing in His sight.” How can a man approach God in confidence when he is living in the daily practice of something for which his own heart condemns him? Impossible! As soon might Satan offer effectual prayer. Before that man can truly approach to God, he must “cleanse his hands,” “purify his heart,” and “put away his iniquity.” No matter what our creed or opinion, God has made it a law of our spiritual being, that without submission and obedience there can be no confidence. Faith in Jesus is God’s expedient for bringing us back to obedience, and not for saving us in disobedience. And all the way through the New Testament He refuses to accept any other proof of discipleship than that of obedience. No less than six times in the 14th and 15th chapters of John is this criterion insisted on. “Faith without works (obedience) is dead,” and therefore has no power to take hold of God, or to appropriate His promises. I am satisfied that this is the “missing link” in the experience of multitudes of professors; and in vain do they cry “Lord, Lord, while they do not the things that He says.” In vain do they try to assure their hearts before Him, while they love not in deed, but only in word and in tongue. I am afraid there is much antinomianism abroad, which makes Christ the minister of sin, and which is always crying, “Faith! faith! only believe!” while consecration and obedience, as indispensable conditions of faith, are entirely lost sight of. “How can ye believe,” said our Lord to some in His day,

”while ye receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?” And we may say to some in our day—how can ye believe who prefer self■indulgence, wealth, or worldly conformity, to Christ and his cross, and the extension of his kingdom? Is it not still true that “if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,” and that “the friendship of the world is enmity towards God”? Saving faith in the sinner, and prevailing faith in the believer are alike impossible without full consecration to known duty. If any one disputes this, let him try to exercise faith in any given promise or for any given blessing, while he is refusing obedience to the claims of God, or withholding part of the price which God requires, and he will find, whatever may be his preconceived notions on the subject, that it is simply impossible. Herein is the solution of the question so often asked—How is it that there are so few answers to prayer? David affirmed it when he said, “If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me.” Neither will God hear and answer us, call we ever so loudly, and ever so long, if we willingly consent to any known unrighteousness. How fares it with your prayers, dear reader? Do you know that God hears you by the answers He vouchsafes? If not, may not this be the reason for the miscarriage? God is unchanged and unchangeable, the promise faileth not. “All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” God must be true; and if your experience contradicts the sure word of promise, you may be certain that it is your experience which is at fault. Examine yourself. Repent, and do your first works. He is faithful and just to forgive the sins of His people, and to cleanse them from all unrighteousness. And then bring all the tithes of a whole■hearted, loving, and believing service into His storehouse, and prove Him therewith, and see if He will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out such a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Watched by the world’s malignant eye, Who load us with reproach and shame; As servants of the Lord Most High, As zealous for His glorious name, We ought in all His paths to move With holy fear and humble love. That wisdom, Lord, on us bestow, From every evil to depart: To stop the mouths of every foe, While, upright both in life and heart, The proofs of godly love we give, And show them how the Christians live. THE SALVATION ARMY.

NOTHING is more commonly set up as a plea for the neglect of such living as is described in the foregoing papers than that “there are no people who carry religion to such an extreme as this.”

Wretched as is this excuse, I thank God that, as a result of the delivery of these and similar addresses, by myself, my husband, our natural and spiritual children, and those others whom we have set to work from time to time, God has raised up for Himself a people who are acting, in no small degree, up to the light which they have received.

“THE SALVATION ARMY,” formerly called “THE CHRISTIAN MISSION,” is a force consisting chiefly of working men and women who have been turned from lives of unbelief and open wickedness to serve the living God with all their might. From July, 1865, when my husband commenced the work alone in the East of London, up to the present time, December, 1878, permanent Corps or bands of these soul■savers have been established in some eighty large towns, and districts of the metropolis.

Here are thousands of men and women, who have either been compelled to come in from the streets and lanes to listen to a Gospel they do not care to hear, or have been roused from a state of heart backsliding and led to give themselves afresh to God with all the ardour of first love. From

amongst these, up to the date just mentioned, no less than 204 persons have been wholly employed in the Lord's work, either as Ministers, Missionaries, Evangelists, Scripture Readers, Colporteurs, or Bible Women, while more than seventy Female Ministers have been sent forth, preaching to thousands in Theatres and Music Halls as well as in the open air, daily, proving their Divine call to the work by miracles and signs and wonders wrought amongst the Gentiles through their instrumentality.

These people having, in multitudes of cases, been at one time the slaves of Strong Drink, not only flee from it themselves, but teach everyone to abstain from its use, and from tobacco, and finery, and Worldly Amusements.

Having known what it is to be in real anxiety about their own souls' salvation and to be really saved from sin and fear and guilt, and shamed into righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, these ignorant and unlearned men and women understand Dealing with Anxious Souls as, alas! many better instructed and more highly stationed do not.

I fear that many of these—who have themselves rather been "dragged up by the hair of their head," as one of them expressed it, than brought up—little understand The Training of Children. But of one thing I am thankful to feel confident, namely, that thousands of children are being brought up to devote all available time and strength to the salvation of others.

Full, detailed information as to the system by which these slaves of sin have been rescued from the tempter's snares and made soldiers of the King of kings, and reports of the conquests being daily made by this Army, may be found in its magazine, "The Salvationist," One Penny Monthly, Morgan & Scott, Paternoster Buildings, E.C.; "Heathen England," boards One Shilling, cloth Two Shillings.—S. W. Partridge & Co., Paternoster Row, E.C.

NEW UNDERTAKINGS. My husband is always prepared to undertake the establishment of a Corps in any town or district, however full of the vilest iniquity and the most extreme ruffianism, provided suitable buildings, such as Theatres, Music Halls, &c., for Sunday services and a room for week nights holding not less than 200 persons, can be got on reasonable terms.

ALWAYS WANTED:

Men and Women willing to devote themselves to the salvation of souls, and capable of being made good Officers of THE SALVATION ARMY. No salary beyond food and clothing guaranteed.

CATHERINE BOOTH.

P.S.—Funds to assist in the raising and equipment of Corps in all parts of the country and the training of young Officers, are always greatly needed, and may be paid into the National Provincial Bank of England, or sent to William Booth, 3, Gore Road, Victoria Park Road, London, E.

Chapter 42

04.00. Popular Christianity

Popular Christianity by

Booth, Catherine Mumford (1829–1890)

04.00.1. Preface

PREFACE. IN committing these addresses to the press, I would like to say to my readers that although for months after their delivery I was continually pressed to publish them by many of my hearers, I steadily refused, chiefly because I feared that in cold type they might produce an impression of censoriousness, which was not possible when, as I believe, assisted by the Spirit of God, I dealt with my hearers face to face on these burning topics.

During my late illness I became deeply convinced that it was my duty to let these utterances, such as they are, go forth irrespective of consequences, in the hope of reaching a greater number of persons similarly circumstanced with those to whom they were originally spoken, many of whom professed to have received great personal blessing, with increased light and power for usefulness.

Having come to this conclusion, I submitted the MSS. to my friend Commissioner Railton, who not only strongly urged me to publish them, but favoured page: vi me with some most valuable suggestions and emendations. May He whose kingdom and glory alone I seek bless every reader with grace to receive whatever truth he may find in these pages applicable to himself in the love of it.

CATHERINE BOOTH. LONDON, July, 1887.

04.00.2. Contents

CONTENTS.

LECTURE I Its False Christs Compared With The Christ Of God

LECTURE II Its Mock Salvation vs. A Real Deliverance From Sin

LECTURE III Its Sham Compassion vs. The Dying Love Of Christ

LECTURE IV Its Cowardly Service vs. The Real Warfare

LECTURE V Its Sham Judgment in Contrast With The Great White Throne

LECTURE VI Notes of Three Addresses on Household Gods

LECTURE VII The Salvation Army Following Christ By Commissioner Railton

Chapter 45

04.01. Its False Christs Compared With The Christ Of God

Lecture I Its False Christs Compared With The Christ Of God The Christs of the Nineteenth Century

I suppose there will be no division of opinion in my audience as to the fact that humanity needs a Christ, -- that everywhere and in all ages, men and women have been, and are still conscious of a strife with evil; not merely physical evil represented by thorns and thistles, but with moral evil -- evil in thought, in intention, in action, both in themselves and in those around them. This consciousness of wrong has thrust upon men the realization of their need of help from some extraneous power, or being. In all generations men have seemed to feel that without such help there must be a perishing. This sense of need has been forced upon men, first, by the failure of their own repeated efforts to help and save themselves.

Secondly, by their observation of such fruitless efforts in others.

What man or woman who has thought at all, who has not stood on the edge of this human whirlpool, and watched the struggling multitudes as they have risen and sunk, striving and struggling by resolutions, by the embracing of new theories, by taking of pledges, and making new departures, to escape from the evil of their own natures and to save themselves? Who has watched the struggle without realizing the need that some Almighty independent arm should be stretched out to deliver and to save? Who can read history or contemplate the experience of humanity at the present time, without realizing that it needs a Saviour, whatever idea may be entertained as to the kind of Saviour required?

Further, this sense of need is the outcome of the filial instinct born in every human soul, which cries out in the hour of distress or danger to an Almighty Father, -- a God, a friend somewhere in the universe, able to help and to deliver. This instinct is at the bottom of all religions, and more or less embodied in all their formulas, from that of the untutored savage up to the profoundest philosopher the world has ever produced. Perhaps the cry of humanity, destitute of a Divine revelation, could not be better summed up than in the following words of Plato, who, speaking of the soul and its destiny, says:

"It appears to me that to know them clearly in the present life is either impossible or very difficult; on the other hand, not to test what has been said of them in every possible way, not to investigate the whole matter and exhaust upon it every effort, is the part of a very weak man. For we ought in respect to these things, either to learn from others how they stand, or to discover them for ourselves, or, if both these are impossible, then taking the best of human reasonings, that which appears the best supported, and embarking on that, as one who risks himself on a raft -- so to sail through life -- unless one could be carried more safely, or with less risk, on a secret conveyance, or some Divine Logos." In this confession, and in that of many others similar, we see, as it were, a mighty soul praying through the gates of life, striving to fathom the mysteries of being and to unlock the unknown future, -- in fact, crying out for a Christ, a Divine Word, or Logos, a something

or somebody who should guide him, taking him up where human reason and philosophy failed him. It is also worthy of note that it has always been the highest type of man in all ages who has cried out most persistently for an extraneous deliverer. The more conscious of his own powers and the higher in his aspirations man has become, the more vehemently has he sought, outside of himself, for light and deliverance. Surely this universal cry of humanity, in all its phases and throughout all ages, betrays a great want, casting its shadows before -- the cry of the creature responding to the purpose of the Creator to send a Saviour able to save to the uttermost of man's necessity. The great realized want of humanity was a deliverer who could take away its sense of guilt, enlighten its ignorance, and energize it for the practice of all goodness and truth, -- a being who could not only stand without and legislate as to what men were to do, but who could come within and empower them to do it. Heathen philosophies and ancient religions could say, "Love thy neighbor," but they could none of them inspire the man to do it, much less enable him to love his enemy none of them even aspired to command that. That was beyond humanity. Here, then, was the great need of a power to come inside and rectify the wrong, making the spring right, so that its outcome might be right.

Further, I want to remark that in the Bible a Christ is offered that meets this need. This is the great distinguishing boast of our faith the only religion on the face of the earth in which the idea of a Christ has ever been conceived. The Bible offers this Christ. The golden chimes of great joy that rang out on the day when He was heralded by the angels, were to be glad tidings to all people of a Saviour which was Christ the Lord, a mighty deliverer, able to cope with man's inability, with the disadvantages of his circumstances, and the consequences of his fall. Now we contend that this Christ of the Bible, the Christ who appeared in Judea 1800 years ago is now abroad in the earth just as much as He was then, and that He presents to humanity all that it needs; that He is indeed, as He represented Himself to be, the Bread of Life come down from heaven, the Light, and the Life, and the Strength of man, meeting this cry of his soul which has been going up to God for generations.

Here I stand and make my boast, that the Christ of God, my Christ, the Christ of the Salvation Army, does meet this crying need of the soul, does fill this aching void, and does become to man that which God sets Him forth as being in this book. Guilty humanity He promises to pardon, and He does pardon. Ignorant humanity (with respect to God and the things of God) He promises to enlighten, and He does enlighten it. Degraded, sunken, impure humanity (in the very essence of its being) He promises to purify, and He does purify it. We make our boast of this Christ, and we say He is able to save to the uttermost, and that He does this now as much as ever He has done in the 1800 years that are past, -- - that He is a real, living, present Saviour to those who really receive and put their trust in Him.

I know that many may answer, "This is not the Christ that is generally presented in the preaching and teaching of this age, or that is generally professed and believed in by the Christians of this age; neither do we see such results as you depict in their characters or lives." Granted. The skeptics and the infidels say: "We do not see these results, and therefore we do not believe in your Christ." And I say, looking at the question from their standpoint, I should feel just as they do, because they have a right to have these results proved to them. It is useless telling of wonderful things having transpired a long time ago and a long distance away. They say, Show them now; show us the men in whom this change is wrought, and then we will believe that this Christ always

does these things. I say Amen, and that because they do not see these signs in the popular Christianity of this day, therefore they reject its Christ, and there is great excuse for them, -- not such excuse as will justify them at the bar of God, because they ought to have found out Christ for themselves, -- nevertheless, an excuse to themselves and to their fellow-men.

I say, I grant that this is not the Christ exhibited in these days.

I will now try to give to you, as I perceive them, those modern representations of Christ which, instead of drawing all men unto Him, have driven the great mass away from Him, and disgusted many of the ablest minds with the whole system of existing Christianity.

False Christs The first imaginary Christ of this age seems to be a sort of religious myth or good angel -- a being of the imagination who lived in the long distance, and who does very well to preach, write, and sing about, or to make pictures about, with which to adorn people's dwellings -- a kind of religious Julius Caesar, who did wonderful things ages ago, and who is somehow or other going to benefit in the future those who intellectually believe in Him now; but as to helping man in his present need, guilt, bondage, or agony, they never even pretend that He does anything of the kind. This Christ makes no difference in them or their lives; they live precisely as their neighbors do, only that they profess to believe in this Christ while their neighbors do not.

Now this is not the Christ represented in the New Testament. The Christ of God was a real veritable person, who walked about, and taught, and communicated with men; who helped and saved them from their evil appetites and passions, and who promised to keep on doing so to the end of the world; who called His followers to come out from the evil and sin of the world to follow Him, carrying His cross, obeying His words, and consecrating themselves to the same purposes for which He lived and died; seeking always to overcome evil with good, and to breast the swelling tide of human passion and opposition with meekness, patience, and love; promising to be in them an Almighty Divine presence, renovating and renewing the whole man, and empowering them to walk in His footsteps.

I am afraid there are thousands who sit in our churches and chapels and hear the modern Christ descanted on, who, if asked their idea of Christ, would be utterly at a loss to give it. They have no definite conception of what His name or being means. They would not like to say whether He is in heaven or on earth. If asked whether He had done anything for them personally, they cannot tell; the most they say is that they hope so, or that they hope He will do something some day. He is to them a mere idea.

Another false but very common view of Christ in these days is that He is a sort of divine make-weight. You will hear people say, when spoken to about their souls, "Yes, I know I am very weak and sinful, but I am doing the best I can, and Jesus is my Saviour; He will make up what I lack." In these instances there is not even the recognition of the necessity of pardon, much less of the power of Christ to renew the soul in righteousness, and to fit it for the holy employments and companionships of heaven. This Christ is simply dragged at the tail, not only of human effort but of human failure, and offered, as it were, in the arms of an impudent presumption, as a make-up in the scale of human deserts. And yet how many thousands of church and chapel-going people, it is to be feared, are deluded by supposing that this imaginary Christ will meet the needs of their souls before the judgment bar of God. To others this imaginary Christ is only a superior human being, a

beautiful example -- the most beautiful the world has ever seen; not Divine, yet the nearest to our conception of the Divine which even they think possible, but only human still. This Christ is held up as the embodiment of all that is noble, true, self-sacrificing and holy -- an example of what we are to be, but supplying no power by which to conform ourselves to the model.

I frequently find that the people who make so much ado about the example of Christ are the furthest from following it. They say it is not intended to be followed literally. But how else can you imitate anyone? How can an example be followed figuratively? Alas! the admirers of this human Christ make it sadly manifest in their lives and experience that humanity needs not only a model, but an inspiring presence to restore its lost balance, energize its feeble faculties, and rekindle its spiritual aspirations. Conceiving only of a human model, the paralyzed soul finds no higher source of strength than its own desires and resolutions, and after the oft-repeated experiment at self-deliverance, sinks at length overwhelmed with a sense of failure and despair. It is not in man or angel, however sublime, to free the human soul from its fetters of realized guilt, or to empower it for the reconquest of that Eden of righteousness and peace from which the avenging angel of justice once expelled it. A human Christ is only a phantom of the imagination, an ignis fatuus.

Another modern representation of the Christ is that of a substitutionary Saviour, -- not in the sense of atonement merely, but in the way of obedience. This Christ is held up as embodying in Himself the sum and substance of the sinner’s salvation, needing only to be believed in, that is, accepted by the mind as the atoning Sacrifice, and trusted in as securing for the sinner all the benefits involved in His death, without respect to any inwrought change in the sinner himself. This Christ is held up as a justification and protection in sin, not as a deliverer from sin. Men and women are assured that no harm can overtake them if they believe in this Christ, whatever may be the state of their hearts, or however they may, in their actions, outrage the laws of righteousness and truth. In other words, men are taught that Christ obeyed the law for them, not only as necessary to the efficacy of His atonement for their justification, but that He has placed His obedience in the stead of, or as a substitution for, the sinner’s own obedience or sanctification, which in effect is like saying, Though you may be untrue, Christ is your truth; though you may be unclean, Christ is your chastity; though you may be dishonest, Christ is your honesty; though you may be insincere, Christ is your sincerity. The outcome of such a faith only produces outwardly the whited sepulchers of profession, while within are rottenness and dead men’s bones. The Christ of God never undertook to perform any such offices for His people, but He did undertake to make them "new creatures," and thus to enable them to perform them for themselves. He never undertook to be true instead of me, but to make me true to the very core of my soul. He never undertook to make me pass for pure, either to God or man, but to enable me to be pure. He never undertook to make me pass for honest or sincere, but to renew me in the spirit of my mind so that I could not help but be both, as the result of the operation of His Spirit within me.

He never undertook to love God instead of my doing so with "all my heart and mind and soul and strength," but He came on purpose to empower and inspire me to do this. The idea of a substitutionary Christ accepted as an outward covering or refuge, instead of the power of "an endless life," is a cheat of the devil, and has been the ruin of thousands of souls. I fear this view of Christ, so persistently preached in the present day, encourages thousands in a false hope while they are living in sin, and consequently under the curse not only of a broken law, but of a Saviour denied and abjured. Let me ask you, my hearers, what sort of a Christ is yours? Have you a Christ

who saves you, who renews your heart, who enables you to live in obedience to God, or are you looking to this outside and imaginary Christ to do your obeying for you?

Another false idea of Christ, entertained, I fear, by multitudes of sincere souls, is that of a Divine condemnation. This class of people seem to think that they ought to spend all their lives bewailing and bemoaning their sins, and are forever crying out, "Oh, wretched man that I am," "Christ have mercy on us, miserable sinners"; and they go on crying this every day of their lives. They forget that He of whom Moses and the prophets did write, is come. They forget that the deliverer is here that. pardon is offered, and that he is ready to witness it and fill their souls with peace and joy. If Christ be only for condemnation, what are these poor souls advantaged by His coming? what has He done more than the law did, for them? The law made them realize their bondage, writhe under a sense of their Sills, and set them longing after freedom and deliverance. It was their schoolmaster (or should have been) to bring them to Christ -- Christ, the Son, who was to make them free; but alas! in this case He is made a much harder schoolmaster than the law itself, for these poor souls get no deliverance, no peace, no joy, or power. They are always piping Paul's bewailing notes, in which he personified a convicted sinner, struggling under the fetters of condemnation. But they never get into his triumphant notes, where he declares, "there is now no condemnation." This false view of Christ has led to most of the idolatries, penances, and lacerations of Catholicism. The exhibition of a Christ too unsympathetic and implacable to be approached without a second intercessor -- a far-off, austere judge, rather than a pitying, pardoning Saviour, -- - has kept millions of poor souls in bondage all their lives. I must say, however, that I have more sympathy with such souls, because they are sincere, and earnest, and willing to deny themselves, in order to find the right way, than with those who thoughtlessly take refuge under any of the false representations of Christ to which we have referred. It is to be feared, however, that the same spirit of worldliness which has so largely destroyed the power of Protestantism, has, to a great extent, extinguished this groping after Christ in the Catholic Church.

I confess that I cannot see sufficient cause for congratulations such as are common in Protestant circles over the decadence of Popery, seeing that everybody knows that it is not in consequence of a growth of real heavenly light, but only the further spread of a careless, godless, take-it-easy spirit, putting out the earnest desire for purification which formerly led to so much self-sacrifice in the Church of Rome. There can be no doubt that it is through the loss of this true spirit of devotion that the evils which have crept into that Church have so completely overshadowed the good, and prevented the multiplication of St. Bernards and others who got through the self-despair into the purest light and joy. Still, there are many earnest souls left, who continue to cry over their sins as though no deliverer had come. The Christ of God came not to bring condemnation but pardon, peace, and gladness to every penitent sinner on the face of the earth.

I heard, the other day, a story which beautifully illustrates this: A poor Catholic woman, who had been in bondage all her life to a sense of guilt, and had earnestly sought by all the methods prescribed by her Church, especially by devotion to the Virgin Mary, to find peace and deliverance, when on her death-bed was brought into contact with one who had in reality found the Christ of God, and who was enabled to show to this poor trembling soul the sufficiency of His sacrifice, and His willingness to pardon and to purify. Through the influence of the Spirit of God which accompanied this exhibition of the true Christ, she was enabled to rest her soul on Him, and immediately entered into rest. Shortly afterwards her priest presented himself at her bedside,

when she accosted him with the words, "Oh, you are too late, too late, I have found a better Priest than you, and He has absolved me. I am happy, happy, happy!" The Christ of God is not a condemnatory Christ, but a pitying, pardoning Saviour, calling to His bosom the weary and heavy laden in all ages.

Another of these false views of Christ is that which presents Him as a future deliverer, without being a present Saviour.

It is to be feared that thousands are looking to Him to save them from the consequences of sin that is, hell, -- who continue to commit sin; they utterly misunderstand the aim and work of the Christ of God. They do not see that He came not merely to bring men to heaven, but to bring them back into harmony with His Father; they look upon the atonement as a sort of make-shift plan by which they are to enter heaven, leaving their characters unchanged on earth. They forget that sin is a far greater evil in the Divine estimation than hell; they do not see that sin is the primal evil. If there were no sin there need he no hell. God only proposes to save people from the consequences of sin by saving them from the sin itself; and this is the great distinguishing work of Christ to save his people from their sins! The Christ of God

Now I deny that any of the representations of Christ to which I have referred are the Bible representations of the Christ of God, or that they meet the need of the soul of man. They are for the most part made to meet the ideas of a modern worldly Christianity.

Men have made up their minds that they can possess and enjoy all they can get of this world in common with their fellow men, and yet get to heaven at last. They have made up their minds that it is all nonsense about following the Christ, -- becoming a laughing stock to the world, which He made Himself every day He lived, -- and setting themselves to live a holy life, which He said if they did not they were none of His; all this they have abandoned as an impossibility, and yet, not content. without a religion, and finding it impossible to look into the future without a hope of some sort, they have manufactured a Christ to meet their views, and spun endless theories to match the state of their hearts. The worst of all, however, is that a great many of the teachers of Christianity have adopted these theories, and spend their whole lives in misrepresenting the Christ of the Gospel.

Now let me try to put before you what I conceive to be the true representation of the Christ of God. We say that He meets the whole world’s need that He comes to it walking on the waves of its difficulties, sins, and sorrows, and says, "I am the Bread of Life; take Me, appropriate Me, live by Me, and you will live forever. I will resuscitate and pardon, cleanse and energize you; I am the Christ, the Saviour of the World." This is the Divine "Word," or deliverer, which philosophers have longed for, and stretched out their dying hands to embrace -- which all the heathen world have, more or less, groped after in some dim figure.

First: The Christ of God is Divine.

We admit the incarnation was a mystery, looked at from a human standpoint, but no greater mystery than many other incarnations taking place all around us, and because a mystery, none the less a necessity. Humanity must have a deliverer able to save, and no less than an Almighty deliverer was equal to the task. Here, all merely human deliverers, all philosophers and teachers of the world, had failed, because they could only teach, they could not renew. They could set up a

standard, enunciate a doctrine, but they could not remove man's inability, or endue him with power to reach it. Here even the law of God failed, and that which was ordained to life wrought death. Here was the sunken rock, the bitter, maddening failure of all systems and deliverers -- they failed to rectify the heart; they could not give a new life or impart another spirit.

We saw at the outset that man needed some being outside of himself, above him, and yet able to understand and pity him in his utmost guilt, misery, and helplessness -- able to inspire him with a new life, to impart light, love, strength, and endurance, and to do this always and everywhere, in every hour of darkness, temptation, and danger. Humanity needed an exhibition of God, not merely to be told about Him, but to see Him; not merely to know that He was an Almighty Creator, able to crush him, but that He is a pitiful Father, yearning and waiting to save him. God's expedient for showing this to man was to come in the flesh. Can the wisest modern philosopher or the most benevolent philanthropist conceive a better? How otherwise could God have revealed Himself to fallen man? Since the fall, man has proved himself incapable of seeing or knowing God; he has ever been afraid of the heavenly, running away even from an angel; and when only hearing a voice and seeing the smoke which hid the Divinity, he exceedingly feared and quaked, and begged not to hear that voice again. Truly, no man, as he is by nature, can see God and live. Seeing then, that God desired that man should see Him -- that is, know Him -- and live, notwithstanding his fall, He promised a Saviour, who should reveal Him in all the holiness and benevolence of His character, and in His plenitude of power to save!

Here the Christ of God presents Himself, claiming to be this Divine Saviour. An objector may ask for proof of His Divinity. This would be far too great a subject to go into now, but we may glance at two or three considerations, which are quite sufficient, unless, indeed, Christ were an impostor.

First, those who reject His Divinity say He is the nearest to the Divine of anything we can conceive. They say He is the best of the good of our race even infidels cannot find fault with His character; they all bow down before the spotless purity, the beneficence and moral beauty of Jesus Christ. All schools grant this. Then, taking my stand here, I say that this perfect being claimed to be Divine, and He claimed it so unmistakably and persistently, that if you take it out of His teachings, you reduce them to a jumble of inconsistencies. His Divinity is the central fact around which all His doctrines and teachings revolve, so that if this be extinguished, they become like a system of astronomy without the sun, dark, conflicting, and inconsistent. Read the Gospels and eliminate for yourselves all His assumptions of Divinity, and then see what you can make of His teaching.

Secondly, these assumptions were understood and resented by the people to whom He spoke, and they surely were the best judges as to what He meant. If they had mistaken His meaning, He was bound, merely as a man of honor, to explain Himself, but He never did; so when the Jews said, "Whom makest Thou Thyself," or, "This man maketh himself equal with God," He did not demur or retract, but repeated, "I came forth from the Father, and I go to the Father." This was the one intolerable point in His teaching, which the Jews, who owned no plurality in gods, could not endure; that any other being should be one with their Jehovah, was to them insufferable, and for this they ultimately crucified Him. "What further need have we," said the high priest, "of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard His blasphemy."

Then, if He were so near an approach to perfection as even infidels admit, how was it that He allowed such an impression of His teachings to go abroad, if he were not Divine? How could He

say, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins," if He had not known Himself to be the Christ of God?

Thirdly, His character supported His assumptions. For 1800 years millions of the best of the human race have accepted these assumptions without being shocked by them. If He be not Divine, how comes it to be that the greatest of human intellects, the sincerest of human souls, and the most aroused and anxious of human consciences, have ventured their all upon this Divine Word, and have seen nothing contradictory between His claims and the actual character which He sustained in the world; whereas, imagine the very holiest and best who ever trod our earth putting forth such assumptions, and how would they sound!

Suppose Moses, who had talked with God in the burning bush, or Isaiah, whose tongue was touched with the live coal from off the altar, or Daniel, the man greatly beloved, to whom the angel Gabriel was sent again and again, or the apostle of the Gentiles, who was admitted into the third heaven, or the beloved apostle John, -- suppose any of these men saying, "I am from above, ye are from beneath," "I am not of this world," "If ye believe not I am He, ye shall die in your sins," "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world." Again, "I leave the world and go to the Father; and in His prayer on the eve of His agony, "The glory which I had with the Father before the world was," and again, in answer to Philip’s request, "Show us the Father," -- "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father;" "believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?" And not only does He claim this oneness of essence with the Father, but also that omniscience which enables Him not only to be with His people but to dwell in them, as shown in His answer to the question of Judas, when he asked how it was that He would manifest Himself to His own people and not to the world. Jesus answered, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

Think of any creature -- a David, a Paul, a John, -- daring to claim for himself this omniscience. If this Christ were not Divine, then there is no alternative; he was altogether an impostor and a deceiver. From such a conclusion, however, even infidels and blasphemers shrink, and therefore we must be allowed to hold to our faith in our Divine Redeemer -- our Immanuel, "God with us." I may ask here, if there is one of my hearers whose consciousness does not tell him that he needs a Divine Saviour? Would any less than an Almighty, omniscient, infinite deliverer meet the needs of your souls? If so, you must feel much better and stronger, and more able to help yourselves than I do. "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." But take this mystery out of Christianity, and the whole system utterly collapses. Without a Divine Christ Christianity sinks into a mere system of philosophy, and becomes as powerless for the renovation and salvation of mankind as any of the philosophies which have preceded it. But no, our Joshua has come, our Deliverer is here; He is come, and is now literally fulfilling His promise to abide, "I and my Father will come unto you, and make our abode with you." He comes now in the flesh of His true saints, just as really as he came first in the body prepared for Him, and He comes for the same purpose, to renew and to save. He is knocking at the doors of your hearts even now, through my feeble words, and will come into your hearts if you will let Him. As he came walking over the sea of Galilee to the men and women of His own day, He comes now to you, walking over the storm raised by your appetites, your inordinate desires, passions, and sins -- a storm only just

gathering, waxing worse and worse, and which, unless allayed, will grow to eternal thunderings, lightning, and billows but He is able to allay it, He offers to pronounce "Peace, be still," and end this tempest of your soul for ever. Will you let Him?

Second: The Christ of God offered Himself as a sacrifice for the sin of man. The Divine law had been broken; the interests of the universe demanded that its righteousness should be maintained, therefore its penalty must be endured by the transgressor, or, in lieu of this, such compensation must be rendered as would satisfy the claims of justice, and render it expedient for God to pardon the guilty. We will not attempt to go into the various theories respecting the atonement; it is enough for us to know that Christ made such a sacrifice as rendered it possible for God to be just, and yet to pardon the sinner. His sacrifice is never represented in the Bible as having purchased or begotten the love of the Father, but only as having opened a channel through which that love could flow out to His rebellious and prodigal children. The doctrine of the New Testament on this point is not that "God so hated the world that His own Son was compelled to die in order to appease His vengeance," as we fear has been too often represented, but that "God so LOVED the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." As Christ represented His union with the Father as perfect and entire on every point and in every particular of His humiliation, so He represents it as equally complete with respect to the sufficiency and vicarious character of His death. "THEREFORE doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. He so shows that in baring His own heart to the sword of justice, He was equally with the Father interested in the maintenance of the dignity of the law, and equally inspired with boundless and quenchless love for its transgressors.

There has been a great deal of empty talk as to the needlessness of a vicarious sacrifice, and many contend that the Father’s love flows out to all His creatures independently of any such intervention; but, setting aside the requirements of the Divine law altogether, I venture to assert that there has never been a human conscience awakened in any measure to the deserts of sin, which has not instinctively felt the need of such a sacrifice. In thousands of instances, even with the strongest representations of the infinity, value, and efficacy of the atonement, it requires the utmost effort to get the trembling soul to rest its hopes on the merits of even this Divine sacrifice, and all history proves that in no other way have sinful consciences ever been able to find rest.

Third: The Christ of God is an accepted sacrifice. This has been attested by His resurrection from the dead. God has declared to the three worlds, of angels, men, and devils, that justice is satisfied, and that henceforth no guilty son or daughter of Adam need despair of His mercy and salvation -- the accepted sacrifice for all men, and we know not for what other beings. How far-reaching its benefits are we cannot tell, -- perhaps to distant planets and suns; any way they reach to you and to me. In view of this sacrifice God waits to pardon your guilt, cleanse your pollution, transform your character, and hallow, and beautify, and utilize your life. You have no longer any excuse for groaning under the dominion of sin. He calls you forth from the tomb of your depravity; He calls you out of the dungeon of your guilt, and offers you a full and free acquittal, with all the resources necessary for a new life of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Fourth: The Christ of God is an embodiment of His Father’s righteousness.

He will only administer the benefits of His sacrifice in accordance with the Divine standard of right. He will do no violence either to the Government of God or the nature of man. Although love was the supreme ingredient of His character, yet we hear no words of an indiscriminate charity dropping from His lips, no excuse of sin, no palliation of the guilt of enlightened transgressors of His Father’s law, or impudent presumers on His Father’s forbearance. He hated iniquity as supremely as He loved righteousness. The great end and aim of His coming was the regeneration and restoration of man to the mind and will of God; hence He confirmed the first and greatest commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

Fifth: The Christ of God claims to be the Sovereign of all whom He saves. He tells us, if men keep not His words -- do not obey Him -- they are none of His; and He claims absolute inward and outward obedience to His precepts every hour of every day of all the life of every one who professes to be His subject. My friends, have you accepted this Christ? Do you know Him as your Divine Almighty Deliverer from the strength and power of sin? Have you cast your weary soul on Him as your sacrifice, claiming freedom from the condemnation of the past? Have you the witness of His Spirit that this sacrifice has been accepted by God on your behalf, and does the answering cry, "Abba, Father," go up from your soul? Are you living in the regeneration of His Spirit, carefully seeking to fulfill all righteousness, commending your every act to Him in faithful obedience? Does he reign over you as the sovereign of your heart and life, and do you hold everything you possess, -- yourself, your children, your property, your time, your influence, your reputation, your life, your death, -- subservient to His will and interests? If so, happy are you, and your example . before men and your influence in the world will be worthy of the professed followers of the "Christ of God."

Chapter 46

04.02. Its Mock Salvation vs. A Real Deliverance From Sin

Lecture II Its Mock Salvation vs. A Real Deliverance From Sin

I suppose that most of those present this afternoon are aware that the subject is "A mock salvation in comparison with Christ's salvation"-- deliverance from sin. As I said last week with respect to a Christian, so I may say this week with respect to salvation, that there will be no difference of opinion as to the need of our race for a salvation of some sort. This must be too patent to need argument, that our world is disordered, disjointed, morally diseased, and that it needs some sort of regenerating, rectifying process, if society is not to be disorganized by its own corruptions, or sunk forever in the hell of its iniquities. Every man knows this to his own hurt.

All men have a personal consciousness of being wrong, whether they believe in a Divine revelation or not; nay, whether they believe in God or not. I do not think I have spoken to more than half a dozen people in my life and I have spoken, I suppose, to some thousands of different classes who have maintained that they were right. Even infidels, when you face them with the question, "Are you right? are you living according to the dictates of your judgment and conscience?" dare not say that they are. The universal cry of our poor humanity is, "Oh, wretched man that I am" whether it be looking for any Divine deliverance or not.

Men everywhere know that they are not living according to their own conceptions of right, and therefore they have a sense of self-condemnation; and this asserts itself in spite of their arguments and excuses. It is of no avail to the soul tormented with a sense of guilt to say, "The woman tempted me," or "I was under the pressure of great fear, or shame, or dread"; this is no real palliation. Hence the universal fear to face the future, the disinclination to think about God, the predisposition to blind the eyes to the proofs of His existence, and to harden the heart against His claims. Truly, conscience makes cowards of us all until cleansed from dead works, purified and restored to the throne of the soul.

Further: not only do all men feel this sense of wrong in themselves, but they expect wrong in others. Even parents anticipate and provide for it in their children. Every parent knows that there is a tendency in . his children to go astray from the very first moment of accountability. He knows that there is in his child a tendency to speak lies as soon as it can speak at all, that there is a tendency to perverse tempers and wicked passions. Hence wise parents universally recognize, whether they make any pretensions to Christianity or not, the necessity of family government and careful training in order to check, counteract, or eradicate, as the case may be, these tendencies to evil; and thus they acknowledge the necessity for a certain kind of salvation. in their children, and they recognize also this fact, that if they do not attempt to work out this salvation, the children will bring them to wreck and ruin. A child left to itself brings its mother to shame; we know that sadly too well.

There is the same recognition of the need of a salvation amongst men of the world. Every intelligent business man goes on the assumption that he has to encounter wrong in the hearts and

conduct of his neighbors; in fact; the world takes it as a sign of intelligence that a business man goes on this assumption, and would call him a fool if he did not. He knows that he is beset on all hands by those who will over-reach, cheat, and ruin him for anything that they care, if they can promote their own interests by so doing. Hence the necessity for a kind of legal salvation, in the form of agreements and bonds, between man and man.

I hear a good deal about this in connection with our negotiations for buildings, which we are carrying on every day. When proprietors and agents have made certain offers or promises, the General says, "Have you got it in black and white?" and if the answer is "No," then he says, "What is the use of it?" Alas! we know only too well that it is of no use; and I am sorry to say that this is as true of many professing Christians as of worldly men. Why is this? Because a man's word is nothing in the great majority of instances. Hence the necessity for lawyers, magistrates, and judges; and even these have to be tied down by law, and watched and supervised, lest even the judges should turn traitors to justice, and, for the sake of bribes or party considerations, sell the interests of those whom they ought to protect. Here again is the recognition of the necessity for a salvation for these very people who are placed as guardians of public justice and the administrators of the law. This salvation many of them specially require when dealing with the poor Salvation Army. By the way, it is a curious fact that such is the impression produced by the Army, that again and again politicians on both sides of the Atlantic have laughingly represented various combinations of statesmen as "salvation armies. How often do politicians in different lands represent their countries as in some particular, verging on ruin, and needing a "salvation"? What is this but a great public confession, made by those best capable of judging, that whole nations are misled? for in these days of popular government most people have to be cajoled into voting to their own injury. Moreover, we have it from the highest public authority that nation after nation goes astray on questions vitally affecting their highest good; and it is commonly asserted that they are deliberately led astray by men who care only for their own interests, and so contrive to delude their fellow men wholesale.

It is evident that but for these temporal salvations to which I have alluded, the world would be unendurable for us to live in You know this. You know that it is not safe for a man to trust his neighbor -- nay, in many oases, even his brother; "for there is none upright among men ... they hunt every man his brother with a net."

Here, then, is the patent, palpable necessity for a salvation. Now, the question is, What sort of salvation meets the necessities of the case? What kind of a salvation does God our Maker, who knows what He meant us to be at the first, and who knows perfectly what we have become through sin, what kind of a salvation does HE propose for humanity?

I answer, He proposes a salvation that deals with and removes the cause of all this wrong and woe. Our Saviour, in Matthew 15:19, goes to the root of the evil when He says: "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." And the apostle also, in Galatians 5:19 : "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in tune past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Whether you believe in the revelation or not, you

will agree with the fact that these are the works coining everywhere from the evil heart of man; there is no getting away from that. Then I say that God proposes to deal with and remove the cause the wrong state of the heart. If all men's hearts could be set right today, we should need no more temporal, legal or political salvation, lawyers, police, magistrates, or judges; for a salvation that renews the heart would render all these unnecessary.

God's plan of salvation in dealing with the internal malady embraces all its external consequences.

It is evident then that any salvation which does not deal with this leprosy of evil in the heart is a mockery. As I showed last week that there are, alas, many false, delusive, disappointing christs; so I have to show this week that there are many make-believe, mock salvations, which only deceive, disappoint, and damn those who trust in them. As I walk about the world, and as I look at professing Christians, my soul cries: O God, make haste to help us to raise up a holy people, in order to show the world what salvation really means, for they do not know. They are utterly befogged and bewildered, and I do not wonder.

We will now look at a few of these mock salvations, for they are legion. First, I want to premise that anything, no matter how valuable in itself, which is put in the place of something for which it is no substitute, is a mockery. For instance, here is a stone, very valuable in its right place -- especially if it be in one of the shops in Oxford Street; but offered to a starving man in a desert it is a mockery; because, valuable as it is, the man cannot eat it, and he will die notwithstanding that the stone, worth a, thousand pounds, lies at his feet, because it is no substitute for bread.

Now, there are endless substitutions for salvation. It has been the devil's plan from the beginning to make imitations of God's best things. Perhaps it is a necessity that evil must try its power upon all God's creatures as it did upon Adam; we do not know. Probably there was no other way of working out the transcendent value and beauty of goodness than by allowing it to come in contact with evil; if this be so, of course it applies to God's remedies for sin; anyway, the devil has done his worst on these. God's plan of salvation is at present in this crucible. The devil is trying to circumvent it, and his favorite plan for doing this is by forging plenty of mockeries.

We will look at these under four divisions -- Salvations of theory; salvations of ceremony; salvations of mere belief, and the salvation of unbelief.

First, let us look at salvations of theory. You see it matters very little what kind of a theory a man has; if it be substituted for salvation it becomes a mockery, -- a true theory no less than a false one. The devil no doubt has a correct theory; I fancy that he is a much better theologian than many Christians, but be remains the old serpent still.

It is doubtless better to have right opinions than wrong ones, but the best opinions will not save a man. I am afraid there is a great deal of preaching that amounts to a mere putting of the different theories about salvation, instead of persuading men to come to Christ and be saved. The main idea of much of the preaching of this day seems to be that of teaching people -- instructing them, -- which too often results in hardening their hearts, and finding them an easier way down to perdition than they would have found without it. Unfortunately a man feels more comfortable when he has been to a place of worship and heard a fine theory about salvation, then he would if he had not been, although he may be no nearer being saved. All preaching, Sunday School teaching, tract writing and distribution, or any other instrumentality which has not for its end the immediate

salvation of the people, only leads them to trust in mere teaching, which is a mockery. It is like giving a dissertation on the relative value of a vegetarian and an animal diet to a man dying of hunger.

What good will your dissertation do unless you get the man to eat of the food about which you are descanting. And, unless your teaching induces men and women to eat of the Bread of life for themselves, it is a mockery! And yet how few preachers or teachers, how few religious workers have this as their main idea -- the end at which they aim. You can see the want of it in the way they fail to bring men to Christ there and then. How my heart has ached over this aimless, pointless preaching, I could not express. Perhaps, when I have had the rare opportunity of a Sunday's rest, I have gone to some near place of worship, hoping to be refreshed or stimulated, and to see sinners saved, or at least convicted, but alas! I could only weep as I listened to dissertations on some creed or doctrine which had probably been believed and approved by everybody present since they were children, while the poor empty souls were left starving for want.

I have felt like saying to the minister, "My brother, if you have nothing better than this to offer, let us have a prayer meeting and get something direct from the great Father himself, without your intervention." Would to God there were more preachers in the fix of a Baptist minister in a town where we are just now having a glorious work, who has been so stirred up and awakened to his responsibilities, that, on a recent occasion when he had read his text, he broke down, weeping, which had more effect than all the sermons he had preached during the years he had been in that town. His people wept too, and many of them got converted over again. I wish that a few thousands of the ministers of this kingdom could be brought to a similar state of mind before next Sunday; what a commotion there would be in the land, and what a stir in hell, ah, and in heaven too! But further, I want you to note that any theory which teaches people to rest in a mere intellectual belief in the Scriptures, or any doctrines therein, while their souls are left in bondage to sin, is a mockery, and it is one of the most popular mockeries of this day.

Oh, Christians say, "Scatter the Word," and they have been scattering the Word for generations, spending thousands of pounds over it, and I could enlighten them as to what becomes of the Word in thousands of instances when it is scattered. We always get wrong when we depart from God's way, and this is not His way. It is not written that "it pleased God to save by the distribution of Testaments, those who believe," but it pleased God to save by the foolishness of preaching -- by the living testimony of living men -- by those who embody the word in their experience and lives, and then go and speak it in the power of the Spirit to others. This is the sort of preaching God has commanded. Study and love the written Word as much as you like, but remember that the letter killeth, and that you will never save men by merely giving them the letter; and I point to the miserable results of this plan as proof of the truth of what I say.

I fear the giving away of texts and tracts has proved a most successful stratagem of Satan for enabling Christians to salve their consciences in resisting the Spirit's urgings to a hold, straight forward testimony for Christ. It is so much easier politely to hand one of these silent messengers, than to make a determined onslaught on the sinner's conscience, and to try to persuade him there and then to flee from the wrath to come. Not only is it easier for the Christian, but it is also much more endurable for the unsaved; consequently he is willing to make a compromise, and in order to escape from straight, plain, personal dealing, he will pocket a tract, laughing in his sleeve at the

cowardice of the giver; because he knows perfectly well that Christians, to be consistent with what they profess, ought to make a desperate effort for the immediate salvation of every unsaved man and woman with whom they come in contact. The world wants living epistles who will live, weep, act, suffer, and, if need be, die before the people. The testimony of such witnesses will prove a living word indeed, sharper than any two-edged sword.

I say that the knowledge of and belief in this whole Bible, from beginning to end, if substituted for actual, personal salvation, will prove as great a mockery as any other sentimental belief. No mere intellectual beliefs can save men, because right opinions do not make right hearts. Alas, we all know the little practical effect opinions have on character. Look around you. Do you know any man who is not a thorough intellectual believer in chastity being better for a man, or a woman, in the end, than uncleanness? Is there any wicked, profligate young man who, if you could take him aside and talk fairly to him, would not tell you that he believed that chastity was the best for a man, and yet you have only to look at him to see that he is a sepulcher of uncleanness and debauchery. What avails his intellectual belief in chastity while he is the slave of his lusts? What better is the man who believes in chastity and sins, than a man who does not believe in chastity and sins? As a French infidel, answering a caviler against holiness, said the other day, "You believe and sin, I do not believe and sin: where is the difference? It seems to me I am the better of the two." Exactly, for however true or grand a mail’s beliefs, of what use are they if he does not act them out? "Can faith save him?" Nay, verily, but such a faith can damn him.

Further, any theory which leads men to suppose that they are safe without being actually saved is the most dreadful of all.

Such a theory adds an intellectual opiate to the deceit of the heart, and prevents the truth from troubling the conscience. Now, the only use of appealing to the understandings of the unregenerate, is, that through their understandings you may get at their hearts, but if Satan has "blinded their minds" by some intellectual opiate, there is no chance. The understanding is darkened, the conscience seared, and the soul paralyzed. These are the worst people in the world to preach to; when I had to preach to them, how I groaned many a time for a congregation of heathen. I have found such now in the Salvation Army -- I mean, a people whose understandings are not darkened by these false theories and intellectual conceits. One can get the light in through their heads into their hearts, and this is the reason of our success with them; and is not this the reason why the publicans and the harlots have always gone into the kingdom of God, while the natural children of the kingdom have been left out? A man is either saved or not; the fact is independent of his theory, and it is of comparatively little consequence what his theory may be if he be saved. Hence many savages and Catholics have rejoiced in a consciousness of pardon, while many evangelicals have never known it. A man is either under the dominion of sin, or else he is delivered from it. If he is under the dominion of sin, what an awful theory is that which makes him believe he is saved. Could the devil have invented a more damning theory than that? And yet, alas! alas! he allures millions to destruction through it, who otherwise would take alarm and begin to seek salvation. He says to all the qualms of conscience and the pangs of remorse, "You are all right, you believe this or the other, your faith is orthodox, you are safe," frequently quoting separated or mutilated texts to back up his lying insinuations, such as -- "By faith ye are saved;" "He that believeth shall be saved; "You are complete in Him," etc. This latter phrase has come to express, in numbers of instances, the most utter ruin to which the human soul can be brought.

"'Complete in Christ"! complete without any true repentance, without any offering of the heart, without the slightest change inward or outward, "complete in Him," while living without Him, and having no conscious connection with Him whatever; complete without losing one evil feature of the godless life, without receiving one grace of any kind, without doing or suffering anything, except perhaps a whispered "I believe"; complete all in a minute, since somebody pointed to a text with which perhaps the poor victim had been familiar all his life. Complete in Christ with a gnawing consciousness at the heart that is as sinful, as empty, as powerless, and as joyless as ever; complete as a poor corpse would he complete, if painted and dressed in the clothes of a living man! May God save you from any such mock salvation as this.

Further, any theory that leads men to trust in general confessions and prayers for salvation, is a mockery.

How many thousands of people every Sunday confess to being "miserable sinners," and cry to God to have mercy upon them, without the slightest appreciation of the meaning of the words they utter. They feel better and safer because of these confessions and prayers, whereas their prayers remove them further, rather than bring them nearer, to any real salvation. What is the use of prayer that produces no effect, that brings no answer? Here is a mother whose boy is condemned to die the father goes to the Queen to beg for his life. When he returns, the -mother says, "Well, have you succeeded?" He answers, "I have put up my petition before the Queen.' "Well, but what is the answer?" "Oh, you must not exact a direct answer: I have no answer, nor have I any reason to believe I shall get one, but I have put up my petition." The mother would say, "That is a delusion; I want to know whether my boy is going to be released; I cannot sleep in my bed till I know that the answer is!"

Now, I say, people who go on petitioning God for years together, never concerning themselves about the answer, or even expecting one, show that they are utterly insincere, and consequently obnoxious to God, and yet there are thousands of such people, who go to and fro to our churches and chapels every Sunday like a door on its hinges. They say, "O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners," but they have no real desire for His mercy, no recognition even of the necessity for the forgiveness of sins, no concern about living to please Him, no idea of what repentance or salvation really means! Is it not manifest that such hypocritical confessions and prayers render those who engage in them more impervious to the truth, and more oblivious to any true idea of salvation, than they would be without them? God says such prayers are an abomination to Him. There is Only one kind of prayer from an unconverted soul which is acceptable to God, and that is the prayer that is wrung out of the heart by anguish for sin.

Further, another mock salvation is presented in the shape of ceremonies and sacraments. These were only intended as outward signs of an inward spiritual reality, whereas men are taught that by going through them or partaking of them, they are to be saved. Amongst these may be classed Baptism, the last Supper, and the ceremonials of ancient or modern churches.

Oh, the thousands of souls who are resting their hopes of salvation on the fact that they have been baptized, not only such as believe in the palpable delusion of baptismal regeneration, but amongst ordinary church and chapel-going people. As I look at our Army congregations in rinks, theaters, and other similar places, and note the signs of sin, debauchery, and crime on many of their faces, I say to myself, I suppose all these people have been baptized; but I do not think there are many

thieves, or harlots, or drunkards, or openly immoral people who claim baptismal regeneration. Thank God! It is only genteel sinners who can bring themselves to believe in such a palpable sham, and yet, if baptism possesses any efficacy, it should be as effective in the one class of sinners as in the other.

What an inveterate tendency there is in the human heart to trust in outward forms, instead of seeking the inward grace! And where this is the case, what a hindrance, rather than help, have these forms proved to the growth, nay, to the very existence, of that spiritual life which constitutes the real and only force of Christian experience!

It is a calamity deeply to be deplored that men should thus put the form in the place of the power, but they have always been doing so. It is only another species of that idolatry which has prevailed from the foundation of the world. Take, for instance, the brazen serpent. All are familiar with the story of that miraculous intervention of Jehovah on behalf of the Israelites dying from the poisonous bites of the fiery flying serpents, sent as a punishment for their rebellious murmuring. God directed Moses to exhibit a brazen serpent on a pole, and to proclaim to the bitten multitudes that all who would look to it should be healed. Thousands looked, and as they looked were cured. In memory of that wonderful deliverance, and doubtless also as an emblem of the coming Saviour, that serpent was preserved; but when, in the years that followed, the people came to attach undue value to the ceremony of viewing it, -- burning incense before it, with idolatrous worship, -- - Hezekiah, jealous for the honor of Him whom this form was only intended to shadow forth, called it "Nehustan," i.e., a piece of brass, which it really was, breaking it in pieces and casting it away with the trees of the groves and the altars of the high places which the people had desecrated by idolatry. Now, we have nothing to say against forms; but they are only, as it were, the bodies in which spiritual ideas and purposes are manifested, and without LIFE they are useless, and worse than useless. When forms are exalted, and idolized, and trusted in, no matter how beautiful in themselves, or how Divine in their origin, they become "Nehustan," as a piece of brass, or a piece of bread, or a bowl of water. As the apostle said of circumcision, when the Jews had put it in the place of righteousness, "Neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." And although originally ordained by God, he says again: "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God."

We feel persuaded that if Paul were here now, and could see the deadly consequences which have arisen from the idolatrous regard given to what are called the Sacraments* of the Supper and of Baptism, he would say precisely the same with respect to them; for even if Jesus Christ intended them to be permanent institutions (against which there are very strong arguments, as put forth by many most devoted and intelligent Christians ever since the days of the apostles, amongst whom are the "Friends" of our own time), such is the awful abuse to which these ceremonies have been subjected, that we feel sure Paul would say Baptism is nothing, and the ceremony of the -- Lord’s Supper is nothing, apart from keeping the commandments of God, especially that great and all-comprehensive commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself."

Christians often say to me, when I put this view before them, "Ah, but you have no authority to remit the Supper, because the Lord said we were to take it in remembrance of Him till He come!" I

answer that He left the taking of it at all perfectly discretional; and as to its continuance, that entirely depends on which coming He alluded to. "Friends," and many others of the most spiritual and deeply taught Christians of all times, have believed that He then referred, as in so many other the places which are generally misunderstood, to His coming at the end of the Jewish dispensation. Anyway, our Lord, who had long before said to the woman of Samaria, "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem (in any special sense) worship the Father ... But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth," anywhere and everywhere, could not have intended to teach that God could be more acceptably or profitably worshipped through any particular form or ceremony than without such form or ceremony, and especially if there were weighty reasons on the other side for rejecting it!

Neither is it credible to a spiritually enlightened mind that He who said, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and we (I and My Father) will come unto him, and make our abode with him," could have intended to teach that through the earthly medium of bread and wine His people were to remember Him on whom their thoughts were to be constantly concentrated, or to commune with Him in any special sense above that in which they were to commune with Him always and everywhere. The water which Jesus gives, and to which alone He attaches any importance, is that which is "in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life"; and the wine which He values and promises to drink with us in His Father’s kingdom, is that wine of the kingdom which is righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Friends, do you partake of these sacraments? If not, rivers of earthly water, vineyards of wine, will avail you nothing; they will be as "Nehustan."

If we were to have any binding forms in the new and spiritual kingdom in which all forms were to find fulfillment, it seems to me that there is a great deal more ground for insisting on washing of one another’s feet than for either of those already referred to; and in this we can see a great practical lesson on the human side which our Lord actually laid down. How comes it, I wonder, that many of those who regard the former with such sanctimonious reverence, can utterly, and without scruple, set aside the latter? I fear that human pride and priestly assumption must be held largely responsible.

Further, nothing is more evident to all who have any acquaintance with the history of Christianity, than that the undue value set upon these ceremonies has been one of the greatest hindrances to the extension of Christianity. Again and again have its valiant warriors paused in their triumphal progress, and turned aside from the battle with the great forces of evil, to quarrel amongst themselves concerning these mere externals. When I was in Ireland, some of the oldest and most experienced Christians who took part in that great revival some twenty-five years ago told me that a great proportion of the results of that wonderful work of God were lost, in consequence of a controversy about water baptism. Do you wonder that we of the Salvation Army shrink from the possibility of such a sacrifice of the greater to the less, especially when we are hacked up by the great apostle of us Gentiles thanking God that he baptized none of his early converts, and for the very same reason, namely, because they were making the ceremony a cause of controversy!

Further, what can be the value of imitating the marchings and vestments and songs of the ancient Jewish Church? We are not accepted in the beloved Jews, and if these ceremonies had become,

as God said they were, a stink in His nostrils because of the backsliding unbelief and hardness of heart of His ancient people, how much greater must the offence of them be when adopted by impenitent, infidel, and rebellious Gentiles. Neither can it be any less repugnant to the mind of God, that spiritually uncircumcised Philistines should dare to put their hands to his ark, by anticipating the signs, ordinances, and alleluias of the Church triumphant. What have such people to do with the songs of martyrs and confessors, or with the alleluias of the angel bands who stand before the Lord in His temple?

"Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." And yet what multitudes who are hardening their hearts and stiffening their necks every day against the claims of God and of His truth, dare to how down to what they call the table of the Lord and unite in what they believe to be the songs of saints and angels. The first qualification for participating in any spiritual exercises or ceremonies, is the renewal of the heart by the Holy Ghost. If you could have die very same ceremonial which they have in heaven, with angels as your ministers, unless you had the spirit of it within, it would profit you nothing. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not the love of God, I am nothing." And our Lord said, with respect to some of His hearers, "Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets. But He shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity;" showing that even where Christ Himself was the preacher, if the heart remained under the bondage of sin and in the gall of bitterness, the bearers would only inherit greater condemnation, and sink into a deeper hell.

I must not omit to say a word here on the salvation of unbelief, notwithstanding that I purpose to enlarge upon it at a future time. The most astounding theory of all the false theories about salvation, and also the latest novelty propagated, alas, from Christian pulpits and through the Christian press, as well as from avowedly infidel platforms, is that man is to be ultimately saved from his errors and iniquities, and especially from all trouble concerning them, by a simple negation. He is to dismiss from his mind all the creeds, all idea of any precise revelation, and to get light from any natural earthly source he can, especially from the modern lights, who are responsible for this new theory. He is to throw his mind back as far as is possible towards heathenism, nay, further back than those enlightened heathen philosophers to whom I referred in my first lecture, for he must on no account even sigh after anything supernatural or Divine. He is to believe in himself and in humanity; especially the future of humanity seeing that there are so many ugly facts about its present. Thus he will have no more difficulties, sighings, or cryings!

He is to put away everything unpleasant and unsightly as far as he can, even if it professes to be the Word of God, and possessing his soul (no, I beg pardon, his mind) in patience, to wait and hope till the law of evolution has transformed our poor sin-stricken and groaning earth into a heathen paradise!

What a striking reproduction is this modern revelation, only in a new fashion, of the words of fools thousands of years ago, who used to say, "How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?" and who "consider not that they do evil."

Truly we may say of all these theories, ceremonies, prayers, faiths, and unbeliefs, which are palmed on man as substitutes for salvation from sin, Vanity of vanities, cruel mockeries, making destruction doubly sure.

Poor humanity still cries out, "Who will show us any good?" Miserable comforters are ye all, leaving us still on the dunghill, covered with wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores. WHAT SHALL WE DO TO BE SAVED?

Deliverance From Sin

Let us now. consider the character of that salvation proposed by God for our race. The salvation of God embraces deliverance, restoration, preservation, and glorification. Of course the mere idea of salvation supposes some enemy, bondage, disease, or danger; there can be no salvation where there is nothing to be saved from. All the saviours raised by God for Israel during their national existence were actual deliverers of their people from their enemies, otherwise they could not have been saviours. Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Nehemiah, and many others, were real deliverers of their people; they delivered from the outward consequences of sin; but the great distinguishing feature of our Joshua is that He delivers His people from their spiritual enemies, and from the power of sin itself. Where there is no deliverance there can be no salvation. What a mockery and a delusion it is for a man to profess to be saved, while he is groaning under the power of his spiritual enemies. If you are under the dominion of sin, you are yet an utter stranger to the salvation of God.

First: Salvation implies restoration.

Salvation to a man who is sick means restoration to health; to a man who is drowning, restoration to dry land; to a man dying, restoration to life to a man on the verge of bankruptcy it means liquidation of his debts, and restoration to solvency. The common sense of mankind has prevented any theoretical deliverances or mock salvations for these temporal maladies and destructions, but our great adversary, who lieth in wait to deceive, has succeeded, as we have already seen, ill deluding men and women, as to the reality of Salvation when applied to the soul. But the salvation of God is no less real and practical for the soul than any of these temporal salvations are for the body or the circumstances.

What is man’s disease? Sin, badness, falseness, spiritual death. Salvation means restoration to goodness, to truth, to spiritual life, and to God. It means deliverance from inward evil, and renewal of the heart in righteousness and true holiness. It means the right adjustment of the faculties of the soul, bringing it into harmony with the laws of its own being, with the law of God, and with the rightful claims of its fellow beings. In short, it means being PUT RIGHT in all its relations for time and for eternity.

Second: Salvation implies preservation. In order to the well-being and happiness of a being who has been saved from any disaster or death, there must be a provision for his continuance in a state of health or safety. It would be a small mercy to save a man from drowning, if he were under the cruel necessity of throwing himself into the water again tomorrow; and equally small would be the mercy of pardoning a sinner, and restoring him to a sense of peace and purity, if no provision had been made for his continuance in such a state of salvation. The salvation of God contemplates all the weaknesses and necessities of fallen human nature; hence the Christ of God becomes "the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him." He not only restores, but He promises to dwell in His people as the power of all endless life, enabling them to purify their hearts by faith, to love God with all their soul and strength, and to offer themselves as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable in His sight. He promises to empower them to resist the devil, to keep

themselves unspotted from the world, and to fight manfully under the banner of His cross till death. Do you ask for living witnesses of such a salvation? Thank God, there are thousands who can testify that they have passed from darkness to light, that they have been delivered out of the hands of all their enemies, and are now enabled to serve God, walking before Him in righteousness and holiness day by day -- thousands, not of genteel, refined, religiously trained people, such as most of you here today, but from amongst the most ignorant, neglected, besotted, and openly wicked of earth's populations. They stand forward, an exceeding great army of witnesses to the reality of the salvation of God, and to the power of His Christ to deliver, to restore, to purify, and to keep all those who really receive and obey Him.

Third: The salvation of God embraces also glorification.

How do we know? Well, first, reasoning from analogy, and seeing that the great change wrought in true saints is in the soul, and that it manifests itself in spiritual and heavenly instincts, dispositions, -- and aspirations, which do not find their full development or satisfaction in this life, we conclude that there is a future and more congenial sphere for such development and satisfaction.

Secondly, we have the most satisfactory evidence which mortals can give, of future glorification in the fact that many are glorified before our eyes in death. Amidst the humiliation, pains, and agonies of physical dissolution, we see the soul emerging from the wreck of its physical environment, triumphing over him who hath the power of death, and in regal majesty pluming its wings for its final flight, and in view of such victory, human reason, no less than Divine revelation, declares: "Death is swallowed up in victory." Are there any here who want salvation? Come and try our Saviour Lord. He can cure your disease, extract the poison out of your heart, and make you new creatures! We testify that He has done this for some of us on this platform; whereas we once were the children of wrath, because the children of sin, even as others, now He has made us the children of God and of light, enabling us to seek those things that are above.

Consistently with our profession, we consecrate ourselves, our whole being, our children, influence, time, life, and, if need be, death, to the pressing of this salvation on the attention and acceptance of our fellow-men. We make all things how down before this unbending resolution, to seek and save the lost.

Chapter 47

04.03. Its Sham Compassion vs. The Dying Love Of Christ

Lecture III Its Sham Compassion vs. The Dying Love Of Christ The Sham Compassion

Benevolence has come somewhat into fashion of late. It has become the correct thing to do the slums, since the Prince of Wales did them; and this general idea of caring in some way or degree for the poor and wretched has extended itself even into the region of creeds, so that we have now many schemes for the salvation of mankind without a real Saviour. Do not misunderstand me. I have no objection -- nay, I rejoice in any real good being done for anybody, much more for the poor and suffering -- I have no objection that a large society of intelligent Christians should take up so noble an object as that of caring for stray dogs, providing it does not interfere with caring for stray babies! I desire not to find fault with what is good, but to point out the evil which, to my mind, so largely diminishes the satisfaction one would otherwise feel in much benevolent effort being put forth around us. As I said at the beginning, the most precious stone given instead of bread is useless to a starving man.

Surely nobody ever cared for poor suffering humanity so much as Jesus Christ. He gladly put forth his mighty power for the healing and feeding of the body, and he laid it down most distinctly that all who were true to Him must love the poor and give up their all for them in the same practical way in which He did; but all this real brotherhood did not prevent His keeping the great truths of salvation ever to the front, and applying them as relentlessly to the poor as to the rich, and vice versa. But now in the name of Christ we are asked to believe either that the truest way to carry out His intentions is to ignore men’s souls and care only for their bodies, or else to join with this sort of material salvation some theory that will practically get rid of all serious soul-need. The First Scheme The First Scheme of salvation without a Christ provides for attention to all the needs of the body, ignoring the soul. This system has not only become more popular in many Christian circles than any of Christ’s teachings, but some of its advocates actually go so far as to place it in favorable contrast with any spiritual ’ work whatsoever, thus plainly intimating that those who really have the spirit of Christ show it better by devotion to these so-called practical ends than by what are assumed to be the less practical efforts which have regard to the world to come. This religion of bodily compassion may almost be said to have many sects devoted to it, each having its own favorite theory.

First, we have the educationalists.

These almost abandon the existing generation, but are confident of the results of their labors upon the coming one, such results being conveniently remote. But whether in connection with week-day or Sunday schools, this plan has had at least the trial of one generation, with extremely bad results so far as we can judge. What a mockery of mankind to suppose or to teach that mere information can satisfy its wants, when the more information men get, the more clearly we see the reign of evil in the world, and the hopelessness of attaining to righteousness, so far as human power is concerned. Yet, strange to say, the efforts of an enormous proportion of the mission agencies at work are directly devoted to education, and the ablest heathen in the world today are those who

have been carefully instructed in missionary institutions, and have used their education to obtain higher positions and greater influence in the world, with which they now the better withstand the gospel of Christ.

Many of the more sensible Christians, perceiving how little ordinary education can do for the toiling masses, devote their attention to mechanical education, hoping to raise the position and prospects of the working classes by teaching them how to put a better finish on their daily tasks, although it is notorious that the cleverest of workmen are frequently the greatest drunkards and the most miserable of men.

Second on this list, for the regeneration of society, we have the house-builders. These are afflicted, and rightly so, with the overcrowded condition of working-class dwellings, and consider that all will be well when the people are better housed, shutting their eyes to the condition of multitudes who may be seen today living in the greatest sin and misery in well-built modern dwellings.

Certainly it is a shameful scandal on those Christian landlords who keep their tenants in buildings unfit for dogs; but, after all, not so much more shameful than the conduct of those who, although aroused to the frightful condition of the masses, deliberately attempt their improvement on the same principles as if they were cattle, mainly by means of buildings which pay a liberal interest. No one could possibly be more thankful than I should to see the compassion which has of late found such loud expression in words, embodied in some practical scheme for the provision of comfortable, wholesome houses for the poor, at such rental as they could comfortably pay; but to provide this, with land under our present iniquitous system, will require a benevolence willing to "lend, hoping for nothing again."

Thirdly: Next comes the total abstinence plan for the salvation of the people.

Amongst those who devote themselves to this sphere of labor there are some of whom I would speak with the greatest respect, namely, those who perceive that in all these outward things there is no remedy without some radical internal change. The majority, however, observing that drink has more than anything else contributed to the degradation of the people, concentrate their efforts upon their deliverance from this one evil -- unquestionably a great temporal good -- but we have only to look across the channel to see abundant evidence that the people may be almost clear of drunkenness without being, for that reason, any nearer to God or true happiness. To soberize without saving can only be compared to the action of a set of people who should with heroic effort drag drowning men ashore, and then leave them lying all unconscious within reach of the waves.

Fourthly: Another scheme of temporal salvation may be represented as rescuing work.

There are benevolent efforts of many kinds put forth for the rescue of various classes of fallen or endangered people from their several perils, without a thought of placing them in spiritual safety. I am not speaking with the least desire to depreciate any of these efforts; but what I would point out is, that while Christ held up for condemnation the priest who haughtily passed by the poor victim, He no less held up to condemnation the Levite who deliberately looked at his necessities and yet passed on. I desire to give every credit for true kindly feeling on behalf of the fallen or suffering; but it seems to me unaccountable that intelligent beings should look upon any form of human ruin without realizing that something must be done within, as well as without, in order to produce any

lasting change for the better.

Fifthly: Another plan of temporal salvation is the providing for needy children. This is one of the most favorite hobbies of benevolent people, and properly so, if it were only carried out in the right way. But how astounding, that people professing to revere and follow Christ should be capable of entertaining any schemes which undertake the guardianship of children, and yet which ignore their spiritual necessities; which train and teach them how to get on in the world without God. Alas I know from personal experience and actual contact with some of the children turned out of orphan asylums of high reputation in Christian circles, that, so far as any real living acquaintance with the things of God, or any practical carrying out of the teachings of Jesus Christ, are concerned, they might as well have been brought up amongst infidels; and I am by no means alone in this opinion.

I have reason to believe, that in many such instances, nothing would be more highly resented than any attempt to make such children realize the willingness and sufficiency of a personal living Saviour to renew their hearts and to enable them to walk in obedience to His will, and to keep themselves "unspotted from the world." Dry conventional dogmas and ceremonies constitute the only notion that thousands of such children have of the religion of Jesus Christ; and no wonder, considering the specimens they have had exhibited to them in the conduct of many of those to whom their poor little lives and hearts have been committed.

I have many times said what I here deliberately repeat, that if I were dying and leaving a family of helpless children, I would leave it as my last request that they might be divided -- one here, and another there -- amongst any poor, but really godly, families who would receive them, rather than they should be got into the most highly trumpeted orphanage with which I am acquainted; for I should infinitely prefer that their bodies should lack necessary food and attention, rather than that their poor little hearts and souls should be crushed and famished for want of love, both human and Divine.

Children brought up without love are like plants brought up without the sun. I would suggest to some of you ladies who may be on committees, or who might possibly get on to them, that you would be doing God and humanity good service by visiting these institutions, not on specified days, but at unthought of hours or seasons; for instance, get up a little earlier and go and insist on joining the children at their breakfast table. On other occasions, demand admission to the schoolroom, and observe the countenance and manner of those paid to instruct these children; in short, observe the deportment of paid servants of the institution all the way through. A still better way, by-the-by, of following your Saviour and serving your generation, would be to take some such children yourselves and bring them up with all the love and care with which you bring up your own, or would have done so had God granted you the privilege. It will be a happy day for England when Christian ladies transfer their sympathies from poodles and terriers to destitute and starving children!

Sixth. Another scheme, perhaps the lowest of these material systems of salvation, is the feeding system.

I mean that system in which large sums of money are spent merely upon providing some special feast for those who are well known to be, as a rule, almost without food. Now, I thick you will all believe me when I say that I rejoice in every bite or sup provided for the needy, but I cannot help

seeing how monstrously all this exhibits the recklessness of the Christian world as to the greater needs of the perishing. Some of the most intelligent and highly placed people in the country may be seen looking complacently on upon the ragged, hungry crowd, who are eagerly devouring the only good meal perhaps which they have had for a twelvemonth, or which is likely to be within their reach for as long again, looking on without apparently having their sense of satisfaction in the slightest degree ruffled by the thought (if such people ever do think) about the lives which these "poor creatures" live during the other 36d days of the year! Such observers do not seem to look behind the staring eyes and hollow cheeks and savage ferocity of the eaters. The starving hunger, the devilish dispositions and abject despair of the "man inside" does not seem to trouble them.

Now, what I want to impress upon you is, not that these bodily wants are unworthy of the attention bestowed upon them, -- for I regard it as a crying shame that such wants should not have a thousand times more attention, and in a thousand times more comprehensive fashion than they at present receive, but what I complain of is, the attempt to substitute any or all of these for a thorough work in the heart; and when such "charity" is carried out on the long pole system, and yet paraded in the name of Christ, I regard it as rather an insult than a credit to His name. It seems to me that the Popular Christianity which would put these things in the place of the Gospel is only another of the clever shams of the devil by which to ruin our race, and to turn aside God’s people to broken cisterns, only insuring a more eternal weight of misery at the cost of a little present relief.

Oh, friends, you who have health, talent, and means, make up your minds on which side you will act. Remember that in the light of that judgment which is coming on, it will appear worse than useless to have expended your energies and powers on doing that kind of good which will NOT LAST, which will, in fact, by itself, serve the enemies purpose rather than otherwise. Either do as Christ commands you, or cease to call your work by His name. Do not let any one delude you with the idea that you are following Christ, or doing that work which is peculiarly His, in contradistinction to all merely human benevolence and earthly salvation, unless you are seeking first His kingdom, both within your own soul and every one else’s. The Second Scheme The second of these schemes of salvation without a Saviour is even worse than that which I have already described; for while that tended to turn the thoughts of men from the world to come to some good or advantage of a temporal kind, this would lay a degrading hand upon eternity itself, and, under pretense of elevating humanity, would push it into a future life with its deepest intuitions all scorched up, and its highest aspirations disappointed and blighted.

Here, again, are to be found various sects, etc.

First comes universalism. This theory would make men into mere puppets, who for the time being are allowed to be the prey of an evil power, but after a certain amount of suffering are to be picked up by a better power. Like some unhappy country whose patriotic force has been crushed out of it until it has become the helpless prize, first of one monarch and then of another, so the kingdom of the human soul is to pass from evil to good and from Satan to God. The blackest wretch on earth, who has made his home a hell, and spread moral ruin as widely as he could reach, is, according to this theory, to be saved even as the purest saint; for "all men" are to be saved -by repentance and a holy life, if they choose; if not, still they are to be saved -- by their own free will, if they have fixed their affections on things above; but if, on the other hand, they have loved sin and vice, and committed all the catalogue of crimes, still salvation is to come out of deviltry, and a clean thing out

of an unclean To try to make men believe in such a system seems to me to be no less insulting to their understandings than it is shocking to their consciences, and defiant of the plainest teachings of Scripture common sense and analogy. The extent of our present knowledge with respect td a better world is that it is the abode of those "who have overcome" evil. Its songs are of victory! Its inhabitants renounced the mark of the beast on earth, washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, kept the commandments of God, and through much tribulation were faithful unto death. To this assemblage of crowned victors, the universalist would introduce the man who, while on earth, overcame not evil but good, who was victorious, not over his own passions, the temptations of the devil, and the forces of evil around him, but over the dictates of his own conscience, the influences and agencies which God put in operation in order to save him, and over all the forces of righteousness with which he came in contact. Strange mercy! to send a man like this to a heaven where every song would remind him of defeat and degradation, and every crown and psalm make conspicuous his false and ignominious position. Strange justice also which gives the prize to him who never won it, nay, who despised the conditions of the contest, and refused to enter the lists!

Second in this scheme comes what I shall designate as the all love theory. The propounders of this theory, without daring actually to contest the great facts of revelation, would have us be silent about the most serious of them, lest we should shock the people. They tell us gravely that men will be "repelled from the Gospel," if its truth about judgment and hell are not kept in the background; tell, say they, about the Father’s love, but do not talk about "damnation " and "the wrath to come." Strange mercy this, to let men perish rather than tell them that sin breeds a hell from which none can deliver them. What should we think of a father too merciful to tell us the truth? Should we not say he was cruel? The child playing on the hearth-rug might well complain if you will not tell him that fire burns, because, forsooth, he might think you cruel to have it there, and so you leave him to find it out by falling in! "Hush, do not frighten the people; "Sing to them, talk sweetly to them; there are no modern words for hell and such-like horrors. In ancient days there were prophets, whose fiery warnings of judgment to come led whole nations to repentance, but men think they know better now The God who sent those poor old fanatics to speak plain words of wrath and denunciation is not their God. His words of burning reproof and fearful threatening is not their burden. Their message is some "sweet text" tied to a bunch of flowers; their burden can be given by "Saturday evenings for the people," where "comic readings," "gymnastics," "secular music by the choir" are the converting measures deemed most suitable.

Alas! alas! such maudlin souls are not worthy to deal with the things of eternity! Who wants in the hospital a man too "tender" to probe the wound, too "merciful " to amputate the mortifying limb, too "loving" to say with firmness, Do this, bear this, or die? Away with such a sentimental surgeon, you would cry; send him to pick rose leaves, where his feeble hands will do no mischief. And yet these over-merciful friends I am talking about would spiritually elevate the masses by twaddling to them in their sins and rebellion, about love, and sweetness, and peace, when, if they did not shut their ears, and were willing to catch the sound, they would hear the thundering echoes from every sinner’s conscience, "There is no peace to the wicked;" "Wrath to come, wrath to come!"

Third. Next in this catalogue of modern salvations comes the theory of doubt.

These doubters, while manifestly very shaky as to their own theory, argue that all is "too uncertain for us to speak positively as to eternity." As we have before noted, their scheme for elevating men is to teach know-nothingness. They seem to think that doubt in itself is something very ennobling, that is, in things spiritual, for in things temporal they have faith enough, and also exact it from others. They claim explicit trust in their business relations, perfect confidence in their domestic lives, but appear to think that to doubt the great God and His revelation will somehow prove a great blessing and benefit to mankind; "as to eternal things it is not seemly to speak positively." In yonder back street, ah, even in the worst dens of vice, are found men who have in the depths of their sinful hearts some hidden memory, which is the link of holy things. Perhaps they have stood when boys by the dying bed of some humble believing father, who declared in his last hours that he knew whom he had believed; or perhaps, even in the later and blacker days of their lives, they have seen a little one go from their own dark homes with a heavenly smile upon its face, and the words, "Jesus has come to fetch me," on its lips; and these men believe without a doubt in the God who, somehow, made their fathers and their children know Him, and some day they mean to turn to Him; but the chains of an evil life are holding them down with the "masses" of desperate and dangerous sinners around them. To these the modern scheme comes with its new light, and lays its withering touch on these memories of good. "We cannot know," it says; "women may have dreamt, and children believed, old men may have had their sick fancies, but it is better to be without that which is delusive the only certain thing is that all is uncertain, the manly thing is to doubt."

Ah! rich man, you may sit in your palace-like home, where nothing unpleasant is now allowed to enter, and it may seem little loss to you, so far, that your belief in eternal things has been loosened; but to the poor man in his bare life, and to the man who is bound by some sinful chain of vice, and whose earthly career has not another gleam of hope, it becomes the final stroke of misery and degradation to make him think that he cannot know with any certainty any better things than those which now surround him. If there is not anywhere in the universe a Saviour’s hand, whose clasp he may yet feel, and on whose strength he may depend to draw him up out of his drunken jail-bird existence to something purer and better, some day, when he shall have made up his mind to be saved, then his one door of hope is closed, and he realizes, with a bitterness which will drown itself in fresh outbursts of sin and villainy, that there is no true light or guide anywhere for anybody. Granted that the one guide is untrustworthy, the one beacon light possibly false, he is out on the sea of life without a spark of hope or cheer. Shipwreck and eternal ruin may be the next event at any hour.

Fourth. "The Christian free-thinkers" next claim our attention.

These are bolder than the latter class, denying whatever seems to them to be objectionable in the Scriptures. The inspiration of the Bible is to them on a level with that of Shakespeare or Homer, and for anything they do not like they have a free rendering, or a cool excision. They would take away what they fancy to be stumbling-blocks in the path of men, without stopping to consider whether God Himself placed them there as guiding-posts. Ah, what contempt such men would feel for the word "free," if it were applied in other ways. Who would tolerate the "free" soldier, who set up his own notions as to military matters, and at the critical hour of the fight was found obeying and leading others to obey orders which had been altered by the omission of all which he considered objectionable! Who would for long be retained in her Majesty’s household who should presume to

alter the rules of court behavior, and to expunge what he deemed irksome? And yet the revelation which is to train servants for the eternal household of the King of kings, and the laws laid down by the Lord of hosts, by which His battles are to be fought, may be treated with a free hand, and tinkered and paired -- obeyed or disobeyed -- according to the notions of men who love their own will better than anything else in heaven or on earth! Alas, I fear it may be said of these doubters that "while they promise men liberty, they themselves are servants to corruption," and I would remind them "how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not."

We might go on to multiply these modern schemes for the improvement and elevation of man, for they are legion, and some of them doubtless propounded by those who have much real concern and compassion for the multitudes, but which all the more, because there is so much of good in them, are the most dangerous and ruinous to the highest interests of mankind.

Take away from the way-faring man the absolute certainty which he feels about the truth of the gospel, and where do you leave him? Wretched and hopeless in the very center of his being; You may have fed his body, you may have clothed and housed him, you may have educated his children, you may have nursed him in sickness and comforted him in sorrow; but for all this he is left on the moors to wander and die in desolation and darkness, in spite of all your feeding and all your loving rush-lights. This sort of compassion is the most cruel ignis fatuus the devil ever invented. Depend upon it, you cannot be more merciful than Jesus, who says today to you and to all men, "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." The Dying Love of Christ

We propose now to consider in juxtaposition with all these modern schemes for the elevation of mankind, on which we have been remarking, that one which is universally admitted to be the model scheme; the ideal of all that is lovely, tender, ennobling, and comprehensive. The scheme of Christ, with its aims and modes, as shown in the story of His life-compassion for the world. I contend that the compassion of Jesus stands out distinguished as of another kind from all the philanthropic plans which we have been considering.

First: By its clear perception of the worst feature of man’s condition. No doubt the Saviour’s heart ached in sympathy with the mass of human sorrow, sickness, and poverty brought before Him. Where we have only a glimpse of men’s troubles as we move hurriedly up and down among them, He had the whole sad story unfolded to Him, and His keen love responded tenderly to every cry for help. Nevertheless, He was never diverted from the great central danger. To Him the sorrowful troubled crowd were not merely poor and suffering, not merely oppressed by unjust laws, and crowded into badly constructed dwellings, -- not merely hungry, hard-worked, and comfortless; these were incidents which He sometimes alleviated and more often shared, but the crowning peril, the absolutely certain woe which eclipsed, in His sight, every other, was the loss of the soul.

He flings aside contemptuously the thought that living well in this world was a real benefit. The fool of all the world, the man who in His opinion stood in most awful risk, is drawn by Him in a parable sketch which is little dwelt on in these days. This fool in Christ’s picture was the rich .man with bursting barns and "so much goods" that he knew not how to dispose of them. He was a man who had been elevated by education enough, at any rate, to enable him to do a good business; he enjoyed the benefits of a good dwelling, good food, and, doubtless, the best society within his

reach; and yet he was a fool, and Christ holds him up as the last sample of such, simply because he left his soul in jeopardy.

Again, Christ draws another picture, blacker and more awful yet, and again He selects the rich man (the very man, remember, who had enjoyed the best of this world's benefits and who also was kind to the poor Lazarus), and yet Christ draws aside the veil of the future world, and shows where earthly elevation landed him.

"The rich man died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And He cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from thence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

What! could it be Christ who talked about a man in fire, a man crying for a drop of water, and denied even the small boon! Could it be Christ who talked about torment, and showed this vision of despair; the tender, loving, merciful Christ! Ah, He showed it, because He SAW IT; because this was the real danger, from which He had come to deliver! Because He knew that the sick beggar, covered with undressed wounds, and with scarce an alleviating circumstance to assuage his sufferings, might have the eternal compensation which should make his earthly troubles seem like a dream, if only his soul were right, if only he were "rich towards God." Christ showed this, because it was the one thing which no one else saw. The human needs of men were apparent enough to many benevolent people in His day, including the rich giver who was going to hell, but the crying soul needs, which had brought him out of heaven, the hopeless woe to which even the rich and happy were drifting -- the undying worm, the quenchless fire, were the visions of sorrow which He only saw, and which His tenderest compassion betrayed itself in seeking to relieve. "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose His own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" may be taken as indicating the foundation principle of His entire scheme of redemption.

Second: Christ's compassion is distinguished from all other compassions by its plain, cutting, personal dealing.

"He would eat with sinners," talk familiarly and tenderly with the worst on the earth, and lay His hands upon the most loathsome, but He was incapable of dealing lightly with their sin.

Imagine Christ giving an entertainment, and spending the evening in frivolous talk, in order that He might humor sinners and attract them to Himself! Imagine Him allowing His little band of disciples to sing current songs and read "amusing selections" for a couple of hours at a time to keep people out of worse company! No, He was too tenderly compassionate for souls, who He knew might end their time on earth at any moment, thus to fool away His chance. He never lost an opportunity of talking straight to them about their sins, the interests of their souls, and the claims of His Father's law. The young ruler conies to Him, and he is so lovable, so moral, so good, might he not have been allowed to join the little band of disciples, and to have gained light gradually? "Yet lackest thou one thing" was pronounced all the more clearly because "he loved him." "Sell that thou hast,

and follow Me" rang out all the more distinctly because He could offer treasures for the soul. The compassion of Jesus was not of the maudlin kind which leaves men their "little indulgences," and shrinks from being "too hard" on them, where hardness is the indispensable condition of salvation. "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off; if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out," He mercilessly prescribes; better, He decides, be maimed and suffering here, than be cast into "eternal fire." As to the religious ideas of His day, He walked straight across them with a cutting "Woe unto you!" Woe! woe! was the one cry with which He met the teachers and professors of His time, provoking their bitterest hate and animosity. "Making clean the outside platter, while within are dead men's bones," was His short description of them and their doings. He upset the nice little fashions which had sprung up around the temple worship with a whip of cords. "Publicans and harlots shall enter the kingdom before you," He told the grand professors who listened to Him. He inflicted the faithful wounds of a friend, in order that He might awaken them to their danger and lead them to seek the only remedy.

Third: Christ's compassion was in direct contrast with all mere human benevolence in its "other worldliness." No one will dispute that He possessed the power to elevate the masses in a temporal sense, by bestowing on them all those benefits at which modern philanthropy aims. He could have fed them by a miracle every day, as easily as on the two occasions when he multiplied the bread; and who could have lectured on science, or history, or invention, so clearly, so perfectly, as He to whom all knowledge must be as an open book? He could have brought into His services those twelve legions of angels, and taken an earthly kingdom, from which He could have dispensed wealth and prosperity to all around; but He indicated his scheme for elevating and saving people when He said "I am the way" -- to another sphere, another realm, not of earthly good, but of heavenly. When He was asked for the posts of honor in His kingdom, He made it clear that he was leading to another and higher world through a "baptism" and with a "cup" of suffering and poverty in this.

Fourth: Christ's compassion stands out in its spiritual fellowship. The King of kings makes eternal friends of the fishermen. "He did not visit the poor," "He did not elevate their sad lot," and walk on in His own high path, having His fellowship, His joys, His sorrows apart from them; but He shared His life with them in a holy comradeship. He did not live in the style and companionship of the worldly Pharisee, and occasionally visit Peter, James, and John, and hold meetings for the working classes; no, He lived with theta and became education, elevation, salvation, and all to them by His blessed fellowship. "Ye are my friends," said He, and "all things that I have heard of My Father, I have made known unto you." His heart had no reserves from these men. John's head could lean on His breast, and Mary could sit at His feet, with the consciousness that they were taken into His confidence, and were indeed as brethren. That they could not always understand Him was their fault, not His; but their slowness and dullness never wearied His compassion, nor caused Him to seek friends elsewhere. He called His three fishermen to Him when He was about to put forth any wonderful exercise of power. He wanted Peter, James, and John, when He was raising the dead, and took them to share His joy on the mount of transfiguration. He craved for their presence in His last agony, and desired no better provision for His mother, when He hung upon the Cross, than the home that one of them could afford.

Fifth: The Compassion of Jesus is yet further distinguished by its Divine faith, and hope, and action.

He had faith in the possibilities of these people, which possibilities would not have been very apparent to any other eye. He believed in the transforming power of the Spirit which He could send them. His hope was not chilled by stupidity, or foolishness, or non-comprehension on the part of disciples or outsiders. Mighty compassion must that have been that Could live thirty years on such terms with such men, and never falter or turn back. Many a fine scheme of modern benevolence dies and goes out when the people who are to be benefited get to be known! "Such wretches," "so ungrateful," "so presuming," "so hopeless." But Christ hoped all things, believed all things, until the Peter who was afraid of a servant girl stood triumphant before. the three thousand converts.

Christ kept His little band together, although He knew there was a traitor amongst them, -- the traitor who would betray Him, and sell Him for money into the hands of His enemies. Christ forbore and worked with John until the man who wanted fire from heaven to burn up sinners became the apostle of love. Christ made the Samaritan harlot woman into His ambassador on the spot; Christ made sound men of the lepers, and sane divines of the mad. He called the devils out of those whom they tormented, and then let loose the whole strange flock of ex-harlots, maniacs, and lepers, to tell His praises and to gather others to His presence. Christ went up to Calvary undismayed by His perfect knowledge of sinful, perverse, opposing men, to die for the whole ungrateful race. Christ hoped and believed in His own blackest hour for the dying blackguard at His side, and saved him as he hung there. Talk about "eternal hope!" Is not this the eternal hope which saves to the uttermost now and here?

Sixth: The compassion of Jesus is further distinguished by His ever going straight to the one end. The whole work of Christ was aimed at the salvation of men’s souls. And this is not the less true because He also benefited their bodies by healing their diseases and sympathizing with their sorrows. This latter side of His work is much dwelt upon in these days, and yet it was a merely incidental part. If He had come to remove earthly suffering, poverty, oppression, and distress, He would, as -- I have pointed out, certainly have gone about it in a different way. He would have aimed at riches and position and ease, in order that He might have shared them with His own chosen ones. He would have sought to build up an earthly kingdom, where men should neither hunger nor thirst, nor be sick, nor die; and it would have been a far easier task than the founding of that new invisible kingdom which we have already tried to describe, where only the spiritual and eternal should be of much importance. In comparison, how much easier to have drawn crowds if He had always given them their dinner, than to hold followers who should enter into the mysterious doctrine, "I am the Bread of life;" "Ye must be born again!" But He did feed the multitudes, and He did heal the sick! Yes, but He gave up the former when He found that they followed Him for that only, and His acts of healing were flashes of the Divine power within Him, rather than the "work given Him to do." "I came to call sinners to repentance," "I am come to set the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man’s foes shall be they of his own household." "I came to bring fire on earth." "I came not to send peace, but a sword." These sayings, and multitudes of others, were descriptive of a spiritual mission, and yet He was most tender, as we readily trace, to every suffering, needy creature who came in contact with Him. His pity was boundless for the lame, the blind, and the deaf, and His loving heart must have grieved over much in the sea of human misery brought before Him, of which we never hear. The truest love must ever seek the highest good of its object, sometimes even with forgetfulness of important lesser advantages. He gave the great rule by which His compassion for men’s necessities was guided, when He said, "Seek first the

kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all other things shall be added unto you."

Seventh: The compassion of Jesus stands out in contrast with all other in its devotion unto death.

He was too merciful to men to spare them the bitter truths of hell, or to conceal from them the punishments due to transgression; but on Himself He had no compassion.

If the penalty were indeed so awful, He would share it. He too would bear the curse, the shame, the agony of dying for sin, so far as could for the sinless One be possible.

How brightly this compassion shines out against that of many who profess so much for the suffering and the lost. Watch the people who talk the most loudly of their tenderness, and will not say one word of the "outer darkness" and the hell fire of which He said so much. Where is there, any dying love amongst them? Where are their Calvarys? Are they remarkable for cross-bearing? Are they noted for self-denial, or is it in word only, and not in deed, that they are more compassionate than Jesus? They do not like to repeat to the poor His terrible words of warning. May it not be because they are unwilling to act toward the poor as He did? No rough living, no fishermen friends, no hungry, weary days, no homeless nights, no persecution and contempt above all, no scourge, no crown of thorns, no march up to Golgotha, no nailing to the cross, no agony, no dying for the salvation of men! There can be no other dying love than that which causes the real dying. Do settle that in your minds, for without a dying, a real, complete, and eternal separation between your old self and the new self, which means to live and die for others, you cannot be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, or an eternal benefactor to your race. You may not come to any such terrible end as your Master did, for as a rule in outward things the servant is above his Lord, but in some way or another you are doubtless called to follow Him in a path full of suffering and self-denial, in a road of shame in which you will find yourself completely cut off, alas, from the rest of mankind; but without this daily dying, this true following of Him, do not expect to be able to do any lasting good to those who are perishing around you.

Let no benevolent projects, no magnificent phrases deceive you. The good done to mankind by the poor fishermen who spoke the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, has surpassed all the achievements of modern philanthropy as far as the noon-day sun surpasses the rush-light.

If you want to elevate the masses, go and ask HIM how to do it, and if the answer comes, "Take up thy cross and follow Me," OBEY.

Chapter 48

04.04. Its Cowardly Service vs. The Real Warfare

Lecture IV Its Cowardly Service vs. The Real Warfare The subject for this afternoon is The Cowardly Service of Popular Christianity in contrast with the Real Warfare which Christ demands of His People.

I should like to say before I commence, that I hope, nay, I believe, that many of my audience will give me credit for speaking the truth in love; that although some things I may have to say may sound cutting, and will be cutting, as all truth when it comes in contact with error must be -- it would cease to be truth if it were not -- yet that I do not speak these things censoriously. If I know anything of my own heart and experience, I can say I do not speak these things harshly, but painfully and reluctantly. But they have been burnt into my soul during twenty-one years of public work, by absolute personal contact with the evils of which I speak.

I have forborne long, hoping that some one more able would take up this sword, until I sometimes fear that I have been guilty of withholding my sword from blood -- God knows not for my own sake, for since I came to the crucifixion of myself I have not cared much what men might say of me; but I have forborne sometimes under a mistaken notion of dealing gently with, and of hiding, the sins of professed Christians for fear of hurting the kingdom. But some three or four years ago the Lord took me to task, more especially on this matter, and showed me that I had no more right to palliate a wrong state of things in His professing people than in open sinners -- that we ought to examine ourselves, judge ourselves, and reprove ourselves and each other, so that we might redeem His name from the awful effects of our inconsistency, and of our coming so far short of the standard which Christ has set up for us.

Therefore what I say this afternoon, and in my following lectures, please to bear in mind I only say because I MUST, and because I could not die in peace if I had not said it. That I shall be criticized and condemned I fully expect, and that in exact proportion to the force with which the truths shall be demonstrated in every man’s conscience. But be assured that this effort has cost me many a tear and prayer, and much thought and self-abandonment. I think I can say to those persons here who may be cut the most severely, and to those who are not here to whom my words refer, I could gladly go down at their feet and wash them with my tears, if I could thus bring about a better state of things.

I want to remark first, that Jesus Christ came to establish the kingdom of God upon the earth; that He intended this kingdom to be a literal kingdom, that is, as truly a kingdom as any of the kingdoms of this world; that He intended it to be a holy kingdom, a kingdom of righteousness, and consequently separate from, and above, all other kingdoms; that Christ continually spoke of His followers as a community, existing in the midst of another kingdom or community, having its own laws and principles and aims entirely distinct. and separate from the world. He not only made it separate, but He ordained that it should be kept separate, and He did not fail to give the most emphatic cautions and prohibitions against any amalgamation whatever between the forces of His kingdom and the forces of the kingdom of Satan, in the midst of which His kingdom was

established.

Further, He put forth the claim, as the King and Sovereign of this kingdom, to the highest affection, allegiance, and homage of the hearts of His subjects, representing Himself as a King in a sense entirely beyond and above all earthly sovereigns. He represented Himself as reigning, not by virtue of outward power, but by virtue of the inward love, devotion, and adoration of His subjects; and thus more perfectly and completely over their outward I lives than any earthly king could pretend to do.

Further, the avowed purpose of Jesus Christ was to propagate and extend this kingdom over the whole earth. In this respect only was He the originator of a new dispensation, for God had already a kingdom in the earth, although it was of a national and sectarian character. Jesus Christ came to break down the walls of partition between Jew and Gentile, and to let out, so to speak, the mercy, goodness, and grace of God to the whole race. Henceforth there was to be "neither Greek nor Jew ... barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all." But as in Adam all had died, so in Christ should all be made alive; as all men had lost their souls in Adam, so all should have the opportunity, subject to that free choice without which either salvation or damnation would be a mere figure of speech, and without which a man would be no more capable of salvation than an ox, -- subject only to such choice every son and daughter of Adam should have the provision in Christ of eternal salvation.

Then, further, Jesus Christ ordained and arranged that this kingdom of His should be propagated in the world by human instrumentality. Why, we do not know. There might be many reasons, but the main one probably was that the human being, him self transformed, restored to God and to His image, and inspired with His love, would be the most effectual ambassador that God could send.

Another reason might be that Christ chose to put this honor on His own brethren after the Spirit those whom He had redeemed from amongst men, and who have chosen Him as their Sovereign, with His cross and its consequences, in preference to the pleasures, riches, or honors of this world.

Or, third, it might be that no other instrumentality would be so calculated to bring glory to His Father, the weakness of the human agent exhibiting most perfectly the excellency of the Divine power.

Note further, that the establishment of this kingdom over all the earth means, of course, resistance and opposition from those nations already in possession. And here is a wonderful analogy between the establishment of the kingdom of Christ and the subjugation of Canaan to the Israelites. God had promised that land to Abraham long years before, and spoke of it as already belonging to his descendants; nevertheless they had to go and conquer it in His strength. So God has given the kingdoms of this earth to His So n. In the end the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ; but we have to go and conquer them, just as the Israelites had to conquer Canaan, in the faith, and by the strength, of our God. It has only been for want of faith that the world has not been conquered long ago.

Oh, what a delusion many Christians labor under with respect to the extension of the kingdom of God! They have a notion that the kingdom is to take the world by stealth; that men are to be turned to God without any connection of means with the event; that it is going to be done with a sort of

internal miracle, and the church has been waiting for this miracle for 1800 years. Consequently the work is not done, because this notion is in direct opposition to the orders and ordination of the King. If ever the world is subdued, it will be by His servants Carrying out their Lord’s instructions, and setting themselves to subdue it.

It will be by bringing all the wisdom, skill, and force of their humanity, allied with divinity, as the early disciples did, and turning that force upon the rebel world. It will be done by hard, desperate fighting, if the great fundamental principles laid down in this Bible are to be relied on, and in no other way, because the nations in possession will never let you subdue them and take them for God without opposition. Christ systematically foretold and depicted this opposition, and gave His disciples to understand that they would have to wage WAR with all the power of those who were possessed of evil, and who were profiting by evil, and that it would be no easy conquest.

He told them they would have to go and subdue this evil by good, this unrighteousness by righteousness. The spirit of the devil would have to be driven out of man by the power of the Spirit of God dwelling in them. This He taught as plainly and persistently as He taught anything. If we wanted an illustration of the continuance of this spirit of opposition in the earth, we might find it in the events that have lately transpired in Switzerland. A little force of godly people, without any of the peculiarities about which there has been such a hue and cry in England, without an instrument of music, without a banner or flag, or procession, or open-air service, without even a uniform, had only to commence to live Jesus Christ over again, and to carry out His orders in thrusting His claims on their fellow-men, when wicked rulers combined with those who profit by the vilest kinds of vice to mob them, drive them out, put them down, or kill them, as the case might be. Why? Because the instinct of the evil one recognized the Spirit of Jesus Christ. The devil always knows where the Spirit of Jesus Christ is, and he knows something else; he knows where it is not, and where it is not he lets well alone!

"Oh! people say, "the world is different in these days from what it was in the days of Jesus Christ and Paul." Is it? Try it on the same lines, and you will soon find out how far different it is. The very essence of the spirit of evil is antagonistic to the spirit of good. Good and evil are as diametrically opposed to each other as ever; therefore they can never be brought into contact without conflict, without war, and sometimes of the most deadly kind, ending in the death and martyrdom of the saints. I was amused with the exemplification of this some weeks ago. As one of our female officers was walking up Clapton, a band of lads were hooting after her, "Hallelujah!" "Jesus Christ!" "Salvation!" and other beautiful names; for in whatever voice they be hissed out, they cannot make such words ugly. They were hissing these names after her as she walked meekly and quietly along. At length she turned suddenly to them and said, "What are you doing this for? I have never done you any harm. I am walking peaceably along the road; why are you shouting after me?" They were all so taken aback that they stood breathless for a moment, then one of them, I suppose a little bolder than the rest, and at least an honest lad, said, "It is because you are good and we are bad." Ah! that was the truth for once. That was the expression, in his rough way, of the eternal principle, that there must be conflict between good and evil; and the greater good you bring in conflict with evil, the more the evil will rage and try for the mastery. Hence, the world treated Him who was the very personification of the Father’s holiness, worse than it ever treated any other human being, because He was the concentration of goodness, and therefore the devil did His worst on Him; and just as we approximate to His character will the devil do his worst on us.

Further, Christ taught His soldiers to expect the opposition of devils.

I suppose most of you believe in evil spirits who have access to the human mind. I wish, if you do not, you could have some of the experience of the Salvation Army; I think you would then. If there are evil spirits, if they have access to this world, and if they are interested in circumventing the plans of God, it only stands to sense that they should influence their servants to fight in opposition to the servants of God. This opposition was foretold by Christ, and His servants were warned against it, and provided for it. He said to His apostles when he commissioned them, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep among wolves, but lo, I am with you always." And again to Paul, "I will be with thee, delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee." Why? Because He knew the opposition which their mission would provoke. He said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."

Wherever the true Christ appears, there must the sword come to the dividing asunder of everything evil, and there must also come the sword of provocation. Even the nearest and dearest relatives rise up to persecute those who truly follow the Christ. This must continue to be so while good and evil continue in contact, and the fact that modern Christianity has ceased, as a rule, to provoke opposition, is one of the deadliest signs of its effeteness. As a rule, the world and modern Christianity go comfortably on together. They are so actuated by one common principle, and walk so amicably on one common pathway, that you see very little collision between them. The world has very little to complain of, and so it lets them alone. May God help, and quickly mend or end it.

Further, I want you to note, that, notwithstanding all the danger involved in this deadly warfare, which Jesus Christ represented it to be, -- for He did not deceive them, but told them plainly that all. men would hate them, that they would probably have to follow Him to martyrdom and death, nevertheless, they accepted the mission. I grant that they were a little time in coming to comprehend it; I grant that it took some time to free them from their national and sectarian prejudices. Peter had to receive his lesson through the vision of the sheet let down from heaven, before he understood the true genius of his mission. But when he and the other apostles did comprehend it, -- and that was the difference between them and modern apostles, when they saw the work to which the Master called them, they joyfully embraced it.

They did not stop to confer with flesh and blood, or to reason what it would cost them, to ask about salaries, or houses, or friends; they embraced the mission and went, and carried it out with their lives in their hands; and oh, how magnificently they succeeded! What a large portion of the world they subdued in comparison with their numbers and facilities, for, remember, there were no railways in those days to speed them from town to town, and city to city; there were no telegraphs to fly before them with their announcements; no printing presses to herald their coming with posters and handbills and all manner of notices; they had none of the facilities which we possess in these days for quickening the speed, or how gladly would they have availed themselves of them!

What gigantic success they attained, because they carried out their mission on the lines which Jesus Christ had laid down. Is it not true that just in proportion as their successors have followed in their steps, they have been successful in propagating the gospel? We all know that the stars in the heavenly firmament, the men and women who stand out with extra brilliancy on the page of history, as having been successful in pushing this glorious warfare, have been the men and

women who took their lives in their hands, and followed their Master without respect to consequences; who came out straight and clear from the world and set themselves to their work, irrespective of what men might say or do to them. And we know what mighty conquests some of them achieved, and therefore we may reason that if all Christ's professed disciples had followed in the same track, a million times greater results would have been attained.

Let me put a practical question here. How many are there here who have comprehended the task? How many are there to whom the Spirit of God has said in unmistakable language, "Come out from amongst the ungodly or the half-hearted, and be separate, and I will touch your lips with a live coal from off My altar, and will make you fishers of men?" Did you embrace the mission? Have you gone forth following your Master, carrying His cross and seeking the souls of men? If not, what will you say to Him in the great day of account?

Further, in looking at the requirements of the King, and at the history of the early apostles and disciples, I charge it on modern Christianity, that its professors do not even comprehend the first principles of this warfare, much less do they set themselves to carry it on to the ends of the earth. The service rendered to the King and to the kingdom in these days is, alas, with few exceptions, of a very milk-and-watery type, of a very short-weight character, and the great effort of the majority of its teachers, judging from their writings, and from what we see and know of their public services and of their private lives, seems to be intended to make things comfortable all round. "Peace, peace," is the continual cry, when there is no peace. As one of the bishops said a little while ago, "We hear a great deal about Church defense; we ought to be hearing about Church aggression." Yes, alas! in the great mass of instances when these modern Christians do fight, it is over opinions and ceremonies with their own children, inside their own walls, instead of with the enemy outside. They are far more valiant in defending. some ceremonial of the Church, than they are in defending the cross of Christ in the presence of its adversaries. They are far more concerned in propagating their "ism" than the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Alas, that it should be so; but such is the fact, and it is patent to every enlightened observer.

Jesus Christ did not call us to fight each other, but He called us to present one bold front to the enemy. He bade us go and take captive the hearts and souls of men, and not merely to change their opinions. Get a man's heart right, and his opinions will soon follow. But you may be tinkering at his intellect till the hour of his death, and he will not be a whit nearer heaven, but perchance nearer hell, than if he had been left alone.

Further, these modern Christians, as a rule, do not see any NEED for the fight.

They hide themselves under some vain, false notions of the sovereignty of God. Oh, how often they have made my heart ache when I have been trying to arouse them to do something for the kingdom. They say, "God is a sovereign, and He will accomplish His purposes out of all this sin and ruin;" and so they sit comfortably down and let things drift; and they have drifted to some purpose, have they not? In this so-called Christian country, in this nineteenth century, they have drifted to about as near perdition as they well could, without absolutely bringing hell on the earth. They have drifted socially as well as spiritually. Look at the state of the nation. Look at the godlessness, the injustice, the falseness, the blasphemy, the uncleanness and the debauchery everywhere! Do you ever look at the condition of things close to your doors and your churches? the worse than heathen beastliness into which thousands of our neglected neighbors, rich and

poor alike, have sunk?

If only half the professing Christians of London had followed in their Master's steps for one twelvemonth, such things would have been impossible, utterly impossible, I repeat, Jesus Christ has ordained and provided that His people are to set themselves to stem these .torrents of moral and social pollution; they are to go and beard the lion in his den; to face the slaves of sin, open their eyes, and bring them down to His feet, just as much as were His early followers; and never till we do it shall we realize a better state of things. All the legislation, education, or provision of better dwellings, as I shall hereafter try to demonstrate, won't touch the moral cancer, the spring of all this wickedness and misery; nothing will do it until the Christians rise up to do their Master's bidding. But I say, they do not see any need for it, and they try to quiet us who do.

You have to prove, and argue, and drive, and almost show them damnation before you get a bit of service of any sort out of them. They have no heart for the fight. They do not feel these things. As God said of the fallen and false prophets of the 'Jews, "They lay not these things to their hearts." They lay their own business to their hearts. You see it depicted on the countenances of these Christian men if the balance is on the wrong side; if bankruptcy stares them in the face, you soon find that out. These Christian women lay the welfare of their own families to their hearts; you soon find out when a child is sick, or in any kind of disgrace or danger. But these same men and women can walk about the walls and see the desolations of Zion without any of these marks of distress or apprehension, without any such tears or groans.

They will manifest more anger against the people who urge them to fight, than they will against the enemy. A great many of them hate the Salvation Army for this more than for any other thing. They say, "You are always at us; let us alone, we want peace." They want to be quiet and comfortable, and to have their religion in a snug, back-parlor fashion. Fight! they hate the name of fighting. Going out to face the mob! oh, dear no! that is out of all question. How could you ever think of such a thing? Being mocked, and spit upon, and kicked, and buffeted, and perchance killed for Christ! they would think you were clean gone mad. Some of these modern Christians have tried to put two or three of our people into asylums for nothing else. The moment anybody attempts really to obey Jesus Christ, they cry, "Mad! mad! away with such a fellow; he is not fit to live." What a veritable laughing-stock to hell such professed Christians make themselves. The devil says, "All right; let them alone. Let them go to their sanctuaries, let them have their creeds and ceremonies, let them sing their sweet hymns, and amuse themselves with their religious entertainments and their Bible classes; do not disturb them, whatever you do, they are amongst my best and most successful allies." Oh, may God show us these things, and help us to set to work to awaken every backslidden, lazy professor within reach of us.

Many of these latter day Christians are most zealous in building the sepulchers of the prophets, that is, of the saints -- the spiritual warriors of bygone tunes. They are often great at lectures on these ancient worthies -- Luther, George Fox, Wesley, and others, -- and they will listen most interestedly to a dissertation on their heroism, just as they would listen to a lecture on Shakespeare or Milton; but as to imitating their deeds of valor, it never enters their minds any more than if they had been inhabitants of another sphere. They simply go, in the great mass of instances, to have their intellects amused, their feelings tickled.

It never dawns on them that they are to go and imitate the example of. these heroes. They do not perceive that it ought equally to be the absorbing interest of their own lives, and that they are equally called to brave men and devils in propagating the kingdom of Christ in the earth. They go home and live the coming week exactly as they lived the week preceding it. They admire the men who laid down their lives for .the King a hundred or three hundred years ago, and will perhaps put up a monument to their memory, but as to doing so themselves, or allowing themselves to come into the same circumstances of persecution, they would sooner almost go to hell. I speak the things I know and have witnessed till my heart is sick.

Further, I charge it on popular Christianity that its professors are ashamed of their colors in the presence of the enemy.

They shrink from any open, straight forward confession .of Christ before men. I maintain that it is not confessing Him to go to church or chapel once a week amongst those who go the same way with you. They do not confess Him on the exchange, in the bank, or in the streets of the city. Where do you see any one, or only one in a million, who comes out with any thorough going, straightforward confession of Christ before the world? Where? There are a few Roman Catholics or high Church monastics, and whatever I may think of their errors and their mummeries, I always feel a measure of reverence when I pass them. I feel there is a man or woman who is willing to acknowledge his God before men, and who is not ashamed to come out and condemn the world, by being separate from it, and entering a protest against its fashions and its follies.

How many professing Christians are there of this day who would go through the city of London in any attire, or with any kind of badge, that said to men and women, "I am a saint and a soldier of Jesus Christ?" And yet the soldiers of the queen are proud to do this in an enemy’s country! I repeat, who is there that dare do it for Christ, except us fanatics of the Salvation Army?

I understand that a popular minister said the other day, speaking of the Salvation Army, that we were "playing at soldiers!" I will engage to say that if that minister will come with us for a single day, we will give. him such a dose of fighting as he never had in his life before. We will send him home at night quite convinced that it is no playing at soldiers on our part. If he does not get his head broken, we will guarantee that his coat will be torn, or covered with mud or ochre [ochre = a mineral of clay and ferric oxide, used as a pigment varying from light yellow to brown or red -- Oxford Dict.], or something worse!

Playing at soldiers, indeed! let him doff his kid gloves, his gentleman’s attire, and lay aside his cigar, and come with our lasses into the public-houses with the War Cry or a Bible under his arm, or anything else that tells the inmates what he has come for, and he will find out whether we are playing at soldiers or not! I would like to put that man alongside one of our dear little female captains in a certain jail just now, and see whether such an experience, even for twenty-four hours, would not change his opinion. Such cruel stabs from professed Christian ministers are worse than the cruel mockings and scourgings of the enemy. "May the Lord not lay this sin to their charge." But to return to this shame-facedness in the Master’s cause: it is time we had done with it; it is time we proclaimed ourselves; for we speak to numbers by our appearance to whom we can never speak by our words, and unless we confess Christ in our appearance in such instances, we cannot confess Him at all Besides, why should we be ashamed of it? Why? The other day when I was driving through a low thoroughfare of London, and the little urchins were crying after me, one

"Jesus!" another, "Hallelujah!" and a third, "There goes the Salvation Army!" I felt my soul glow with holy joy as I thought of the words, "The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on me."

I do not care what kind of a garb or a badge you wear, -- that is not the point, but there ought to be a badge which says to every man and woman, "I belong to Jesus Christ, and I am not ashamed of my colors."

Any profession of Jesus Christ which brings no cross is all nonsense; it is not confession at all There are plenty of Christians very brave inside their churches in the presence of their friends, or on parade. They sing:

"Am I a soldier of the cross?". or, "Hold the fort, for I am coming."

I was once in a large congregation where they were singing this with the greatest gusto:

"Wave the answer back to heaven, 'By Thy grace we will.'"

I was sitting beside a warrior of the cross, one who carried the marks of many a desperate battle on his worn face. I whispered, "What should you think this people's conception of holding the fort is?" and he whispered back, "A seven-and-six-penny pew!" Alas, how true, in hundreds of instances. Are there any ministers here? If so, I ask you, Is it not true of three parts of your congregations? What do the people in your pews mean by holding the fort? What fort do they hold? They hold the fort valiantly on the stock exchange, in the bank, at the office, or behind the counter. Let anybody go and try to get the better of them there, and they will hold that fort valiantly enough; but what fort are they holding for Jesus Christ? Here are two men, one is a professing Christian, the other an honorable man of the world.

They are both, we will suppose, in the same business. Take their lives from day to day, and what is the difference between them? The one goes to church or chapel once or twice on Sunday. On the week day he gets up in the morning and has his breakfast, and perhaps he reads prayers out of a book, or perhaps not; this done and away be rushes to the city, to the business, where he works and thinks and plans with untiring energy till evening to make money. This is what he does six days in the week, without giving one hour per day to any kind of service to God or humanity, or even to the affairs of his own or his children's souls. The other man does just the same, only he does not go to church on Sunday, or read prayers. If you look into the lives of these two men at the end of the week, you can't find that the professed Christian has done one iota for the kingdom of God more than the other. You can't find that he has spoken to any one about his soul, he would think it out of season to talk about religion in the shop, the counting-house, or on the exchange. He has never buttoned-holed any of his acquaintances or friends in his own house; he has never knelt down by the side of any poor wandering brother or sister, never visited any sick one or prayed with the dying; he has not done a thing for the Lord Jesus, and yet he will go to chapel and sing, "Hold the fort" on Sunday, as though he had been living the life of a saint all the week. I ask, Why should such a man be called a Christian any more than his neighbor over the way? Oh, friends, it is time we wiped away this reproach, and put it out of the power of infidels and atheists to wag their heads and say, "What do ye more than others?" It is time we drummed out of the professed armies of our Lord all such renegades or hypocrites!

Further, the great mass of these modern Christians cannot enter into this fight because they REFUSE TO BEAR THE CONSEQUENCES.

Fighting is hard work, whatever sort of fighting it is. You cannot fight without wounds of body, heart or soul. You cannot be a soldier without enduring "hardness," and genteel Christians don't like hardness -- they won't have the consequences.

First, they won't lose their reputation; they won't be counted fools and fanatics. I was thinking the other day, if we could have a list of the names of every person, high and low, rich and poor, who however been to the meetings of the Salvation Army, and who has received light and truth, and been called and claimed by God for this war, but who has gone back into the wilderness, what a list that would be! And more than half of this drawing back has been because people have been ashamed to own where they got their blessing, or where they might have had it. Friends, the recording angel keeps such a list! A gentleman answered the other day, when bewailing his miserable spiritual condition, and one of our friends asked him to go to a holiness-meeting, "not in my own town." If he had been in London, and could have crept in with the crowd into the great Congress Hall, where nobody would have recognized him, he would have gone, but not in his own town. That reveals the secret of thousands of people having resisted the light, and lost the blessing they might have had. It was the same spirit of false shame which prompted the question of the Pharisees, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?" My brother, my sister, listen:-- while you care what any man or woman on earth thinks about you, or the instruments used of God to bless you, never expect to keep your blessing, for you never will. That man will go blundering on in his present lean and skeleton condition to the grave, and probably into hell, unless he repents, and finds out his mistake, and does his first works. Ashamed! Won't be thought fanatical or weak, won't be mixed up with these common people. "Not in my own town, not in my own family," -- too proud to confess that I am not just what I should be, and that I am going amongst those poor people to be made better. Oh, dear no, not if heaven depended upon it. Listen! "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of my words, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Then, further, these modern Christians refuse to give their substance to carry on the war. You see war is impossible without money. I wish it were not so, but I cannot help it. This war is as impossible as any other, without money. Men and women must eat to live, however little they may manage with. And traveling expenses, rent of buildings, announcements, working expenses, prosecutions, breakdowns through sickness, etc.; etc., must be met. This war, I say, must have money, AND THE MORE WAR THE MORE MONEY IS WANTED. How many of these mongrel Christians, when faced with the needs of the war chest, exclaim, "Money again! always begging." Now contrast the feelings of these same people when there is any great popular national war on foot. Then, what do they say in their newspapers, in their public meeting? They say to their statesmen: "You must ask for grants; you must not stick fast for money. We must win.

John Bull must not be beaten for the sake of a few millions!" Ah, ah! their hearts are in this warfare! The women would sell their ornaments, and the men would hand over their balances, rather than England's freedom or greatness should be sacrificed. Now then, I say that if the Christians of this London and this England of ours had the true war spirit, the spirit which says, "I want the world for Christ Jesus: I want my King to reign over the hearts of men: He shall win, be it

at the cost of money or blood, or all else," -- if this spirit possessed them, instead of begrudging and reckoning how little they could give, and how much would save appearances, they would try how far they could deny themselves, and how much they could give. Oh! is this not true? Can you contradict it? Then, what am I to think of a band of professed soldiers who are always grumbling about having to give their money to extend the reign of their king, whom they profess to love more than all else besides!

I do not propose to dwell on the beggarly subterfuges for getting money which these Christians resort to; it would make my cheeks crimson with shame. I said to a lady a little while ago, who was working an elaborate piece of embroidery for a bazaar, "Why don't you give the money, and use your time for something better? She answered, "This will sell for more than it costs." "Then reckon what it will sell for, and give the money; don't sit at home making other people's finery, instead of visiting the sick and seeking to save the lost!" It makes me burn with shame to think how money is raised for so-called religious purposes by semi-worldly concerts, entertainments, penny readings, and bazaars, at which there is frequently positive gambling to raise money for Jesus Christ, whom they say they love more than fathers, mothers; husbands, wives, houses or lands, or anything else on earth! And these are the people who accuse the Salvation Army of want of reverence!

I have sometimes talked to ladies when they have been expensively dressed, and they have said, "Really, I do not care for these things." "Then," I have said, "it is passing strange you should be willing to spend your money for them. People generally care for the things they pay for." If Christians really cared for the reign of Jesus Christ over the hearts of men, if their hearts were set on His Kingdom and on doing all they possibly could to extend it, if it were the highest ambition of their souls, the waking and sleeping idea of their minds, do you think they would grudge to pay for it? Oh no; any child knows they would not. Such professed concern is a mockery!

Further, these modern Christians refuse to give themselves or their children to the propagation of the kingdom.

They studiously bring up their children from three or four years of age to eighteen or twenty, grinding it into them every. day of their lives, for six and eight hours a day, how to get on and up in this world; but when Jesus Christ wants one of them -- especially if he or she happens to be clever -- to do any unpopular, or, in the eyes of the world, vulgar work for Him -- any work that will bring a cross they consider it absolutely throwing that child away. All the ordinary, silly, sickly circles of gossip, and croquet, and drawing-room occupations, are considered most respectable and satisfactory in the case of young girls, alongside of any one of them giving her self up to seek and to save the lost. I heard a young lady say of a large circle of Christian friends: "While I was in frivolity and sin they all let me alone; I never had a letter, that I remember, from any of them about my soul; but as soon as they found that I had given myself to work amongst the poor and the lost, then they all woke up to a deep concern about my future, and I was flooded with letters from these Christian friends?"

Oh! what do you think Jesus Christ would say to such people? Would He not say, as He said of their representatives, the Pharisees, "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me"? Why should that daughter be thought thrown away who conies out and chooses a voluntary poverty and humility, and becomes a salvation officer to win poor lost men and women, for whom you say Jesus Christ

shed His blood? If they were worth His blood, surely they are worth your daughter’s respectability! Then why, because she chooses to sacrifice it, should she be put at a disadvantage compared with her elder or younger sisters, who spend their time in the frivolities of the world? Answer, all ye parents, professed followers of the despised Nazarene!

Oh, the stories I could unfold, the dozens of letters that could be produced, pleading with young men and women whose hearts God has touched with pity for the perishing multitudes; bringing all the considerations of family ties, worldly position, future prospects, wealthy alliances, and I know not what else, in order to induce them to turn aside from the path of self-sacrifice and whole-hearted abandonment to the interests of the kingdom. I sometimes wonder that Christian parents and friends dare utter such words or pen such letters. I wonder that the ink does not turn red as they write, and that their accusing consciences do not force them to sign their names "Judas."

What a different spirit parents and friends manifest with respect to their children and wards when the war-fever seizes the nation! Mothers give their sons -- it may be with tears and heartaches -- nevertheless ungrudgingly, to face the horrors of foreign warfare, in the shape of loneliness, toil, long marchings, exposure, privation, fever, dysentery, and a desolate death; and in other instances to wounds, loss of limbs, enfeebled constitutions, or violent death. Nay, women themselves have gone to such a war with the bravery of men, making lint, nursing the wounded, and inspiring the weak or wavering, and even working the guns; and as one rank has fallen, others have rushed in to fill up the bleeding gaps. But is it so in this warfare? It used to be. No grander enthusiasm, no more heroic self-sacrifice, no more determined abandonment, has ever fired human souls than has been exhibited in the cause of Jesus Christ; but alas! it is a long while ago. The Christians of this age, as a rule, want all their time, strength, and ability, and that of their children also, to enable them to climb up the ladder of this world’s social position; to get up, UP, from whence God -- if Christ’s teaching means anything -- will say, "Thou fool!" and hurl them down to perdition when they have done.

Friends, is it not true? If so, we ought to go down on our faces and weep, and have a confession service -- first, for those who feel that this truth applies to themselves; and second, for those who, although their own consciences acquit them, know that it applies to thousands round about us. Like the prophets of old did, let us humble ourselves for the sins of our people. Let us take their iniquities on our hearts as far as we may, weep over them, confess for them, and pray for them, and then set ourselves to try to arouse them up to a sense of their responsibility and danger.

Further, I charge it on the professors of popular Christianity that they have no valor in the fight for truth and for God.

They hold not fast the faith once delivered to the saints, but surrender first one point and then another of God’s revelation to any skeptical heathen who may see fit to attack it. They bid Godspeed alike to all professed prophets and creeds, simply because it is a matter of indifference with them whether truth or error shall prevail; in fact, they are most tolerant of false teachers because they propound the easiest doctrine, often patronizing the most monstrous contradictions and shameless caricatures of the gospel. There can be no doubt that millions of souls are being sacrificed to the godless, senseless antinomian gospels of the present day, gospels which have been hacked and hewed worse than any poor vivisected animal. The very standards and

landmarks of goodness, truth, honesty, chastity, and godliness are broken down, and the people are taught that they have nothing to do, to sacrifice, or to suffer, in order to be saved and to get into heaven, in fact that they call get there as easily by the broad road as by the narrow way; and all who preach the truth as Christ preached it are stigmatized as legal -- as workmongers, as antichrists and papists.

Further, these modern Christians lack all enthusiasm in the warfare.

Look at their poor, gasping, half-hearted, uncertain profession of personal religion. They condemn anybody who dares get up and tell out any definite change that God has wrought in them, or of any glowing experience of the love, sufficiency, and power of Christ to save. They characterize all such testimony as self-exaltation and vainglory, whereas they ought to know that one of the main purposes of Christ in establishing a kingdom on the earth was that His servants might be His witnesses -- not witnesses merely of His existence, but of His power to save from sin and its consequences. They should also study the writings of Paul, whom they claim as their great apostle, and note his bold, comprehensive, and persistent expression of his own personal experience, which occupied so large a share of his epistles.

Look at the cold, stiff, stilted public service of these modern Christians; note how they pray, sitting looking about, without reverence or decency, while their ministers pray for them by proxy; listen to their songs, mostly sung by a few dressed-up dolls perched in an organ-loft or singing pew, doing their praises for them, perhaps with a profane or drunken leader at so much a year. Listen to the preaching, -- as a rule, cold dissertations and abstractions or platitudes, "moving not a hair of the polished divine" who utters them, nor of the people who listen. An amen or hallelujah would sound almost as much out of place as it would be on the gallows Who would ever imagine that such a minister and such worshippers were professedly serving Him of whom it was said, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire"? Alas, alas such worshippers have nothing to be enthusiastic about.

They have no personal participation in the Spirit or purposes of their professed Lord, no realization of His presence, and no glowing anticipation of His predicted triumphs. But watch the change when the time for dismissal comes; see the rush of acquaintances at the church or chapel doors to shake hands with one another; listen to the rush of tongues; there is plenty of enthusiasm now! Frank’s prizes at school or honors at college, Harry’s promotion in the killing army, Gertrude’s recent engagement, or Lizzie’s new baby, -- these are topics in which the heart is interested, and so the tongue is inspired, and the soul comes forth from its lethargy! Alas for the little children who watch the altered countenances and listen to the interested tone and manner of mother and father during the progress of these congratulations! No wonder if they conclude that this is the reality, and what they have been witnessing in the church or chapel is a sham. No wonder such a Christianity cannot hold its own against the forces of the enemy; no cause is so hopeless as one without enthusiasm. People who do not care much are sure to go to the wall.

Further, I. charge these modern Christians with a lack of missionary enterprise. No wonder, if they reason from the value and effect of their religion on their own characters and lives, that they do not see the importance of sending it to the heathen; and from all accounts it does no more for the heathen abroad than for the Christians at home. Alas, alas! on all these points popular Christianity must be confessed, when weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, to be found lamentably

wanting.

Friends, what about yours? The Real Warfare We will now glance at two or three of the main characteristics of that warfare to which Christ has called His soldiers.

First: Christ's soldiers must be imbued with the spirit of the war.

Love to the King and concern for His interests must be the master passion of the soul. All outward effort, even that which springs from a sense of duty, will fail without this. The hardship and suffering involved in real spiritual warfare are too great for any motive but that of love. It is said that one of the soldiers of Napoleon, when being operated upon for the extraction of a bullet, exclaimed, "Cut a little deeper and you will find my general's name," meaning that it was engraven on his heart. So must the image and glory of Christ be engraven on the heart of every successful soldier of Christ. It must be the all-subduing passion of his life to bring the reign of Jesus Christ over the hearts and souls of men. A little child who has this spirit will subjugate others to his King, while the most talented and learned and active, without it, will accomplish comparatively little. If the hearts of the Christians of this generation were inspired with this spirit, and set on winning the world for God, we should soon see nations shaken to their center, and millions of souls translated into the kingdom.

Secondly: The soldiers of Christ must be abandoned to the war.

They must be thoroughly committed to God's side: there can be no neutrals in this warfare. When the soldier enlists and takes the queen's shilling, he ceases to be his own property, but becomes the property of his country, must go where he is sent, stand at any post to which he is assigned, even if it be at the cannon's mouth. He gives up the ways and comforts of civilians, and goes forth with his life in his hand, in obedience to the will of his sovereign.

If I understand it, that is just what Jesus Christ demands of every one of His soldiers, and nothing less.

Some one may ask, "But we cannot all be ministers, or missionaries, or officers in the Salvation Army; must we not attend to the avocations of this life, and work for the bread that perisheth for ourselves and our families?" Certainly, but the great end in all we do must be the promotion of the kingdom. A man may work in order that he may eat, but he must eat to live, not to himself or for the promotion of his own purposes, but for his King, and for the advancement of His interests; and if his heart is really set on this, he will have no desire to work at his secular calling longer than is absolutely necessary to promote this object. When the necessary amount of work is done, he will gladly lay aside his implements of husbandry or handicraft for the sword of the Spirit, and for the conflict with ignorance, vice, and misery. Instead of spending his evenings in ease and self-indulgence, he will betake himself to the streets or other places of resort for the people, and will spend what would have been his leisure hours in pressing on them the claims of God and of His truth.

There will be no running away, no forsaking of the cross, no shrinking from the hard places of the field; but a determined pushing of the battle to the gate, even amid weariness, opposition, and sometimes in the face of dire defeat. I ask, Was it any less a devotion than this which actuated the martyrs and confessors of old? Have I depicted an abandonment greater than that which they

understood to be their duty and privilege? If they might have drawn back, why did they persevere, many of them, through long years of conflict and persecution, culminating in stripes, imprisonment, and death? It is evident that they understood fidelity to Christ to involve the most perfect self-abandonment, both in life and in death.

Then, third: Christ's soldiers must understand the tactics of war. In order to do this, they must make it a subject of earnest and prayerful study how to make the most of their time, talents, money, or any other resources which God may have placed at their command for the advancement of the kingdom. They must think and scheme how best to attack the enemy. Only think of the time, trouble, skill, and money that are expended by great killing armies in planning for stratagem, and maneuver in order to surprise and overcome their enemies. Some of you will remember reading, in the records of the last German and French war, that the German officers were better acquainted with the geography of France than the French themselves; they knew every road, by-way, and field, likely to be available for their purpose.

Think of the time and trouble that must have been expended in becoming thus familiar with a foreign country, and compare this with the haphazard, rule-of-thumb kind of way in which spiritual warfare is for the most part conducted. Think of the undigested schemes and abortive plans, throwing away both labor and money, embarked in by professed Christian soldiers, who have never, perhaps, spent a day's anxious thought and prayer over them in their lives. Think also of the shameful indifference-which cannot be characterized as warfare at all-of the ordinary services and arrangements of the churches.

It often makes my heart ache as I pass some stately, closed-up church or chapel, with its antiquated board with a shame-faced, insignificant announcement that the "Reverend So-and-so will preach," or a "Gospel address will be delivered" at such a time on such a day; in which it is evident nothing is contemplated beyond securing the eye and attention of those who already have a liking for going to churches and chapels. And as I sometimes read the lists of meetings connected with ordinary churches, I say to myself, "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be," is evidently the creed of the originators of this program, not with respect, perhaps, to the doctrines they preach, but with respect to the old-fashioned, effete methods by which they continue to publish them. Oh, is it not time that the professed children of light should learn, as the great Captain of our salvation exhorted them, wisdom by contrast with the children of darkness? As I heard some friends talking the other day about the rescue of Gordon, and listened to their calculations as to the probable cost being some millions of money, and perhaps thousands of lives, I could not help thinking, yes, and I suppose all England (the Christians included) will think this quite a legitimate expenditure of both money and life to rescue this one man and the little band who is with him; and yet, if we were to ask for a few millions of money, and propose to sacrifice a few hundreds of lives in the rescue of millions of the human race from a bondage of misery and destruction ten thousand times more appalling than that which threatens General Gordon, they would call us mad enthusiasts and senseless fanatics. Alas, alas we may well ask, Where is the zeal of the Christians of this generation for the Lord of hosts? How much do they care about His reign over the hearts of their fellow men? What is their appreciation of the present and eternal benefits embraced in His salvation; or what is their estimate of the "crown of life" which he promises to give to every one of His conquering soldiers?

Fourth: The soldiers of Christ must believe in victory.

Faith in victory is an indispensable condition to successful warfare of any kind. It is universally recognized by generals of killing armies, that if the enthusiasm of expected conquest be destroyed, and their troops imbued with fear and doubt as to the ultimate result, defeat is all but certain. This is equally true with respect to spiritual warfare, hence the repeated and comprehensive assurance and promises of victory from the great Captain of our salvation The true soldier of Christ, who has the spirit of the war and who is abandoned to its interests, has an earnest in his soul of coming victory. He knows it is only a question of time, and time is nothing to love! As he is lying in the trenches, or taking long marches, or suffering for the want of common necessaries, or enduring the sharpest bayonets or heaviest fire of the enemy, or lying wounded, overcome by fatigue, pressed by discouragement, realizing the greatness of the conflict in contrast with his own weakness -- in the very darkest hours and severest straits, he has the herald of coming victory sounding in his ears. The faithful soldier knows that he shall win, and that his King will ultimately reign, not only over a few, but over all the kingdoms of this earth, and that He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. This faith inspires Him to endure hardship and to suffer loss, to hold on. He never thinks of turning his back to the foe, or shirking the cross, or turning the stones into bread, or of trying to shorten the march. He never thinks of withdrawing from the thick of the fight, but goes on through perils by land, by sea, by his own countrymen, by the heathen, by false brethren at home and abroad. He looks onward through the dark clouds to the proud moment when the King will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" He listens, and above the din of the earthly conflict he hears the words, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life!"

Chapter 49

04.05. Its Sham Judgment in Contrast With The Great White Throne

Lecture V Its Sham Judgment in Contrast With The Great White Throne Its Sham Judgment

Many people dislike the very sound of the word judgment. They have abandoned, as far as they can, any belief in a judgment to come, and they ignore as uncharitable and severe any expression of judgment as to the doings and characters of individuals in the present; but somehow the instincts of humanity are too strong for them, and these very people find themselves, in spite of their theories, pronouncing judgment both on themselves and others every day of their lives.

God has reared a judgment seat in every man’s conscience, which in some slight measure answers to, and prefigures the sentence which He declares He will pronounce on every man’s action, whether it be good or bad.

Then if there is a great Judge of all, and a standard of right and wrong which He has set up, it must be of supreme importance that we should correctly understand what this standard is, and that we should judge of the conduct of ourselves and of those around us according to it. Surely nothing could be more deceptive and soul-ruining than to accept as correct any short of the one unalterable and eternal standard of righteousness and truth which he has laid down; and yet, alas! popular Christianity distinguishes itself by nothing more than by a systematic misrepresentation of right and wrong, calling evil good and good evil.

Just as in the days of Christ the spirit and essence of the law of God was set aside and made of no effect by traditional interpretations of the letter, so in our time interpretations and expositions, in direct antagonism to the plainest words of Christ, are palmed upon the world by many of the official representatives of Christianity, who back up their false tenets by quotations from "the word," separated from their explanatory connections, and made to sanction views and practices the very opposite to the mind and intention of their Divine Author. In pointing out as plainly as I am able a few of these misrepresentations, I know only too well I shall lay myself open to criticism, and that I may even run the risk of wounding some hearts that I would fain cheer. But the vital importance of the subject will not permit me to pass it over lightly.

First: "Judge not that ye be not judged" is one of the favorite texts of popular Christianity, which is interpreted to mean that we are on no account to form an opinion of the rightness or wrongness of anybody’s conduct. Under the specious guise of charity, faith and unbelief, obedience to God and disobedience, sin and holiness, are to be confounded in one indiscriminate hodge-podge, and their actions and abettors treated exactly alike, making no separation between the precious and the vile. This serious charity is pushed to such an extent that even the man who has pledged himself to preach certain doctrines, and who is actually employed as the agent of a Church for so doing, is not to be condemned if his "riper judgment" should lead him to renounce those doctrines; while at the same time he holds fast the salary and position with which he was entrusted in view of his original engagement. On the same principle we are asked to allow that people who never go to a place of worship or how their knees in prayer may be as good and faithful servants of God as

any others. We are told that perhaps they are carrying out "the Divine will in a spirit of true devotion to duty," that working is praying, and that a man’s belief bounds his responsibility, and so forth.

"We are all aiming at the same thing" is a favorite way of expressing this popular Christianity, which just suits the ideas of drunkards, adulterers, and liars, as well as of shallow professors. To declare positively that people are sinners, condemned already, and on their way to hell, is accounted as "uncharitable judging," "really dreadful," and no one, we are told, can possibly be justified in coming to such a conclusion.

All this we could understand perfectly, coming from the camps of infidelity or from the haunts of vice; but to find it passed off in connection with the name and teachings of Jesus Christ is monstrous indeed. What a sham to worship Him Who declares Himself to be THE Way, the Truth, and the Life, if there be no certain way, no definable difference between the true and the false, no practical separation between the Christ life and the life without Christ! Surely it is high time for all who care about the reign of Christ on the earth to make up their minds to one thing or the other. If Christ be our master let us learn His lessons, and abide by His rule, and obey His commands. If, on the other hand, some are unwilling to see any difference between the narrow and the broad road, between those who are in the kingdom of God or out of it, who are with Christ or against Him, let them be honest enough to declare openly that they have no Christ and will have no prophet but "Society."

Another text which might be taken as setting forth a very favorite theory of modern Christianity is that in which Paul personified the struggles of a convicted but unsaved soul: "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." We are all to look upon ourselves as "poor, incapable, fallible creatures," and this assumed humility is to absolve us from all condemnation, on account either of doing evil or neglecting to do good. Instead of condemning ourselves or others, when convicted of some flagrant wrong or manifest inconsistency, we are to look upon it as only what might have been expected.

How often have I heard people say, with regard to some man holding an official position of great responsibility in the Church, "Well, he does not do this, that, or the other (whatever may be the duty in question) as he might, but, you know, he can’t do everything." Such an apology as this would be beautiful in the extreme, applied to those who are known to be earnestly and faithfully striving to do their share for the extension of the kingdom of God; but when applied, as I have generally heard it, to what everyone knows to be a systematic and inexcusable neglect of everyday duty, it is no more nor less than a wholesale cloaking of sin. But, friends,. whatever you do, never allow your minds for a moment to trifle with questions of duty, for nothing can be more fatal to either body or soul than to give way to the theory that one really cannot be expected to do what one ought.

How differently people treat this question of doing their duty in commercial matters. Imagine the business man who cannot attend to all his customers, or who thinks it unnecessary to keep his place of business open all the week and every week. What would you think of a servant who should consider it unreasonable to get up at the proper time every morning, or carry out your wishes in matters in which her views differed from yours? How bug could society hang together if this looseness of thought as to what we ought and ought not to do were permitted to enter into the

sphere of everyday life? But alas, alas! how much more ruinous is this looseness when it relates to our great spiritual duties towards God and our fellow-creatures.

Either you ought or you ought not always to pray and not to faint -- to learn and to do the will of God, to care for perishing souls, to warn, counsel, and help those around you; and what applies to you applies to all who take upon them the name of Christ in any way whatever. We should never, on any account, allow ourselves to excuse any neglect of God and duty, because such neglect is all but universal, but we should look at things as they are, and in the light of the judgment throne; and when we see conduct worthy of condemnation, condemn it, and be determined to separate ourselves in heart and life from evil practices, however much respected they may be, and to take our stand on the side of duty and of God at all costs.

I tell you honestly that I have turned away numberless times of late years, and with almost despairing disgust, from audiences of what would be called intelligent Christians, that is to say, persons who talk and act upon an intelligent view of any imaginable subject except that of Christian duty. How often do I hear the remark, "We know things are not as they should be," from people who have not the slightest intention of striving in any way to make things better, and who would not on any account, incur the odium of expressing any condemnation on that neglect of religious duty which they profess so much to deplore.

Away with this unmanly, unwomanly cowardice. We have the light; let us come to it in order to see whether our deeds, and the deeds of those around us who profess to be "working for God," are wrought in Him. We call by God’s grace, do our duty, if we will. As we tried to show in a former lecture, Christ came on purpose to empower us to do it; but let those who will not have such a doctrine and such a Christ, but who prefer to accept the miserable theories of impotency, which would not be tolerated for a moment in the kitchen, the shop, or the exchange, -- let them at least save Christ from the indignity of having such helpless, incapable creatures called by His name, and professing to be His followers. He says with respect to all such, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?"

"But the Lord looks at the heart," is another of the pet doctrines of popular Christianity.

True, terribly true in the right sense, -- for God is not to be mocked with lip service or the formality of worship in which the heart has no share, -- but false, ruinously false, when it means, as it generally does, that all sorts of wrong may be passed over and excused, if people only say they mean to do right.

I rejoice beyond all expression in the precious thought of the Lord’s longsuffering and tender mercy toward those who sit in darkness; and if we were living in the center of Africa, where people have been trained only to fear and worship some hideous imaginary power of evil, -- if we had absolutely no spirit of truth, and no word of light to hear or to read, no knowledge of God or a Saviour, -- it might be admissible to consider everybody right who meant right; but even those in this country who are most skeptical as to divine revelation cannot pretend to be in any such position as this, much less people who profess to call themselves Christians. Is there anybody here taking refuge in this hollow subterfuge? Friend, let me ask you, did you really worship and serve God last Sunday? Had you any convictions as to what He wished you to do, not only on that day but throughout the following week? If so, have you acted on them, have you honestly tried to

carry them out? If not, do not, I beseech you, try to pacify your conscience with any silly nonsense about the Lord looking at the heart. He has plainly told us over and over again in the New Testament, and in the very last book of it, that he will judge every lean according to his works, and, moreover, He has laid down the same rule of judgment for us. "By their fruits ye shall know them." "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous."

I fear there are thousands of professed Christians excusing themselves from the performance of the most manifest duty by this excuse; for instance, when a prayer meeting is announced, there are a certain number of people who make an effort to be present, but a much larger number of so-called Christians who deliberately choose to keep away. It is quite allowable to apply the doctrine of the Lord's looking at the heart to the poor mother who would fain be there, were she not detained by the inexorable claims of half a dozen little children; but to cloak over with the same excuse, the constant indifference, nay, positive irreligion, in the great majority, is only to refuse to come to the light because it would condemn you. People who mean well, where there is no physical impossibility in the way, do well; but those who fail to do well, will fare ill when the great reckoning day comes.

Further, I charge it upon popular Christianity, even when it does pay some tribute to the truth with regard to character, by recognizing here and there what it calls an "excellent man," or a "noble woman," that when you come to examine into the meaning of these phrases, they are, in many instances, utterly misleading. Most generally the persons thus eulogized are distinguished, rather for the lack of those peculiar characteristics set forth by Christ and His apostles as of supreme importance, than by the possession of them. Just try to call up a person so distinguished within your own knowledge, and ask yourself how they have earned their title. To begin with, do they excel in prayer, or are they in most cases persons who were never known to pray in public, or, at any rate, without being specially called upon to do so? Or, are they renowned for praying by the bedsides of the sick, or even with their own families in the privacy of their own homes? Do these persons excel in faith, shown by their works in the way of bold, straightforward testimony for God, or in daring, unpopular enterprises for the salvation of men? or are they generally silent both in public and private, giving no personal testimony as to their knowledge of Christ, and carefully abstaining from any outward demonstration on His behalf, which would bring them into discredit with their neighbors? Probably they do excel in what is called charity; but is not this generally due to the fact that they are much richer than others, and only out of their enormous abundance do they contribute occasion any large sums for Christian or philanthropic objects. What a name may be acquired in modern Christendom by the judicious use of a few hundred pounds per year, without so much as speaking a kind word to a brother or sister in need, or denying yourself a moment's ease or a single luxury! Is it not notorious that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it is simply the possession of a certain amount of wealth which gives a man or woman his or her grade in religious as well as in civil society, and that people chosen for and entrusted with leading positions in churches, are simply those who have the best houses of their own? By-and-by their splendid coffins will be pompously deposited in the family vault, and you will be told that they "maintained an unblemished character for many years;" that is to say, they neither got drunk, blasphemed, committed robbery, nor picked anybody's pocket. They lived in society in such a style as made them welcome in the circles of semi-worldliness everywhere. Their linen and their dresses were unblemished, for they never turned aside, like their Divine Master, into any of the

soiling habitations of the poor and the wretched, nor mingled amongst such mobs as continually jostled Him all the way through life. Their names were always mentioned with honor, for they took care never to let them be used in connection with any enterprise, even on behalf of Jesus Christ, which was not considered "quite the thing." Do not misunderstand me. I am very far from wishing to pour contempt upon such persons, for without them what would become of the churches and of benevolent enterprises generally? I do not question that many of these individuals have at one time or other been converted, and might have become true saints, had they been faithfully dealt with; but alas! they have, to a great extent, been made the victims of that sham judgment which now selects them as its standard-bearers. Of many of them, I doubt not, it might be written, were Jesus Christ again amongst us, and were they brought in contact with Him, that He looked upon them and loved them, notwithstanding all their worldliness and pride of position. But what I want to point out is, that such persons are not distinguished by popular Christianity for the peculiarly Christ-like traits in their characters, but for the possession and use of a long purse. This exaltation of mere morality with money stamps modern Christianity as an unjust judge, and it will be fatal to your views of what Christ demands of you, if you accept its model men and women as the representatives of Christian excellence.

Fifth: As I have before remarked, there has come over society of late quite a fever of professed benevolence towards the poor; and yet, in connection with this very pleasing awakening to the existence of millions of miserable people, we have another striking illustration of the sham judgment of modern Christendom. "Those wretched, filthy people" are simply the poorer classes, who are compelled by their poverty to herd together by families in small rooms, surrounding perhaps a court-yard full of oyster-shells and other refuse, at which society -- and Christian society, too -- turns up its nose, and declares that the people breathe an "atmosphere of moral pollution." Perfectly true there is an atmosphere of moral pollution present in these dark alleys and horrible dens, to which people are driven by thousands, that others may have plenty of room in which to carry out their ideas of civilization; but to eyes that look at things in the light of God, I say there is an atmosphere of moral pollution not a whit less dangerous, and far more blameworthy, in very different circles. Is it not notorious that multitudes of people amongst what are called the higher classes deliberately denude themselves of ordinary clothing, and then go in a half-dressed condition, with every addition of ornament that can be conceived, to insure that they shall be noticed and admired, to large places of public amusement? Is there hot a growing disposition in Christian circles to look upon it as perfectly harmless for Christian families, including often those of ministers, to spend hours together, dressed in the way I have described, at parties, balls and other entertainments, frequently given within the precincts of some consecrated building, or in order to raise money for church purposes? Now, I ask, how it comes to pass that the poor are spoken of as herding together without regard for decency under the circumstances of necessity which I have described; while the herding together of the rich and well-to-do in this voluntary indecency should be regarded with complacency and described as refined and genteel? That such is the judgment of modem Christendom can only be attributed to one fact -- the power of the purse; and that the churches should in the main devote their attention to the well-to-do classes, while they regard the masses of the people as a kind of outside element, to be operated upon by separate agencies, as a few missionaries or Bible-women, is, I contend, a crying scandal to the Saviour’s name. The judgment of Jesus Christ led Him to spend most of His time herding with fishermen, with publicans and sinners. Their language might often be very violent and bad and their home life simply

scandalous; but the Son of God preferred to make His bed in a fishing-boat, and to sit talking with that infamous woman of Samaria, rather than to hobnob with the religious swelldom of Jerusalem, the outside of whose cup and platter would have passed muster with modern Christianity while their lives were full of hypocrisy and unrighteousness.

Sixth: "The brutal tastes of the lower orders" Is another pet phrase of modern Christendom.

It represents the idea that for a poor man, who has to keep himself and his family on a few shillings per week by hard labor, which takes away all inclination towards study or more exalted pursuits, it is a brutal taste to like to have a quart of four-penny beer as often as his scanty means will allow. It is a brutal taste to take pleasure in seeing two men fight each other with their fists, inflicting in the course of half an hour many hard knocks and bruises; and it is a still' more brutal taste which leads men to train animals to fight each other, and to take pleasure in seeing them do so. Now, I perfectly concur in the denunciation of all these evils, from which God is enabling the Salvation Army to rescue multitudes of these poor, so-called "brutal fellows;" but let us turn the light of truth upon the Christian society which shrugs its shoulders in horror at the mere description of these men who get drunk and beat their wives; the Christian society whose refined taste leads it to have as little intercourse as possible with these lower orders.

What sort of taste is it, which, in the presence of the existing state of things among the poor, spends not four-pence but four shillings, and double and treble that sum on a single bottle of wine for the jovial entertainment of a few friends, and from twenty to forty pounds for a dinner to be swallowed by a dozen or two of people? I maintain that no splendid furniture, no well-trained and livened servants, no costly pictures or display of finery or jewels, can redeem such a scene, viewed in the light of the teachings of Christ, from being worthy of being called "brutal," and all the more brutal because it is delighted in by persons whose intelligence and knowledge of the awful state of things in the world around them must make them fully aware of the good that might be done with the money which they thus lavish upon their lusts.

Let me take you to another scene. Here is His Grace, the Duke of Rackrent, and the Right Honorable Woman Seducer, Fitz-Shameless; and the gallant Colonel Swearer, with half the aristocracy of a county, male and female, mounted on horses worth hundreds of pounds each, and which have been bred and trained at a cost of hundreds more, and what for? "This splendid field " are waiting whilst a poor little timid animal is let loose from confinement and permitted to fly in terror from its strange surroundings. Observe the delight of all the gentlemen and noble ladies when a whole pack of strong dogs is let loose in pursuit, and then behold the noble chase! The regiment of well-mounted cavalry and the pack of hounds all charge at full gallop after the poor frightened little creature.

It will be a great disappointment if by any means it should escape, or be killed within as short a time as an hour. The sport will be excellent in proportion to the time during which the poor thing's agony is prolonged, and the number of miles it is able to run in terror of its life. Brutality! I tell you, that in my judgment, at any rate, you can find nothing in the vilest back slums more utterly, more deliberately, more savagely cruel than all that; and yet this is a comparatively small thing. One of the greatest employments of every Christian government and community is to train thousands of men, not to fight with their fists only, in the way of inflicting a few passing sores, but with weapons capable, it may be, of killing human beings at the rate of so many per minute. It is quite a scientific

taste" to study how to destroy a large vessel with several hundreds of men on board instantaneously.

Talk of brutality! Is there anything half as brutal as this within the whole range of rowdyism? But against all this, modern Christianity, which professes to believe the teachings of Him who taught us not to resist evil, but to love our enemies, and to treat with the utmost benevolence hostile nations, has nothing to say. All the devilish animosity, hard-hearted cruelty, and harrowing consequences of modern warfare, are not only sanctioned but held up as an indispensable necessity of civilized life, and in times of war, patronized and prayed for in our churches and chapels, with as much impudent assurance as though Jesus Christ had taught, "But I say unto you, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and, return evil for evil, hate your enemies and pursue them with all the diabolical appliances of destruction which the devil can enable you to invent." Alas, alas! is it not too patent for intelligent contradiction that the most detestable and brutal thing in the judgment of popular Christianity is not brutality, cruelty or injustice, but poverty and vulgarity? With plenty of money you may pile up your life with iniquities, and yet be blamed, if blamed at all, only in the mildest terms, whereas one flagrant sin in a poor and illiterate person is enough to stamp him, with a majority of professing Christians, as a creature from whom they would rather keep at a distance. I had an amusing corroboration of this the other day from one of my younger daughters who had been visiting a poor criminal in one of our large prisons. She said to one of the officers in attendance, "I suppose you do not often have rich people in here?" He replied, "No, miss, we very seldom get anybody but poor folks," and on her replying, "No, I am afraid it is because you do not look out so sharply for them," he remarked to a fellow officer, "She's all there."

Seventh: Further, "the criminal classes" is another of the cant phrases of modern Christianity, which thus brands every poor lad who steals, because he is hungry, but stands, hat in hand, before the rich man whose trade is well known to be a system of wholesale cheatery.

It is never convenient for ministers or responsible church wardens or deacons to ask how Mr. Money-maker gets the golden sovereigns or crisp notes which look so well in the collection. He may be the most "accursed sweater" who ever waxed fat on that murderous cheap needlework system, which is slowly destroying the bodies and ruining the souls of thousands of poor women, both in this and other "civilized" countries. He may keep scores of employees standing wearily sixteen hours per day be hind the counter, across which they dare not speak the truth, and on salaries so small that all hope of marriage and home is denied to them. Or he may trade in some damning thing which robs men of all that is good in this world and all hope for the next, such as opium or intoxicating drinks; but if you were simple enough to suppose that modern Christianity would object to him on account of any of these things, in fact, that you were alluding to such as he, in the phrase "criminal classes,"-- how respectable Christians would open their eyes, and, in fact, suspect that you had recently made your escape from some lunatic asylum, and ought to be hastened back there as soon as possible.

If any one should dare to cast any reflections upon any of these Christian money-makers, the representatives of their churches would say, "Hush, hush, my dear sir, Mr. So-and-so is the great man at our place, you know; they would be glad enough of him at the church opposite, but he likes our minister, and we mean to propose him as a deacon at the next church meeting." So the

wholesale and successful thief is glossed over and called by all mariner of respectable names by the representatives of a bastard Christianity. It is ready enough to cry, Stop, thief! when some poor fellow who has been out of work for perhaps months, gets desperate at the sight of children crying for bread, and makes a bungling attempt at getting what is not his own in order to satisfy them; or when it hears that such men, left helplessly to their own devices, take to living together, and bringing up a generation of thieves, it cries out vigorously against the criminals.

Sure, it may suggest a mission to them, and even set about it in a helpless, patronizing sort of way, wondering if really it is of any use to try to help "such men," as though they were of different flesh and blood to themselves. Verily such Christianity is of different blood from Him who preferred talking to a thief in His own last moments, to holding conversation with any priest or white-washed temple worshipper standing around. The man who hung by His side was a great ruffian, no doubt, but then he had been trained in that way; and if we want the judgment of Jesus Christ on such a point, He would certainly give. it against the pet of modern Christianity, and in favor of this poor rough. The man whom Jesus Christ consigned to .a hopeless perdition was he who made long prayers, and at the same time devoured widows' houses; or whose barns were filled with plenty while Lazarus lay covered with sores at his gates. On no point does the sham judgment of popular Christianity appear more startlingly in contrast with that of Jesus Christ, than on the everyday question of honesty. It knows that its rich tradesmen are so dishonest in their modes of carrying on their business, that if some poor fellow comes out of prison, determined to do right and earn his bread honestly, we know scarcely any with whom we dare entrust him, and with whom he would not be tempted to break his resolution, by being asked to tell business lies, or perform business tricks, which to his "unChristianized" intelligence is only another mode of thieving; but Christianity goes on, with virtuous breath declaring that the poor and found-out thieves are criminals, while the rich and secret scoundrels are the valued supporters of her institutions.

Further: "Desecrating the Sabbath" is another virtuous-sounding phrase, which is accepted .as the expression of a very reverential religion. So it should be, but here the sham judgment comes in again! What is desecrating the Sabbath? Well, it is not dressing up in fabulously costly clothes (sometimes unpaid for), as near in fabric, style, and fashion as can be to those worn in the very vilest services of sin. It is not to lie in bed consuming the early hours of the day, and then to flaunt in this array to one short service, as an exhibition of self and respectability, spending the remainder of the "sacred day" in an easy chair with the last new book. This is Sabbath keeping, even though to carry it out comfortably, servants may have to work over an elaborate dinner, or the turning out of a luxuriant equipage. Then what is "desecrating"? Well, go and spend next Sunday evening in Mr. Easy's mansion, and he will show you. You will not have an unpleasant time, that is, if your notions agree with his. He will give you a splendid meal, and then you will be allowed to lounge on one of his soft couches, while your host tells you spicy stories about the popular ministers of his denomination, or his daughter will play to you some "sacred" music on the piano or the harp. Fire and lamp-light will gleam softly, and thick curtains shut out the night, about which some one will occasionally remark that it is awful weather."

Presently a harsh, discordant sound is heard, like shouting and singing with some brass instrumental music all mixed up; and if you looked out you would see a little handful of men and women, wet and mud-stained, nearly exhausted in the struggle with rain and storm, and the half rough, half good-natured crowd, who have been allured out of yonder alley, and are now going,

swearing pushing, rolling along, in a fashion of their own, to a little room, or a low music-hall, where these tambourine players and the rest do congregate. Your host will jump up with an annoyed air, and exclaim with great emphasis, "Desecrating the Sabbath, that is what I call it!" and he will go on to expound his views until you understand that it is a Sabbath breaking for those poor folks to have made a noise in the street, even though they were only doing what David and Jesus Christ insisted was to be done-praising God with a loud voice, and confessing Him before all men.

For, "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" or "Glory! Hallelujah!" certainly had rung clearly out above the din with almost tragic earnestness. You will learn that your host's son and daughter have kept the Sabbath by singing in the church choir, although you see them later on, the one reading a novel, the other strolling out of the house with a cigar and a hint about returning with the latch-key. Now I charge it upon popular Christianity that its professors know all the miserable desecration which lies under the whole modern keeping of the day, and yet have not courage to condemn, but keep their blame for some effort to serve the Lord which they deem vulgar and distasteful. Modern Christendom gives its judgment ill favor of the hollow, conventional sacredness of the performance of the dressed up choir, whose very manner and countenance often betray the irreligion and frivolity of their hearts, and which neither wins the souls of sinners nor stirs the souls of saints; but reserves its strongest censure for the unscientific, rough-a nd-ready brass band, which empties the public houses and gets sinners saved by scores and hundreds.

Further: "The Sanctuary," according to modern Christian theories, is a "holy place," and yet a place where no one must speak of being now and actually holy! In fact, it is a place where scarcely anybody except the minister may say a word to, or for God; where such a scene as that recorded in 1 Corinthians 14:23-31 would be counted the highest fanaticism, and next door to blasphemy. I have heard of a congregation being actually thrown into dismay by the cry to God for mercy of some poor sinner who had been previously convicted, and gone to that chapel in the hope of finding the way of salvation; but he had a near escape of being ejected by the beadle.

Better everybody refrain their feet from going to these modern sanctuaries, than have a crowd of rough, needy sinners really wanting light and needing to be brought to repentance and salvation "Keep silence before me," says modern Christian society, and not a word is breathed to hurt its feelings. It is a literal fact that in these modern sanctuaries any manifestation of the LIVING GOD is the last thing expected or desired. Imagine the scare and horror of excitement and the intense surprise if He came, as He did once in an upper room, with His baptism of fire, in the middle of one of these quiet and soothing services next Sunday morning! There would be a quicker and more precipitous exit of many of the professed worshippers than there was from the temple when He drove them out with a scourge of small cords! The great work nearest to His heart -- the gathering in of the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, or the victims of sin, debauchery, and crime, the thieves and the harlots -- is the very last thing desired and expected in these modern sanctuaries. That He should speak in what is called His own "house" is the last thing arranged for. Alas, alas! do not these facts prove that these are the temples of Mammon, of respectability, of miserable, hollow, Pharisaic profession, where all manner of ungodliness is glossed over by what answers to the tithing of mint, anise, and cummin? and yet Christianity baptizes these temples with her name, and holds up to ridicule and contempt the open-air ring, where poor, simple, but devout and consecrated people, plead with God to speak, and try to make the world hear His message.

Further: "He is much to be condemned!" What for?

Never, as we have shown, because he is taking it too easy; never because he is enjoying a thousand a year, and letting men go on in sin undisturbed; never because he makes no straight forward, bold confession of Christ, or takes not up his cross to follow Him; never because he does not deny himself even the luxuries indulged by others in his "position," in order that he may push on the interests of the kingdom of God in the world!! "But he is much to be condemned" who gets into trouble, -- into a row, as it is politely termed, -- for Christ's sake. Modern Christians ask with bated breath, "Why ever should he have gone and stirred up the moral cesspools all around him, filling the atmosphere with 'moral pollution'? How could he be so quixotic and fanatical as to expect to make things better where the bishops and clergy, and all the most influential good people of the day, had long decided that it was better left alone?

We really cannot pity him," say these modern Christians, "if he is set upon and traduced and persecuted by all the libertines and whoremongers of the age; we fear that he is seeking notoriety, and posing to be a martyr!!" And thus this bastard Christianity adds its bann [sic] to the curses of God's enemies on the man who has not done well for himself, but who has dared to stand up for the poor and helpless, for broken-hearted mothers and fathers, and for the innocent and infant victims of the devils of lust and villainy, incarnate in the persons of rich debauchees. Modern Christianity has got rid, to a great extent, of damnation, but it can damn right vigorously in its own fashion all those who "go to extremes."

It can pour its half-pitying, half-sneering contempt upon ignorant, blundering fishermen or mechanics, but who, nevertheless, love God and souls, and believe in heaven and hell, and who really exercise self-denial and take trouble in order to serve God and save men. If such men go to prison to win some point for God and liberty of conscience, these Christians say in their drawing rooms, in their magazines and newspapers, "Ah, they are trying to become notorious! they are zealous of being thought martyrs!" And thus they join hands, as of old, with those who stood around the cross and wagged their heads, and said, "He saved others, Himself he cannot save;" and they can pronounce this judgment with such a pious, ex cathedra air that many simple men accept it as really the judgment of Christ's body on earth, instead of the hollow, sham verdict of modern Pharisees. In conclusion, let me repeat that if my words seem to condemn the great majority of the representatives of Christianity around us, it is with sincere grief that I admit it. Would to God there were few localities, few churches, and few ministers to which my remarks could be applied! But if there be not few but many, I cannot help it. I appeal to you whether I have spoken more than the truth; and I speak it in love to you who wish to hear and to obey it in the love of it. I would gladly -forbear to speak out thus, -- I have forborne for long, and have frequently felt condemned hi so doing and it is only because I see the utter hopelessness of any improvement, of any recurrence to the simplicity and purity of the gospel, without an utter abandonment of the false and hollow judgment of modern Christianity with respect to the matters we have been reviewing, that I venture to speak thus.

I would fain hope that some of you may be induced to forsake every refuge of lies which has been reared around you, and to abandon all the false standards of faith and practice to which I have alluded, and open your hearts and ears to listen to the voice that never changes, but which in all ages alike tells men of a just judgment to come. We must all appear before the judgment-seat of

Christ; and it will be no excuse for us there that we were surrounded by false witnesses, sham lights, and an openly received system of hypocrisy. God has shown us His beloved Moses, Daniels, Nehemiahs, Jeremiahs, Pauls, Johns, and numberless other worthies, standing out gloriously alone in the midst of a Pagan society, full of refined and splendid iniquity, and standing out ever more Divine, when all around were "weighed in the balances and found wanting." You have but the old choice to make; may God enable you to make it, and to stand out for God and righteousness against all around you. The Judgment of the Great White Throne As we remarked in the first part of this lecture, the innate convictions of humanity are too strong for the successful annihilation of a dread of coming judgment. It seems to have been the universal opinion of the wisest and best of the human race that there ought to be a judgment, The continual miscarriage of justice in this world, and the unequal distribution of its goods and enjoyments; its false standard of right and wrong; its unjust and sham judgments, to which we have already alluded, have seemed to drive it in upon the reason of all thoughtful beings that there must come a settling day. The unavenged wrongs of multitudes of the poor and the oppressed; of millions of slaves; of poor, helpless children; of tens of thousands of poor, broken hearted girls, -- mere children, -- who have been wrecked of virtue and happiness through the vice of those double or treble their age, and who were fully awake to the consequences of their conduct; wrongs such as these, and multitudes of others, all unjudged and unrequited in this world, seem to demand some future retribution. The unpunished sins of multitudes who have flourished in their lives and gone in triumph to their graves, who floated to their positions of eminence, fame, and luxury through the tears and blood of widows, orphans, and others, down-trodden by their greed and power, cry from the ground, as did the blood of Abel, for avenging justice.

Methinks if we could face this guilty crowd and compel them to speak, they would be obliged to say, " Yes, during our lives we violated all law and justice, won the applause of men and the pleasures and honors in which we reveled, by means of the sorrows and sufferings of our fellows; but no strong arm stayed our progress, no tongue denounced our villainies, no power punished our crimes; we lived and fattened, and died with the approbation, nay, applause, of men ringing in our ears; and after death we were praised and flattered on tablets of marble, in newspapers and biographies, as though we had been the excellent of the earth. We know that we are of the devil; we expect and are waiting for the judgment."

Further, the common-sense of humanity perceives that human lives are all unfinished at the grave, and require some appendix, some explanation. If you found a book with the story all unfinished, -- the villains and seducers all unpunished, and the poor, .down-trodden slaves unavenged, the wronged and helpless people undelivered, -- you would feel that there must be another volume somewhere. So, when life breaks up, with almost all men there are so many things and doings and feelings all unfinished, that you might write on every gravestone, "To be continued in the next world." It is as if the tree were blighted at its bloom; as if the life were sapped at its source; as if the flood were turned back at its tide.

But, as we have already noted, there is a judgment already begun here and now. The same Divinity is at work in this world who will reign and operate in the next, and He is working on precisely the same principles. The moral government of this world is going on under the shadow, so to speak, of the great white throne. The shadow of that tribunal is reflected on all the tribunals and transactions of this earth.

Formerly, when the judges visited the provincial towns, there used to be a sort of public entry. The legal civic dignitaries went forth to meet them and march in procession with them into the town, preceded by heralds with trumpets, announcing the coming of judgment for the wrong-doers of those towns. So God has His heralds abroad in the world, proclaiming that He is coming. These heralds are already gone forth; they are here today. There is a herald in every man's heart, giving foretastes of what the judgment will be, pointing out and convicting him of sin.

Every transgressor of the Divine law stands condemned before his own judgment seat. Conscience pronounces sentence on him according to his works, independently of all creeds and theories. A false gospel, under the auspices of popular Christianity, essays to set at naught this judgment, and to tell men that they are not to judge themselves according to their works, but according to their beliefs. But God's herald in them remorselessly holds up their sin, and points to coming retribution. Conscience asserts itself, and the man who has sinned knows, feels that he must be judged.

Further, not only does conscience convict of sin, but to a certain extent punishes sin, even here. What horrors men suffer from their guilty consciences, in spite of all their infidel reasonings and hopes. How many suicides will be found, like Judas, to have been driven to distraction by the remorse and anguish of realized guilt. Is not the fact that such suffering is the consequence of sin unquestionable evidence that so long as the soul contumes [with insolence purposes -- DVM] to live and remain guilty, it must continue to suffer? If transgressors can find no comfort or deliverance from this tormenting sense of guilt in this world, on what principle can it be argued that they will find it in the next? If conscience is too strong for them here, what ground is there for supposing that they will rise superior to it in the future?

Secondly: God has a herald in society. We have wandered a long distance from God in these days, I admit, and as distance from the sun brings corresponding darkness and obliterates the distinctions between natural objects, so distance from God brings spiritual darkness and induces blindness to moral distinctions. Nevertheless, far as society has got away from God, and rotten as it largely is, still it has the herald trumpet blowing loudly enough to proclaim evil to be evil, and, being evil, to be amenable to judgment. And although many preachers of a false theology, under the patronage of popular Christianity, combine to persuade men and themselves that they will escape punishment, the very libertines, thieves, gamblers, and moral bankrupts of all descriptions, pronounce their judgment to be false, saying, "Hypocrites all of you, we know we are of the devil his works we do, and we expect to go to hell."

I have no doubt that the great secret of the success of the Salvation Army with multitudes of the openly wicked and profane is that we go straight to their consciences, attacking their sins, making no excuse or palliation, but telling them as straight as Jesus Christ Himself told the sinners of His day, that, except they repent, forsake their sins, and turn to God, everlasting fire must be their portion. This gospel answers to the voice of conscience within; they know it is true, because it matches their most secret and powerful intuitions, whereas the popular gospel of this day, its judgment included, is the laughing-stock of hell; it dare neither damn the sinner nor sanctify the saint. But we must now consider for a few minutes what the character of this judgment is to be, which is proclaimed alike by conscience, reason, and religion. And the BIBLE, after all, is the great authority. It meets us just where conscience and reason fail us, and responds to and corroborates

the profoundest and most indestructible intuitions of humanity.

Here the bible comes forward and proclaims the fact of a coming judgment in the most emphatic and unmistakable language, and describes the principles on which it is to be conducted, and the consequences which are to follow from it, with the utmost minuteness. I have avoided quoting texts more than I could help in former lectures, mainly because the number corroborative of each of my points would have been so overwhelming; but I must necessarily quote three or four passages here, and shall take them from the words of Jesus, Paul, Peter, Jude, and John, that in the mouth of three or four witnesses this truth may be established.

"The hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29).

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be published with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10).

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 1:6).

"And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Revelation 20:11-12).

I accept that authority. That answers to the voice of my conscience. That satisfies the claims of my intellect. Here I perceive that God will avenge the wrongs, not only of His own elect, but of the fatherless, the widow, and the oppressed of all ages, and the cry of my soul for justice is met, my sense of outraged righteousness is appeased, my conscience pronounces, "True and righteous art Thou, O King of saints!" But people say, and a great many Christian people say in this day, "A good deal of the language in these and similar texts is figurative language." They do not like the doctrine; it is too definite, too particular, too inclusive for them; and so they try to explain it away. But supposing that some of the language were figurative, -- what then? What do you gain by making it out to be figurative? What are figures for? Surely no one will argue that the judgment, as prefigured in the words of Jesus Christ and His apostles, will be less thorough, less scrutinizing, less terrible than the figures used to set it forth i Therefor it does not matter whether these be figurative expressions or no, seeing that they are calculated to convey the most awful and tremendous ideas of the judgment which any figures could convey, which the wisdom of God could

select.

Some of the objections which people bring against the literal fulfillment of these passages seem to me to be very weak.

They say, " Where could be the scene of such a judgment seat!" I answer, He who created the universe can surely make a platform big enough on which to judge the inhabitants of this little world. For ought we know, there may be one already erected. There may be a world of judgment going on, where the representatives of the Divine government are already at work, getting ready for the final sentence. We do not know.

Again, they say, "Look at the time it would require." But I say, He who has had patience to watch the long procession of man’s iniquities through the ages of time will perhaps have patience to judge men on account of them And as one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, be sure, sinner, He will take the time to investigate your case; you will not be missed out.

Note that the judgment is to be universal.

These passages and numberless others declare that the dead, small and great, shall stand before God, and that every knee shall bow before Him, and every tongue confess to Him. If God in some way will deal individually with every son and daughter of Adam, what does it signify where or by what method He does it, so that the end be secured? You and I will find our way from the spot, wherever it may be, to heaven or to hell, according to the sentence. Our destiny in the great eternity which follows will be settled by the sentence, not by the method by which it is arrived at. The great matter to us is that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." This is not the Old Testament. I have purposely confined my quotations to the New; this is the revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, by which Paul declares God will "judge the secrets of men." Not only will every man and woman be dealt with, but every character will be demonstrated, made manifest.

There will be no whited sepulcher business there, no make-believe, sentimental salvation, no false gospel, with its creeds and phrases, no ceremonial salvation; but we shall all stand revealed as we are, black or white, good or bad, washed or unwashed, pure or impure.

What nonsense it is for people to talk of going down to death with their hearts full of iniquity, "as a cage of unclean birds," as some of them are so fond of quoting. If so, what effect will death have upon their moral nature? What cleansing stream will be opened by the Angel of Death? If you are not saved from sin before you come down to the Jordan of death, there is no virtue in its waters to wash you. There is only one cleansing medium for SOULS, and that is the blood of the Lamb; and you must get washed in life, if you want to pass muster at death and at the judgment seat.

People say, "Do you think the sins of the saints are going to be dragged out at the judgment seat?" No! not the sins of the saints, for they are cast behind His back; but the saints themselves are going to be dragged out. One great end of the judgment will be to decide who are the saints, and to show to the universe that Jesus was equal to the work He had undertaken, namely, to destroy in the hearts of His saints the works of the devil, and that He was strong enough to hold them up against all the temptations and allurements of sin, blameless unto that day; and now they are to be

revealed and held up, not as dark, hollow, evil-hearted, hypocritical people, but as the saints of God, washed and saved and made clean and white, which you know means holy, in the blood of the Lamb. He will point all the devils in the universe to His saints; they will be His boast and glory, and manifest victory over the devil. The question of questions then will be, Are you a saint?

Further, every character is not only to be settled and demonstrated, but it is to be judged according to its deserts -- "according to that he hath done."

He that knew his Master's will and did it not, is to be beaten with many stripes; while he who knew it not and did things worthy of stripes, is to beaten with few. "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell."

We shall be judged according to our privileges, according to the light we have received, and the obedience we have rendered to it, not only outwardly, but inwardly; according to our rebellion or submission to God; according to our loyalty and obedience to Him, in our hearts as well as in our lives.

I am afraid many, even of those who are saved, will suffer great loss in that day. There will be a great deal of wood, hay, and stubble, instead of gold, silver, and precious stones. Oh, let us wake up in time to redeem the few remaining days of our lives. The past is irredeemable; it is gone, and its losses must remain forever. The harvest which we might have gathered is lost, and God Himself cannot make up to us for that loss. We may have many to-morrows, but we shall never have over again a yesterday. Oh friends, you who love Him will have to stand before His judgment seat to receive the things done in the body. What are you doing? Are you visiting His sick or in prison? Are you ministering unto Him when hungry or naked, in the persons of His poor? When He is cast out and traduced in the persons of His persecuted ones, are you showing your love to Him by standing up for His character and doing what you can to defend Him? Are you seeking after His lost sheep diligently until you find them, which means, you know, going after them where they are, however the thorns may prick your feet or the sun light on your head? Are you DOING these things? because, if not, don't expect Him to say, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Can anybody imagine that Jesus Christ will pronounce a sort of figurative or sentimental judgment -- that He will say, "Inasmuch as ye did this or that" to those who never did anything of the kind? Such a proceeding would be very unlike anything He ever did or said when on earth, would it not? He was so true that He was called "the Truth;" so intensely real and practical that no shadow of unreality or sham could endure His gaze for a moment. is it possible to conceive that He will be any other when he comes 'to judgment?' And yet how many of His professed followers are presuming on a Judge all meekness, mercy, and love, quite forgetting that in that day the reign of mercy will be ended and the Lamb that was slain will appear as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Judge of all the earth, who will still do right.

What are you doing, friend? As the stories come to me from Hackney Wick, Seven Dials, St. Giles', the Borough, and other parts where our people are visiting and working continually, -- stories of destitution, sickness, sorrow, and suffering, no less than of sin crime and shame, -- I feel, what can I do, what can I say that will arouse God's professed people to some concern and care for these poor lost multitudes? Our people tell me they find people who say, "Don't talk to us about a God: we don't believe in such a Being. Don't tell us about Christians: we want neither you nor your tracts, nor your Bibles -- away with you. We don't believe in such Christians, who leave us

to die in want and misery like this." Men and women nearly naked, children absolutely so, women who must not look off from their match-box making, at 2 1-2d. per gross, or their shirt stitching, at 3d. each, for fear of reducing their earnings a half-penny, and thus robbing their children of an ounce more bread, or the rent of their wretched room of the last fraction which an inexorable (perhaps Christian?) landlord exacts.

Thousands of such wretched beings, without a bed to lie upon, without fire to warm them, or sufficient food to keep body and soul together, are living in the .greatest degradation and sin all over this London, perhaps not two hundred yards from the very spot where we are assembled this afternoon; and yet who cares for them, or visits them, or weeps over them with a really Christ-like sympathy? Who carries them either the bread that perisheth or the Bread of Life? You London Christians, what shall you say in the great day of account? Where shall you stand? How will you look? Oh, friends, give up the sentimental hypocrisy of singing,

"Rescue the perishing, Care for the dying," -- in the drawing room, to the accompaniment of the piano, without ever dreaming of going outside to do it; such idle words will prove only a mockery and a sham in the great day of account. Such songs will come booming back on the ears of the soul with more awful forebodings than the echoes of the Archangel’s trumpet itself! Sentimentalism will have no resurrection; it will rot with the grave clothes! What doth it profit, my brethren, to say to the hungry and naked, either physically or spiritually, Be ye warmed and filled, if, notwithstanding, ye give them not either the temporal or the spiritual bread? He will say, "Inasmuch as ye did it not, depart from Me."

Further, the verdict of that day will carry universal conviction.

Every being will feel that long-waited-for justice has come at last. The song which will burst forth from the lips of the saints, as they take their places in the celestial city, will be, "True and righteous art Thou, O King of saints;" and methinks the same words, though not uttered by the lips, will be graven on the hearts of the hosts of the lost as they sink to meet their doom, and the realization of the justice of their sentence will make their hell. May no soul in this assembly, or any who may read these words, ever realize what this means. Amen.

Chapter 50

04.06. Delivered in Steinway Hall, Regent Street

Notes of Three Addresses on Household Gods Delivered in Steinway Hall, Regent Street

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Romans 6:16 (3).

It is assumed all through this Book that every human being has a deity. In fact, we are so made that we must have a god. Even the man who says there is no God, worships a god notwithstanding, and that god is, "to whom he yields himself a servant to obey." Now God claims to be the Deity of the soul of every human being; but Satan has supplanted God, and he has done it in many ways. He has assumed many different forms in order to suit different classes and conditions of men. For one class of persons he finds one idol, for another class another. But the principle here laid down is, that whatever the outward form may be, that which usurps in a man's affections, life, and action, the place of God, becomes his deity. He need not outwardly label it idol, or bow his knees and worship it. The supremacy which he gives to it in his affections and life is the point.

What an awful thought that in this so-called Christian England, tens of thousands of people are as truly worshipping idols as are any of the inhabitants of Africa or China.

I want this morning to confine myself more particularly to the gods of the household. Professing Christians speak about giving up the vanities of the world, and coming out from the world, when, alas! we need not go outside the four walls of their own dwellings to find their god. I am afraid there are quite as many people who go wrong with these inside idols as with the outside ones. The first that strikes us as the most universal god of so-called religious society in this day is the God of Fashion.

Now, what is fashion? What does the term mean?. It means the world's way of having things, and the world's way of doing things. When we look abroad on the great majority of men and women around us, we see that they are utterly godless, selfish, and untrue, and yet the majority always fixes the fashion. It is not the few true, real, God-fearing, earnest men and women who want to serve God and help humanity, who fix the fashion; it is always the majority. Consequently, you see, fashion is always diametrically opposed to God's way of having things, and God's way of doing things. Therefore the votaries of fashion cannot possibly be the servants of God! There is no getting away from that conclusion.

Let us now inquire what is God's great end or purpose in His way of doing things, and in the way that He has prescribed in which we are to have and to do things. What is shown by the constitution of our bodies, by the laws and ordinances of the heavens, and by the laws of nature, to be God's end in everything? Utility! If you look at your eye, or study your ear or hands, or any other part of your body, you cannot find a single fiber or nerve which is not of some use in your annual economy-nothing superfluous, nothing for waste or for mere sake of being there. A useful result is the end contemplated. Look at the heavens-it is the same; there is not a single waste star. Look at

the animal creation -- it is the same. Look at the vegetable creation -- it is the same. The very rocks exist not for themselves. The earth ministers to the wants of man and beast. There is nothing created for mere show, no useless part of creation. The aim of God in all His modes and works is the highest good to all His creatures. Now let us inquire what is the end of fashion. When we substitute the means for the end, we lose the great result God had in store for us. This is true in everything, natural, mental, and spiritual. Now, God's order is to have everything attuned to the highest result, especially in the case of His highest creature-man. He wants us to use every power and capacity He has given us for the highest ends-to serve God and humanity! But fashion has turned God's order topsy-turvy, and set up as its end, supposed Beauty! not that beauty which is an accompaniment of utility; but fashion sets up beauty as the end, and not the accompaniment. Fashion says, "That is elegant. That looks grand, so it shall be so." So the great question comes to be in dress, in equipage, in our modes of doing business, in our furnishing arrangements, and in our institutions, What is the order of fashion? Fashion sets the law, and everybody does what everybody else does; and all who will not bow down to this idol are called puritans, fanatics, straight-laced, or by any other terms of contempt most convenient. So hot is this furnace of contempt and scorn that it is one of the highest tests of moral courage in man or woman to set fashion at naught. It is one of the grandest things to teach your children from their babyhood to say, "No, I won't do that because everybody else does it. You must give me a better reason than the fashion for what I do."

Fashion prescribes the form of dress for almost the whole world. Doctors may talk, and advise, and warn against high heels, tight waists, and insufficient clothing, and all the monstrous and ridiculous appendages to dress which fashion from time to time prescribes. But it is fashion! that is enough. Never mind if tight-lacing does squeeze my lungs and prevent my getting the necessary amount of air, thus inducing premature disease and death; it is the fashion, and I must do it. Never mind if the high-heeled shoes produce deformity of the spine and all manner of other injuries; it is the fashion, and I must have them. I must dress myself in the most ridiculous costumes which Parisian milliners can contrive, it is the fashion; if the dress is too light, or does not half cover my body, never mind; I shall wear it because it is the fashion.

So, in the furnishing of people's houses, in a great many instances, it is the same. I have been in many houses where it seems to me that almost all utility and necessary comfort for health and work is lost sight of. It is almost all show, so that you are afraid to use a table for fear you will injure it. Oh, the money and tune that are squandered, and the perpetual strife that goes on to keep up this show because everybody else does it. In their very companionships fashion has decided that should be the ground and the rule of selection, and so fashionable people have only the companions that society has settled they are to have. They do not look, as you would suppose rational beings would, for congenial society in the way of congeniality of thought, and feeling, and intelligence, that which gives vivacity and interest to communion with one another. Oh, no! If a person ever so attractive and clever, and competent to interest, or instruct, or please them, happens to be a grade lower in the social scale, fashion says, "That person is not in your circle, he is out of your sphere; you cannot associate with such a person." So they deprive their intellects and hearts of the greatest delight, because fashion has prescribed what kind of people they should associate with, and if those people be ever so hollow and empty, never mind; they must obey the behests of fashion.

Fashion has also settled that it is not the thing for people in certain positions and stations to go to such and such places, but that it is right for them to go to others; and so they go wherever fashion dictates. Fashion has even prescribed the way people shall move and the way in which they shall speak, and has got them pretty much squeezed down into uniformity, so that all naturalness is lost and they are nearly all alike. It is the same kind of movement they make and the same kind of platitudes they utter, everywhere and in all circumstances. I hope there are not many of this class here this morning; but if there are any, let me ask, How do you like the picture -- the representation of the claims of this deity? -- that rational beings, intelligent creatures, some of them capable of great and glorious things, should be thus fettered and bound and forced into one shape and reduced to nonentities and puppets? Do you envy the fate of the devotees of fashion? Will you worship this god any longer? Thank God, He emancipated me twenty-five Years ago, and I have been free ever since. If you are not yet emancipated, get emancipated this morning. Do not consider fashion when you are settling how you ought to order your household, but plan for the highest good of your children and those around you, and for your greatest usefulness in the world. Never mind fashion. In this day when chaplains of prisons and reformatories tell us that gaudy, flashy dressing leads as many young girls to destruction as drink, it behooves every true woman to settle before God in her closet what kind of dress she ought to wear, and to resolve to wear it in spite of fashion. If all professedly Christian ladies would do this, what a salvation this one reform alone would work in the world! You young people here resolve that you will be original, natural human beings, as God would have you; resolve that you won't be pressed into this mold, or into that, to please anybody-that you will be an independent man or woman, educated and refilled by intercourse with God; but be yourself, and do not aim to be anybody else. Set fashion at naught. If people would do this, what different households they would have! What different children! What different friends! What different results they would produce in the world, and how differently they would feel when they were dying! Oh, what wasted lives! What beautiful forms, and beautiful minds, and beautiful intellects are prostrated and ruined at the shrine of the god of fashion! May God deliver us from this idol!

Another of the most prominent of household gods is that of ease -- comfort. In many instances the highest interests of the children and servants, the good of the bodies and souls of men, the serving and glory of God, are all made subservient to this god of comfort.

Think for a moment what God requires of every human being. First, He requires all men to be His people; and secondly, He requires of all His people that they should be absolutely HIS SERVANTS.

Now then, compare the duties of a servant with the idea of ease and comfort being the prevailing notion of a man's life, and you will see its absurdity. What would you think of a servant, whose prevailing idea was to make her or himself comfortable? Suppose such a one saying, "Yes, I want the situation, I should like the wages, but I want my comfort most. I do not want to get up any earlier in the morning than the mistress or the master. I am not going to do any hard or troublesome work. I don't see why I should. I should like an easy chair to sit in, and certain hours of the day to myself. I am not going to do this or the other that is disagreeable to me. I am going to be COMFORTABLE." What would you think of such a servant?

You smile; well, if we are true and real, we have given up the ownership of ourselves. We have become literally the slaves of the living God, to do His bidding, to work for His interests, to look after His lost ones, to extend His kingdom, and to live for His glory! This is what we PROFESS. This is not The Salvation Army theology only. This is in all Church creeds, more or less. It was sworn over your baptismal font that you should renounce the devil and all his works, that you should give up "the world" and be a true and real servant of the Most High God. And yet I am afraid many in this congregation have taken good care never to serve God at the expense of their own comfort! If you suggest any plan of usefulness, the first thing that meets you in one form or another is, "Oh, that would be hard work; that would be a sacrifice; or, I should have to give up so many evenings a week;" or sometimes, alas, "that would interfere with my dinner hour."

These ease-loving Christians do not look at the object that has to be accomplished for God; but how it will effect their own ease and comfort. "I visit the poor! Oh, I could not; think of the smells I should have to encounter; look at the disagreeable sights I should have to see! My delicate nerves would not bear it. Oh, no, I could not. If the Lord has any nice comfortable work, I have no objection; but my comfort must first be considered. Your mission services are all very good, but we cannot have our household duties upset. We must have our domestic regularity -- our comfort." I have wept many times as I have parted with such people, when these words forced themselves upon me: "Saul returned into his own house, but David gat him into the hold."

David must go and fight and face the perils of the wilderness, and endure all sorts of self-sacrifice, and conflict, and sorrow, but Saul goes back to his own house. He has done with it. He thinks his responsibility is at an end. When the meeting is over, these people who have heard all about the claims of God and the lost, and perhaps said a few sleepy words of sympathy, or given a five-pound note, away they go to their own houses; but the real Davids must get up into the holds, or else God’s armies will be wasted, and hell will be more largely peopled than it would be otherwise. Somebody must hold the fort, somebody must fight, somebody must suffer. Nothing can be done for humanity hilt through . suffering, and if one won’t, there falls a double .weight upon another. Oh, the multitudes of souls who have made shipwreck through this god of ease! It ruins the soul that worships, as well as hinders all the good that might be done for others. It has a stupefying, paralyzing, damning influence upon every soul that once gives way to it.

Once get under the dominion of THAT GOD and you are done for. If you are under his dominion, for Christ’s sake get up this morning and ask Him to snap the fetters that bind you. Jesus from the Cross cries to you. Suffering humanity is sinking at this hour by thousands into a hell on earth, and a nethermost hell hereafter. Up, Christians, arise and be doing! Put off your sleepiness, your idleness, and set to work; bend your back to the burden, stoop to pick up the lost. They are crying all around you for help.

If I understand this book, you will be called to an awful account if your opportunity, your strength of body, your capacities for blessing your fellow men are all buried and destroyed by this love of ease.

Thank God, He emancipated me from that years ago. I have had the same temptations that others have had, and perhaps sometimes even extra temptations, through excessive weariness, frequently hardly knowing how to get from my bed; but I have had such a horror of getting under the dominion of this god of ease that I have set my whole nature against it.

What would you think of a mother whose child was dangerously sick saying, "Really, I am so burdened with the rest of my family, I have so much to think about, that I cannot give myself up to this child. I am very sorry, of course, I feel it very deeply, but I cannot deny myself the comforts of life. I must lie on the sofa so long, and I must do this, that, or the other, or go here and there?" What would you think of such a woman? And yet there are thousands of professing Christians who lie on the sofa, I am afraid, half their time. They don't know what to do with themselves, trying to get amused and occupied, and yet they profess to be God Almighty's SERVANTS. My friends, put this practical test to yourselves. It is of no use going to services and hearing beautiful sermons which you don't apply to yourselves. Are not these things realities? If so, I say, for Christ's sake, for your soul's sake, and humanity's sake, act accordingly. Another household god-alas! I wish it could be kept out of the household (for it is more especially the god of the world outside, yet it comes into the family and gets into the hearts of the very little ones) The God of Gain.

Now God's order is for every man to look after his fellow man-" look not every man on his own things, but also on the things of others," but the world's order -- its received maxim is -- "Every man for himself." God's order is, "As ye would men should do to you, do ye even so to them." That means, you know, when you are making a bargain, don't run a man down below the lawful price of his goods, any more than you would like to have him run you down. Don't beat down that poor woman in her work because you know she has no one to appeal to. That is the spirit of selfishness, which is of the devil. This god of gain! how I see its sway sometimes in houses where I stay. What a contrast I often see between the interest excited by the news of the day, and any information respecting the kingdom of God. You know how morning prayers are not over very often -- how superficial it all is, how little heart there is in it. It seems quite a relief to the worshippers when it is over; then begins the real interest of the day. The gentleman seizes the newspaper, looks up and down the columns to see how the funds stand. If you keep looking at him you will tell in a minute if there is anything in the paper that touches him. If he is a merchant the state of the market as to the things he buys or sells touches him to the quick; if he sees something affecting his interests he will perhaps tell it to his wife; and then you will see the older children looking towards him with the greatest anxiety-the god of gain has his hand even on their young hearts.

They may have some outward show of being religious, but gain is the real god. If there is anything that entails immediate action in connection with the business, you see how everything else is at once put on one side. Then the lady says, "Business must be attended to." Must is a sine qua non in the matter. Would to God they would put a must in somewhere else. The children all know the importance of that must. They know, perhaps, that they have money, that they are to be rich some day, but nevertheless they want more. Their father cannot afford to lose if he has ever so much. Gain, gain -- they must make gain! That man may see in another column of the paper something which affects the work of God, but he only says a few sleepy words about it, "Very sorry, very sorry indeed." Then down goes the paper, and he gets ready to go to his office. The column touching his gains touched him to the quick, the other only touched his sentimentality; the one touched his interests, the other touched only those of Jesus Christ.

Once I was at a conference, and I shall never forget it. I saw a company of ministers deliberating on certain questions, and the questions were all on paper, so that everybody knew what was coming on. I noticed that when anything came up affecting the character, or position, or income of

those individuals, every man was in his place, every man had his paper and pencil quick as lightning, to catch every word that was said. But when it was a question that only referred to the work of God, to the interests of the Church, to the salvation of souls, a number of them were out of their places altogether. Others had got the newspapers, others were writing letters.

There was only a handful who were paying proper attention to the question. I thought, O my God, it is as it was in the days of old, "there is not one of them that will keep Thy doors for naught; they are all gone after their covetousness." Don't call that censorious. You know how true it is. I WISH IT WERE NOT. I feel as if I could give the blood out of my very heart that it might not be so, but it is so. I have no doubt the Apostle was forced much against his will to say and feel -- "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." Alas! it had begun to be true then; how much more true is it now? I trust and believe that God is raising up a people who will seek His, in their very hearts' core, and who will be willing to sacrifice their own gain!

"The love of money is the root of all evil." Human experience justifies the Divine Word. Show me a man who loves money for its own sake, for the sake of hoarding it and leaving it to his children, and I will show you a man whom the DEVIL IS SURE OF. There is no doubt about it, unless God in His omnipotent mercy awakens him and gives him grace to turn that devil of avarice out of his soul -- "Covetousness, which is idolatry "-idol worship! gold worship! wealth worship!! Are you worshipping this god? My friend, make haste for your life. You can no more be the Lord's servant and worship wealth, than the Jews were who crucified the Lord Jesus.

Friends, go to your closets; see whether you are in any measure under the dominion of this idol of gain! see why you value your money; see what you purpose to do with it; reckon, if you had a husband, a wife, or child in slavery, and you could buy them out, how much of the money you would keep. Reckon what you ought to keep while thousands of your brethren are the slaves of sin and the devil, when your money would help to deliver them. Reckon this matter as you would reckon with your' steward.

You give your steward possession of certain property to manage for you; you know that he must eat and drink, and have a place to rest in. If he is a good servant, you say, "Here, John, I want you to accomplish that work for me in so many months, and I place at your disposal these resources. Get in these debts, see these creditors, receive such and such moneys, do such and such things. You may take out all that is necessary to keep you in comfort and health (and if he has a family), as much as your family requires, not for extravagance, but for your necessary comfort, while yeti are doing my business." Would you reckon that such a steward had a right to spend your money in extravagant living, or hoard it up for his own personal ends? Are you a steward of God? And do you expect to give an account to Him who shall judge both quick and dead? If so, what will you say when He demands an account of your stewardship? The household god next in importance, and which is perhaps the most popular both of the household and the nation, is the God of Education.

Everything must how to the scholastic education of the children. Their very health is sacrificed in hundreds of instances; the whole of the domestic arrangements, the convenience of father and mother and visitors must how down to this god. The children must be educated, whatever else becomes of them. I touched very briefly on this subject in my address at Exeter Hall on "Family Religion," and some friends seemed to infer that I was against education, whereas I have seldom talked with any one on the subject more profoundly impressed with its importance! I adopted,

many years ago, the sentiment of the philosopher Locke, who said that "in nine cases out of ten all the men we meet are what they are for good or for evil, for usefulness or otherwise, by their education." I say I fully believe that, and have acted upon it in training my own family; so you see my quarrel is not with education, but with a certain kind of education.

I believe that a child ought to be educated every half-hour of its life -- never ought to be left to itself in the sense of not having a recognized influence exerted over its mind. The question is then, What kind of education is the right kind to bestow upon children? How ought you to educate them? The same idea which helped us on the question of fashion may help us again here. What should be the great purpose of education? Surely right education must be that which is calculated to help the child to attain the highest type of its kind, and to fit it for its highest destiny, You train your horse on that principle. You develop and strengthen it that it may be a perfect creature, having capacity developed for the highest service of which its nature is capable.

I say that all right training ought to contemplate this end, and especially with respect to man, God's highest creature. Next comes the question, What is the highest type of a man? and the highest destiny of a man? What ought we to aim at? For if the aim is wrong, all our training will be wrong. . I say that the highest type of a man is that in which the soul rules over the body, in which a purified, ennobled soul rules through an enlightened intelligence, and makes every faculty of the being subservient to the highest purpose, the service of humanity and the service of God! If I understand it, that is the highest type of man and his highest destiny. And it seems to me that all education that falls short of this is a curse rather than a blessing. The aim of all rightly directed education is to make such men and women, and to fit them for such work, and if it fails of this, I say it is one-sided, unphilosophical, and irreligious, and THAT IS MY QUARREL WITH MODERN EDUCATION. I charge it with being all this, and that is the reason I did not educate my children after its theories; I did not believe in them, and the results so far prove that I was right.

Then first let me look at what ought to be the purpose of education. Most of you, nearly all, I presume, agree as to what I have stated. But the purpose of modern education is anything but this It is for the most part planned and executed with a view to the aggrandizement or well-being of the individual, looked at in a worldly point of view. Parents look at their boy and say, "Now, what can we do with him?" They have all sorts of aspirations and ambitions for the boy, and they. say, "Well, we must educate him, develop his intellect." What for? That he may use it for the service of humanity and the glory of God? Oh no, that never enters their minds. They say, "We will have him educated in order that he may shine in the world. We will have a son who will be able to go to the bar, the senate house, or do anything else that ambition fixes on." The AGGRANDIZEMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL is the end, not the universal good, and out of this wrong aim arises the undue estimate of mere scholastic education. What would you say of the training of an animal, if it were possible for the trainer to select one or two faculties, and develop and strengthen them to the exclusion, neglect, or extinction of other faculties? Would you say that was right training? The main idea of modern education is that of the imparting of knowledge. Knowledge is the idol which both the household and the nation today are worshipping more largely perhaps than any other, as if progress in knowledge constituted the true progress of man. Oh, if it were so, what a different world we should have today; but we know it is quite the contrary. We know that the more knowledge you give to an individual, without giving him a corresponding disposition to use it for good, the more you increase his capacity for mischief. Very often the most learned men live for the

worst purposes! But, alas,! the very flower of the youth of our nation is sacrificed to this modern deity. The notion is that our youth must be educated in this mischievous sense; they must be crammed with knowledge; whether it be a curse or a blessing to them is not the question, but they must have it. They must learn the dead languages, and read had literature, in order to make them like the rest of the world around them, no matter what becomes of their morals; they must be crammed with science, -- much of it falsely so called; much of it in embryo, crude and shallow -- the shallow theories of minds trying to grasp profound thoughts, and getting lost in the fogs of their own folly, landing the poor pupils on the strand of infidelity and atheism. The intellect, the one faculty of the man, must be strained, and stretched, and crammed, to the utter neglect, and often destruction, of the moral faculties. And when you have done, what have you produced? An enlightened animal, an intellectual monster, who walks abroad, treading under his feet all the tender instincts and most sacred feelings and aspirations of humanity. That is all you have produced; there are thousands such to be seen today. Alas! my heart bleeds over the stories I hear all over the land, which I could give you as illustrations of this fact. All this mischief comes of upsetting God's order -- cultivating the intellect at the expense of the heart; being at more pains to make our youth clever than to make them GOOD! This false theory leads to false methods, and hence the deplorable condition of our nation today. It leads to the separating from home life our little boys of ten and twelve years of age, and our girls too, alas! sending them away from the tender influences, and what ought to be the grand and noble inspirations of their mothers, to herd with boys of their own age and class, to have their moral nature manipulated by masters, often skeptical or immoral.

Now I say, and will maintain, that the chief end of education is not mere teaching, but INSPIRATION; and if you fail to inspire your pupil with nobleness, disinterested goodness, truth, morality, and religion, not only are all the glorious ends of education lost, but you damn your pupil more deeply than he might have been damned without your education. I ask, Is it not so? Take some of your own sons (alas! I could point to numbers round about) as illustrations of this fact. God has given every child a tutor in his mother, and she is the best and only right tutor for the heart.

I defy you to fill a proper mother's place for influence over the heart. If God were to depute the angel Gabriel, he could not do it. God has tied the child to its mother by such peculiar moral and mental links that no other being could possibly possess. I tell you, mothers here, that if you are good mothers, you are committing the greatest wrong to send away your child from your homes, and I believe this wretched practice is ruining half our nation today. God committed the child to its parents to be educated, not to the schoolmaster. You can employ the schoolmaster to teach his head, -- and even then you must be very careful of what sort he is, or he will ruin the child; but God committed the child to the parents to be educated, trained -- that is taught how to feel, think, and act. And it is to the mother especially belongs the art and the capacity to inspire her boy to love all that is noble and good, and disinterested, and grand in humanity, and to keep on inspiring him until he is strong enough in moral excellence; in other words, strong enough in God's likeness and grace to walk alone. Just as you tend him when he is a baby, and will not leave him to strangers, so, while he is a moral infant, you are to watch and keep. and train him until he is able to walk alone. I set my soul on this with regard to my own children, and God has enabled me to do it. I had a great fight over it in many ways, but I said, "I am determined to keep my children for God and

goodness. They shall have the education that I think likely to help them to be useful to their generation, as far as possible; but I will never sacrifice purity to polish, I will never sacrifice the heart to the head." That was my resolve, and I see no cause to regret it.

I think it was Fenelon who said that "the service of my family is more important than the service of myself, and the service of my nation is more important than the service of my family, and the service of humanity is more important than the service of my nation." That is my opinion. This is God's idea of man's highest vocation: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." If God's type of manhood had been a being crammed with knowledge to the exclusion of the moral and religious sentiments, Jesus Christ would have been such a man, whereas He was the opposite. He combined all the tenderness, sublime devotion, and self-sacrifice of the woman with the intellect and strength of the man. He was God's model man. That is the type for us. Therefore, for the sake of your children and your own gray hairs, I beseech you to see to it that you train and educate them in His likeness. Alas I know many parents in this land today, who are wringing their hands in anguish for the consequences of a false notion of education; and yet there are tens of thousands more who are making the same experiment, to have the same results.

I was staying in a mansion some time ago, where there was everything that wealth and refinement could procure to make the parents happy. But I thought as I looked at the dear old gentleman -- one of the kindly type of man, at whose table you like to sit down because of the genial intercourse and the generous sympathies of his soul towards all humanity -- but I thought there seemed to be a gloom over the household. I felt as if he had a sorrowful spirit, though I knew not why. After dinner, when we got into the library, he said, with trembling lips: "I wish you could get a word with Mr. ____." I said, "Who is that?"

"My eldest son; do try to get a minute to speak with him."

"Why, what is the matter?" I said.

"I am afraid he has embraced skeptical opinions. I sent him to a professedly Christian school (ah, I thought, the old story!) and then to college, and now I am afraid he is nearly an infidel." And when I got hold of the young gentleman, I saw that he was just of the type our modern schools produce -- self-conceited, self-indulged, proud, vain; a young man who looked down on his father much as an antiquated picture or piece of furniture. Oh, these stories, they break my heart! I felt that this dear old man spent his money on the education of his son, and thought he was doing the best he could for him, to send him to a so-called Christian school and then to a so-called Christian college, and here is the result; and there are thousands of such results!

Yet people send their sons over and over again to these schools and colleges, commit them knowingly to skeptical and infidel teachers -- give them over, body, mind, and soul, to them, to go through a process of education which necessitates the putting into their hands of text books containing all manner of idolatrous legends and impure and immoral histories, bringing into their imaginations all manner of profanities and impurities just at the most critical period of their history. And this is all done under the name of "CHRISTIAN EDUCATION."

I could tell you stories that would make you weep almost tears of blood at the consequences of these associations. Don't I know mothers today who are wringing their hands in agony, and fathers who are bowed down almost to the grave, broken-hearted, because of them? Add to this

education association with troops of godless, lawless, and frequently immoral youths, whom they are sure to have for their companions, and then wonder that youths isolated from their mothers, sisters, and all the refining influences of home life -- put into these schools and colleges, and kept there frequently for seven or eight years, and I ask, Can parents be surprised that they receive them back without any principles, without any love for their parents, without any religion, and without any respect for humanity? to walk about and trample under foot the most sacred instincts, and feelings, and aspirations of true manhood and womanhood, and to march over the nation to spread desolation and ruin wherever they go -- moral waifs and strays -- drifting down the current of humanity, down, down to everlasting shame? This is the result of modern education falsely so called. I challenge anybody to disprove it. Now then, I say, let every Christian parent in his closet settle before God this matter. What will you make your child? Will you say, "I will be more concerned that he shall be a good, benevolent, holy man, working for the good of his race, than that he shall be one of those intellectual monsters, all head and no heart. I will rather that he should be poor and good than that he should be rich and wicked"? When you come to that you will save your children. But you say, "Well, I must have this position and that position for him, not because of the use he will be to humanity and the glory he will bring to God, but because he will be a bigger man, having social position and influence." Ah! thousands have said that, and their sons have ended in being nobodies -- idle, extravagant, spendthrifts, taking all the patrimony of their brothers and sisters to keep them going in their evil courses. Truly "God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Chapter 51

04.07. The Salvation Army Following Christ

The Salvation Army Following Christ By Commissioner Railton

During the past twenty years there has been growing up in the midst of Christendom an organization which has been all along denounced and opposed, in a manner remarkably resembling the opposition shown to Christ and His apostles by the religious and respectable people of their day. The very phrases applied to the latter have been those most commonly used in connection with the Salvation Army.

Such expressions as "blasphemy," "Blasphemous performance," "mockery of religion," have been repeatedly used by the most thoughtful and influential critics with respect to this organization, and for what reason? Simply because poor and unlettered men and women are found continually expressing an intimate acquaintance with God in terms almost identical with those which are common in the Psalms and the Gospels. The poor man cries, and the Lord hears and delivers him; the convicted publican smites on his breast and cries, "God he merciful to me a sinner," but the unbelieving onlooker denounces his crying as an "intolerable noise,"' and this declaration that he has been delivered, an "unwarrantable presumption."

It is notorious that in thousands of buildings next Sunday, congregations of people who, a few years ago, had nothing whatever to do with the worship of God, will be repeating exactly such-like experiences. Yet even some of those who regard these people with a somewhat friendly eye will excuse their making "a joyful noise unto the Lord" as a "pardonable extravagance," and will explain that it is due to their "want of culture" that they do not worship God in the "decorous silence" which is customary in modern places of worship. As for the greater part of the community, they will denounce the whole of the proceedings as an "outrageous nuisance," "a farce," etc., which "ought to be put down," or got rid of, if it were possible, and which it is to be hoped "will not last long."

Now it is a remarkable fact, worthy of the most careful study by all who would understand either the power of God or the times in which we live, that in the face of all this hostile opposition this Army will go on without altering its course in the slightest degree to gain public favor, and that in fact it has gone on steadily increasing during twenty years, in spite of such opposition.

Five years ago this Army had only 442 corps and 1,067 officers -- persons, that is to say, employed in the work and supported by it. During the year 1882 no less than 669 of the soldiers, -- 251 of them women-were knocked down, kicked, or brutally assaulted in the streets; fifty-six of the 530 buildings used were attacked and partially wrecked, and eighty-six officers or soldiers, fifteen of them women, were locked up and imprisoned by the authorities in connection with the open-air services. Bishops, editors of religious papers, chairmen of great religious assemblies united to denounce the Army in the extremest terms; but at the end of five years it is found to consist of 2,153 corps, under the leadership of more than 5,200 officers.

Now, if it be correct that the Army systematizes blasphemy, this prodigious increase is truly a calamity; but if, on the contrary, it is found that thousands whose every second sentence was formerly an oath, and who neither feared God nor regarded man, are now to be seen clothed and in their right minds, singing (though it may be in rough style) the praises of God, and living honest, industrious and benevolent lives; then surely these figures eloquently demonstrate that the truth lies entirely on the other side, and that this vast working-class organization is, after all, acting in conformity with the will of God, and therefore blessed and helped by Him, involving the inevitable conclusion that the common opinion of the day is in violent opposition to the spirit and work of Jesus of Nazareth.

Let us examine a little more closely the method of the Army's increase, as illustrated by one of its most recent advances. A couple of young girls formerly engaged in domestic service, declare themselves to be called to preach the Gospel. For this purpose they place themselves at the disposal of the only religious organization in the world which thinks it right to give them this opportunity, and after careful examination into their character, they are sent off to a foreign country, where they are to raise an Army corps in a certain small town. The building in which they are to gather their congregation is simply a long-disused workshop, where a number of unbacked seats have been placed. There is not a single person in the town who can be regarded as friendly to their mission, and most people consider their appointment as directly opposed to the will of Christ. Yet night after night their humble barracks are crowded with an audience consisting mainly of persons who have never worshipped God before. The meetings are interrupted, and violent scenes sometimes occur. Yet, as is common all over the world, those two officers have raised a corps in a short time. And what is their corps? It consists of working men and women who are ready to stand up in the meetings and add their testimony to that of their officers, that Jesus Christ is a living Saviour. In the language of apostles and psalmists, not quoted but reproduced almost in identical terms from their own experience, they say that they were up to the time of their coming to these meetings "afar off by sin and wicked works, but have now been brought nigh to God by the blood of the Cross;" that He has filled their hearts with peace and gladness such as they never found while in pursuit of worldly pleasure, -- peace and gladness which rather increase than diminish under the scorn and opposition of family, friends, and work-mates. It is not long before some of these converts are found expressing their highest ideal of duty in the desire to do exactly what their officers did when they left home, situation, worldly comforts and prospects, and embarked on a life of poverty and difficulty such as they have seen worked "but before their eyes, in order to spread the glad tidings of a real Saviour from sin, whom they personally know.

Every step in the Army's progress has been accomplished in some such way as this, and the astonishment to most of us is not that such results should follow, but that people of intelligence should either continue with their eyes closed to it all, as though it had no existence, or else with persistence object, as though the Army were violating in every way the will of God. Again I say, this drives one inevitably to one of two conclusions, -- either the Army must be a system of the most terribly God-dishonoring delusion, -- a curse to the world of the most awful kind, or else, if it be indeed what it professes to be, inspired, moved, and directed by Him -- then the people of our day must have departed far from the spirit and teaching of God, both by His prophets and His Son, to have come into direct collision with these forces acting under His leadership.

If we search still more deeply into the secret of the Army's life and activities we shall find at every step the phenomenon of a faith and practice exactly similar to those which the language of psalmists and apostles, literally taken, describe. Here are poor fishermen who declare that they have heard Jesus Christ calling them to leave all and follow Him. They say that He walks by their side on the shore and sails with them over the stormy deep; that they commune with Him in the night watches; that whereas, but a short time ago, they were so utterly in darkness as to know nothing of the possibility of prayer, they now see clearly those great spiritual truths which have sustained their comrades in ages past; that God Himself is their light, and gives them to see, day by day, amidst the most toilsome occupations and the most ruffianly surroundings more and more of Himself and His will concerning them.

Nobody pretends to question that the lives of multitudes of such men have been, as the result of their connection with this Army, transformed as completely as they themselves declare that their inward experiences have been. Here are people who, but a few years ago, received with blows and curses those who spoke to them in the name of Christ, but who now manifest the same tender love towards those who ill-treat as was shown in the first place towards themselves -- men and women who gladly bear contempt, abuse, poverty, and suffering of every kind, that they may spend the part of life which still remains to them in proclaiming their Saviour; men and women whose want of education and of many qualifications that one would suppose to be desirable for such a work, cannot prevent from profoundly impressing the souls, and thus changing the lives of multitudes of others. How is it all to be accounted for? We must either accept their own account of the marvel, and conclude that it is by the power of Jesus of Nazareth that these men see and walk thus in the presence of us all, or else we must find some other way of accounting for the change wrought in them.

Attempts of this kind have indeed been made, but they do not commend themselves to very serious attention. "Excitement-all excitement!" some have said. But has religions excitement ever been known to last for years consecutively in individual cases? Generally speaking, the duration of a wave of popular excitement upon any subject is to be measured by weeks, or by months at most. But here we have huge audiences gathered continuously, Sunday after Sunday, for years, and men and women devoting themselves to the holding of services said to be of the "most exhausting character," night after night, without intermission. How can any mere excitement account for all this? A somewhat more reasonable theory is that the Army owes all its successes to a "rigid discipline." But is not this begging the whole question? That the Army maintains and extends its influence largely as the result of military order and system is undoubtedly true; but the question is how men and women, hitherto averse to all religious control, and indeed, control of any kind, are induced to submit themselves without fee or reward to the orders of those who are often in every way their inferiors. Look at that young lad, not out of his teens, commanding a corps in some large city. His every sign is obeyed by men and women old enough to be his grandparents, by tradesmen who were accustomed to manage business affairs before he learned arithmetic (what little he knows of it), by sergeants and soldiers of the Army, who have served years longer than himself in it, and some of whom know more of God and mankind, more of the work and literature of the Army, than he does. Whence all this ready obedience, this systematic labor under such leadership? It is easy to explain all upon "the love of Christ constraineth us" principle, "submitting yourselves one to another in love;" but take that away, and what becomes of the

Army’s discipline? The Army’s discipline is all the more remarkable when we remember that it is applied amongst all nations alike, and that in the world’s three greatest Republics it is carried out as successfully as amongst communities more accustomed to the idea of submission to absolute authority. Moreover, the marvel of general and absolute obedience, rendered without murmuring by persons of all sorts and conditions, scattered all over the world, is all the more striking at a time when any approach to the exercise of authority in connection with religious work is becoming more and more out of the question.

Just consider for a moment what this Army discipline amounts to. Forty thousand times this week, and every week of this hot summer, bodies of men and women are induced, after having toiled all day at their usual employment, to walk a more or less considerable distance from their homes, and place themselves under the leadership of officers who keep them from two to three hours engaged in praying, singing, speaking, marching through the streets, standing in narrow, dirty alleys and courts, or sitting on unbacked seats in the close atmosphere of uncomfortable buildings. Yet this only represents the public services of the Army. We give up in despair any attempt to calculate the number of hours spent by scores of thousands of these soldiers in visiting, War Cry selling, and other labors, under the direction of their officers. All this will bear investigation and consideration to any extent; and the more it is considered, the more inevitable will be the conclusion that the Army’s strength within and without must arise from a power far superior to anything human. If so, then the Army is everywhere a standing manifestation of the saving power of God and a standing reproof to the "modern thought" which ignores that power. The one-minded and one-heartedness of the Army is strikingly exemplified in its newspapers and its prayers. It has twenty-four War Crys, published ill as many different countries and colonies, in their several languages. In not one of these can there be found any recognition of the controversies which disturb the Christian world! They represent minds always engaged upon the one subject, lives entirely devoted to the one object -- the subjugation of the world to the dominion of Jesus Christ. In prayer this absolute union of heart and mind is even more remarkable. In the course of more than twenty years there have of course arisen frequently within the Army differences and disputings, which could not have been easily brought to an end but for the exercise of a strong central authority; but it is a remarkable fact that these differences have scarcely ever arisen from any variety of opinions, and in only one or two instances from the introduction of any new teaching.

I was very much impressed lately with the Army’s oneness in prayer, during a tour is which I had the opportunity to observe closely the action of soldiers of half a dozen different nations in succession. I do not wonder that the Army is reproached with the constant use of a few phrases, repeated over and over again. The accusation is gloriously correct to this extent -- that officers and soldiers, to whatever class or nation they may belong, and wherever you may meet them, appear to have their minds so concentrated upon the one great theme, and their whole energies so thoroughly called out for the accomplishment of the one result -- that to hear one is to hear all.

Now to what conclusion can one come but that either all this union is produced by one Almighty Spirit working "all in all" -- according to the Scriptures, making His real followers not only of one spirit but "of one mind," giving them to "see light in His light," producing in every one the same purpose and the same entire subjection to the will of Christ, -- or else that we are in presence of the most astounding wonder of the age, without having placed before us any means of accounting for its existence? This becomes all the more evident when we look at the financial system of the

Army. To overcome the general indifference to religion and its teachers, it has become common, in our time, to endeavor to induce the poor to attend the ministrations of this or that religious community by the presentation of gifts, or the provision of gratuitous entertainments. The Salvation Army, on the other hand, goes to the people in every service with its collecting boxes, and pays the rental of expensive buildings everywhere by means of the poor man's pence! Hundreds of thousands of pounds are contributed in this way annually, the people not only meeting the cost of the services conducted in their own immediate neighborhood, but assisting in the extension of the Army's work all over the world, and showing the greatest readiness to respond to every appeal from new enterprises.

There are multitudes of persons whose incomes are between 10s. and 20s. per week, who give to the Army one or two shillings of that amount, besides devoting so much of their time and strength to its operations, as already explained. The 5,000 officers who have given themselves up entirely to the war, without the guarantee of any salary whatever, merely represent tens of thousands more who would gladly do the same thing, if we were able rapidly enough to arrange for their dispatch to every part of the great world-field. We had more than 1,000 such offers in a few weeks of 1887, in England alone. To all these people home and comfort are as enjoyable as to yourself or any one else; yet they glory in the possibility of a whole life of self-denying activity for Christ, and eagerly look forward to the day when, far from home and old friends, their bodies shall be lowered into a salvation soldier's grave, amid the tears and prayers of others now reveling in sinful indulgence, but induced by their life, example, and testimony to leave all and follow Christ.

Let no one say in presence of a vast assemblage of facts like this, that it is no longer required of us, or no longer within our power, to follow in the footsteps of the prophets and apostles of the past. Amidst the snows of Lapland, as well as in the Indian jungle, on the outskirts of European occupancy in the far West and the other side of the world, as well as in the midst of crowded European and American cities, men and women are proving every day that the experiences of the Psalms, -- the very experiences of God's presence and salvation, which in apostolic days made the poor, despised, and persecuted followers of the Messiah the happiest of beings, -- are now within the reach of all who will equally deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Him who became poor in order to make others rich forever. The Salvation Army deserves and demands the careful and patient study of all who would learn how best to follow God and hasten the coming of His kingdom. The more closely and carefully you examine, the more fully will you be driven to the conclusion -- the opinions of the day to the contrary, notwithstanding -- that those who truly wish to follow Christ at all costs can do so in this age as well as in previous ones, and will succeed, just as others have done before, in gaining the world's hatred, the smile of God, and the victory which He guarantees to all who trust in and obey Him. THE END

Chapter 52

06.00.0. The Works of Catherine Booth

The Works of Catherine Booth by

Catherine Booth

06.00.1. Contents

CONTENTS Obey The Holy Spirit Expect To Receive The Holy Spirit How To Overcome Satan’s Deception How To Overcome Self Deception How To Wait For the Holy Spirit How To Receive The Greatest Gift

06.01. Obey The Holy Spirit

Obey The Holy Spirit by Catherine Booth

"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" Isaiah 25:9

Resolve to obey the call of God and the command of Jesus, and He will fill you with His Spirit. Do it. Never mind thinking He might ask you to do something that chokes you. Declare, "I will die in obedience rather than live in disobedience." Don't say, "I don't think I would like saying or doing that, I don't know the consequences." Resolve to obey Him and never mind the consequences. Do what He tells you. If the disciples had not obeyed and waited and longed to serve their Savior, they would not have been filled with the Spirit.

Never mind the consequences of an obedient faith. God will stand between you and the consequences. If He allows you to suffer, never mind, suffer, but obey the voice of the Spirit. Thousands of souls would have been saved if all those who had the urging of the Holy Spirit obeyed Him. I ask you, from where do benevolent urgings spring? Do they come from your own evil heart? If so, you are better than the apostles. If you are separated from the Holy Spirit, disunited from Christ, you are selfish, devilish. Do benevolent urgings come from the devil? If so, Satan would be divided against himself. When you are filled with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the living God, you will be urged to go out and seek to save the lost. Will you obey these urgings? Will you give up your rationalizing? Will you give up your likes and dislikes and obey God? If you will, then He will come to you frequently. He will fill you more and more, till, like David, you will feel the interests of His Kingdom to be more important to you than meat or drink, than silver or gold. You will become like Jesus who said, "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up."

We are the only people who can save the unconverted. Jesus Christ has no one else to represent Him here but Christians. No one except His real people will work for Him. Only Christians can show the way of mercy to the poor people of the world, who are lost in darkness and ignorance. If we do not go to them in loving earnestness and determination to rescue them from the grasp of the enemy, if we do not by the power of the Holy Spirit bind the strong man and take his goods, who will do it? God calls on us. This is an alarming and awful consideration.

After the Holy Spirit fills you, you will utter a burst of praise for your deliverance from bondage to sin and death. And then you will pray for some other person still in darkness. This is the legitimate fruit of the Holy Spirit. Is not this what we should expect?

After you are truly saved, your soul will go out after the deliverance of someone else, father, mother, child, brother, sister, friend. Like some, you may not go to sleep until you have written a distant relative and poured out your soul in anxious longing for their salvation. The Holy Spirit will urge you to seek for souls. Frequently, the last cry of the Spirit, before the believer's soul leaves the body, is a prayer for some prodigal soul outside the Kingdom of God. He has no thought of self, money or circumstances. When the light of eternity comes streaming upon the soul, it neither

hears nor sees anything else. It goes out of time into eternity praying as the Redeemer did, for the souls it is leaving behind. This is the first and last utterance of the Spirit in the believer's soul on earth. If Christians were only true to the prompting of the blessed Spirit, it would be the prevailing impulse, the first desire and effort all the way through life. It is not God's fault that it is not so.

Backsliders in heart frequently confess and bemoan their unfaithfulness to the admonitions of the Holy Spirit with respect to souls. In fact, backsliding begins here in thousands of instances. Satan gets people to yield to considerations of ease, propriety, being out of season, being injudicious, and so on. So, they lose opportunities of dealing with souls, and the Spirit is grieved. Oh! What numbers of people have confessed this to me. An elderly gentleman said, "When I was a young man, and in my first love, the zeal of the Lord's house so consumed me that I used to neglect my daily business, and could scarcely sleep at night. But alas! That was many years ago." I asked, "Was it not better with you then than now?" The tears came welling up into his eyes. "Oh, Yes!" The Lord says of him, "I remember you, the kindness of your youth, the love of your espousals, when you went after me in the wilderness in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the first-fruits of His increase."

There are many such today. They have it all to do over. If they are to go into the Kingdom on high, they must repent, do their first-works and come back to be forgiven, washed, and saved. Because they have lacked systematic and resolute obedience to the urging of the Holy Spirit toward their fellow men, all this must be done again.

If people would only be obedient to the urging of the Spirit, they would never lose these urgings.

Dear Holy Spirit, forgive me for all the times I have refused to obey you, to spend time with you, to get to know you, to be able to distinguish your admonitions and urgings from the evil spirits of this world and my own selfish desires. Help me to open myself up to you for cleansing, filling and empowerment. As I read the Scriptures and prepare to give unbelievers reasons for the hope we have in Jesus Christ, please bring me together with those who need saving faith, and bring the truths I share home to their hearts. In Jesus' name. Amen.

06.02. Expect To Receive The Holy Spirit

Expect To Receive The Holy Spirit by Catherine Booth "I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope" Psalms 130:5

Faith is inseparable from expectation. Where there is real faith there is always expectation. I often hear people pray for the Holy Spirit from their throats instead of their hearts. When I see how they talk the minute they get off their knees, how they live, and with whom they associate, I say, "You may pray till your dying day, and if you do not change, you will never be filled with the Holy Spirit." If they expected anything, they would wait for it. Common sense tells us that. In the upper room, the disciples waited. For how long? The Bible says they waited ten days, until the Day of Pentecost had fully come. I have no doubt they prayed far into the night, so far as they could keep their natural powers awake. They waited. They did not set the Lord a time limit. They were wiser than that. They did not say, "Now we will go and have a couple of days praying. That will be a long time. We will just shut out all else and wait on the Lord for a couple of days. If He does not come by that time, it will be outrageous to wait beyond that. Whoever heard of a prayer-meeting two days and two nights long?" They did not set they Lord a time limit! They obeyed. The disciples went and waited until the Holy Spirit came.

You may say, "I have not been filled with the Spirit." No. Because you did not wait until He came. You got hungry, or fell asleep, or hugged your idol. You did not wait until HE CAME!

Suppose the disciples had given up on the fifth day and said, "There must be some mistake. He knows we are here, all ready, and the world is perishing for our message. There must be some mistake. We should begin without Him." But no, they waited on and on and on, until He came. Can you imagine what sort of prayer went up from the upper room? Do you think they were the lazy, lackadaisical, prayers that we hear now and then for the Holy Spirit?

Oh! Think how Peter agonized and wrestled. Think how Thomas pled. Imagine how Mary would have wept, beseeched, and entreated. Consider how they were all of one heart and one accord. They wanted one thing. They were there to receive the Holy Spirit. The disciples cared for nothing else but Him. They cried for Him as hungry children cry for milk. They wanted Him and His indwelling. Did the Lord ever disappoint anyone who waited like that? Can anyone say so? Did you ever hear of such a case? Never. HE CAME!

Nowadays, some people set God time limits in everything. They think a good deal more about their dinners than about Him. People think a great deal more about conversations with their friends and doing the polite thing with them, than they do about the precious waiting Holy Spirit of God. They think a great deal more about their businesses than the business of God. "Oh!" they say, "It is business, and business must be attended to." But what about the Holy Spirit and the Kingdom of God? Must not your soul be saved? Must you not become a temple of the indwelling Spirit of God? Put a MUST in there! Your soul is much more important than your body. I have given you the most common-sense, simple, exhibits and illustrations of these truths that I possibly can. Was it not so?

Did they not wait for Him as I have described, and did not the Holy Spirit come? On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit filled both the men and the women. They began to speak as the Holy Spirit gave them words. The Holy Spirit still comes. Sometimes, my bodily senses are aware of His coming. When He comes, we only know that something so influences our bodies that we cannot describe it. When the Holy Spirit comes into a human soul, He opens his eyes, quickens his perceptions, enlarges his capacity and swells him with glory. His body will feel His power and sometimes be prostrated. What did the Apostle Paul say? "I have been into the third heaven and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful to utter." Do you think God intended such experiences and visions only for Paul and the Apostles?

Since Paul's day, many people have had such experiences. And many more might have them if they are willing to be wrapped in His arms and pressed to His bosom to know Him in the Scriptural sense. You must be willing to be given up and consumed by the Holy Spirit. Your heart and flesh must cry out after the living God, as David's did. You must pant after Him as the deer after the water-brooks. If you seek the Spirit's filling, long to come and appear before God. If you will so long for God that you cannot live without Him, God will come and reveal himself to you. Will you thus wait in obedient faith?

I want you to come up higher and not slide back and become cold and indifferent to these things. Here is the hope of the world, if there is any hope for it, people getting filled with the Holy Spirit. People must wake up to God and His glory and the interests of His Kingdom. The world needs people filled with the Spirit. People with eyes to see spiritual sights others do not see, with ears to hear the crying of multitudes dying for lack of knowledge, with hearts to feel so they could go and weep over them, with hands to break the bread of life, with zeal to die for them if need be.

Dear Father, for too long I have set limits on what I wanted you to do for me and on what I would do for you. I have not waited where and when I should have, and I have missed the blessings you have offered and promised me in your word. Forgive me for telling you how I wanted to be filled and for setting limits on my obedience. Help me repent of every sin and resolve to obey you in every matter. Fill me with your Spirit and holy power so I can be a faithful, effective witness for you in Jesus' name. Amen.

06.03. How To Overcome Satan's Deceptions

How To Overcome Satan’s Deceptions By Catherine Booth

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8).

Satan has succeeded in deceiving people regarding the standard of Christian living. He has gotten the church to receive what I call an "Oh, wretched man that I am" religion! He has gotten people to lower the standard that Jesus Christ established in the Bible. Jesus’ standard is not only to be aimed at, but to be attained. His standard is victory over sin, the world, the flesh, and the Devil, a real, living, reigning, triumphing Christianity!

Satan knows the secrets of the great success of the first disciples, their whole-hearted devotion, their all absorbing love of Jesus Christ, and their utter renunciation of the world. They were consumed in working for the salvation of their fellows and promoting the glory of God. An enthusiastic Christianity swallowed them up and made them willing to become wanderers and vagabonds upon the earth. For Jesus’ sake they would dwell in dens and caves, be torn asunder, and be persecuted in every form.

Facing this degree of devotion in Jesus’ disciples, Satan saw he had no chance. He knew such people as these could ultimately subdue the world. Human nature could not stand before that kind of spirit, that amount of love and zeal. If subsequent believers had continued as the first disciples began long ago, the glorious prophecy would have been fulfilled: "The kingdoms of this world" would have "become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." Therefore, the arch-enemy asked, "What must I do? I shall be defeated after all. I shall lose my supremacy as the god of this world."

It would do Satan no good to bring in a gigantic system of error that everyone would recognize. That has never been Satan’s way. His plan has been to get hold of a good man here and there, who will creep in unawares and preach another doctrine. He shall deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. And he did it. He accomplished his design. He gradually lowered the standard of Christian life and character. To a certain extent in every revival God has raised the true standard again. However, we have never gotten back thoroughly to the simplicity, purity, and devotion set before us in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. And in every age where God has raised the devotion of His people, Satan has gotten someone to oppose Him and say that this was too high a standard for human nature. Therefore, Christians have been content to say "Oh, wretched man that I am" to the end of their days.

Satan has gotten the church into a condition that sometimes makes a person positively ashamed to hear professing Christians talk, and ashamed also that this world should hear them talk. I do not wonder that such "Christianity" drives away thoughtful, intelligent people. I believe this kind of "Christianity" has made more unbelievers than all the infidel books ever written. If I had not known the power of godliness, it would have driven me off.

Yes, Satan knew that he must get Christians down from the high pinnacle of whole-hearted consecration to God. He knew that he had no chance until he had tempted them down from that blessed vantage ground, and so he began to spread false doctrines to counteract it. John saw this and wrote before he died, "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." Lord Jesus revive this doctrine! Help us afresh to put up the standard!

Oh, the great evil! Dishonest-hearted people, because they feel this standard condemns them, lower the standard to their own miserable experience. But Jesus Christ put the glorious standard before us. He offers us the power. He lays down the conditions and we can attain the standard, if we will. For the sake of the children and generations yet unborn, if we refuse to attain it, let us not drag down the standard to make it meet our little, paltry, circumscribed experience. LET US KEEP IT UP. In this way, we will get the world to look at it. Show the world a real, living, self-sacrificing, hard-working, toiling, triumphing Christianity, and the world will be influenced by it. But anything short of that, and they will turn around and spit upon it.

I have been reading the New Testament with special reference to the assertive spirit of the first Christians. And it is wonderful what floods of light come upon you when you read the Bible concerning any particular topic on which you are seeking help. When God sees you are panting after the light, to use it, He pours it in upon you. It is an indispensable condition of receiving light that you are willing to follow it. People say they don’t see this and that, no, because they do not wish to see it. They are not willing to walk in it; therefore, they do not get it. But those who are willing to obey shall have all the light they need.

Dear heavenly Father, forgive me for all the times I have lowered the standard of righteousness and faithful living to be comfortable in my sins, or appease my guilty conscience, or quiet the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Help me to read your Holy Word with a commitment to obey all the light that I receive. Grant me boldness to proclaim fearlessly before the church and world the standard of holiness that you have placed before us. Help me, and believers everywhere, attain true holiness by the gracious power of the Lord Jesus Christ through faith. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

06.04. How to Overcome Self Deception

How to Overcome Self Deception By Catherine Booth

"And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD." Hosea 2:19-20

Knowledge is as powerless as ignorance. A person is not at all nearer to God or more like Jesus Christ simply because he has his head crammed full of the Word of God. In fact, some who have been the best acquainted with the Bible have been the greatest slaves of sin. Even ministers of Jesus Christ have confessed to me that they have been the bond slaves of some besetting sin. The power is not in the knowledge. The power is in our union with Jesus Christ. A little child who has a real, vital union with Jesus has more power than the most cultivated theologian without a personal relationship with Christ. The things of God can only be understood by those who have the Spirit of God. By wisdom, the world does not know God any more now than it did in the apostles' day. The things of the Spirit must be spiritually comprehended; therefore, this beautiful union cannot be explained. However, it is spoken of throughout the Bible as knowing God. After God summed up the failures of His people, He encouraged them with a promise that they should know Him. He said, "I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness for ever, and thou shalt KNOW the Lord," as though that were the end of the whole matter, truly to KNOW Him. When Christians come to have a living union of their souls with Jesus Christ, He brings the vital sap (as it were) into the branch of the tree, another of His own beautiful illustrations: "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." You know what happens when a branch is broken off a tree or a vine. It retains the form of a branch, and for awhile it maintains the beauty and greenness of a branch. But it is broken off and there is no power in it. Alas! Human branches often maintain their verdure in a certain beauty, as when first lopped off. Yet, they can never bear fruit. Why? Because the communication is cut between them and the vine, and there is no sap in the fiber. Their life is cut off. A soul that is not united to Jesus Christ in this living spiritual marriage cannot bear fruit unto God.

You can be like a cut off branch. You can get so much scriptural knowledge that you can look just like a real Christian. You can get many of the feelings of a Christian. You can get the sentiments and many aspirations and desires of a real Christian. You can be so like a branch that no one except Jesus Christ may know that you are not in the true Vine, that you have never been grafted into the tree. Therefore, you go on weeping and struggling and trying to perform the functions of a living branch, when you are a dead one. You go on trying to bring forth fruit unto God, when the one indispensable condition for fruitfulness is lacking.

You may have every other condition of being a Christian. You may even be nailed to the wall close to the vine. You may be such a professing Christian that nobody would ever doubt you. You may be so close to the vine that no one can detect your lack of union with Jesus Christ except the Gardener who comes and closely inspects you. You may not have one fiber truly circulating the

real spiritual sap; therefore, YOU HAVE NO POWER, and down you go when temptations come.

What weary years of strife some professing Christians have, they would be ashamed to tell. Death sometimes forces it from their lips before they die, trying to perform the functions of living people when they were never spiritually alive. All they have ever had has been what Paul depicts as the struggle of a poor convicted sinner unable to bring forth any fruit unto God (see Romans 7:1-25). To know the Lord is to be conscious of the living sap circulating through your soul, anointing your eyes with eye-salve, giving you eyes to see, a voice to speak, feet to run, and hands to serve , making you in all respects a "new creature."

Now, my dear reader, those of you who have never experienced knowing God, never mind who comes to you and brings a Bible and says, "Do you believe this and that? If you do, you are saved." Say to them, "You are a miserable comforter. I will never be content until I know God." When Jesus Christ delivers us from the condemning, reigning power of the Law, we become married to Jesus Christ. Then we get a power to produce in our affections and hearts and lives, and all about us, such things that will delight God. "If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make Our abode with him." When a person has got the Father and the Son, he is a match for Satan and all his forces. Union with Christ! That is what we need! When Jesus Christ comes and you know Him, you won’t be ashamed who knows it. After you really get the living Christ for your husband, you will be prouder than any bride, and you will have gotten a husband worth being proud of. You will love to acknowledge and praise Him, and the day is coming when you will crown Him before the hosts of heaven. The Lord help you accept Him and put away everything that hinders His coming into your life.

Dear heavenly Father, I love you and pray that you would fill me with a greater love, worthy of who you are. Please fill me with your Holy Spirit, so I can love your only begotten Son as He deserves. Cleanse me from all unrighteousness and show me your perfect will. As I seek to obey you and your Word in all things, I pray that you will give me the power to fulfill my pure intentions. May I have such a vital union with you that we will rejoice in the presence of each other and others will come to know you through me. In Jesus Name, I pray, Amen.

06.05. How To Wait For The Holy Spirit

How To Wait For The Holy Spirit By Catherine Booth

"And being assembled together with them, Jesus commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father" Acts 1:4

I believe God gave the command, "Be filled with the Spirit," to all believers always and everywhere (Ephesians 5:18). The privilege of being filled with the Holy Spirit belongs to the youngest and weakest of believers, as well as the most advanced. We only need to comply with the conditions and commands that the Savior stated when He promised the gift.

I do not find two standards of Christian experience. I do not believe that God ever intended there to be a lower life and a higher life. And I am afraid that those who rest in the lower life will find themselves very mistaken at the judgment. Christianity is all or nothing. Individually, God is either first in our lives or nowhere with us. The very essence or core of Christianity is "God First," a supreme allegiance and obedience to Him.

Jesus offers the filling of the Holy Spirit to all believers. God wants you to be filled. God calls you to be filled. If you will, you can live in the power of the Holy Spirit as much as the apostles did. Only God knows what He would do with you and make of you if the Holy Spirit filled you. The experience of Peter shows how utterly different a man is before and after he gets the baptism of the Holy Spirit. After Peter got this power, the man who could not stand the questionings of a servant-maid dared to be crucified.

We hear a common lament on the lips of really spiritual teachers, "Ye did run well." Some begin in the Spirit, then, as the Apostle says, "They go on to be made perfect in the flesh" (Galatians 3:3). How is this? The Holy Spirit puts before everyone the walk of a full consecration and whole-hearted devotion to God. Instead of being obedient to the heavenly vision, some shrink back and say, "That is too much, that is too close, that is too great a sacrifice." So they decline. Instead of giving up their profession of Christian faith and going back into the world (there would be ten times more hope for them if they did), they cling on to their profession and kindle a fire of their own and walk in the sparks they have kindled. God says He will be against them, and they "shall lie down in sorrow" (Isaiah 50:11). Oh! There is too much of this.

People must have a god and a religion. When they shrink from the true God, and will not follow the Divine counsel, they make a god and religion for themselves. Many of them go to sleep and never wake up. Oh! See that you wake up and keep awake, and be willing to follow the Spirit’s teaching in everything at all costs.

Notice how the disciples waited to obey Jesus command, "Tarry at Jerusalem till ye be endued with POWER." They had received the truth before, and they now needed more than truth. Paul says his gospel and his preaching were not merely in word, but in power and in the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. After Jesus’ ascension into heaven, I think the first feelings of the disciples would

have been of deep self-abasement, of humiliation, guilt and shame. As they thought of the past, now that the full glory of His divinity and the divinity of His mission had burst upon them, and as they thought of their three years' traveling with Him, and of all their darkness and blindness of heart, and of all they had lost, all they might have known, all He would have revealed to them if they would have received it, as the thought of these things burst upon them, they must have exclaimed, "What fools we were!" Indeed, as Jesus said of them, "Oh, fools, and slow of heart to believe" (Luke 24:25). While they waited, they were cured of their self-sufficiency and pride.

I would not be surprised at all if in the upper room Peter, with his impulsive nature, did not throw himself on his face before his risen Master in deepest humiliation and broken-heartedness for his vile ingratitude in having denied Him. How do you think Thomas and all of them felt as they remembered the scene in the Garden and how they, in the hour of His agony, had forsook Him and fled? Oh! They would feel unholy, untrue, cowards, and would go down repeatedly on their faces to wait in deep self-abasement.

Now, dear reader, this is the very first and indispensable condition of receiving the Holy Spirit. You must first realize your past impurity, unholiness, disobedience and ingratitude. You must not be afraid to know the worst of yourself. You must look back at the time when your hand has been with Him on the table, and yet you have virtually betrayed Him. You must look at your unfaithfulness and disobedience, at your shrinking from the cross, at your cleaving to the world. If you want to be filled with the Holy Spirit, you must be willing to know the worst of yourself. You must say, "Now, Lord, am I low enough? Now, Lord, am I far enough in the dust for you to come and lift me up? I abhor myself. I loathe myself in dust and ashes, and I want you to come and fill me with your Spirit."

You will have to be emptied of self. When people are self-sufficient, God always leaves them alone to prove their self-sufficiency. When people think they can do for themselves, He lets them fall down and see their weakness. We must realize our utter helplessness and weakness. We must see ourselves as utterly lost in our own sight. God's way of exaltation is through the Valley of Humiliation. You must get lower, lower. You can never get too low in your own estimate to be filled with the Spirit of God.

Dear heavenly Father, help me to be quiet enough to hear what you have to say personally to me. Apply your Holy Word to my ways of living. Reveal my faults, so I can confess and repent of my sins of omission as well as commission. By the blood of Jesus, cleanse me from all sin so I might be fit to receive the filling of your Holy Spirit. Fill me now, for Jesus' sake, that I might tell others of His wondrous glory in the loving power of your presence within me. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

06.06. How To Receive The Greatest Gift

How To Receive The Greatest Gift By Catherine Booth

"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him" Isaiah 64:4 In the upper room, about 120 disciples waited for the gift of the Holy Spirit. They had an earnest appreciation of its importance. How do you think they felt as they thought of the past, remembered the ignominious crucifixion of their Lord, looked forward to the future, and contemplated the work to which He had called them? And what had Jesus called them to do? They were not to go and set up an idol or a monument of Jesus Christ alongside other idols in the temples of the heathen gods. They were to go into the city of Jerusalem, where Jesus had just been crucified between two thieves. They were to proclaim Jesus as the long-expected Messiah of the Jews. They were to begin setting up the Royal Spiritual Kingdom in contradiction to the temporal and earthly kingdom. Then, God commanded them to go out from Jerusalem and subjugate the world to His sway!

Poor Peter, Thomas, John, Mary and the rest of the women, how would they feel? They would feel, "We might as well stop and die here, as go out as we are, until we do get the equipment of power. We need something more than what we have got." So, they waited and prayed, "Lord, pour it out upon us; we are ready. We are helpless; we are powerless, we can do nothing. You know what you have called us to do, and you have promised us power to perform it. Now, here we are. It is useless for us to begin until we get power." They appreciated its importance.

God never gives the gift of His Spirit to any human being who has not come to the point that he would sell all he had to get it. The Holy Spirit is the most precious gift that God has to give in earth or in heaven. Think of the Holy Spirit filling you, filling you with himself, God taking possession of you. Think of being moved, inspired, energized, empowered by God, by the great indwelling Spirit moving through all your faculties and energizing your whole being for God. That is the greatest and most glorious gift He has to give today. The Father is not likely to give the Holy Spirit to people who do not highly appreciate Him. You must appreciate Him so highly that you will forego all other gifts for Him, everything else, creature love, creature comfort, ease, enjoyment, and aggrandizement for this one thing. Have you come to this? Are you telling this to the Lord Jesus? Are you seeking the filling of the Holy Spirit?

I have often thought of the Savior, when so many who had been hearing Him forsook Him and fled. He had been trying to lead them higher, even to real spiritual union with himself. They were not willing to go all the way, to pay the price, to suffer the consequences. So, if you want this blessing, I know of no other way than I have just described.

I had to come to this before I received the filling of the Holy Spirit. The last idol of my soul had to be renounced, and it was hard work, as it always is because we love idols. Idols would not be idols if they were not loved. We have to lay our real Isaac, our beloved and only Isaac, upon the altar. It is hard work, but it has to be done because He is a jealous God and will have no rivals. Do you so

appreciate this blessing that you are willing to give up your Isaac? If so, you may have the filling of the Holy Spirit today. God will fill you with His Spirit. The disciples of Jesus Christ waited in obedient faith for Him to fulfill His promise. They did as He asked them. Jesus told them to wait in Jerusalem, and they did not go off fishing or to the beach. Peter didn't say, "I can wait as well on the beach as in Jerusalem. I wonder why the Lord told me to go to Jerusalem? I think it was unreasonable. I think I will go back to my fishing nets." No. Jesus had cured the disciples of their unbelief by the last few days' experiences. They had learned better than to dictate to their Master, and they knew He had a good purpose in sending them to Jerusalem. So, they went there and did as He told them. Back to the upper room they went.

They had learned better than to reason, "I have been running about ministering to the Savior a long time. I'm afraid my friends will think I am neglecting home duties and the claims of old friends. I really must go home and see to matters there for a while. I may as well wait there for the Holy Spirit as at Jerusalem." Mary had learned better than that. She went back to Jerusalem. We have their names. They entered the upper room, shut the door, and waited, obedient faith! One of the poets said:

"Obedient faith that waits on Thee, Thou never will reprove."

God sends the disobedient faith away empty. People are crying out about their faith, but it is a disobedient faith. If the Lord has told you to wait in any particular place, way, company, or time, and you disobey Him, He will not fill you with the Holy Spirit. At last, even if on your dying bed, you will have to come to these conditions.

Obedient faith! While there is one spark of insubordination, rebellion, or dictation, the Spirit will never fill you. Truly, only submissive and obedient people enter this kingdom. Anywhere He tells you to go, anything He tells you to sacrifice, or fly from, you will have to do. The Holy Spirit is one of His choice gifts that He has reserved for His choice servants, those who serve Him with all their hearts, obedient faith.

Dear Father, I confess that I have not fully appreciated the gift of the Holy Spirit as I ought. I have taken His indwelling for granted, and have not sought His filling as I should. Cleanse me, fill me, and empower me to serve you only for the sake of your kingdom. Amen.

S. What is Repentance?Title/Content

What is Repentance? by Catherine Booth

If any father has a prodigal son, I ask, How is it that you are reconciled to your son? You love him intensely. Probably you are more conscious of your love for him than for any other of your children. Your heart yearns over him, you pray for him, you dream of him, your bowels yearn over him. Why are you not reconciled? Why are you obligated to hold him at arm's length and not have him come in and out, and live with you on the same terms as the affectionate, obedient daughter?

"Oh!" you say, "the case is different, I cannot. It is not, I would not, but I cannot". "Before that can possibly be, the boy's feeling must be changed toward me. I have done all a father could do, but he will go on in defiance of my will." You say, "As a wise and righteous father I must insist on a change in him. He must confess his sin and ask me to forgive him. Then I should run to meet him and put my arms around his neck!" But there is a "cannot" in the case.

Just so. It is not that God does not love you, sinner, or that the great benevolent heart of God has not, as it were, wept tears of blood over you. It is not that He would not put His loving arms around you this moment if you would only come to His feet, and confess you wrong, and seek His pardon. He cannot. The laws of His universe are against His doing so. He dare not and cannot until there is a change of mind in you. You must repent, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Well, if repentance be an indispensable condition of salvation, let us try to find out what repentance really is. How full of confusion the world and the Church are upon this subject! Repentance is not merely conviction of sin. If it were, what a different world we should have, for there are tens of thousands in whose hearts God's Spirit has done His work of convincing them of sin. We should be perfectly astounded if we had any conception of the multitude whom God as convinced of sin, as he did Agrippa and Festus. They are convinced of sin, but they go no further. They live this week as they did last. That is not repentance.

Neither is repentance mere sorrow for sin. I have seen people weep bitterly and writhe and struggle, yet hug their idols, and vain as it been to try to shake these from them. If Jesus Christ would have saved them with those idols, they would have had no objection at all. If they could have got through the strait gate with one particular idol, they would have gone through long since, but to part with it is another thing. Some people will weep like your stubborn child when you want him to do something which he does not want to do. He will cry, and when you apply the rod he will cry harder, but he will not yield. When he yields he becomes a penitent, but until he does he is merely convicted sinner. When God applies the rod of His Spirit, of His providence, and His word, sinners will cry, wince, and whine and make you believe they are praying and want to be saved, but all the while they are holding their necks as stiff as Iron. They will not submit. The moment they submit they become true penitents and re saved. There is not mistake more common than for people to suppose they are repentant when they are repentant when they are not. Repentance, therefore, is not mere sorrow for sin. A man may be ever so sorry and all the way down to death

be hugging some forbidden thing, as the young ruler hugged his possessions. But that is not repentance. Neither is repentance a promise that you will forsake sin in the future. It if were, there would be many more penitents. There is scarcely a poor drunkard that does not promise, in his own mind, or to his poor wife, or somebody, that he will forsake his cups. There is scarcely any kind of a sinner who does not continually promise that he will one day give up his sin and turn to God, but he does not do it.

What then is repentance? Repentance is simply renouncing sin, turning round from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God. This is giving up sin in your heart, in purpose, in desire; resolving that you will give up every evil thing, and that you will do it now. Of course this involves sorrow; for how will any sane man turn himself round from a given course into another if he does not repent? it implies, also, hatred of the course he formerly took, and from which he turns.

He is like the prodigal who, when he sat in the swine yard amongst the husks and the filth, fully resolved, and at last acted. He went, and that was the test of his repentance. He might have sat resolving and promising till now, if he had lived as long, and he would never have got the father’s kiss, the father’s welcome, if he had not started. Yet, he went, and went to his father honestly and said, "I have sinned" which implied a great deal more in his language then than it does in our now.

Then comes the proof of his submission, "and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants" -put me in a stable, or set me to clean the boots, so that I can be in thy family and have thy smile. That is Jesus Christ’s own beautiful illustration of true repentance. Sub mission is the test of true repentance. My child may be willing to do a hundred and fifty other things, but if he is not willing to submit on the one point of controversy he is a rebel and remains one until he yields.

Here is the difference between a spurious and a real repentance. I am afraid we have had, in our churches thousands who had a spurious repentance: they were convinced of sin - they were sorry for it; they wanted to live a better life, to love God in a sort of general way; but they skipped over the real point of controversy with God; they hid it form their pastor, perhaps, and from the deacons, and from the people who talked with them. Abraham might have been willing to give up every other thing he possessed, but if he had not been willing to give up Isaac, all else would have been useless. It is your Isaac that God wants. You have an Isaac, just as the young ruler had his possessions. You have something that you are holding on to, that the Holy Spirit says you must let go, and you say, "I can’t" Very well, then you must you must stop outside the Kingdom.

Then another difficulty comes in, and people say, "I have not the power to repent." There is a grand mistake. You have the power, or God would not command it. You can repent!

You can this moment lift up your eyes to Heaven and say, with the prodigal, "Father, I have sinned, and I renounce my sin." You may not be able to weep. God nowhere requires or commands that. You are able, this very moment, to renounce sin in purpose and in resolution. Mind you do not confound the renouncing of the sin with the power of saving yourself from it. If you renounce it, Jesus will come and save you from it, like the man with the withered hand whom Jesus intended to heal. Where was the power to come from to heal him? From Jesus, the benevolence, the love, that prompted that healing all came from Jesus; but Jesus wanted a condition, and that was the response of the man’s will. So He said, "Stretch forth thine hand." If the

man had been like some of you he would have said, "what an unreasonable command! You know I cannot do it." Jesus wanted that "I will, Lord" to be inside the man, the response of his will. The moment he said that, Jesus supplied strength. He stretched forth his hand and you know what happened.

Stretch out your withered hand, whatever it may be, and say, "I will, Lord." You have the power and mind, you have the obligation, which is universal and immediate. God "now commandeth all men every where to repent" and to believe the gospel. What a tyrant He must be if He commands that and yet knows you have not the power!

Now, do not say, "I do not feel enough." Do you feel enough to be willing to forsake you sin? That is the point. Any man who does not repent enough to forsake his sin is not a penitent at all. When you repent enough to forsake you sin, that moment your repentance is sincere and you may take hold of Jesus with a firm grasp. Then "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved".

sermon index

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net