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The Profitable Word

A. B. Lipscomb

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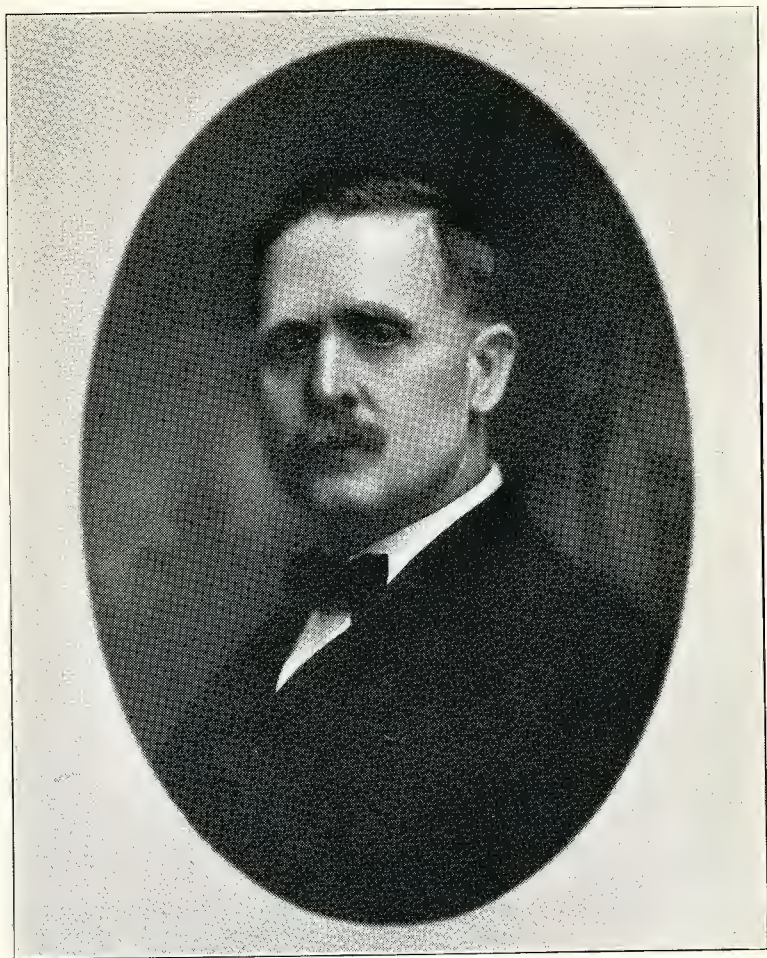
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THE PROFITABLE
WORD

A. B. Lipscomb



J. G. McQuiddy.

THE PROFITABLE WORD

(Containing selected articles from the pen of
J. C. McQuiddy, which portray his
matured thoughts and most
wholesome teaching)

Collected by
A. B. LIPSCOMB

NASHVILLE, TENN.
GOSPEL ADVOCATE COMPANY

1925

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DEDICATION

To those thousands of readers of the Gospel Advocate who either by word of approval or criticism inspired him to think, to meditate upon the law of God day and night, and to "press on toward the goal," this book is affectionately dedicated.

PREFATORY

THE purpose of this book is to preserve in substantial form some of the best lessons taught by the lamented J. C. McQuiddy. Among his fellow citizens, he was everywhere known and respected for unusual thrift and business acumen; but among his brethren, including especially the thousands of readers of the Gospel Advocate, he was more generally recognized and esteemed for his deep and abiding interest in the kingdom of Christ. Here his proved fitness and unflagging zeal gained for him a place of unquestioned leadership.

He began his work with the Advocate in 1882, and it did not end until the breath left his body and he was "called up higher" on August 3, 1924. Thus his work in an editorial capacity covers a period of forty-two eventful years. During the greater part of this period he not only had the business management of the paper, but became financially responsible for its publication and extension of circulation. That he carried it through the stress and strain of many lean years, including the crucial period of the World War, is a fact most appreciated by those who know just what faith and personal sacrifice of time and money this burden entailed. It is not too much to say that Brother McQuiddy loved the Advocate and

gave to it the very best thought and energies of his being.

As a writer, he was frank, pointed, and very simple in his choice of language. While he often quoted from other religious journals and books, his chief source of inspiration was from the word of God. In nearly every article one may note a fondness for the Scriptures and an underlying purpose to make known the divine will. On this point he once wrote: "No man should discuss a subject unless his ultimate aim and purpose is to maintain the truth and to honor and glorify Christ." Again, he pronounced a high ideal for himself and for every contributor in these words: "An article that will not in some way bring the readers into closer communion with God, or in some degree elevate, uplift, and make them more useful, should be eliminated from the columns of a journal, even though the editor incurs the frowns of a contributor." He realized that the position of an editor is not easy to fill. Out of his own experience he said: "One day the public may applaud his efforts, and the same public may condemn him the next day in the most scathing terms. It is certain as death that he cannot please everybody." Humility and steadfastness as well are indicated in this statement: "Of course an editor is not infallible or inspired; he makes mistakes as do other people; but God demands that he be true to himself and his convictions."

Of a necessity, many of his editorial utterances

were of a controversial nature. While the columns of the Advocate were never meant to be used as a clearinghouse for the settlement of the troubles of local congregations, yet whenever and wherever great principles of truth and right have been involved, it has not shrank from an unpleasant duty. In such crises Brother McQuiddy uniformly endeavored to be both courteous and fair toward his opponents. He contended that "the debater who is not willing to do unto his opponent as he would be done by, and who is not willing to regard his opponent as honest and as sincere as is he, is liable to bring all discussion into disrepute." Certainly we may expect something worth while to enamate from the heart and pen of a man who cherished such ideals. To this end this book has been compiled.

It is by no means possible to include within one volume all of the writings or even all of his best efforts. In the matter of selection and revision I have endeavored, however, to feature in Part I four subjects that were favorites with Brother McQuiddy and to which he gave the very closest study and scholarly research. They are: (1) *The Integrity of the Word*, a series occasioned by the recent fundamentalist-modernist controversy; (2) *Church Government*, with special reference to the eldership; (3) *Teaching the Bible*, a plea for a systematic and faithful study of the word in classes on the Lord's day; (4) *The Call to Evangelism*, a series of exhortations urging more extensive

and more efficient missionary activities. Each of these subjects is exhaustively treated by the writer, and for that reason they are given preference.

In Part II the reader will find twelve themes of a diversified character, the basis of selection being the importance of the theme itself and the appealing way in which it is presented.

I have undertaken the compilation of these articles at the request of the family and in response to a long-cherished wish of Brother McQuiddy himself. It has been a pleasant and, in one sense, a sacred task. The reading of these vigorous articles penned by a brother who has "laid his armor down" brings to mind the cryptic words spoken of Abel: "He being dead, yet speaketh." And thus may our departed brother speak through the coming years and lead the readers of this book along the paths that are safe and true.

A. B. LIPSCOMB.

PART I

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE INTEGRITY OF THE WORD -----	11
II. CHURCH GOVERNMENT -----	41
III. TEACHING THE BIBLE -----	69
IV. THE CALL TO EVANGELISM -----	103

CHAPTER I

THE INTEGRITY OF THE WORD

The Effort to Discredit.

SOME who do not believe the word of God, like Jehoiakim, seek to destroy it by denying its genuineness and authenticity. Jehoiakim, king of Judah, "cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was in the brazier, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was in the brazier." (Jer. 36: 23.) The enemies of truth and righteousness have fought the word of God in all ages of the world; but, like Jehoiakim, they have passed away and have been forgotten, while the word of God lives and rules in the hearts of more people than ever before. The wicked become wise in their own conceits and imagine vain things. Peter says of Paul: "Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Pet. 3: 15, 16.) There are men using a penknife on the Bible to-day to cut out things relative to the divine side of Christianity which they do not understand, as though the human could fully compre-

hend the divine. The human side in salvation is plain, simple, and easily understood, but the God side no human has ever been able to fathom. If man could do this, there would be no room for faith. No man can understand just why Christ should die for sinners, the just for the unjust. Every effort to explain this has failed. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; he who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory." (1 Tim. 3: 16.) If we could comprehend how "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," how he created Adam a full-grown and perfect man from the dust of the ground, and how Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, we could not reverence, adore, and worship him as we do the God of the Bible. But why should our faith stagger at these things, when we are accepting every day as true so many things that we do not and cannot understand? All life comes out of death and suffering. The mother gives her life that her child may live. No child comes into the world without suffering. Through toil, labor, and weariness our food comes to us. Somebody has toiled, suffered, and died that we might enjoy the blessings that we now enjoy. We do not refuse to enjoy them even though we fail to see the justice of the death and suffering of our forefathers.

An editorial from the London Mirror fittingly emphasizes the point I am making:

Whenever we undertake to believe and accept nothing but what we can see and weigh and feel with our hands and verify by records, we face a kind of hard and blank wall of facts. If the Almighty did not tell Moses of the beginning of things, who did tell him, and how?

There can be no more absurd and pitiful disregard of facts than belief that human knowledge and reason are unlimited and that there is nothing beyond what we know and can prove by material evidence. Each generation of discoverers and investigators has proclaimed that it had learned all there was to know, but was proved by the next generation following to have been ignorant.

Scientists of Tom Paine's day believed they had learned all the mysteries of nature, and from them could demonstrate that God was an impossibility. They could have demonstrated, also, from what they thought they knew, that a theory that each drop of water and of blood in our bodies and each cubic foot of air swarms with living things which can penetrate our skins without our knowledge and do us harm or good was an impossibility. They could have proved the radio, the telegraph, the airship, to be impossibilities, as they were from what was known then. The generation after ours will discover and reveal things of which we do not dream, facts which exist and which we do not suspect. So it will go on indefinitely. Developments of the future are as obscure, mysterious, and vast as those of the past, recorded before history began. The simple, loving faith that humbly and truthfully acknowledges the narrow limitations of human knowledge and wisdom and reason, accepts the plain teachings of nature that there must be a Wise and Almighty and Beneficent Power, and that there must be life after this, and looks forward joyfully and hopefully, can cast aside as trifles the labored

efforts of arrogant and insolent ignorance to prove that what we see and have and know is all, that the beginning was some kind of unexplained accident, and that what we call death is the end.

No Occasion for Fear.

I am not among those who fear that the wicked, unsteadfast, and ignorant can destroy the word of God. I fear not the conflict between truth and error. Victory belongs to the truth. The word of God will live, guide, comfort, and cheer men when Darwinism, rationalism, and agnosticism have been long buried and forgotten. "For, All flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth: but the word of the Lord abideth forever." (1 Pet. 1: 24.) I rejoice in the faith that the will of God will eventually triumph, and I know that God's ways are not man's ways. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55: 7-9.) If I could fully understand the "virgin birth" or any other birth, I would know that the God I worship, the God of the Bible, is not responsible for them. The very fact

that there is something incomprehensible about the virgin birth and every other birth intensifies my faith in God and the Bible and leads me to lose my will in the will of God. Every humble, devout Christian will approve the sentiment of the following lines:

Thy will, O God, is joy to me,
A gladsome thing;
For in it naught but love I see,
Whate'er it brings.

No bed of pain, no rack of woe—
Thy will is good;
A glory wheresoe'er I go,
My daily food.

Within the circle of thy will
All things abide;
So I, exulting, find no ill
Where thou dost guide.

In that resplendent will of thine
I calmly rest;
Triumphantly I make it mine,
And count it best.

To doubt and gloom and care and fear
I yield no jot;
Thy choice I choose, with soul sincere,
Thrice happy lot.

In all the small events that fall
From day to day
I mark thy hand, I hear thy call,
And swift obey.

I walk by faith, not sense or sight—
Calm faith in thee;
My peace endures, my way is bright,
My heart is free.

God is jealous of his word and never permits it to go unfulfilled. Those who are faithful to observe and keep it are blessed. To Solomon was this promise made: "Concerning this house which thou art building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute mine ordinances, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I establish my word with thee, which I spoke unto David thy father." (1 Kings 6: 12.) How comforting the thought that God's promises never fail! In the days of Elijah the Tishbite, to him it was said: "As Jehovah, the God of Israel, liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." (1 Kings 17: 1.) Bible readers need not to be told how faithfully this was fulfilled! We should not be concerned about the failure of God's word, but about our failure to accept and obey it. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isa. 55: 11.) The blatant infidel could as easily blot out the sun and obliterate the stars as render the word of God void. I fear not the power of the skeptic, but the failure of Christians to hold fast the form of

sound words and to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

Jehovah Behind the Book.

God is not slack concerning his promises nor negligent concerning his word. To Jeremiah, the prophet, he said: "Thou hast well seen: for I watch over my word to perform it." (Jer. 1: 12.) Why should any one fear what the rationalist can do to the word of God, with Jehovah watching over it? As the hammer breaks the flinty rock, so the words of God soften the hard heart. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the straw to the wheat? saith Jehovah. Is not my word like fire? saith Jehovah; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. 23: 28, 29.) As Jehovah was against the prophets that stole his words from the people, so is he against those who are using the penknife of skepticism on his word. If the agnostic and the rationalist would read the Bible faithfully over and over again and again, their doubts would soon vanish away. An impartial reading of God's word will cure infidelity. No other book speaks with the impartiality, authority, and wisdom of the Bible. The man of judgment and humility trembles at God's word. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt. 24: 35.) Remark-

ably strange it is that all do not read, respect, and obey the word of God. "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4: 12.)

It is dangerous not to "preach the word." The Holy Spirit revealed to John on the isle of Patmos what a terrible punishment will come upon the person who modifies, adds to, or takes from the word of God. "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book." (Rev. 22: 18, 19.) This shows the estimate God puts on his word. What a fearful thing it is not to cling to and follow the word of God!

Focus of Criticism.

Criticism has been busy now for over a hundred years with every phase of the life and work and character of Jesus of Nazareth. Men of all faiths and of no faith have studied his life from every available source, with every conceivable hypothesis and critical suggestion. The progress in phi-

losophy and in science and in historical investigation has come to a focus in the study of Jesus Christ. The brighter the light that is brought to the search, the more does he shine forth the supreme character in history, the greatest teacher of the ages, the chief force in life, the founder of Christianity, the object of faith and worship by one-third of the human race as the Son of God and Savior of sinners. It is not possible to escape the problem of Jesus. His character as pictured in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypse is a fact and cannot be denied. His power as the chief regenerating force of the human race and the mainspring of all our progress in the uplift of mankind is indisputable. He is the one hope of man in the midst of the complex and manifold problems of industrial, social, and political life.

Rationalist and evolutionist have attempted to brush Jesus aside as without the pale of natural law, and therefore a myth or a legend. But modern scientists are not so dogmatic and have a wider view of nature and of God and concerning the possibility and even reality of mystery in nature. Life is an unsolved mystery and death the door to greater mysteries. Science does not deny the possibility of the virgin birth of Jesus and the fact of the resurrection from the grave. The only adequate explanation of the character of Jesus is this, that in him God and man meet. He is himself the great miracle, the incarnation of God in human form. He is the word of God,

the expression of God. In the light of reason it is easier to believe than not to believe the claims of Jesus.

Jesus Christ and His Claims.

Christ made claims that no human ever made or can ever make. If simply a human being, he performed a stupendous miracle in making the claims. No man, after almost two thousand years, is able to duplicate his claims. To make such claims as Jesus made, we must set aside all laws of human thought and think as no man ever thought. This is a miracle. Jesus could not have done it had he not have been more than man.

Shall we look at the claims of Christ? Heaven is his nativity. "For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6: 38.) He came that we might have life. "I am the bread of life." (Verse 48.) The Gospels show how Jesus was conscious from the first of his divine mission and of his peculiar relation to God as the Son. We see it on his visit to Jerusalem when twelve years old; at his baptism in the river Jordan, when the Father greeted him as his beloved Son; in the temptation by the devil; in his own claims to be the Son of God; and when he prays: "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that the Son may glorify thee." (John 17: 1.) He "called God his own Father, making himself equal with God."

(John 5: 18.) Of the Pharisees gathered together Jesus inquired: "What think ye of the Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I put thine enemies underneath thy feet? If David then calleth him Lord, how is he his son? And no one was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions." (Matt. 22: 42-46.) Why did no man ask this question before, why has no man asked it since, and why will no man ever ask it again? To these questions but one answer can be given, and that answer plucks up infidelity by the roots. The secret of the answer is, the questions *were not asked by a mere man*. Why does not some infidel now rise up among his kindred and duplicate this question? The eternal laws of nature will not let him. Bound by the laws of human thought, he cannot do it. He is afraid of the contempt of the wise, and hears the scoff of the fools, and in alarm flies from the floods of ridicule and sarcasm that would overwhelm him did he dare to ask, Who am I?

He said: "I am the equal of God." This is true or false. If true, the question rests; if false, it is equally miraculous as if true. If false, for four thousand years no one had ever been able to tell such a lie. Men of all classes and in all ages had exhausted their mental powers in telling lies, yet

no one had ever been able to invent such a lie. Why had some infidel not thought of it and built upon it a church that would prove to the human family the greatest blessing it had ever enjoyed? If Jesus had not been divine, he could not have said, "I am the equal of God." Men who are not divine do not have the effrontery and gall to claim to be the equal of God and to claim heaven for their nativity.

But worse still for the skeptic. If Jesus is an impostor, he not only reversed all laws of thinking and told a lie that no other man can tell, but led the most intelligent and enlightened people to believe and build on that falsehood a church that is the light of the world and the salt of the earth and which is purifying those who enter it. If falsehood and vice could do this for Christ's subjects, it would be a miracle indeed. If Christ is the greatest liar the world has ever known, then his followers would assimilate his character and become as he is. If Christ were not the Son of God, he knew it, and had nothing to gain by the death of the cross, but all to lose. He spent his life in poverty, without a home, in trials and persecutions, and died on the cross, in order that he might be the world's greatest fraud, says the skeptic. Men do not so act. If weak thy faith, why accept the harder side?

Though time may dig the grave of creeds,
And dogmas wither in the sod,
My soul will keep the thought it needs—
Its swerveless faith in God.

No matter how the world began,
Nor where the march of science goes,
My trust in something more than man
Shall help me bear life's woes.

Let progress take the props away,
And moldering superstitions fall;
Still God retains his regal sway—
The Maker of us all.

Why cavil over that or this?
One thought is vast enough for me—
The great Creator was, and is,
And evermore shall be.

The Resurrection Doctrine.

The supreme and final message of every sermon should be the resurrection of our Lord, which expresses at once a new-born hope to all humanity. The blessed hope of immortality, with its accompanying doctrine of the resurrection, was proclaimed by the Christ himself in the intimate and all-comforting words of his farewell sermon to the disciples: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am,

there ye may be also." (John 14: 2, 3.) Jesus proclaims himself to the beloved John, saying: "Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades." (Rev. 1: 17, 18.) No fact is better attested and more clearly proven than is the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In the time of Christ, the belief in a resurrection, in connection with a state of future retribution, was entertained by the Pharisees, and also by the mass of the Jewish people, being disputed only by the Sadducees. Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, David, and other prophets wrote of the revivication of the human body after it has been forsaken by the soul. Isaiah compares the restoration of the Jewish people and state to a resurrection from the dead. (Isa. 26: 19, 20.) Ezekiel had glimpses of the resurrection. (Ezek. 3: 7.) Daniel (12: 2) is clearer than Isaiah and Ezekiel on the resurrection, saying: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." David declares: "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall dwell in safety. For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption." (Ps. 16: 9, 10.) Again he sings in a strain of satisfaction, saying: "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be

satisfied, when I awake, with beholding thy form.” (Ps. 17: 15.) All our precious hopes and sweet promises of the gospel cluster around the resurrection of our Savior. The Spirit, by Paul, says: “Knowing that he that raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you.” (2 Cor. 4: 14.) “For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.” (2 Cor. 5: 1.) “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. . . . For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” (1 Thess. 4: 14-16.) The purpose of God “hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” (2 Tim. 1: 10.) With full assurance of faith, the Christian should abound in hope.

Hope, Christian soul! In every stage
Of this thine earthly pilgrimage,
Let heavenly joy thy thoughts engage;
Abound in hope.

Hope through the watches of the night;
Hope till the morrow brings the light;
Hope till thy faith be lost in sight;
Abound in hope.

Witnesses of the Risen Lord.

The hope of the resurrection is preëminently a Christian hope, and the doctrine of eternal life in a state of perpetual happiness found at once its early dawn and its noonday fullness in the gospel of the Son of God, and this hope was realized in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, "the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth." (Rev. 1: 5.) This supreme event in the world's history is evidenced by the risen Savior's glorious appearance in a manifold visitation to his disciples.

The risen Lord was seen of Mary Magdalene and others of the faithful women; seen of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus; seen of the ten disciples in the upper room; seen of the eleven, including the doubting Thomas; seen of the disciples on the familiar shores of Galilee; seen of five hundred believers in the one great company; seen of Peter, James, and Paul, in separate, personal visitation; seen once again of the eleven in the final vision that ended with the Lord's ascension. In all these appearances the person of the risen Christ was indeed visible and tangible. To the doubting Thomas he said: "Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." (John 20: 27.) When he went to abide with the two disciples at Emmaus, "it came to pass, when he had sat down with them to meat,

he took the bread and blessed; and breaking it he gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight." (Luke 24: 30, 31.) The resurrection without the death of Christ would be an imposition; the death without the resurrection would be a tragedy. The enemies of Christ say that he was put to death on the cross. This is freely and frankly conceded by all. There is no room for disagreement here.

Christ was seen by too many, and at different times and under different circumstances, after his resurrection, for the disciples to be mistaken. That they saw him was not a matter of *faith*, but a matter of *knowledge*. They knew they saw him or they knew they did not see him. "Until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen: to whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God." (Acts 1: 2, 3.)

Credibility of the Apostles.

If the witnesses could not identify the risen Lord in forty days, they could not in forty years. But they did recognize him. They were not mistaken. If they were honest, their testimony is true and should be accepted. In the light of all

they did, it is hard to believe they were dishonest. They had no motive to tell a lie. When they proclaimed him the risen Lord, imprisonment, stripes, and death awaited them. If Christ did not rise, they could have no hope of reward. Paul emphasizes this: "Now if Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised: and if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we witnessed of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, neither hath Christ been raised: and if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable." (1 Cor. 15: 12-19.) The apostles did not tell a lie in order to gain hardships, hunger, and death. They looked forward to life in Christ Jesus. They knew that Jesus had been raised from the dead by the power of God, and they believed that the same power would raise them from the dead to an immortalized and glorified life. If they knew Jesus to be an impostor, they could not have believed this. Jesus Christ was raised from the dead without the use of human instrumentality. Prior to this God

had used Elijah and Elisha to raise persons from the dead. Since the resurrection of Christ, the general resurrection will be accomplished without the use of human instrumentality. "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5: 28, 29.)

New Testament Manuscripts.

The manuscripts of the New Testament are both older and more numerous than those of the Old Testament. The original manuscripts of the apostles and evangelists were written on perishable Egyptian paper, and had, therefore, disappeared in the second century. But there are more copies of them than of any other ancient writings, and the materials for the restoration of the original text are abundant. An immense amount of labor and skill has been spent during the last and present centuries upon the critical examination in order to verify the genuineness and integrity of the New Testament text. We have now a pure and reliable text of the Greek Testament, which was used by the Committees of British and American Revisers of 1881 for the benefit of the English-reading people.

The Bible is not only the best authenticated book, but it was the first book to be printed, and

the King James Version is to-day the best-selling book in the world. Renan says: "The composition of the Gospels was one of the most important events to the future of Christianity which occurred during the *second half of the first century.*" Again: "All, in my judgment, date back to the first century, and they are substantially by the authors to whom they are attributed." I have no doubt as to the genuineness and authority of the New Testament text, which I am able to show; yet it is not my purpose here to show their reliability by external evidence, but to establish its credibility by the internal evidence of the book itself.

The infidel who believes that the twelve apostles told a lie concerning the resurrection of Jesus from the grave should never charge credulity on Christians or claim that he cannot believe in miracles. Miracles are wrought by the suspension of the uniform laws of nature. A power supervenes above all laws, reversing or suspending their uniform action, and producing a result the opposite to what would have been brought about in the regular course of nature. As we have three worlds—moral, mental, and physical—there may be three classes of miracles.

God Rules by Law.

The moral and mental worlds are as much under law as is the material world. Never-varying law controls our thinking. The feelings, the emo-

tions, that stir our moral nature, do so according to uniform law. Every joy that inspires the heart and brightens the eye; every feeling of anger or hate that has hardened the human countenance; every bud of hope that has made light and smooth the pathway of man, journeying to his eternal home; every fear, every pain, every doubt, and every despair that has been endured in life—all these and more are produced by unchanging law, as immutable as the laws that govern the material world.

We are born by law, live by law, die by law, become Christians by law, and live Christians by law—law as unchangeable as that controlling the sun, moon, and stars. The truth is, God rules by law.

Any thought that is imparted to mind in contravention of mind law would be a mental miracle. If a feeling is communicated to the human heart outside of regular law, it would be a moral miracle.

After man had sinned and had violated the law of God, the advent of a miraculous Jesus, who would not be born by the uniform laws of birth, nor live by uniform law, nor die in conformity to the law of death, nor be brought forth from the grave by uniform law, was a necessity.

That Christ was born, lived, was crucified and buried, none deny. Did he rise from the dead? The Christian says, "Yes;" the infidel, "No."

On the statement that he "arose from the dead" I plant myself, sure that victory will hover over

the open grave and that the risen star of Bethlehem shall forever illumine the grave, dispelling its gloom and darkness.

“Did Jesus rise?” The infidel Hume says: “It is much easier to believe that twelve men would agree to tell a falsehood than to believe that a dead man came to life.” In the light of the facts, I say no. We are even. Infidels are good at *asserting* and *guessing*, but are failures at *proving*. He charges that the twelve apostles *deliberately lied*, but does not offer one syllable of proof.

It is a sad truth that lies have been told in all ages of the world, but they have been told in harmony with uniform law. Liars have used common sense in selecting the character of lies by them told and the purposes for which they told them.

No Motive to Lie.

If Christ is an impostor, the twelve apostles *knew* it. If they agree to tell a lie, they must do it in accordance with the unvarying mental and moral laws. The Christian believes that the physical law of death was reversed and that life came forth from the grave. To avoid this, the infidel makes the twelve apostles reverse the laws of mind and heart to enable them to tell the lie that Hume says they told.

For what are lies told? Men will lie for fame, power, wealth, revenge, to escape from prison, for

amusement, for a friend, to injure an enemy. These will suffice. What motive will the infidel assign the twelve? Hume did not even try. After the lapse of nearly two thousand years no man has made the attempt. The infidel world will not, cannot, make the attempt to assign a motive to the twelve for telling the lie charged. On this point T. W. Caskey says: "These men were Jews by birth, education, and religion—raised up under the law of Moses and at the feet of their priesthood; taught from their infancy that lying was one of the meanest vices condemned in their law; had stood by smoking altars, bathed in blood, to atone for that and other sins; taught that if they lied their hope of a home in Abraham's bosom was blotted out forever and that Gehenna was their doom. Add to this the fact that they had cut themselves off from their sacrifices, under their law, by accepting the sacrifice of Him whom they preached. Another fact, that for more than three years they had been with him, listened to the lessons of divine wisdom from him, against whose character for truth, purity, and every virtue that can adorn life and make death glorious, even infidelity can bring no railing accusation. Yet, in view of all these facts, this man says they lied—lied without a motive, an object, or an end."

And this is not all. If Hume be true, they lied knowing that it would lead them to poverty, jail, persecution, and eternal death. They died for

what they *knew*, and not what they *believed*. The man who thinks they lied is a believer in the supernatural and should blush to talk about the credulity of the Christian!

The infidel, the agnostic, and the evolutionist offer me no incentive to live or to die. For my aspirations, joys, and hopes they hold out to me a dark and cheerless oblivion.

Faith is a grasping of Almighty power;
The hand of man laid on the arm of God;
The grand and blessed hour
In which the things impossible to me
Become the possible, O Lord, through thee.

Sophistry of Modern Skepticism.

For skeptics to deny the inspiration of the Scriptures, the virgin birth of Jesus, the atonement of Christ, and the physical resurrection of our Lord is not modern, but it is something new for men to claim to believe the Bible and yet deny the inspiration of the Bible and the divinity of Jesus Christ. If Christ is not divine, if he is not the Son of God, and if he did not rise from the dead, "then is our preaching vain, your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we witnessed of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, neither hath Christ been raised; and if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain;

ye are yet in your sins. Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ have perished." (1 Cor. 15: 14-18.) There is no middle ground between virtue and vice, truth and falsehood, Jesus risen and Jesus not risen. With a risen Lord, a halo of light encircles the grave, death is robbed of its sting and victory, and the gloom and darkness of the grave are dispelled. The cross without the resurrection would be the tragedy of the ages. If Jesus did not rise, the grave is shrouded in darkness and despair; and "if we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable." (1 Cor. 15: 19.)

Those who deny the virgin birth and who deny that Jesus rose from the grave cannot accept him as the best of men; for he said he would rise, and he upbraided his disciples with their unbelief. No, he could not be good and bad at the same time. He is either the Son of God or the vilest deceiver the world has ever known. He is either divine or not divine.

It is vital to believe that Jesus rose from the dead and that he is the Son of God, in order to be saved. Those who reject the divinity of Jesus Christ and devise ways of salvation for themselves can have no hope of salvation through Christ. On this the Bible speaks clearly and forcefully: "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of

God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." (John 20: 30, 31.) The *faith* in Jesus Christ, the *Son of God*, leads to *life* in his name. Faith, then, in the virgin birth, in the atonement, and in the physical resurrection, must be vital to salvation. The man who believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God believes that he was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, and that God raised him from the dead. If you doubt that it is necessary to believe that God raised Jesus from the dead to be saved, you do not believe the Bible. "But the righteousness which is of faith saith thus, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down:), or, Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Rom. 10: 6-9.) The man who does not accept the virgin birth and the physical resurrection does not accept Jesus as Lord, nor believe in his heart that God raised him from the dead. Such a man may be flattered and praised by those who reject Jesus as Lord and Christ, but he is not saved and does not have God's approval. To accept Christ simply as a man is to have a Christless religion. Christ stripped of his birth and resurrection is Christ shorn of au-

thority. This same Jesus did God raise up and hath made him both Lord and Christ. In obedience to him demons were cast out, diseases were healed, and the dead were raised. The winds and the seas obey him. He shall rule until he puts all his enemies under his feet. "The last enemy that shall be abolished is death."

Antichrists Are Here.

The Holy Spirit tells us that those who deny the Christ are liars. "Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, even he that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also." (1 John 2: 22, 23.) The man who denieth Jesus is antichrist, and whosoever denies the Son has not the Father. Any man who confesses the Son has the Father also. The Father and the Son stand or fall together. The Father glorified the Son, gave him authority over all flesh, and requires every spirit to confess Jesus. "And every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already." (1 John 4: 3.) Antichrists are in the world and are denying Jesus by denying his birth and resurrection. By refusing to confess Jesus as Lord, they have not the Father.

If we would enjoy life, with all its aspirations,

joys, and hopes, it must come to us through the Son of God. We may belittle the Sonship and magnify in as far as possible the Fatherhood of God, still God's immutable word stands, and it declares: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in him: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he hath not believed in the witness that God hath borne concerning his Son. And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life." (1 John 5: 10-12.) It is not ominous that "fundamentalists" will not accept the rejection of the birth and resurrection of Jesus by "modernists," but it is both fearful and terrible that men who reject Christ, the source of life, will claim to enjoy life through him. The Son and life are joined together, and we could as easily create life as enjoy it without the Son.

If the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, dwell in us, he will also quicken our mortal bodies, and they shall come forth from the grave and put on incorruption and immortality. "Christ is the first fruits of them that slept." (1 Cor. 15: 20.) He is our hope, our joy, and our salvation.

It is not generous to expect us to fellowship those who are seeking to destroy our faith in him. It is not possible for the man who loves Christ with all his heart to help the man who hates him

as he labors to dethrone Jesus. To reject Christ as the only begotten Son of God means to forsake the fellowship of both Father and Son. To deny that Christ has come in the flesh is to have the spirit of antichrist. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God." (1 John 4: 15.) Those who deny the Sonship of Jesus Christ reject the witness God has borne of his Son and have made him a liar. The Father and the Son work as one and stand together. A repudiation of the virgin birth and the resurrection of Christ is a rejection of the entire scheme of redemption. It is the constant aim and purpose of the Christian to become more and more like Jesus with the passing years.

Jesus, thou joy of loving hearts!
Thou Fount of life! thou Light of men!
From the best bliss that earth imparts
We turn unfilled to thee again.

Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood;
Thou savest those that on thee call.
To them that seek thee, thou art good;
To them that find thee, all in all.

We taste thee, O thou living Bread,
And long to feast upon thee still;
We drink of thee, the Fountain Head,
And thirst our souls from thee to fill!

Our restless spirits yearn for thee
Where'er our changeful lot is cast;
Glad when thy gracious smile we see,
Blest when our faith can hold thee fast.

O Jesus, ever with us stay;
Make all our moments calm and bright;
Chase the dark night of sin away;
Shed o'er the world thy holy light.

CHAPTER II

CHURCH GOVERNMENT

The Correct Vision.

THE church in its most comprehensive sense includes all believers of whatever age, sex, race, nationality, or color. Christ is the Head of the church in this broad sense. It has no organization and no officers, save that Jesus Christ is its Leader. Its union is like that of the vine and the branches. The bond of union is faith in Jesus Christ. Whoever does the will of God as laid down in the Scriptures is a member of the church in this comprehensive sense. There is another sense in which the word "church" is used in the New Testament. I speak of the local church, which is much more limited than the church universal. In the New Testament we read, "The churches of Christ salute you;" we read also of "all the churches of the Gentiles," "all the churches of the saints," and "the churches of God which are in Judea." This local association of disciples, with elders to oversee and serve, is the only church organization—if I may use that word—in the New Testament. Neither were these local churches associated together in any organic sense. They were entirely independent of each other, save that the members of all of them were

spiritually under one Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, united by the bonds of common faith, hope, and love. The various societies and ecclesiasticisms of the present time are all younger than the church of Christ. No one who is a member of the church of Christ in its broad sense and is also a member of the church of Christ in its local sense should belong to any other religious organization for the purpose of serving God. There is no good work which one can do in the service of Christ that he cannot do in the church of Christ. Not a sigh can be heaved, not a prayer can be offered, not a good deed can be done, not a kind word can be spoken, not a cup of cold water can be given to a disciple that it cannot be done in the church and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is sometimes argued that these institutions or aids are stepping-stones to the church. It would be better to stay in the church to worship God rather than to get outside on a stepping-stone. As Noah did not need aids or little lifeboats in order to make the ark a success, so we do not need aids in order to do the work that God has ordained that we should do through the church. We are admonished by the Holy Spirit: "And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Col. 3: 17.) We should be careful in all of our religious work and in all acts of service rendered to God to give glory to Christ through the church: "Unto him be the glory in the church and in

Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever." (Eph. 3: 21.)

Human Societies.

People in their mad craze to form human societies for doing the work which God has ordained the church to do should be careful lest they reflect on the wisdom and power of God. The formation of societies for doing the work that God has ordained his church to do belittles the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, belittles the work of the church, and reflects on the wisdom of God in unmistakable terms. If such societies had been essential to the efficient work of the church, God would have ordained them for such purposes; but as the Bible does not furnish us one syllable of information concerning such societies, we are led to believe that the church is effective and complete in itself and that the man of God who has faith in Christ and works through it is thoroughly furnished unto every good work. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.) Turning to human organizations to do the work of the church is a reflection on the efficacy of the blood of Christ. Christ certainly would not have died to establish his church, if that church was to be a failure and not to be

sufficiently complete and efficient to save all the obedient for all time after its establishment. Christ spoke the truth when he said to Peter: "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16: 18.) The church is sufficient for the redemption of all men, provided they will only accept the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ and bow in meek, humble submission to it. Followers of the Lord Jesus Christ should never belittle the work of the church and its mission in the world by intimating that human organizations do more good in the world than the church. The man who does this reflects on his own Christianity and the wisdom of God. No humble, devout believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, who acknowledges Christ as supreme, will ever make any such insinuations. Of course the church cannot work itself without humble, faithful subjects; but if Christians will be careful to do nothing which is out of harmony with the word of Christ, if they will work as he directs and follow in his steps, they will find that the church is complete and effective for the salvation of the world. Instead of seeking to glorify ourselves and human organizations, let us give God the glory through the church and cling to him by working through the only divine organization that we have for the salvation of a lost and ruined race. How great and how wonderful will be the

work accomplished, if we only cling to the Christ and work through him, giving the glory to our Heavenly Father!

Apostolic Legislation.

It will not be denied that during the personal absence of the King he has committed the management of this kingdom to stewards. "This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. . . . Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified." (Acts 2: 32-36.) Thus we see that Christ, the head of the church, has been exalted to the right hand of God in heaven, from whence, as the head of the church, he directs and controls the church. (Col. 1: 18.) His under shepherds, or stewards, into whose hands he has committed the management of the body of Christ, are not permitted to direct the body only as guided by the *written* word of God. At first God gave the management of the kingdom of heaven into the hands of the apostles. Next to them were prophets; next, teachers; then, assistants or helpers. Besides these, many persons possessed of miraculous powers—gifts of healing and speaking in tongues—were employed in setting up and putting in order

the communities composing the kingdom of heaven. Angels were also used and are now employed by the great King in ministering to them who are heirs of salvation. For Christ now, as Lord of all, has the Holy Spirit at his disposal, and all the angels of God, and these are employed by him in his kingdom. "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues." (1 Cor. 12: 28.) "And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." (Eph. 4: 11.) "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" (Heb. 1: 14.)

Christ delegated all authority to the apostles as his ambassadors. Hence, everything pertaining to the kingdom of God was first taught and enjoined by them. They were the first preachers, pastors, teachers, ministers, overseers, in the kingdom, and had the direction and control of all its affairs. "Who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." (2 Cor. 3: 6.) "But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and

having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor. 5: 18-20.)

The communities collected and set in order by the apostles are called the congregation of Christ. All these congregations of Christ have the word of God, are under the law of God, and enjoy all the blessings of the present salvation. Christ, their head, is in heaven, but present with them by his Spirit in their hearts and in all the institutions of his kingdom.

Every obedient believer in Christ is a free and full citizen in the kingdom of God, and entitled to all the privileges and honors of that kingdom. All who meet together regularly in one place in obedience to Christ, for the observance of the Lord's Supper and all the institutions of Christ, compose a congregation of Christ.

Appointing Public Ministers.

Now, in forming and setting in order the congregations of Christ, the apostles during their lifetime had, and by their writings still have, the sole right of legislating, directing, and disposing of all things. It appears that the apostles directed and controlled all the affairs of the church in Jerusalem until it was not pleasing to Christ for them to forsake the word of God to serve tables. Hence,

the twelve "called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables. Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom ye may appoint over this business. But we will continue steadfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaüs a proselyte of Antioch; whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them." (Acts 6: 2-6.) Here is authority for appointing deacons or public ministers of the congregation, who, under the direction of the overseers, were to manage the temporal affairs of this congregation of Christ. The apostles also appointed elders, or bishops, in every city, town, and country where a congregation of Christ was collected. This they did for the usefulness, edification, and influence of the congregation. "And when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fastings, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed." (Acts 14: 23.) "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge." (Tit. 1: 5.)

But, as all Christians are free men under Christ, they all have a voice in the selection of the persons whom the apostles appoint to be elders. The apostles still appoint all persons so selected, possessing the qualifications which the Holy Spirit has prescribed. It is, indeed, the Holy Spirit, and not the congregations, which selects elders and deacons. The Spirit gives the qualifications, and, speaking to the congregations through the Bible, commands their appointment to the work. Alexander Campbell very truly says: "And if a congregation will not elect to these offices the persons possessing these qualifications; or if, by a waywardness and selfishness of their own, they should elect those unqualified, and thus disparage those marked out by the possession of those gifts; in either case, they despise the authority of the ambassadors of Christ and must suffer for it." ("Christian System," page 173.)

Importance of the Eldership.

For many years the authority of the elders has been questioned by some Christians, and the elders themselves have been ridiculed and belittled as figureheads. They have been charged with ignorance, incompetency, and inefficiency. In many instances their functions and work have been usurped by the man-made pastor. Preachers and churches have ignored and discouraged the God-appointed bishops until there are very few active

elders who are tending the flock of God. The result is not a surprise, for it cannot be otherwise. If the evangelists in the churches met with as much ridicule and as little encouragement as do the elders, there would be very few, if any, evangelists. The work of an evangelist is no more important than the work of an elder. The work of both is given much prominence in the New Testament. The work of an evangelist is much easier and does not demand as much persistence and patience as does the work of a bishop. There is no more important work than the work of the divinely constituted overseer. How sweet will it be, after the conflicts and misunderstandings of life are over, for the undershepherds to hear the Chief Shepherd say to them: "You have been faithful in watching in behalf of souls; enter thou into the joys of heaven!"

The work of teaching, feeding, tending, and overseeing the flock requires no little skill, fidelity, and patience. It is usually a very difficult task to "be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers." The Holy Spirit recognizes this; so he admonishes: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief: for this were unprofitable for you." (Heb. 13: 17.) Paul admonished the elders at Ephesus: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy

Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20: 28.) The elders are to rule. (1 Tim. 5: 17.) They are commanded to take the oversight of the church, not for lucre, and to be examples to the flock. (1 Pet. 5: 1.)

Duties of Elders.

The elders have been the rulers, overseers, and teachers of God's people in all dispensations. Through them God decides cases and enforces his laws in the church. The New Testament is the law of the church, and the elders are the scriptural representatives of the church. The duty of the elders is to teach and enforce obedience to the Scriptures. When the elders teach and decide questions in accord with the Bible, the voice of God is ruling and controlling the congregation, if it is a church of Christ. This is true in exercising discipline on the disorderly walking, even though they be most eloquent and gifted preachers in the church. It is true of all members alike. It is the duty of the churches through their elders to withdraw fellowship from every brother who walks disorderly, regardless of his position in the body, or church. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us." (2 Thess. 3: 6.)

The church that ignores and denies that the elders are the rulers in the church of Christ is at sea without chart or compass. If God does not rule and control through the elders, then through whom does he rule? I am wholly unable to find any one, save the elders, who is authorized by Jehovah to take the oversight of the church. The elders, acting as God commands, have the full authority of Jehovah. If not acting as God directs, they have no authority whatever. The elder who serves most and rules least is the best elder.

Laxity in obeying the law of God is the root of the trouble. More love and fidelity for the truth on the part of the whole church will free it from the wave of wickedness that threatens to overwhelm it and destroy its usefulness. Restore the elders to the work that God has assigned them, insist on their enforcing the law of God against all offenders, and demand that fellowship be withdrawn by the whole church from the immoral evangelists, and publish the action of the church to the world. This will put the disobedient in their true light and will protect other churches from their deception and wickedness.

The Question of Inspiration.

It is taught by some that when inspiration ceased, elders ceased. We are told that in the apostolic church elders were inspired, as were the

prophets and apostles, though this affirmation cannot be proved. If some elders were inspired, it does not follow that all elders were inspired. It is evident that some Christian women were miraculously endowed in the primitive church; but it does not follow, because there are no women now so endowed, that there are no Christian women. Neither does it follow, because there are no elders enjoying inspiration now, that there are no Christian elders; nor should we conclude, because there are no absolutely perfect elders, that there are no elders. Because there are no absolutely perfect Christians, it does not follow that there are no relatively perfect Christians. If inspiration is a qualification of an elder, it is incomprehensibly strange that the Bible nowhere says so. If this be the *one needful* qualification, how remarkable that the Bible does not emphasize it!

Inspiration was an essential qualification of prophets and apostles. God clearly reveals this. "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Pet. 1: 21.) "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds." (Heb. 1: 1, 2.) The apostles were not commanded to study that they might be "apt to teach," but God spoke through him. "But when they deliver you up, be not anx-

ious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." (Matt. 10: 19, 20.) God alone could inspire prophets and apostles. He never authorized any one to appoint prophets and apostles in every city. He never gave a number of prophetic and apostolic qualifications. He never encouraged any one to seek or desire the work of an apostle, but he selected his own apostles and inspired them for their work.

When Inspiration Ceased.

But how different it is with the elder, since inspiration is not a qualification of the eldership! God authorizes men to appoint elders in every city. If inspiration is essential to the eldership, men could not appoint them, since they cannot fill men with the Holy Spirit. Titus could not inspire men, yet Paul says: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge." (Tit. 1: 5.) "And when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed." (Acts 14: 23.)

If inspiration made elders, God would not command men to appoint them, neither would he give the qualifications essential to the eldership. He

would inspire them as he did the apostles, and that would end the qualifications. The qualifications of elders are found in 1 Tim. 3; Tit. 1; 1 Pet. 5: 1-4; Acts 20: 28-31; 1 Tim. 5: 17; Heb. 13: 17. As long as the church exists, it will need men with these qualifications. Those who appoint elders are required to give heed to the qualifications as revealed, but not to inspiration, for that is nowhere given as a qualification of an elder. Why did God fail to tell us, if only men of inspiration could be elders and they were to pass out with inspiration? As long as there are teachers and evangelists in the church, so long will there be elders, pastors, or overseers, in the churches. Prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers will all go out of the church at the same time. "And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Eph. 4: 11-13.) Two things are evident. (1) That apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers all cease to function in the church at the same time. (2) All will function "till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man

[church], unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." We have not yet attained unto the unity of the faith, nor is the church full-grown; so the elders, or pastors, are still in the church. But some one may say the apostles and prophets are not in the church. They are in it in their teaching and authority just as they were while living, for their flesh and blood were never in the kingdom of God. So those who are trying to get rid of the elders, by the same reasoning put the apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers out of the church. They will, to be consistent, be forced to make some new apostles—apostles of their own.

We find elders in the primitive church—the Jerusalem church and the Philippian church, which is noted for its liberality and goodness. "Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." (Phil. 1: 1.) "And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and the apostles and the elders, and they rehearsed all things that God had done with them." (Acts 15: 4.) "And as they went on their way through the cities, they delivered them the decrees to keep which had been ordained of the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem." (Acts 16: 4.)

It is well understood that spiritual endowments were for the encouragement and development of the church in its infancy, and that when the re-

vealed will of God was given spiritual gifts ceased. This being correct, it is inconceivable that God would put in that revelation the qualifications of elders which ceased to be when the revelation was given. God has never been guilty of such an absurdity. God had elders in the primitive church, he has them in the church now, and they will remain there until the work of the church is complete.

Qualifications.

There has always been a live interest in the qualifications and duties of elders, bishops, or presbyters. As God holds up a perfect pattern for the Christian, just so he gives us a perfect model for an elder. There are only a few qualifications which an elder must have that every other Christian is not also required to possess. All Christians are admonished to be blameless. It is also said to them: "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt. 5: 48.) While no Christian can be as perfect as God, yet in striving to be perfect as God he will not partake of any evil, but will be reaching up to a nobler and purer life.

We have the printed copy book. The copy is perfect. In imitating such a copy we learn to write much more accurately than we would to follow an imperfect copy. Just so in taking a perfect model for a Christian and an elder.

If we never have a church of Christ until Christians are absolutely perfect, we will have none. Christians may be relatively perfect, but not absolutely perfect. If we expect Christians to be absolutely perfect, we shall be disappointed, just as we shall be if we expect elders to fill to absolute perfection all the qualifications prescribed for the Christian bishop. No infallible men live in this world. So long as men are in the flesh and are subject to appetites and passions, they will make mistakes. Some write and talk of a Christian as though he must be so perfect as never to sin. The Bible pictures no human being as sinless. Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Peter were not sinless. They were good men, filled with pure aspirations, and doubtless there are many such in the world to-day. While we should admonish all to live godly lives, yet we should not expect sinless men in the flesh. There is a constant warfare between the flesh and the Spirit.

There are different words in the New Testament that designate an elder. They are "bishop," "presbyter," "elder," "pastor," and "overseer." The Holy Spirit has stated the qualifications of an elder, and in doing so has given qualifications which if any man possessed wholly and completely would make him an absolutely perfect elder. For the qualifications of elders, read 1 Tim. 3; Tit. 1; 1 Pet. 5; Acts 20: 28. G. C. Brewer, in "The Model Church," tabulates the qualifications:

TIMOTHY.

1. Without reproach.
2. Husband of one wife.
3. Temperate.
4. Sober-minded.
5. Orderly
6. Given to hospitality.
7. Apt to teach.
8. No brawler.
9. No striker.
10. Gentle.
11. Not contentious.
12. No lover of money.
13. Rules well his own house.
14. Not a novice.
15. Good testimony from
without.

TITUS.

1. Blameless.
2. Husband of one wife.
3. Having children that believe.
4. Not self-willed.
5. Not soon angry.
6. No brawler.
7. No striker.
8. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
9. Given to hospitality.
10. Lover of good.
11. Sober-minded.
12. Just.
13. Holy.
14. Self-controlled.
15. Sound in the faith.

I make the following tabulation :

ACTS.

1. Take heed to self.
2. Take heed to the flock.
3. Feed the church.

PETER.

1. Tend the flock.
2. Exercise the oversight.
3. Not as lording it over
God's people.
4. Must be ensamples.

Must be Fitted.

The church should look out men who possess these qualifications as fully as human beings possess them. A man who is ignorant of the Bible, who is a novice, should not be selected. The same is true of the other qualifications. If the Bible is followed, the very best men will be selected—men who are apt to teach, who are without re-

proach, who are just, and who come the nearest to filling completely the divine pattern. The appointment of men to do the work of elders does not give them the qualifications, but they should be fitted for the work before any appointment is made. Those who possess the qualifications will take the lead in guiding and directing the affairs of the church. They should be recognized as God-appointed elders of the church because they have proved their fitness for the work and should be designated by the church to do the work of the elders. Appointing men without the qualifications for elders will not fit them for the work, neither will it lead or capacitate them to do it. Any one who does this work of an elder is, in fact, an elder, whether he is appointed to it or not. The appointment gives him confidence and assurance in the work and makes him feel it especially his duty to do the work. It is as difficult to live the Christian life as it is to do the work of an elder. A number cannot live the Christian life and not develop the character needed to do Christian work. It is frequently said that nobody fills this bill, when it is not true. Occasionally we hear a wicked man say there is no Christian; and it is just about as hard to find a Christian, according to the fault finder's standard, as it is to find one fitted for an elder. If one is an unsafe teacher because he teaches that men are not absolutely perfect, that men are not perfect as the angels are perfect, then is the Bible an unsafe teacher; for it says: "If we

say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 1: 8.) God does not expect perfection among men, and the man who does is an impractical visionary.

How Appointed.

Just how the Holy Spirit appoints elders is a much-mooted question and is difficult to determine. On this subject David Lipscomb says: "The only work, so far as the Scriptures show, done by the church was to choose those described by the Holy Spirit. In the case of the seven, hands were laid on them by the apostles. Whether this was to be done by others than inspired men has always been a question a little difficult for me to decide. Hands were laid upon persons occasionally during the ministry of the apostles. In all cases except two, this one and Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13), it is specifically stated that it was done to impart the Holy Spirit, or that the Holy Spirit was imparted in doing it. This is not stated in these two cases. Yet the parties in both cases on whom hands were laid did manifest a power to work miracles, of which no account is given previous to the imposition of hands. This truth, together with the consideration that all the other cases were intended to impart spiritual gifts, raises the doubt in my mind if this was not the object in these cases also, inasmuch as almost every one called to do special duty before the New Testament

was given was endowed with a spiritual gift to guide him in that work. If so, laying on of hands was confined to the age and persons possessed of spiritual gifts. It is very certain, at any rate, that men did discharge all the duties pertaining to the work of the church of God without having hands imposed on them." The church will observe those who possess the qualifications for the work, those who are full of faith and the Spirit, and will designate them for the work. Others teach that elders are now appointed by the imposition of hands with fasting and prayer.

We are sometimes asked: "When there are none qualified to be elders in a congregation, what must be done?" I do not think the Bible tells us how long a church should exist before elders should be appointed. In the Jerusalem church, it seems, the neglect of a proper work was the occasion of their appointment. A daily ministration to the widows and the poor was going on before these persons were set apart to attend to the work. Every member of the church should faithfully serve the Lord in the church until suitable men are developed to be the elders. Those who are fit to be elders will be found doing the work, and thus it will be seen that they possess the qualifications.

What "Rule Well" Involves.

That the elders are to "rule well" the flocks over which they are overseers is made clear by the fol-

lowing scriptures: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops [overseers], to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20: 28.) An elder must be "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (but if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)" (1 Tim. 3: 4, 5.) "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching." (1 Tim. 5: 17.) "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief: for this were unprofitable for you." (Heb. 13: 17.) "The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock." (1 Pet. 5: 1-3.)

These scriptures very forcefully teach that the elders are to oversee and "rule well" the churches, but they as clearly show the character of oversight which they exercise. (1) It is according to

the will of God. (2) They are not lords over the charge allotted to them, but are ensamples to the flock. (3) They watch in behalf of souls as they that shall give account to the Chief Shepherd. (4) They must rule as a father who loves his children. (5) They must rule well.

It is evident that their authorized rule is the rule of God, ruling through them. They are not authorized to alter, add to, or take from the word of God. They must be ensamples to the flock in strict adherence to and obedience to the word of God. On this phase of the subject, in the *Millennial Harbinger* of 1835, page 514, Alexander Campbell says: "To 'rule well,' be it observed, is not to legislate for the church, nor is it to lord it over God's heritage. It is not to command with authority, as an absolute sovereign; it is not to dictate, as a pedagogue; but it is to have all the laws of the Absolute Monarch fully and faithfully executed. It is to have the apostolic canons supremely regarded, and all their commandments exactly and constantly obeyed. It is to have all things done decently and in order."

The bishops, or elders, are not bosses, or popes, but are servants doing God's will, and by their lives influencing others to obey God. To "rule well" means more than removing and correcting offenses. It means also to watch over the flock. It is doubly important to watch to prevent errors and wolves in sheep's clothing from slipping into the church. An ounce of prevention is worth a

pound of cure. The wise lawyer keeps his client out of litigation. The best physicians are those who prevent diseases. The sovereign who by his foresight and wisdom prevents a revolution among his people is a better ruler than is he who permits it to occur, though he afterwards succeed in putting it down. They are the best bishops who by their watchfulness prevent delinquencies and apostasies in the church. Greater and more important is this work than to reclaim the sinner from the error of his way or to withdraw fellowship from the impenitent and incorrigible sinner.

Cases of Discipline.

Offenses must come, and, if possible, they must be healed. In case of discipline in a church, the question is sometimes asked: "How shall the church proceed?" Neither experience, reason, nor revelation reveals any specific mode of procedure. In cases of unequivocal public offense, they should be laid before the church for approval. A church with scriptural elders should present all cases of discipline to the church through its presbytery. As to the facts and the law in each case, the elders of the congregation must decide. The elders should report the case to the church, give the facts in the case, lay before the members the charges and the evidence on which they are based, the scriptures violated, and the law requiring the action taken. The congregation should never be

asked to vote whether or not they will withdraw from an offender. God has decided that, and no one should vote where God has legislated. The whole congregation is entitled to know the facts. The congregation should approve the decision of the elders when it is according to the law of God. Otherwise their decision is worthless and not to be approved. A unanimous approval of the decision of the elders would be best; but if this is not possible, the approval should be by a large majority.

In the case of the fornicator in Corinth who had his father's wife, Paul commanded to deliver him unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. This was God's decision, which was approved by the many or majority. "Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many [marginal reading, "the more"]." (2 Cor. 2: 6.) It is evident that some did not accept the decision. In the *Millennial Harbinger*, 1835, page 512, Alexander Campbell says: "In the New Testament we have the word which the Greeks used for 'majority' sometimes translated 'the greater part' (1 Cor. 15: 6), 'the more part' (Acts 19: 32; 27: 12), and 'the many' (2 Cor. 2: 6), where the censure inflicted upon a certain individual is spoken of, rendered by Macknight '*the majority!*' 'Sufficient for such a one is the censure inflicted by the majority;' plainly intimating that not every individual, but that a de-

cided majority of the church had concurred in the sentence pronounced."

Report to the Congregation.

When the elders have patiently labored with the erring and impenitent and they obstinately refuse to do right, then the facts should be stated to the congregation by the elders, who should point out the sin committed and the scripture that condemns the wrong done. In all such cases the church is to be addressed through its rulers. No private individual has a right to accuse any one before the whole congregation. The congregation should heartily and cheerfully sustain the scriptural decision of the elders. This discipline must be exercised by the elders in a spirit of Christian love and forbearance and freedom from partiality, partisan or personal feeling. The protection of the church and the salvation of sinners should be the leading object of all Christians. The offender should be made to realize that the bishops are his friends and seeking his good. The justness, scripturalness, and righteousness of the overseers' course should be apparent to all so as to cement and unify the whole congregation.

The rules of discipline announced in Matt. 18 are the rules for settling difficulties between brethren and in the church. "But if he hear thee not," and if he hear not the two or three witnesses, "tell it unto the church." The report to the church is

not to give information alone, but to bring to bear the influence and weight of the church to induce the wrongdoer to repent of his sins. He is to hear or refuse to hear the church before any action is taken in the case by it. It is only when he has thus refused to hear the church that he is to be withdrawn from and is to "be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican." This action is final and should not be rescinded until the transgressor has repented of the wrong done and reformed his life.

When God has clearly revealed the truth or legislated upon any subject, his faithful subjects will accept his legislation as final. If it be shown that a man is a guilty offender before God, they will withdraw from him because God so commands. If a congregation refuses to accept and approve the scriptural decision of the elders, then the elders in patience should teach them the way of the Lord more perfectly.

CHAPTER III

TEACHING THE BIBLE

A Mistaken Conception.

THE idea appears to be firmly fixed in some minds that because we encourage the teaching of the word of God by questions and answers, that, therefore, we are under obligation to defend an institution that is separate and distinct from the church of God and which in no way belongs to the worship. I must confess my inability to see the "therefore." I am in no way set for the defense of "Sunday schools" as organizations or institutions for children, entirely distinct and separate from the church. I have never worked for the success of the "Sunday school" on that basis, but have given what influence I have for its destruction. On such a basis it has never had anything to rely on for success but its novelty and attractiveness for the children. When the novelty of such an institution wears out with the child, the attractiveness in the main is gone. The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor and other organizations for young people may also attract for a while, but will also lose their influence as the novelty dies. A still more deplorable feature of the situation is that the church, with its regular sermon for eleven o'clock, is as dull and unedifying as the back-number Sunday schools.

There is a growing conviction among thoughtful people of all denominations that the remedy is to abolish all separate organizations and institutions for children and young people, and bring the old folks, the children, and the young people all together to study the Bible and engage in singing, prayer, breaking bread, contribution, and words of exhortation. This is the thing we are encouraging, because it is in harmony with the teaching and practice of Christians and churches in New Testament times under the leadership of inspired men. The interest in such work cannot die until the word of God dies, because God requires it. The interest promises to grow as men's faith grows in the wisdom and power of God.

An Integral Part of Christian Worship.

Yet there are good-meaning, misguided people who contend that this practice of teaching by classes is of the devil, and treat it as the modern Sunday school founded by Robert Raikes in the city of Gloucester, England, in July, 1780. Trumbull, in the "Yale Lectures on the Sunday School," page 110, writes of this "Sunday school" as follows: "The children were to come soon after ten in the morning and stay till twelve; they were then to go home and stay till one; and after reading a lesson, they were to be conducted to church. After church they were to be employed in repeating the catechism till half past five, and then to be

dismissed, with an injunction to go home without making a noise, and by no means to play in the street. Four women were employed as teachers in the school at the rate of a shilling a day." The teaching for which I am contending did not begin in 1780, but in the days of the apostles. It was not established simply for children, but for men, women, and children. It did not originate with man, but with the Lord Jesus Christ. Teaching is a part of, and belongs to, the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ. In proof of this, read Acts 2: 42: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." It should be noted that teaching belongs to the worship, just as does breaking bread. If breaking bread is worship, so is teaching. Instruction in classes by questions and answers is a method of teaching. I have heard preachers say that the communion is the most sacred part of the worship. They give no authority for such statement; neither can they, for it is not correct. All acts ordained of God for worship are equally sacred. The contribution is as sacred as praying. Both are worship. Neither is there anything in this passage to indicate that the communion is intended for all the church, while the teaching and contribution are not. Such reasoning would be ridiculous, and yet many Christians practice as if such teaching were in the passage. The children and the young people in the main engage in that part of the worship de-

fined as "teaching," while the full-grown people neglect this item of worship and wait for the communion. No man who worships thus worships as the Holy Spirit directs. The Christian who does not come together with the old people, the young people, and the children on the first day of the week to study the Bible, engage in singing, breaking bread, contribution, and words of teaching and exhortation, does not worship God as did Christians in New Testament times. Some people get so frightened at Robert Raikes' modern Sunday school that they have fled away beyond Jerusalem. They are so frightened at the name "Sunday school" that they cannot see that when Christians—old, middle-aged, and young—meet together on the first day of the week to worship as did the apostolic church, that they have not formed a separate institution distinct from the church of Christ. If these Christians thus come together to worship God should use written comments on the Bible, and not rely altogether on oral comments, then our misguided, frightened critics are ready to shout: "The whole procedure is from Rome and a child of the devil!" It is strange reasoning that makes it sacred to use concordances, commentaries, and written helps every week day, and blasphemy to use the same helps on the first day of the week in the assembly of the saints. The thing that I condemn is the laziness that makes it necessary to use them there. The prep-

aration of the lesson should be so thorough that it is not necessary to use the helps in the class.

No Exclusive Method.

Unless we are infidels, we must all agree that we are to study and offer words of exhortation in the assembly of the saints. If God has revealed no plan to the exclusion of other methods of teaching, then we are at liberty to adopt the most efficient method of teaching. We are under obligations to do so. The man who contends there is a method of teaching revealed to the exclusion of other methods of instruction is under obligation to show it. As no man can point out any authorized method of teaching to the exclusion of other methods, there is but one thing for the man to do who objects to the old, the young, and children coming together in the worship and studying the Bible, and that is to show that the choosing of such method of instruction makes the whole procedure separate and distinct from the worship. And this is in the face of the fact that God has required no exclusive method of teaching! Such reasoning would make the communion itself an innovation. That we are taught to break bread will not be denied. God has left the method of communion open to our judgment, just as he has the method of teaching. Some partake of the emblems sitting; others, kneeling. Shall those who partake of the emblems kneeling charge upon

those who partake of them sitting of being guilty of an innovation upon the worship? Nay, verily. Does the sitting of the communicant make the communion not ordained of God? Surely not. And yet some people argue as though the teaching of the Scriptures by questions and answers makes such teaching an innovation. The truth is, the Savior taught by questions and answers. The apostles did the same. The Lord enjoined this way upon his disciples to extend and to upbuild his church—by making scholars of those who would be learners and by teaching them that which they need to know; and that was the way in which the disciples carried on the work which had been committed to them by our Lord (Matt. 28: 19, 20), but not to the exclusion of other ways. The truth should be impressed that those who worship God as did the early Christians do not stay at home until the “teaching” is over. All Christians are to continue in the teaching the same as in the communion.

Old Testament Customs.

It is the purpose of the writer to show that teaching the Scriptures by questions and answers was in the Jewish worship and that it was adopted in the Christian dispensation. While I shall not hold that the interlocutory method was used, to the exclusion of all other methods, yet it was usually held as the most effective method, and is

the most effective way of teaching to-day. The method used in the days of Ezra, and which was adopted by Christ and the apostles, resembles in all essentials of teaching what is now known as the Bible school, or what most people now term the "Sunday school." The Bible school is the church teaching the word of God catechetically to children and other learners clustered in classes under separate teachers, all these classes being associated under a common head. It is in point here to meet one common fallacy that the church never does anything unless the entire membership is assembled. If this were true, then the church would never worship God at all. The church is spoken of as being in a man's house and as being scattered abroad. The Lord has assured us that where two or three are gathered in his name, that he will be with them to bless. So much for this objection.

The Bible school in its essential characteristics was a prominent feature in the Jewish church and is an integral factor of the church of Christ. This is evident in the light of the plain facts of history, sacred and secular. To some few of these facts I invite fresh attention just here. Passing by tradition, which places the origin of this catechetical Bible school and the synagogue at a very early date, and also passing over the sayings of the rabbis, which give considerable light on the subject, we look first to the Old Testament for instruction.

In Gen. 14: 14 we find a reference to Abraham's three hundred and eighteen trained retainers. "The Hebrew word ('chaneekh') translated in our English Bible 'trained' includes in its meaning the idea of a training in religion as well as in use of weapons; and its use in this place would presuppose a process of school instruction under Abraham's oversight." (Trumbull.) Schaff-Lange's "Commentary," on this passage, with citation from Wordsworth, says: "Abram had trained them in spiritual things in the service of God, as well as in fidelity to himself. See chapter 18: 19; 24: 12-49."

Trumbull says in "Yale Lectures on the Sunday School" (pages 6, 7): "In the Chronicles we see when Jehoshaphat was working reforms in his land, the princes and the priests and the Levites 'taught in Judah, having the book of the law of the Lord with them; and they went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught among the people.' (2 Chron. 17: 7-9.) In Nehemiah we have a completer exhibit of actual methods of Bible instruction, in the record of a great open-air Bible school in Jerusalem after the return of the Jews from captivity. Ezra was the superintendent in this school. His assisting teachers are mentioned by name. The opening prayer, the responsive service, and the details of class teaching are all described, as if in illustration of the custom in such a gathering then and thenceforward in the Holy Land. (Neh. 8: 1-8.)"

Josephus and Philo.

We find Josephus asserting that, from the days of Moses, it was a custom of the Jews to assemble in their synagogues every Sabbath, not only to hear the law, but "to learn it accurately," and that so thorough is this instruction of the young in the teachings of the law that, as he expresses it, "if any one of us [Jews] should be questioned concerning the laws, he would more easily repeat all than his own name." (Contra Ap., II.: 17, 18.) This is clear evidence that these weekly gatherings for Bible study, in the days of Josephus, were not very new things. Philo, who even antedates Josephus, affirms that the synagogues of the Jews were really "houses of instruction." According to the rabbis, it was about 80-70 B.C. that Simon ben Shelach, as president of the Sanhedrin, established—or, as some would claim, he reestablished—a system of religious schools in conjunction with the local synagogues throughout Palestine, making attendance at them obligatory.

Thus from the evidence of Philo, Josephus, and the rabbis, it is clear that Bible schools, in connection with the Jewish synagogues of Palestine, were a part of the Jewish economy at the beginning of the Christian era. Edersheim says: "There can be no reasonable doubt that at that time such schools existed throughout the land."

From five to ten years of age the Jewish child was to study in these schools the Bible text only.

This is a valuable suggestion to religious teachers to-day. It is a fact worthy of note that the Jewish child's first lessons in Bible study were in Leviticus.

Care was taken that in these Bible schools the lesson helps should be ample and trustworthy. A library was in every schoolhouse, filled with copies of the Bible. Although it was deemed unlawful to make copies of small portions of any of the books of scripture, an exception was made of certain sections which were copied for the instruction of children. Just here Trumbull remarks: "These selections included the historic record from the creation to the flood; the first nine chapters of Leviticus and the first ten chapters of Numbers; together with the Shema, which, strictly speaking, was Deut. 6: 4-9, but which frequently embraced also Deut. 11: 13-21 and Num. 15: 37-41 and the Hallel (Ps. 113-118, 136). This seems to have been the origin of the Sunday-school lesson leaf, with its fragmentary, or 'scrappy,' portions of the Bible, which is now vexing so many pious minds as a dangerous modern innovation. It was first authorized by the Sanhedrin Uniform Lesson Committee, two thousand years or so ago. Attention was also given to the fitness of the instruction from these lesson leaves; 'that the lessons taught . . . should be in harmony with the capacities and inclinations of the children; practical, few at a time, but weighty.'

In addition to these elementary Bible schools, there were more advanced Bible schools connected with every synagogue. In these advanced Bible schools the method of teaching was very much like the teaching in the church Bible schools of the present time. In this connection I quote again from Trumbull ("Yale Lectures," page 15): "The regular Sabbath services of the synagogue included a forenoon service of worship and an afternoon service of interlocutory Bible study for young and old together, with an intermission between for dinner. . . . The forenoon service was known as the Beth-ha-Sepher, the House of the Book; and the afternoon service as the Beth-ha-Midrash, the House of the Searching, or study." Palestine was full of these advanced Bible schools.

Questions and Answers.

In the conduct of these Bible schools the rabbi was seated on a platform above the schoolroom floor. His assistant teachers were seated in a semicircle a little lower than himself, although still above the floor. The pupils were seated cross-legged on the floor—literally at the feet of their teachers. In the large schools, in addition to the assistants, there were speakers or repeaters. The truth to be taught was whispered by the rabbis into the ear of these speakers, and here is the force of the expression: "What ye hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops."

The evidence is overwhelming that the method of teaching in these church Bible schools was almost entirely interlocutory and catechetical. Vitranga says: "It was the teacher's [part] to listen, and the pupil's [part] to question; not the teacher's part to lecture and the scholar's part merely to hear." Again, Vitranga says: "The mode of teaching [that is, one of the modes of teaching] was this: the colleagues (wise men and students) raised a question on this or that subject, while the teacher answered it fully through an interpreter [speaking it low to an "amora" who would repeat it aloud to the colleagues]; or again [as another mode of teaching] the teacher himself began the discussion of a theme raised by him."

As it is needless to multiply proof on this point, I will close this phase of the subject with a proverbial caution of the rabbis, showing the interest of the pupils in these Bible schools: "At the coming in of the teacher the scholars shall not overwhelm him with questions"—or, as we should express it, "Don't all speak at once."

These catechetical Bible schools were the very life of the Jewish polity, were a part of the religious system itself, essential to the stability and perpetuity of the national existence and character. Many a Talmudic proverb might be given as illustrative of this truth. For example: "The world continues to exist only by the breath of the children of the schools." "The children must not be

detained from the schools, even though it were to help rebuild the temple." "The true guardians of the city are the teachers." "If you would destroy the Jews, you must destroy their schools."

This system of church Bible schools was in vogue in Palestine when Jesus was born into the world. Bible teaching began in the home. At from five to seven years of age, at the latest, the child was to find its place in the church Bible school. He there memorized the Scriptures, and was to come to an understanding of their meaning through the process of simple questions and answers. Later on he was to be a member of the synagogue Bible school, in which the truth was taught by means of questions and answers. So far the facts are clear.

In the one glimpse given of the childhood of Jesus, he is seen in one of the more advanced Bible schools of the day, in the temple, at the age of twelve years, "sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them, and asking them questions." He gave his mother to understand that she should expect to find him there. This was natural. But "all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers."

Distinction Between Teaching and Preaching.

The New Testament makes a distinction between the teaching and the preaching of Jesus. Matthew, who wrote peculiarly from the Jewish

viewpoint, in language which every Jew would understand, says: "Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people." (Matt. 4: 23; read Matt. 9: 35; 11: 1; Mark 1: 14, 21, 22, 39; Luke 20: 1.) Many other passages could be quoted, but all the evangelists make a clear distinction between the teaching and preaching of Jesus. John the Baptist is always represented as preaching, never as teaching. He came to herald, announce, the coming of the Christ. When he gave instructions in the line of personal duty, he is spoken of as a preacher. Christ was the great Teacher of truth, and, in addition, the one perfect Preacher of righteousness. Will you read carefully his method of teaching in the temple, as given by Matthew? "When he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said [taking part in the exercises by their question], By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them [in harmony with the method of the Jewish Bible-school teaching], I also will ask you one question, which if ye tell me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or from men? And [at that question] they [the questioning priests and elders] reasoned with themselves, saying, If

we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, From men; we fear the multitude; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We know not. He also [then] said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." (Matt. 21: 23-27.) It will profit our readers if they will turn to the twenty-first chapter of Matthew and continue the reading to the close of the chapter.

In this same light, keeping before us the distinction between teaching and preaching, should we interpret the great commission as recorded by Matthew: 'Go ye therefore, and make disciples [scholars] of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' (Matt. 28: 19, 20.) Alford, Greek Testament, says of this scripture: "This teaching is not merely the 'kerugma' of the gospel—not mere proclamation of the good news—but the whole catechetical office of the church upon and in the baptized. . . . The command is to the universal church—to be performed, in the nature of things, by her ministers and teachers." The Jews evidently understood this commission as the Lord meant it, that they were to teach the word of God by the catechetical method, as well as by the proclamation of the gospel.

"Teachers" are named among the recognized workers of the church, and the work of "teaching" is given prominence in its place. A bishop must be "apt to teach." Jesus himself, while laboring among men recognized the distinction between "teaching" and "preaching:" "And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people." (Matt. 4: 23.)

Thus we find a clear distinction between "preach" and "teach" in the Gospel, in Acts, and in the Epistles. All great reforms in the church since the days of John the Baptist and Peter have been brought about by *preaching*. The clarion voice of the herald preacher has aroused Christians from their sloth and has startled alien sinners in and from their sins. Preaching has been, and is, and is to be, the preëminent agency for the warning and calling of sinners and for the exhorting and directing of saints. But the religious *training* and *development* of any people has been attained, and the results of any great reformation have been made permanent, only through a process of catechetical *teaching*, such as forms the distinguishing characteristics of the "Sunday school."

Apostolic Precedents.

It is freely admitted that preaching is one method of teaching, but it has also been shown

that the interlocutory method is another way in which Christ instructed the people. A distinction has already been shown between the teaching and the preaching of Jesus. It is now in order to show that the same distinction is made between the teaching and the preaching of the apostles. In other words, preaching is one method of teaching, and teaching is another method of instruction. A number of passages make the distinction sharp and clear.

“The priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees,” were “grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.” (Acts 4: 2.) “And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” (Acts 5: 42.) “And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch.” (Acts 14: 21.) “Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.” (Acts 15: 35.) At Athens, Paul “reasoned [after the Bible-school manner] in the synagogue with the Jews and the [other] devout persons.” (Acts 17: 17), and he did the same thing “in the market place every day with them that met with him,” using the catechumenical method of teaching and learning.

The church appears to have established itself firmly in the beginning, under the apostolic work,

by the interlocutory method of teaching and learning as required by the great commission. At Corinth, Paul seems to have begun his labors by having a share in the advanced Bible school which belonged to the Jewish synagogue. "And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks." (Acts 18: 4.) When, however, he made bold to preach the gospel there, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ, a breach was made between him and them, and he went out, carrying with him the ruler of the synagogue, and started a new Bible school in "the house of a certain man named Titus Justus, . . . whose house joined hard to the synagogue." There he continued "a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them." (Verses 5-11.) We find very much the same method employed at Ephesus as at Corinth. At Ephesus, after a three-months' trial of "reasoning [with] and persuading as to the things concerning the kingdom of God," Paul, as at Corinth, went out from the synagogue school, taking with him the Christian scholars; and he gathered the nucleus of a Christian Bible school in connection with a daily exercise "in the school of Tyrannis," which "continued for the space of two years." (Acts 19: 1-10.) Also, for two whole years Paul was similarly occupied in his own hired house in Rome, "preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things [the "all things" commanded of Christ] concerning the Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 28: 30, 31.)

New Testament Examples.

“Incidental references to ‘instruction’ as a well-understood process of technical Christian teaching are made by Luke in connection with the warm-hearted convert Theophilus (Luke 1: 4) and of the eloquent and zealous preacher Apollos (Acts 18: 25). ‘Teachers’ (Acts 13: 1; 1 Cor. 12: 28, 29; Eph. 4: 11) are named among the recognized workers of the Christian church; and their office work of ‘teaching’ (Rom. 12: 7; Col. 1: 28; 3: 16) is given prominence in its place. It is even named as an essential qualification of a bishop that he shall be ‘apt to teach’ (1 Tim. 3: 2). And ‘children’ (Eph. 6: 1; Col. 3: 20; 2 John 1)—as those to whom our Lord gave prominence—are specifically included in the number of those to whom the apostolic epistles were sent as a fresh basis and outline of instruction. Hence, there is sound reason for supposing that the best lessons of the Jewish church and the specific injunctions of the divine Founder of the Christian church, concerning the church care of the children, and the systematic study of the Scriptures through the process of interlocutory instruction, were borne in mind, and were put in practice by the divinely guided leaders of the apostolic church.” (Trumbull, in “Yale Lectures on the Sunday School,” pages 40, 41.)

That it was the Bible itself, the inspired text of the sacred writings, that was to be the subject-matter of teaching and of study from childhood

to maturity in the church Bible school, is pointed out by Paul in his counsel to the young bishop of Ephesus concerning the training work to which he was set of God: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.)

A careful reading of the preaching recorded in the New Testament shows that it was largely on the interlocutory or catechumenical method. In the early history of the apostolic church the scholar or hearer had perfect freedom in asking the preacher questions. An example of this may be read in the eighth chapter of Acts of Apostles. The Ethiopian nobleman inquired freely of Philip the meaning of the scriptures. "And Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some one shall guide me? And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him. . . . And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other? And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8: 30-36.)

Not by great sermonizers swaying the minds of adult unbelievers, but by individual teachers reaching and teaching children and the childlike individually, were the triumphs of early Christianity mainly won. "It is a remarkable fact," says Schaff, "that after the days of the apostles no names of great missionaries are mentioned till the opening of the Middle Ages. . . . There were no missionary societies, no missionary institutions, no organized efforts in the ante-Nicene age; and yet in less than three hundred years from the death of St. John the whole population of the Roman Empire, which then represented the civilized world, was nominally Christianized." ("History of the Christian Church," Vol. II., page 19 f.) And this was because the immediate successors of the apostles of our Lord were satisfied with the truth in its purity and clung to the divinely approved plan of the child-reaching and child-teaching methods of Christian activity. Again, Trumbull ("Yale Lectures on the Sunday School," page 51) says: "The foremost minds in the church at large were gladly devoted to the work of catechizing, great preachers as well as great teachers being willing to leave all other work, if necessary, in order to exercise the function of the catechist." (See De Pressensés "Christian Life and Practice in the Early Church," Book I., chapter 1.)

We have seen that from the days of Abraham systematic "instruction" had its place in the work

of the chosen people of God. From the days of Moses the Jewish people had a measure of responsibility for the religious teaching and training of the young. From the days of Ezra the church Bible school was a recognized factor of the Jewish system, among the Jewish people, for the study and teaching of the word of God. In the days of Jesus there was, in the land of his birth and sojourn, a system of Bible schools, corresponding very closely in their general features to the scripturally organized church Bible schools of the present time. The primary schools in this system gave prominence to the study of the Bible text. The advanced Bible schools in this system were a part of the synagogue; and in them Bible commentaries, in addition to the Bible text, were commonly studied. The primary schools were for children only; the advanced schools, for both adults and children. In all the schools the arrangement was that of scholars grouped under a special teacher, and the process of teaching was by form of question and answer. Our Lord seems to have been both a scholar and a teacher in schools of this character. In giving the great commission, he gave the apostles authority to teach by this system of schools.

Gentile Influences.

So long as the early Christian teachers worked chiefly among the Jewish people, the methods of teaching and training were, as a matter of fact,

largely conformed to the plan and practices of the Jewish synagogue. Its Bible schools were based on the synagogue-school foundation, as is evident from the examples already pointed out in the Acts of Apostles and in the Epistles. When, however, the church gained a foothold among purely Gentile people and extended its membership to those who knew nothing of Jewish training methods, it necessarily varied its system of instruction, adapting the details of that system to the peculiar needs of the Gentile people. In this connection Trumbull says: "For a long time Christianity had no one land and people which it controlled religiously, as the Jewish church had had; hence it was unable to enforce a uniform church-school system in all communities alike, with carefully graded instruction from the primary class to the divinity school. The best that it could yet do was to provide, in every local church gathering, for the catechetical instruction of the young, including the children of believers and all other children who could be brought under its care; and then to establish, at certain large centers, schools for the more thorough instruction in the 'all things' which the fully furnished Christian had need to know. And just this it did do so, as ecclesiastical history makes clear."

It cannot and will not be denied that this catechumenical method of teaching in the schools of the Roman Empire had a great and uplifting influence over the people. It was on this account

that Julian, the apostate, in the fourth century, "determined to take the control of education into the hands of the State," and that he issued his formal edict, designed to shut out all Christian teachers from those schools. The emperor realized that the continuous growth and life of Christianity pivoted largely on the school idea—on the interlocutory teaching of the young—and that if he could put a permanent end to this character of teaching he could hope to check the permanent progress of Christianity. Two centuries ago Bishop Lancelot Andrewes said of this plan of the emperor: "If he had not been as a cloud that soon passeth away, it might have been feared that in a short time he had overshadowed true religion."

But sufficient has been said as to the efficiency of the interlocutory method of teaching. It is clear that the early church of Christ was not unfaithful to its trust, but was mindful of the duty imposed upon it by the great commission. They continued to instruct and to train by this interlocutory method of teaching. So long as they wisely followed the injunction of Christ, they continued steadfast in this work. But as the church grew in worldly prominence and lost in spirituality, changes came in the methods of teaching. Its ritual services were expanded and the catechetical method of teaching was diminished. "Teaching gained in proportion as ritualism lost," says De. Pressensé; and, conversely, teaching lost as ritualism gained. Proudfit expresses it: "When the

ecclesiastical spirit overcame the evangelical, and the church grew . . . worldly and material in all her institutions and instrumentalities, . . . making more of a splendid ritual than of a pure faith, and magnifying church orthodoxy above vital piety, . . . catechetical instruction, of course, declined."

Piety a Product of Teaching.

Nothing will promote pure piety as the word of God in the heart. The truth must be hid in the hearts of the people or religion will decline. In proof of this, I quote from Trumbull's "Yale Lectures on the Sunday School" (page 64) :

It stands out most clearly in the ecclesiastical history of the Middle Ages, that where the Christian life was purest, in those times of general decline, was where the Bible-school idea was adhered to most closely as a means of religious instruction and training. Peculiarly was this the case with the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Lollards or Wycliffites, the Bohemian Brethren or Hussites, and the Brethren of the Common Life. Not the pure liturgy, nor yet the faithful pulpit, but the divinely appointed Bible school—in its more primitive elements—was the distinctive means of their preservation from the well-nigh universal defection.

An admirable illustration of this truth is furnished in the recorded testimony of Reinerius, an emissary from Rome to the Waldenses, in his report concerning the Bible teaching prevalent among that people in the thirteenth century. "He who has been a disciple [in their fold] for seven days," he said, "looks out some one whom he may teach in his turn; so that there is a continual increase

[of them]. If any would excuse himself [from learning], they say to him: 'Only learn one word every day, and at the end of the year you will have three hundred [words]; and so [you will] make progress.' . . . I have heard one of these poor peasants repeat the whole book of Job by heart, without missing a single word; and there are others who have the whole of the New Testament by heart and much of the Old; nor . . . will they listen to anything else, saying that all sermons which are not proved by scripture are unworthy of belief." . . .

From the beginning, in short, all the way down the centuries, the history of the Christian church shows that just in proportion as the church Bible school—the Sunday school, as we now call it—has been accorded the place which our Lord assigned to it in the original plan of his church, has substantial progress been made in the extending of the membership and in the upbuilding—the “edifying”—of the body of Christian believers in the knowledge of God’s word and in the practice of its precepts. . . .

In the face of so many overwhelming facts, it is remarkably strange that any one can object to the use of literature in teaching the word of God. This is especially true when it is noted that the literature uses the system of questions and answers. It also follows with irresistible force that the man who seeks to fasten on the people of God a method of teaching, to the exclusion of other methods, is guilty of a presumptuous sin. God, in his wisdom, has not seen fit to bind any one method to the exclusion of other methods. We are guilty before Jehovah if we do not teach the truth, and teach it in the most effective manner.

Some Objections Answered.

Some people condemn the "Sunday school" and charge that it is a failure because those who attend it, they say, study the Bible so little. It is contended by the opponents of the "Sunday school" that only about thirty or forty minutes' time per week is given to the study of the Bible. This is not true. I teach a class, and have done so for years. I devote several hours each week to the preparation of the lesson, and I am sure that there are members of the class who devote two or three hours every week to the study of the lesson before coming to the class. An additional period of forty minutes is usually spent in the class in investigation and study of the lesson. Those who do not give at least this much time to the investigation of the lesson during the week are not prepared for the class study on Sunday.

Another thing in favor of the "Sunday school" is that the Bible is studied at regular periods and in a systematic manner. When people fail to study the Bible periodically and at regular intervals, they do not study it much at all. Irregularity in Bible study is not productive of the greatest good. Haphazard methods of Bible study are not best. Those who fail to study the Bible regularly are not very long in ceasing to study it altogether.

It is no objection to the worship in the assembly of the saints that it occurs only on the first day of the week. This is no proof that Christians

do not worship and serve God during the other six days of the week. It would be just as sensible and reasonable to object to the worship on the first day of the week because it does not usually last over an hour as it is to object to the "Sunday school" because it does not usually consume over an hour. The objection to each would stand on the same basis. The objection to either is worthless. Just as Christians throughout the week should serve God and get ready for meeting and breaking bread, even so they should prepare for the study and teaching of the word of God on the first day of the week. Such a flimsy objection to the "teaching" on the Lord's day is so unreasonable as to be hardly worth notice. Such an objection is not considered on its own merit, but because some may be misled by those who present it. Because they may lead the unsteadfast to accept such flimsy objections should not lead any to conclude that they should cease to study the word of God in the "Sunday school." Because some people wrest the word of God to their own destruction is no reason for our ceasing to read the Bible. Peter says of the writings of Paul: "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things: wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Pet. 3: 16.) Because this is true, shall we burn the Bible and cease to read it altogether? Because some pervert the

simplest truths of the Bible and thereby lead many to destruction, shall we proclaim the Bible a wicked book and warn everybody against reading it? Nay, verily. Because some people are bent on being lost is no reason for our joining them in the broad way. We should be sufficiently wise not to be guilty of such folly.

It has been suggested as an objection to the teaching in the "Sunday school" that some of the teachers are not sincere. The same objection might be made to Christianity, because all professed Christians are not in earnest. They lack singleness of purpose and fail to serve the Lord with all their heart.

It is undoubtedly true that whenever the word of God has not been taught to the children by the class system of teaching the church has declined in numbers and influence. The children who are taught the word of God in the Sunday school usually obey the gospel early in life. The church draws largely from those who have been taught in the Sunday school. Those churches which have neglected to teach the young in the Sunday school have not grown in numbers, but have either declined or died. The Missionary Baptists have grouped the young in classes and have instructed them in the word of God. The growth of the Missionary Baptists has been very decided. The Primitive Baptists have neglected to teach the young by the catechetical method. As a result, they have decreased in numbers instead of growing.

It is imperative to teach the truth. It is our duty to use the most efficient method, as the Lord has bound on us no method of teaching to the exclusion of other methods of instruction.

Woman's Right to Teach.

Woman in her God-given sphere is doing much to control the destiny of nations. When she rules as queen in the home and faithfully fills the mission assigned her by Jehovah, she renders to him the purest and noblest service. The sweetest and purest counsel falls from the lips of godly women. Not the throned monarch, not the bloody warrior, nor the wise statesman, rules the world under God, but the pious mothers who mold and shape the character of their children. From the mother's knee the purest prayers rise to the throne of God. The man who thinks lightly of woman's work has little respect for himself.

But in order to determine the character of speaking a woman is scripturally authorized to do in the church, we should determine what scripturally constitutes the church. The Bible nowhere teaches that all the believers in any given territory must "be come together" into one place before the church assembles. The Bible represents that all the church was scattered abroad, save the apostles. When Christians dwell in a home, the church is in it. With a Christian father and mother in a home, the church is in that home.

May we not say that wherever a Christian is, the church is there? "Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow worker, and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in thy house: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phile. 1-3.) "The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Prisca salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house." (1 Cor. 16: 19.) "And salute the church that is in their house." (Rom. 16: 5.) Thus we see that the church is in every home where the Christian dwells. This drives us to the conclusion that the speaking which woman is forbidden to do in the church does not apply to all speaking in the church; for, if so, woman would be prohibited from teaching and training in her own home. No one will deny that the mother is commanded to teach and train her children.

What "Speaking" Means.

What is the meaning, then, of the inhibition contained in the Corinthian letter: "Let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church." (1 Cor. 14: 34, 35.) It

should be noted with care that the Bible does not say that it is shameful for a woman to ask a question for information in the church. No teaching in the word of God authorizes such a conclusion, but those who have husbands are commanded to ask them at home—in the church. All of which goes to show that woman is not to speak publicly in the church in a way that usurps authority over the man. This applies as well to the church in the home as anywhere else.

I will quote a number of passages in which we have the same word in the original that is rendered "speak" in 1 Cor. 15: 34. The word is frequently used in the New Testament of teachers such as Jesus, the apostles, and others. "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." (Matt. 10: 20.) "And when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." (Luke 5: 4.) "And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." (John 1: 37.) "The officers answered, Never man so spake." (John 7: 46.) "As he spake these things, many believed on him." (John 8: 30.) The Holy Spirit says of the speaking of Stephen: "And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake." (Acts 6: 10.) "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning." (Acts 11: 15.) "And it came to pass in Iconium that they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews,

and so spake that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed. . . . The same heard Paul speaking: who, fastening his eyes upon him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole, said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet." (Acts 14: 1, 9.) "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshiped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul." (Acts 16: 14.) In precisely the same sense is "speaking" used of the teachers in the church at Corinth. These teachers spoke with authority and as having a right to demand an answer to their questions. The speaking, or teaching, in the days of the apostles was more by the interlocutory method, by means of questions and answers, than preaching at the present.

A woman has no scriptural right in the church at home to usurp authority over her husband, and, as a teacher, demand him to answer her, but should, as a learner, ask him for information. She has no divine right to usurp authority over her husband anywhere. "But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression." (1 Tim. 2: 12-14.) It should be impressed that the inhibition is universal—that

nowhere is the woman permitted to have dominion over the man.

It is a little remarkable that any one can torture a woman's teaching a class of little children—in the church, at home, or elsewhere—into having dominion over the man. Is it not strange that God did not discover his mistake when he made the mother the instructor of her own child? Why did he not see that when she was teaching her own children she was usurping authority over man? Such a claim is absurd, and yet it has in it all the objection that can be scripturally urged against a woman's teaching a class of children in the church of God. I shall rejoice to see the day when brethren will cease to misapply this scripture. We should give more time to teaching the word of God in our homes, in our stores, on the road, in the field, and everywhere. Let us sing with David: "Thy word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Ps. 119: 11.)

CHAPTER IV

THE CALL TO EVANGELISM

Christ's Yearning Heart.

CHRI^ST, while here on earth, was not unmindful of the necessity of sending forth laborers into the harvest. He well knew that the harvest was plenteous, but the laborers few; so, just before making his third tour of Galilee, he instructed the twelve and sent them forth two and two. "And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and he gave them authority over the unclean spirits; and he charged them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no bread, no wallet, no money in their purse; but to go shod with sandals: and, said he, put not on two coats." (Mark 6: 7-9.) The great, magnanimous, and loving heart of Christ yearned to relieve and redeem the world. His love was active and compassionate. It was not listless and indifferent. He gave the twelve authority over all devils, to cure diseases, to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. (Luke 9: 1, 2.) Jesus was never unmindful of his mission to lift up and save fallen man. To accomplish this end, no work was too great for him to do and no burden too heavy for him to bear. So, after Jesus had died and had risen from the dead, he again said to the eleven: "Go ye therefore, and

make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28: 19, 20.) The same commission as recorded by Mark reads: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." (Mark 16: 15, 16.) It is true that God loves the obedient and hates the disobedient, but I have never seen one syllable in the Bible that leads me to believe that one man is nearer to God than another. There is no foreigner with God. "And Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10: 34, 35.) "And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17: 26.) God's love makes no distinction in race or nationality. He saves to the utmost those who come unto him. He sent his Son into the world to redeem the world. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world

should be saved through him." (John 3: 16, 17.) It was the will of the Son to do the Father's will. He says: "For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6: 38.) Again, he says: "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." (John 9: 4.) Christ has left us an example that we should walk in his steps. (1 Pet. 2: 21.) We cannot be accepted and approved of God unless we imbibe the Spirit of Christ. "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom. 8: 9.)

No Place for Cavil.

In obedience to the command, the apostles preached the gospel to every creature under heaven. "Yea, verily, their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." (Rom. 10: 18.) Christ died "to present you holy and without blemish and unreprouable before him: if so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven; whereof I Paul was made a minister." (Col. 1: 22, 23.) The apostles did not preach the gospel to every creature on the habitable earth at that time by contending with each other over the order of worship or a method of teaching, but they de-

voted themselves to vigorously preaching the gospel which is God's power unto salvation. When we see brethren contending over teaching a class, or teaching literature, or passing around the contribution basket, or the order of worship, or keeping a record of membership, or about a woman modestly and quietly teaching the word of God, one would naturally conclude that these things are the gospel of Christ! The brethren, instead of proclaiming the gospel, are destroying one another! When they get through fighting and devouring one another, they have no strength left to fight the devil. Verily, the language of Christ applies to them: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone." (Matt. 23: 23.) Preachers, instead of devoting the best that is in them to the great work of preaching the gospel, are surmising evil of their brethren, talking and writing about things of which they are wholly uninformed. We may say of such a person, he "teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, wranglings of men corrupted in mind and bereft

of the truth, supposing that godliness is a way of gain." (1 Tim. 6: 3-5.) Some men advise old men who have a record of positive work for the Lord to abandon the work and turn it over to another! But none of these things move the faithful. Such evil praters lived in the day of the beloved John. He says: "I wrote somewhat unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preëminence among them, receiveth us not. Therefore, if I come, I will bring to remembrance his works which he doeth, prating against us with wicked words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and them that would he forbiddeth and casteth them out of the church." (3 John 9, 10.) Lust for preëminence has ruined many a man! Humility leads to usefulness and happiness.

Back to the Apostolic Method!

Let us cease to speak against each other and to argue over nonessentials, and put on an aggressive campaign for Christ. Souls are perishing for the bread of life. Go out among the people who have never heard the gospel. The audiences may not be so large as when you are preaching to the churches, but you will preach to more outsiders and will have a splendid opportunity to convert people to the truth. The churches of Christ should resolve to sow the seed of the kingdom broadcast. The seed should not all be sown in one spot. The

churches are drifting more and more to the "pastor system" and not heeding the command to go into all the world. The church is the light of the world, the salt of the earth, and the pillar and ground of the truth. It should not wait for the people to come to it, but should go to them. Let the churches and preachers go out into the highways and hedges and constrain them to come in, that the church of God may be full. Give us an active, aggressive campaign for Christ. Carry the gospel to more people. Back to the apostolic method! "Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest." (Matt. 9: 37, 38.)

Every Christian a Missionary.

The man who is not a missionary is not a Christian. The genuinely converted soul is praying and working for the conversion of the world. He will not enjoy the pleasure of salvation and the joy of redemption alone, but he is hungering and thirsting for the world to share them with him. If he could, he would not go to heaven alone. The joy of being saved is so glorious and heavenly that he cannot bear the thought of not telling others about it. "They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word." (Acts 8: 4.)

Telling the story of redemption to others quickens our own spiritual pulse and increases a hundredfold the joy of service.

Is thy cruse of comfort failing?
Rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine
It shall serve thee and thy brother.

Love divine will fill thy storehouse
Or thy handful still renew;
Scanty fare for one will often
Make a royal feast for two.

For the heart grows rich in giving—
All its wealth is living gain;
Seeds which mildew in the garner,
Scattered, fill with gold the plain.

Is thy burden hard and heavy?
Do thy steps drag wearily?
Help to bear thy brother's burden;
God will bear both it and thee.

Numb and weary on the mountains,
Wouldst thou sleep amidst the snow?
Chafe that frozen form beside thee,
And together both shall glow.

Art thou stricken in life's battle?
Many wounded round thee moan;
Lavish on their wounds thy balsam,
And that balm shall heal thine own.

Is thy heart a well left empty?
None but God the void can fill.
Nothing but the ceaseless Fountain
Can its ceaseless longings still.

Is the heart a living power?
Self-entwined, its strength sinks low,
It can only live in loving,
And by serving love will grow.

There are so many famishing for the bread of life, there are so many in ignorance whom the truth would enlighten, and the calls on Christians to send the light are so numerous that any Christian should be ashamed of the neglect that suffers his love to grow cold.

The church, which is the light of the world and the salt of the earth, does not give out the light that it should unless it sows the seed of the kingdom broadcast. God has not ordained that a church shall save only itself. In such selfishness and indolence a church is under condemnation and has failed in its mission. So many churches have left their first love that it is both distressing and alarming.

The Christian's First Impulse.

I saw recently a statement that conservative Christians gave only five cents each for missionary work last year, but I am sure this statement does loyal Christians a great injustice. No one knows just how much each gives. Some officious person may pretend to know. Every child of God should be a missionary. The field is world-wide, and every responsible person needs the gospel. The first impulse of the genuinely converted is to lead

others to Christ. Andrew sought Simon Peter, his brother, and brought him to Christ. Our work for Christ should begin in the home, in the family, among our neighbors, and then should reach out to the wide world. Andrew proved himself ready to do what he could. In a measure he was responsible for the great work Peter did in later years. Our influence may begin in a small way, but it should grow with the passing years. Where Peter is known we will remember Andrew and his work. The Lord never forgets any faithful deed we do. There is no conflict between home and foreign missions. The bright light at home shines the farthest away. We must do the work at home before we can effectively do the work abroad. We should make an effort to convert the heathen at home before we go to China. "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1: 8.) This order the apostles followed in preaching the gospel to every creature under heaven. Christ also said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." (Mark 16: 15.) In the light of this teaching, it is evident that our work should begin at home and widen until its influence is world-wide. We cannot obey the gospel and resist the preaching of the gospel to every creature. This passage tests our faith in God and our loyalty to him.

There are many Christians who hold that it is scriptural for the churches to communicate directly with the missionary in the field. The missionary should go, and not wait to be sent and his salary guaranteed. While it is noble to contend for God's way, it is equally as noble and commendable to practice what God commands. Our teaching should be well mixed with practice. Those who have planted churches all over our country have preached in groves and in schoolhouses and in rented halls without financial compensation. They have preached very largely at their own expense. Being consumingly in earnest, filled with the love of the truth and guided by the word of God, they have triumphed gloriously and marvelously. Through their labors for Christ the desert has rejoiced and blossomed as the rose. They have not advertised their work from the rooftops, but in faith and humility they have borne the burden and heat of the day. Only by such faith and devotion will the work be continued successfully. Place hunters and money lovers are worth little or nothing in the conversion of the world. We must go on to greater achievements.

To sit down to rest while we applaud what has been done is not pleasing to God and is dangerous. The disobedient prophet who sat down under the oak was already half conquered. It is dangerous to sit down in the path of duty while greater victories are to be won. It is folly to waste our energies on each other in arguing over expediencies.

While contending with each other over untaught questions, we should be able to lead some one or more to Christ. Such contentions prove weights to sink us down to hell instead of wings with which to fly to heaven. Where God says "Go," do it, but don't bind your opinion that a missionary society may be substituted for the church upon the kingdom of God.

Small Beginnings.

We should not be discouraged because our beginnings in missionary work are small. The church itself began in a small way. The kingdom of God had a small beginning and is compared to a grain of mustard seed. The day of small things should not be despised. An education is made up of letters. The great ocean is composed of drops of water and the lofty mountain is made up of grains of sand. "The continual dropping wears the stone." God was in the still small voice. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17: 20.) We should know that usually the least good is done when a great display is made. We do not need costly edifices in order to worship God acceptably. "Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in houses made with hands." (Acts 7: 48.) If the kingdom of God is within our missionaries, if they are God-fearing and self-sacrificing, they will lead

people to Christ, though they be not housed in costly edifices.

A person who has the kingdom of God within him and who hungers and thirsts for righteousness is worth far more than money in the conversion of the world. We are exalting money to the neglect of devotion to God. The Spirit-filled man will move stones of difficulty out of the way. The Holy Spirit tells us what men of sublime faith have accomplished. "And what shall I more say? for the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Baram, Samson, Jephthah; of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, waxed mighty in war, turned to flight armies of aliens. Women received their dead by a resurrection: and others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword: they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, ill treated (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves, and the holes of the earth." (Heb. 11: 32-38.) The great triumphs of Christianity have been achieved without worldly power and splendor.

Humility and fidelity far outweigh money and worldly wisdom in the conversion of the world.

The church should fellowship the faithful missionary. The church that makes no sacrifice to hold up the hands of the missionary is not blameless. There are churches that should support a missionary in the field all the time. The church would be better off to do so. The churches need fruit to abound to their account. Leading sinners to Christ quickens the spiritual pulse of the church.

Paul's Fine Example.

I am satisfied that some preachers could do more if they were devoting all their time to teaching the truth, if they were visiting and teaching from house to house every day in the week. The most efficient teaching is the teaching that is done in a private way and that is done every day in the week, backed up by a consistent, Christian life. It is probable that some of these preachers are wronging the churches in failing to receive support from them, as did Paul the Corinthian church. "For what is there wherein ye were made inferior to the rest of the churches, except it be that I myself was not a burden to you? forgive me this wrong." (2 Cor. 12: 13.) The man who has the gift and the ability to preach the gospel should do so, and should not turn aside to some secular calling. No consecrated, faithful

minister, thoroughly equipped to preach the word, will find it necessary to make tents, provided the church of God does its duty. The word of God is clear upon this subject. "Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel." (1 Cor. 9: 14.) It is true that Paul did not always avail himself of this means of support which the Lord had provided for the faithful minister. While he made tents in Corinth and was not a burden to the Corinthian church, he begged of the Corinthians to forgive him the wrong that he had done them. Whenever churches failed to support him, he labored with his own hands, ministering unto his own necessities and to the necessities of those that were with him. "I coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20: 33-35.) He thus left us an example that we may do likewise. If churches fail to supply the necessities of the faithful minister, then he should, like Paul, support himself with his own hands, and do so without murmuring or complaining. Paul says: "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am in, therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in

everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4: 11-13.)

Supporting the Preacher.

We learn also that his labors in Thessalonica were arduous. "For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: working night and day, that we might not burden any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God." (1 Thess. 2: 9.) But while Paul was thus toiling and laboring in Thessalonica, he was not forgotten by the Philippians, for he tells us: "And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need. Not that I seek for the gift; but I seek for the fruit that increaseth to your account." (Phil. 4: 15-18.) Churches should rejoice when they have an opportunity to cooperate with a faithful minister as he preaches "Jesus Christ, and him crucified," in a destitute field. No preacher who thus labors and toils should feel that he is a parasite and that he is not as independent as any other man simply because the churches support him while he is doing this work. He simply goes as one sent by the Lord Jesus Christ and as a messenger ap-

proved and indorsed by the churches that support him. We learn also that while Paul was making tents with Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth and reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath, he was in want. This same Philippian church relieved his want, so that he began at once to devote all of his time to testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. He tells us in 2 Cor. 11: 9: "And when I was present with you and was in want, I was not a burden on any man; for the brethren, when they came to Macedonia, supplied the measure of my want; and in everything I kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself." While he was thus laboring with his own hands making tents with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth, the Philippian church sent unto him Silas and Timothy with a gift.

From such scriptures and examples it is evident that churches are under obligation to support the ministers of the gospel, and that no minister of the gospel should consider himself a burden simply because he is receiving support in a way that God has ordained that he should receive it. The man who is able to do more good in preaching the gospel than in any other way and who is gifted in that respect has no right to turn from preaching the gospel to a secular calling; to do so is a prostitution of the talent that God has given him. A minister who is truly called of God to preach the gospel and who, with Paul, realizes that "woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel,"

will never cease to proclaim it simply because Christians fail to do their duty. If the necessity is forced upon him of supporting himself, he will still preach the gospel as he has opportunity, being content in want as well as in abundance.

Paul has left every minister of the gospel an example in this respect that is worthy of imitation. Every minister of the gospel should educate the churches to support those who proclaim the gospel, and should teach them this truth as clearly as they teach alien sinners, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." No preacher should be so fearful and timid as to fail to teach Christians that the Lord has ordained that they who proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel. All ministers should say boldly and fearlessly to the church: "If I have sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if I shall reap your carnal things?" No one is fit to preach the gospel who feels that he can do more good in some other calling than in preaching Jesus Christ. A man who would preach simply for money is foolish and is not fit to preach the gospel of Christ. While it is the duty of the preacher to labor for the salvation of souls, so it is the duty of every Christian to work in that way in which he can do most for the honor and glory of God.

PART II

TWELVE SELECTED THEMES

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. "BUY THE TRUTH AND SELL IT NOT" --	123
II. PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY -----	132
III. CHRISTIAN UNITY -----	137
IV. A RIGHTEOUS PEACE -----	144
V. CHRIST TEACHES HUMILITY -----	149
VI. THE PREMILLENNIAL VIEW AND THE SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF THE KINGDOM	158
VII. MARRIAGE AND THE HOME -----	164
VIII. THE TRUTH BETWEEN EXTREMES -----	170
IX. WOMAN'S WORK -----	177
X. DIVINE FORGIVENESS AND PUNISHMENT	182
XI. THE FATHERLESS -----	188
XII. THE PAST AND THE FUTURE -----	192

CHAPTER I

“BUY THE TRUTH, AND SELL IT NOT”

THE “truth” mentioned in Prov. 23: 23 means the knowledge of God and his will concerning man in all of his relations to both his Creator and his fellow man. While the words “buy” and “sell” here used in connection with the “truth” are commercial terms, they by no means intimate that one may commercialize or make merchandise of the truth. It becomes an easy matter to corrupt or handle the word of God deceitfully for the purpose of selfish things. Hence, it becomes us all to look well to the motives which actuate us in all that we do. To buy or to acquire the truth requires a diligent and studious investigation of the Holy Scriptures; for the duties and obligations of man are manifold, reaching out in so many directions that he cannot comprehend them all at a grasp. The word “buy” means to acquire the knowledge of God at all events; and in order to do this, too much industry and labor cannot be expended.

We must give something in return for the truth, but that something is not mentioned. Evidently it is not gold or silver, for gold and silver cannot buy the truth. It means that we must give our undivided attention to what God says, and then be willing to make every sacrifice and endure every hardship in order to possess it. Considera-

tions of friendship, worldly pleasure, honor, or love of money should not induce us to fail to acquire the truth. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 10: 37-39.) Abraham had to offer his son in order to possess the joy and have the strength which comes through obedience to God. The children of Israel had to pay the price of a wilderness life, with its trials and hardships, to learn the lesson of providential care. The ancient worthies (Heb. 11) paid for the truth, or, rather, their loss of it, in pain, suffering, and death. No matter what the cost, every one should be willing to pay the price because of the home to which it leads when life is over.

We are admonished, "and sell it not," which means, when the truth is once acquired, let no consideration deprive us of it. We should cleave to it even at the risk of our lives. It is sad to think of the multiplied millions who, like Esau of old, sell this rich heritage for a mess of pottage—namely, the fleeting things of time. Some bargain the truth for the momentary gratification of their fleshly pleasures; others, for money; and still others, for the empty honors of this world.

But there is one obligation which truth imposes,

to which I direct special attention and which I here present—namely, our vows or promises to God and man. While the Bible tells man that his vows should be few (Eccles. 5: 2), it also tells him to pay his vows (Num. 30: 2). He must pay them even at his own hurt, and change not. (Ps. 15: 4.) No man should vow to believe the same things ten years hence that he believes now, neither should he vow to teach the same things that he teaches now; for, if he is a close student of the Bible, he will find that he has been teaching some error. If one vows to do a thing which is right, and he finds the performance of his vow is to his hurt socially, financially, or religiously, he must pay it. When we make a promise to a fellow being, if we are honorable men, we will keep that promise if within our power to do so. If such promises to the living are sacred or binding, how much more so is a promise made to one who is dead—one who is beyond our reach and cannot release us from our obligations, no matter how much we might desire it. Those who would expect us to break such vows would certainly have a low estimate of our integrity, this being especially true if we were of the conviction that we did right in making the vow. Even more, if we should decide that our friend made a mistake in exacting the vow, still we would not be excused from keeping our vow. Men should cease to place a low estimate on anything that the word of God requires. It is important to obey God in all his com-

mandments and requirements. Therefore we should not sell the truth by being false to our vows to our fellow men, no matter what inducement may be offered us. To be true to such vows may bring upon us the censure and scorn of men; but the smiles of an approving God will be upon us, which, after all, is worth more than all the praises and honors that man can bestow. Man crowns to-day and crucifies to-morrow. God approves the right forever. "Let not kindness and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the tablets of thine heart: so shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man." (Prov. 3: 3, 4.)

David tells us of the greatness, immensity, and extensiveness of the truth: "For thy loving-kindness is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the skies." (Ps. 57: 10.) It is impossible to magnify too strongly the importance and glory of the truth. Only those who receive and prize the truth above worldly treasures and the sweetest and dearest friendships live in communion and close fellowship with the Lord. We may love the sacred ties of friendship and our friends may be very dear to us, but the truth must be dearer than any relative or friend.

I have never regretted that I have declared all the counsel of God to both saint and sinner. Error looks just as bad in my brother as it does in a sectarian. If I love him, I must teach him the way of the Lord more accurately. Christ did not

excuse Peter for cursing and denying him, though he forgave him when he repented. The betrayer of Christ was no less atrocious because Judas was one of the twelve. Sin is sin, and we should condemn it in our children as well as in other people's children. We should not condone and compromise with their wrongdoing, neither should we fail to expose the vicious teaching of brethren. Some disciples are worse sectarians than those denominationalists they condemn. They are on dangerous ground and should look well to their standing with God.

I have no apologies to make for courageously teaching the plain, simple truth, but I have been discouraged and disappointed that I succeeded in getting so few people to receive it. I certainly did not expect Christians to criticize a faithful advocacy of the gospel in the spirit of the truth. I shall continue to teach the truth, to commend the good and condemn the evil in all alike, leaving the result with God. It is mine to do the sowing, and God's to give the harvest. "He will cover thee with his pinions, and under his wings shalt thou take refuge: his truth is a shield and a buckler." (Ps. 91: 4.) There is nothing purifying and uplifting in false teaching, but it enslaves in sin. How different is the truth! "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8: 32.) Jehovah "will judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." (Ps. 96: 13.)

To know and teach the truth is to show forth righteousness. It is not enough to know the truth. Thousands who know the truth are lost because they have no regard for the truth. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness; because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them." (Rom. 1: 18, 19.)

It is a fearful thing to know the truth and yet not have the courage to expose error. Christians are commanded to add to their faith virtue, or courage. The Christian who is too cowardly to speak out for the truth is too cowardly to be saved. God will not approve so long as we compromise with error in anybody or anywhere.

The old prophet who dwelt in Bethel saw God's worship corrupted, his altars crumble, and idolatry introduced into Israel by Jeroboam without any protest. He went with the crowd, and must have refrained from criticizing the error taught by his brethren. He was broad and sweet-spirited and fought shy of being called "narrow" and a "pessimist." He was a moral coward. God forbid that I should be so timid and cowardly as to see the true worship destroyed and supplanted by a false worship without sounding a note of warning against error in any form. Before I would be guilty of such disloyalty to the truth, I pray God that the hand that pens these lines may wither and dry up and that my tongue may cleave to the

roof of my mouth. The truth must be first with us. It must be dearer to us than friends, relatives, husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, or any earthly tie. "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." (Mark 12: 30.)

It is only in obedience to the truth that we are justified, edified, and saved. Christ in his prayer makes it clear what is the truth: "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth. As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. (John 17: 17-19.) As we are sanctified in the truth, we do a brother in error an injustice if we do not expose his error and teach him the truth. Disciples are consecrated by the power of the truth in their hearts, so they must make a complete surrender to his will spoken in the word.

We must not only know the truth, but we must receive the love of the truth. I have known men who knew well what they must do to become Christians, yet no power could move them to obey the truth. Of such the Holy Spirit says: "And with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleas-

ure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. 2: 10-12.) Those who fail to receive the love of the truth from any consideration will be lost.

The truth, with all its power and effectiveness, shall be evil spoken of. Men show their hatred for the truth by condemning those who teach it faithfully. How often is the loyal, faithful teacher scorned, ridiculed, and persecuted for teaching the whole counsel of God! The last days are grievous times. Men are not lovers of good, but are "headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." The Spirit declares: "But there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their lascivious doings; by reason of whom the way of the truth shall be evil spoken of." (2 Pet. 2: 1, 2.)

Our dangers are more from the inside than the outside. The disobedient prophet sent out of Judah to curse the altar at Bethel withstood Jeroboam, the king, but fell before his brother, the old prophet of Bethel. The great Restoration Movement inaugurated by the Campbells bravely resisted and overcame the attacks of sectarians, but has been demoralized by the heretical teaching of those who were pledged to speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where the Bible is silent.

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.” (1 Cor. 16: 13.)

Truth will prevail, though men abhor
The glory of its light;
And wage exterminating war,
And put all foes to flight.

Though trodden under foot of men,
Truth from the dust will spring,
And from the press, the lip, the pen,
In tones of thunder ring.

Beware—beware, ye who resist
The light that beams around,
Lest, ere you look through error's mist,
Truth strike you to the ground.

CHAPTER II

PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

THE Bible makes it clear that our personal responsibility is measured by our knowledge of the Lord's will. "And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more." (Luke 12: 47, 48.)

It should also be emphasized that our personal accountability is meted out to us according to what has been committed to us, and not by what hath not been given to us. "And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades: for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." (Matt. 11: 23, 24.) The lamentation of the Lord over Jerusalem, which was so highly favored, is indeed touching and pathetic. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how

often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. 23: 37.)

It is the duty of every one to hear. It is a duty that cannot be shifted. No one can hear for another. "If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Mark 4: 23.) But it is not enough to simply hear. There are many things that should not be heard at all. It is dangerous and corrupting to hear them. Our ears should be closed against hearing the low, the vulgar, the evil. Through the hearing we may be corrupted and influenced to travel the broad road which leadeth to eternal destruction. "Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he thinketh he hath." (Luke 8: 18.) What is heard must be heard with profit and used in blessing the world, or even the ability to do good will be lost. "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath." (Matt. 13: 12.)

We are personally responsible for the character of things that we hear. It is binding on us to take heed what we hear. "And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you; and more shall be given unto you. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him

shall be taken away even that which he hath.”
(Mark 4: 24, 25.)

All these scriptures emphasize our personal accountability to God and that every one is responsible for the use he makes of his talents. As each is accountable to God for himself and is accountable to no other, it behooves every one to be more concerned about what he really is than it does about what the world thinks him to be. A man is accountable for what he is, and not for what he seems to be. No man will be judged by the estimate the world places on him. While it is unpleasant to have people lie on us and persecute us, yet such is not nearly so bad as it is to be guilty of lying. It does not change our standing with God for people to malign us, but to commit sin does change our character and unfits us for heaven. “All that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3: 12), but they find comfort in the language of Jesus when he says: “Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.” (Matt. 5: 10-12.)

God approves and helps the man who feels personally responsible to him and who labors to control himself and to glorify him in both body and

spirit, but God has nowhere given an intimation that he appointed one man to keep under the body of another man. Each man is individually accountable to him, but no one is made a special guardian over his brother. The conduct of some would indicate that Paul should have said: "But I buffet my brother's body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that he has preached to others, he himself should be rejected." (See 1 Cor. 9: 27.) Nowhere in the Bible have I found a passage that makes it a man's personal duty to be a caster out of motes. No man is specially commissioned for such a business. The Bible does say: "Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." (Matt. 7: 5.) We need, first of all, to rigidly discipline self. Instead of looking for the flaws and defects in our brethren, we should first pluck the beam out of our own eye.

Frequently I am asked: "Did you read the article of a certain brother?" I usually reply: "No; but why do you ask?" "He was after you, though he did not call your name," I am told. I scarcely ever read such articles. If the writer wishes to benefit me, he should write me and tell me just what I have done that is wrong. If he wishes to burden the brotherhood and is seeking to prejudice some one against me, he is possibly pursuing the best course to attain the desired end. That is not the way to serve God.

I was at one time in life associated with a prominent evangelist. He made it a point to tell me all the mean things people said about me. For a time it worried me. I saw that he enjoyed the "worry." I quit worrying over anything he told me, ignoring it completely. The fun was all gone and he soon ceased to tell me the mean things. Why tell mean things, when no good is accomplished thereby? When we cannot speak and write the good or something that will do good, we had better not speak or write at all. In our conversations, in our writings, and in our deeds, let us in kindness be a blessing to those who come our way. The following lines from John Greenleaf Whittier are impressive:

A little word in kindness spoken,
A motion or a tear,
Has often healed the heart that's broken
And made a friend sincere.

A word, a look, has crushed to earth
Full many a budding flower,
Which, had a smile but owned its birth,
Would bless life's darkest hour.

Then deem it not an idle thing
A pleasant word to speak;
The face you wear, the thought you bring,
A heart may heal or break.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIAN UNITY

CHRISTIANS are associated together in a great fellowship, partnership, or communion. In this firm there are *divine* partners—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and these three agree in one. In this fellowship there are also *human* partners. All who are baptized into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit enter into fellowship with God and each other for certain clearly defined purposes.

They are fellow partners, fellow workers, fellow sufferers, and fellow heirs in the great and glorious work of redeeming a world of lost and perishing sinners from sin, ignorance, and death; to strengthen and educate saints for the glories, felicities, and raptures of heaven; to lift all people of all nations and all generations from death to life, from vileness and shame to glory and honor, from sin to holiness, and to transform the heirs of wrath and vengeance into the inheritors of heaven's immortal glories and honors.

It is through the boundless goodness and mercy of God that we have been translated out of darkness into the marvelous light of this blessed communion. The grandest miracle of the ages is the sinless Lamb of God dying to redeem the race that scorned him, and the wisdom of sages and the elo-

quence of orators and prophets are mute before that matchless oracle: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3: 16.)

Every Christian should bring into this partnership his *just share* of toil, money, sacrifice, and whatever he possesses that the partnership needs. Every child of God should in honor prefer his brother and should for the advancement of the fellowship yield his own personal ambition, opinions, and preferences. He is a poor Christian who will not do it. "Freely ye have received, freely give." "For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another." (Rom. 12: 4, 5.)

The Christian who is not ready to sacrifice his lust for power and money to maintain the unity of the body thinks meanly of his responsibility and basely of himself. In order to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," no sacrifice should be too great for the Christian to make. The man who puts his own selfish interests above the interests of the body of Christ has not learned the lesson of self-denial which must be learned before the unity of the church of God can be preserved. "Ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body." (1 Cor. 6: 20.) Without the subjugation of our fleshly desires and

appetites, we cannot glorify God in our bodies. By the love and mercies of God, by all that is pure and heavenly, the apostle Paul beseeches us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our spiritual service. In order to preserve the unity of the body of Christ, we must put into this partnership love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, fidelity, self-sacrifice, self-control, humility, and meekness. "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 14: 11.) Christians should not worry because they do not see the proud and selfish humbled and the meek and lowly exalted. God will take care of that.

It is freely conceded by all that so long as the professed followers of Christ make their own preferment and selfish interests their chief purpose in life it will be impossible to maintain Christian unity. If all would know and love the truth, and if all would deny themselves their own whims and fancies in order to lead the world to accept and obey the simple gospel of Christ, it would not be difficult to maintain peace and harmony among those known as Christians. The word of God so clearly and forcefully emphasizes that God's children should be of one accord that the man is inexcusable who destroys the unity and fellowship of brethren. God will condemn the man who ignores his teaching on the subject of unity and who prefers himself rather than the peace and harmony

of the body of Christ. When God legislates, it is our duty to obey.

Obedience is the only thing that will satisfy God's commandments. Only silence where God has not spoken will meet the approval of Jehovah. As to incidentals and expediencies, "the faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself before God." (Rom. 14: 22.) Those who foist their opinions upon the church of Christ are binding it where God has not bound it. It is a burning shame that men will proclaim their opinions instead of a "Thus saith the Lord." Christ commanded the apostles to preach the gospel, not their opinions. Some men have made ruts, and contend for them more stoutly than they preach the gospel. They would force all Christians to ride their hobbies or walk in their ruts. So long as such a condition exists it is not possible to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

This condition arises from a lack of respect and love for the truth. I shall quote a number of scriptures which inculcate Christian unity. David sings of it and tells us what it is like: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that came down upon the skirt of his garments; like the dew of Hermon, that cometh down upon the mountains of Zion: for there Jehovah commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." (Ps. 133.) There is one body, one

church, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, one Father, and one hope. With all the contention, strife, and schism that are now so rampant, we all are called in the hope of eternal life. Hence, the apostle declares: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4: 1-3.) Christians should not seek the highest positions of honor, but in humility should receive and appropriate the teaching of Christ: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren." (Matt. 23: 8.) If we heed and practice the sentiment of this passage, schism, discord, and bitterness will cease in the body of Christ as the night follows the day. The desire to hold positions of honor and superiority over our brethren is sure to produce enmity and strife. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." (Acts 4: 32.) It is a mistake to suppose that having "all things common" was peculiar to the church in Jerusalem. That particular form of distribution evidently grew out of peculiar conditions; but in *principle* the religion is the same, and although a change in circumstances may bring a change in the incidents of

giving, the duty of bringing our all to God is just as great now as it was then. This applies just as much to our ability as it does to our money. "Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus: that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 15: 5, 6.) Christians should be so saturated with the Spirit of Christ that as one man they proclaim the glory of God and the praise of Christ. If all bitterness, selfishness, and covetousness were out of the church, this would be the result. "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1: 10.) This would be the condition in a perfect church. It is an ideal condition, and we should strive to attain it. God's word strictly obeyed leads to perfection. Paul, the great apostle, to banish factions in the church at Corinth, admonishes: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfected; be comforted; be of the same mind; live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you." (2 Cor. 13: 11.)

Certain it is that we must have peace with each other before we can have the peace of God. "Make full my joy, that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; doing nothing through faction or through vain-

glory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself." (Phil. 2: 2, 3.) How great would be the fullness of joy of all Christians if they were of one mind and one accord and each in humility considered his brother better than himself! A hearty practice of this scripture would be an effective panacea for factions and contentions. "Only, whereunto we have attained, by that same rule let us walk. Brethren, be ye imitators together of me, and mark them that so walk even as ye have us for an ensample." (Phil. 3: 16, 17.) But perfect unity did not prevail in Paul's day, even as it does not now. He further declares: "For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is perdition, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things." (Verses 18, 19.) We should not cease to do the right thing because some are wicked and we do not have perfect unanimity. Persistent obedience never fails of its reward. "Finally, be ye all like-minded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tender-hearted, humble-minded: not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing; for hereunto were ye called, that ye should inherit a blessing." (1 Pet. 3: 8, 9.)

CHAPTER IV

A RIGHTEOUS PEACE

WE have had so many and terrible wars that it should take no argument to induce the nations to disarm. There has been and is so much strife and division in the religious world, and so much evil has been the result of this strife and division, that all Christians should devote their talents to the ushering in of the peace and unity that would please God. All will readily concede that the peace and unity enjoyed in him are to be coveted, but there is danger of concluding that all peace is desirable. This is not so. Peace in sin is wicked and vicious. The unity and peace of murderers, thieves, and adulterers should be condemned. The sinless, spotless Babe of Bethlehem never came to this world to bring such a peace. It was not an unholy peace that caused a multitude of the heavenly host to praise God and say, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased," when Christ was cradled in a manger. Christ came to bring "peace on earth" by leading his subjects to deny themselves for harmony and to live "soberly, righteously, and godly." He came to bring his disciples peace by influencing them "in honor" to prefer "one another" and to love not "in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth."

The peace that Christ brings teaches us to present our bodies living sacrifices, to lead lives of self-denial, to correct the erring, and to help the fallen to rise. In seeking and pursuing this peace, a conflict between truth and error, right and wrong, virtue and vice, will arise. If we are not cowards, we must fight. We cannot enjoy the peace that is from above and tamely submit to sin. Christ triumphed over sin in all its forms. He tells us: "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." (Matt. 10: 34-36.) The father may love the truth, the son may hate it. There can be no real peace between them. The daughter may love and obey the truth, the mother may be dishonest and worldly. There can be no real fellowship between them.

One preacher is full of humility, loves the truth, and teaches it to the very best of his ability. Another preacher knows the truth and presents it in the "holier-than-thou" fashion; he sees much to criticize and little to commend in his brother preachers, and leads his audiences to believe that he thinks no one is really preaching the word but himself. All preachers should lose sight of themselves in the delivery of their messages and should know nothing but Christ, and him crucified. We

cannot bring to the church, weary and tired of division and strife, that peace Christ intends until we are willing to deny ourselves the gratification of our personal ambition in order to promote peace among God's children. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

The peace of the world and the peace of God are very different. In the world there is no perfect peace. In this world no man enjoys perfect rest. Christ says: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." (John 14: 27.) Again, Christ says to his disciples: "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye may have peace. In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." (John 16: 33.) God's children have tribulations in this world as do other people. There is change and unrest on every hand. The boy sighs to be a man, and the man sighs to be a boy again. Like David, we long for the wings of a dove, that we may fly away to God and be at rest. Knocks, slander, and persecution come to the innocent. Joseph's virtue did not save him from slander and cruel treatment. "In the world ye have tribulation." It is God's way, and there is no escape from it. When we are called on to suffer, when the clouds hang heavily over us, we should not rebel against God. It is the common lot of man. "Man, that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble." (Job 14: 1.)

This world is the school in which we are trained for perfect peace and rest. It is the scene of our conflict, in which, if we conquer, we inherit, when the victory is won, eternal life. In the fight that we must make to overcome sin and selfishness we should be encouraged by the thought that we may have "the peace of God" to abide with us. I have been impressed with the fact how Paul would have "peace from God" to abide with all Christians. Without it, there is not a possibility of victory. In writing to the Romans, the Corinthians, the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, and the Thessalonians, the Holy Spirit, through Paul, says: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." What a wonderful prayer for these churches! Living in close union and communion with God and enjoying his peace, they must expect tribulations and not peace in the world. Still, abiding in the peace of God, there would come to them a joy and satisfaction that is unknown to the man of the world. These churches could not abide in the "peace of God" by lusting for power and money or by compromising with the world to gain its popularity. They were not expected to live in peace with all manner of sin. Paul would have them so live "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of

Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fullness of God." (Eph. 3: 17-19.)

Peace at the expense of truth would be unrighteous. Men must so love the truth as to teach it, but to them Paul says: "Let your forbearance ["gentleness"—margin] be known unto all men." (Phil. 4: 6.) Severity, roughness, and harshness are no parts of the truth. We should seek to lead the world to a righteous peace, then God will bless our efforts. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4: 7.)

CHAPTER V

CHRIST TEACHES HUMILITY

OF humility we may truly say :

Humility, that low sweet root
From which all heavenly virtues shoot.

It is undoubtedly true that humility is the most admired virtue, and yet the least practiced. It is also clear that Christ teaches forcefully and persistently that we cannot be full of self-seeking, glorification, and conceit, and be his disciples. His whole life and example teach otherwise. Men, forgetting the life of self-denial and sacrifice which the lowly Jesus practiced, seek the chief seats in the synagogue and the positions of trust and responsibility. This ungodly greed for money and lust for power are not only in the world, but also in the church of Christ. Such selfishness is a shame and disgrace to the religion of Jesus Christ. Some, like the proud and haughty Pharisee, feel like they are superior to their brethren; so, instead of in honor preferring one another, they kick them out of their positions and step into them themselves. God will not use them any more than he did the wicked Pharisee. The haughty spirit is a stench in the nostrils of Jehovah. He cannot and will not use such men. The use of haughty

characters would fill heaven with sorrow and hell with joy.

Whom does God love? "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." (Isa. 66: 2.) God used the humble Christ, who humbled himself even unto the death of the cross. No selfishness, no worldly pride, and no sense of superiority ever marred the character and darkened the life of Christ. Unselfish characters are useful here and will inherit the kingdom of heaven. Christ shows the importance he attaches to humility by stressing it in his first teaching: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. . . . Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." (Matt. 5: 3-5.) Could a greater reward be given than is given the humble? They inherit both the earth and the kingdom of heaven.

The meek are characterized by humble serenity of spirit and submission to the divine will. "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." (Matt. 21: 5.) See how humble and meek was David, and be benefited by his example: "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." (Ps. 22: 6.) Moses, the great example of meekness, felt his weakness and inability to do great things. He reminds Jehovah that he is slow of speech and of a stammering tongue. No truly

great man ever felt his greatness. Moses and Paul did not.

The apostles were men, after all. The apostleship did not rob them of their humanity. In the very shadow of the cross, they had disputed one with another on the way who was the greatest. Christ then and there taught them: "If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all." (Mark 9: 35.) A man must crucify selfish pride and ambition before God can exalt him to heaven. "And he took a little child, and set him in the midst of them: and taking him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever receiveth me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me." (Verses 36, 37.) "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein." (Mark 10: 15.) "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted." (Matt. 23: 12.) The only way to be great is to faithfully work in the position where God has placed us. So soon as we are able to assume new and greater responsibilities, he will give them to us. A call to greater service is evidence that we have been faithful in our work. He who makes the most sacrifices for others; he who serves most and lifts the most burdens from off the weary, the sin-sick, and the heavy-laden, is the greatest and is best fitted for heaven. He

who realizes that he is a sinner and pleads to God for mercy is not far from justification. "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 18: 14.)

True greatness consists in service. "Ye know that they who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all." (Mark 10: 42-44.)

It is easy to preach to others to be humble, but it is very difficult for one to practice his own preaching. But hard as it may be, we all should practice humility, and in positions of honor should take the lower places, giving heed to the warning of Christ when he says: "Beware of the scribes, who desire to walk in long robes, and love salutations in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts; who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers; these shall receive greater condemnation." (Luke 20: 46, 47.) When places of honor are offered, if we have Christ's spirit, we will take the lower seats and leave the higher for our brethren; and when a humble sacrifice must be made, we will cheerfully take the first place. Paul, in writing to the Roman brethren, says: "In love of

the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another." (Rom. 12: 10.) This advice heeded by our preachers would often save the body, or church, from factionalism. Preachers sometimes, instead of practicing this teaching, exalt themselves and honor themselves above their brother preachers until a division is made in the body. Strange love for Christ that permits a church to wrangle over a preacher until two bitter factions are at war in the church! How much better for the preacher over whom the contention arises to drop entirely out of sight! He should plainly say to his admirers and friends: "You cannot create a faction over me." It is a fearful condition for one to be for Paul, one for Cephas, and another for Apollos. Such divisions over preachers brings carnality, and carnality brings death. Read what the Spirit says: "Nay, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary; and those parts of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness; whereas our comely parts have no heed; but God tempered the body together, giving more abundant honor to that part which lacked; that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it;

or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it." (1 Cor. 12: 22-26.)

When this teaching is strictly and humbly obeyed, there will be no division and strife in the churches of Christ. But so long as some think of themselves more highly than they should, so long as there are selfish and lustful preachers ministering to the churches, we will find the churches more worldly and corrupt than spiritual. A spirit of levity, worldliness, and corruption is prevailing among the churches that should be cast out. No godly preacher will compromise with such in order to make a living. I would rather break rock on the street and live on bread and water than to compromise with uncleanness of which many church members are guilty. But alas! Some preachers do not cry out against sin, because their own robes are tainted and smell unto heaven. When one learns of the divorced preachers who are living with their second wives and of the many preachers who frequent the moving-picture shows, he cannot but believe we are living in "perilous times." To all such the language of the Spirit is specially applicable: "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you." (James 4: 8-10.)

If we realize how weak we are, and how we

cannot gain the victory over sin in our own strength, in our humility he will give us grace to resist and overcome the devil. Those who have overconfidence in their own strength and ability rush into temptation, to be overcome by Satan. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10: 12.)

Christ is the one great example of humility. He rendered to the world the greatest possible service that a perfect Being could render. Enjoying all the glories of heaven and being in the form of God, he did not cling to the equality, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant: "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross." (Phil. 2: 8.) He led a life of self-denial and service for others. He healed the sick, cast out demons, forgave sins, fed the hungry, and restored sight to the blind. He came down from heaven to serve and to do the will of his Father who sent him. Those who are great walk in his steps. The man who serves most is greatest of all. Those who are greatest are forgiving, guileless, free from malice and pride. "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 18: 4.)

The Christian, instead of claiming to be superior to others and boasting of how much better he is than others, as did the Pharisee, knows his own weakness, and, like the publican, prays: "God, be

thou merciful to me a sinner." Knowing our own imperfections and weaknesses, we should all "put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye." (Col. 3: 12, 13.)

With a heart filled with pride and conceit, it is impossible to serve the Lord. The heart filled with gratitude for the blessings of God extends a helping hand and sheds a tear of sympathy for the unfortunate and fallen. While Paul was truly brilliant and great, he does not lose sight of his own weakness. Listen to him: "Serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind, and with tears, and with trials, which befell me by the plots of the Jews." (Acts 20: 19.)

In the trials, storms, and conflicts of this life, we should ever cling close to the Lord Jesus Christ. The best must fight sin from the cradle to the grave. If we have made good use of our time, we realize that we know but little and have nothing for which to be proud. In the strength that God gives us and with his guidance, we must subdue the animal nature until he says to us, "Well done." In his strength we must climb to the mountain top of a perfected and consecrated life. By his guidance we must climb higher and higher to where the snows of purity forever gleam in the glow of heaven. Suffer a word of exhortation from the

Spirit: "All of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one author: for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you." (1 Pet. 5: 5-7.)

Dictators and autocrats are not needed in the kingdom of God. Position hunters and place seekers are weights in the church and retard the growth and development of the kingdom of Christ. We need men as humble as children and with the characteristics of a guileless child, free from malice, to build up the church of God. Such will never have to seek a position; the position will seek them.

This is the highest learning,
The hardest and the best—
From self to self to keep still turning,
And honor all the rest.

If one should break the letter,
Yea, spirit of command,
Think not that thou art better;
Thou may'st not always stand!

We all are weak, but weaker
Hold no one than thou art;
Then, as thou growest meeker,
Higher will go thy heart.

CHAPTER VI

THE PREMILLENNIAL VIEW AND THE SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF THE KINGDOM

THE cardinal assumption that the kingdom of Christ waits, and that Christ will come at the millennium and sit on David's throne in Jerusalem and there establish a material kingdom with the Jews being the center of it, is without warrant in the Bible. It is true that a literal notion of the kingdom of God as an earthly dominion, in which the Jewish nation should have the primacy, was quite firmly entrenched in the minds of the Jews at the coming of Christ. It is also true that there are indications that this notion had gained such lodgment in the minds of the primitive disciples that it was difficult to dislodge it all at once. But, on the other hand, it is clear that a different view came within the circle of New Testament thought, a view accordant with the placing of the major emphasis on the spiritual nature of the kingdom. The discourses of Christ supplied an ample basis for this improved conception.

He provided an offset to Jewish narrowness and externalism on the theme of the kingdom in a two-fold way. On the one hand, he lifted the view of the kingdom above the Jewish plane in substantially discarding the national connection by which it was bound in contemporary thought. He con-

trusted the new order which he came to establish with the Old Testament order. He says: "Neither do men put new wine into old wine-skins: else the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins perish: but they put new wine into fresh wine-skins, and both are preserved." (Matt. 9: 7.) It is a new kingdom, not the Jewish kingdom restored. He declared that men should come from the east and west and occupy a place in the kingdom, while the Israelites shall be cast out into outer darkness (Matt. 8: 11, 12); and that, as a people, they shall be dispossessed of the Lord's vineyard and see it let out to other husbandmen (Matt. 21: 33-45). In harmony with this teaching, he gave injunction to preach the gospel, not only to the Jewish people, but to all nations. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations." (Matt. 28: 19.)

In many instances he spiritualized the view of the kingdom by using words which obviously teach that it is a present and interior reality. Such an inference is clear from the words which Christ addressed to the Pharisees: "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." (Matt. 21: 31.) "Ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering in to enter." (Matt. 23: 13.) The same idea is in Christ's response of approval to the scribe: "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." (Mark 12: 34.) The kingdom is also described as here and

now in some sense in the words with which Christ replied to pharisaic calumny: "If I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you." (Matt. 12: 28.) The same may be said of the whole list of parables in which the kingdom is likened to the sprouting and growth of grain, to the working of leaven, to the finding of a treasure hid in a field, to the development of a mustard seed, and to the obtaining of the goodly pearl at large cost.

The present existence of the kingdom in some sense and its spiritual nature are declared in this sentence: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17: 20, 21.) While still other scriptures could be given, the great array of scripture authority already cited must not close without Col. 1: 13, which reads: "Who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love." If any one can read this array of scripture and still contend that Christ's kingdom is not established and that it may yet be thousands of years in the future, it is needless to seek to convince him, for he would not be converted though one arose from the dead.

On this subject Henry C. Sheldon very correctly says: "Intrinsically, so comprehensive a theme as that of the kingdom is adapted to give rise to a variety of representations. Viewed as to its source and central principle, the kingdom is the

realized moral rule of God; viewed as to the relations of its subjects, it is an ideal society. Regarded as a sum of spiritual goods which accompany or result from the realized rule of God, the kingdom can be spoken of as a treasure to be received; regarded as the domain where a divine and heavenly régime obtains, it can be described as a province or sphere to be entered. As already inaugurated and in process of development, the kingdom is here and now; as awaiting a great consummating stage, it is yet to come. All these aspects are represented explicitly or implicitly in the teachings of Christ." But with all these aspects represented by Christ, he nowhere represents that he will return to establish a material kingdom with Jerusalem as its capital and converted and restored Israel as its center.

The Holy Spirit, through Peter, teaches that heaven has received Christ until the times of the restoration of all things. "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Christ, who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restoration of all things." (Acts 3: 19.) As the heaven has received Christ to hold him until all things are restored, then surely he will not come to restore an earthly kingdom and to rule with a rod of iron for a thousand years.

Christ is Coming Again.

Christians rejoice in the blessed assurance that Christ is coming again. "But now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment; so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation." (Heb. 9: 26-28.) But the Bible does not lead us to believe that Christ will appear again at least over a thousand years before the final resurrection and judgment, as chiliasts endeavor to do. Christ's second coming is synchronous with the resurrection and glorification of the body. This is the plain teaching of the Bible. "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself." (Phil. 3: 20, 21.) Again, the Holy Spirit, in Col. 3: 4, teaches: "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory." While the Bible does not teach two or four judgments and two or more resurrections, as do chilasts, it does very clearly teach that the good and bad will be resurrected at the same time. Chiliasts teach that the righteous will be

raised first and the wicked last. "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5: 28, 29.) We are to wait patiently for Christ's second coming, at which time we shall appear with him in his glory. "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word." (2 Tim. 4: 1, 2.)

The idea of Christ's bodily reign on the earth for a thousand years is absolutely foreign to the thought of Paul. It is nowhere suggested in his epistles. According to his unbroken and uniform conception, the second coming of Christ is the abolition of the present economy and the ushering in of the eternal state. "Now unto him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of his glory without blemish in exceeding joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, before all time, and now, and unto all the ages. Amen."

CHAPTER VII

MARRIAGE AND THE HOME

THE way our people are leaving their homes and living in boarding houses, hotels, and apartments forebodes evil for them. The manner in which some women leave their homes and husbands, go out into the business world and contend with its problems, means the destruction of the home. When you destroy the home, you destroy the church, the state, and society. As the church is the salt of the earth, so the home is the salt of the church. The children in the church who study the Bible and love the truth are from the best homes. God ordained the home for the preservation and elevation of society. Hence, in the beginning it was said: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Gen. 2: 24.) Both Christ and Paul quote the above scripture with approval.

The husband and wife should work and pray together first for the salvation of their children, then for the salvation of their neighbors, and then for the redemption of the world. Hence, the Holy Spirit admonishes: "Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the savior

of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it." (Eph. 5: 22-26.)

Marriage is so sacred, so holy, and so divine that it is an atrocious sin to treat it lightly. "Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge." (Heb. 13: 4.) The union is too sacred, important, and lasting to be entered hastily and without serious inquiry and reflection. Congenial spirits and an affection which is far greater than any other earthly love are indispensably necessary to a happy marriage. No man should take a woman to be his wife until he feels that she is necessary to his usefulness and happiness. The same is true of woman. No one should enter marriage as an experiment. The contracting parties to the union should understand that it is for life. It occurs to me that it would be a protection to marriage if people were not permitted to marry on too short an acquaintance. Would it not be well to announce the engagement some time before the marriage is to occur? Hasty marriages often lead to disastrous results.

Uniform marriage and divorce laws in all the States of the United States would serve to prevent improper marriages. It is a sad fact that the ratio of divorces and marriages is about one to three. Our judges and courts would do well to

grant no divorce only for the scriptural cause—infidelity to the marriage relation. The Bible is clear on this subject. “It was also said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you, that every one that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress: and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery.” (Matt. 5: 31, 32.) The same truth is also taught by Christ as follows: “Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.” (Matt. 19: 9.) If divorces were granted only for fornication, there would be fewer divorces. It may not always appear best, but it is best without exception to obey God.

When a man has taken upon himself the duties of a husband, he should faithfully perform them. He should not be such a dawdler as to allow his wife to make a living for him. God never intended that the wife should keep house, rear and train the children, and also devote her time to the support of the husband. Shame on the man who is willing for her to do it! The wife who does her duty faithfully in the home surely has burdens enough. The man who is not willing to support a woman is not worthy of a wife. It is a serious mistake and to be deeply regretted that so many women are leaving their homes and entering offices and

stores to make a living. When such a necessity exists, there is something radically wrong with society. Mothers are needed at home. Nothing is more important than training children. They should be taught the Bible and be trained to honor and obey God.

The family is the unit of that which is good. With the family and home neglected, our civilization is sure to come to grief. When there is no religion of Christ in the home, there can be none in society, in the church, or in the school. With ignorance of the Bible prevailing in the home, it will also prevail in society and among the people. With a prayerless home, we will have a prayerless people. With a lack of respect and reverence for the Bible in the home will be a lack of respect for God in society. If we would correct our evils, we must begin in the home.

God requires the reading and teaching of his word in the family. "Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thy house, and upon thy gates." (Deut.

6: 5-9.) In different words the same duty, yet more sweeping and comprehensive, is enjoined upon Christian parents: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6: 1-4.) Again, the man of wisdom, Solomon, says: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22: 6.) To fail to correct a child is to ruin the child. Solomon also says: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." (Prov. 13: 24.)

If good boys come from Christian homes, so bad boys come from ungodly homes. To me nothing appears much more shocking than to see children have absolutely no respect for their parents. In the light of the word of God, I can picture no good that the future has in reserve for them. How horrible for a boy to regard his father as his slave and to refuse to see anything good in him! Verily children are acting as though God had said: "Parents, obey your children." David has well said: "The fool and the brutish alike perish." It is not possible for a disobedient, disrespectful child to grow to a useful manhood. The young are so

ignorant of God's word that it would be a miracle if they did not go astray.

While we are asking what is wrong with our schools and with our civilization, would it not be well to inquire what is the matter with our homes? Have we not pulled down our family altars, and are we not permitting our children to grow up in ignorance, irreverence, and disobedience? Are we not failing to read and study the Bible as we should? It is no new thing for evil to pursue those who neglect God. David says: "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver: whoso offereth the sacrifice of thanksgiving glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his way aright, will I show the salvation of God." (Ps. 50: 22, 23.)

Instead of being a nation of money-makers, let us be a race of home-makers. Give us Christian men and women who are devoting the best that is in them to the making of well-ordered homes in which God as Father and Jesus as Elder Brother dwell. Give us fathers and mothers who make it the business of their lives to love the Lord Jesus Christ with all their hearts and to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Then will we have happy homes where confidence and love dwell as twin sisters, and then will we have fewer foolish, ignorant women seeking to pile up gold for themselves when there is no reason or necessity for such conduct.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRUTH BETWEEN EXTREMES

SOME writers are so extreme and bitter in religious discussions that their readers become prejudiced against all investigation and discussion. This is very unfortunate. Discussion is very helpful in eliciting truth, and no one should oppose the right kind of investigation. When one is conducting a discussion, he should never write anything when he is in the wrong spirit and is liable to say harsh, bitter things that are calculated to do harm, and not good. If one cannot conduct a discussion in the spirit of Christ, he should not discuss at all. The man who will cut a sentence in two, leaving out a qualifying phrase so as to destroy the meaning of the writer, should never write at all; neither should the man write who will leave out a part of a paragraph that is needed to complete the meaning of the one whom he is criticizing. No man should discuss a subject unless his ultimate aim and purpose is to maintain the truth and to honor and glorify Christ. But there are some who are so bitter in their denunciation of an opponent that they have rendered all religious discussion very unpopular. They have gone to such an extreme that they have influenced others to go to the opposite extreme and to object to all religious discussion. The debater who is not willing to do unto

his opponent as he would be done by, and who is not willing to regard his opponent as honest and as sincere as is he, is liable to bring all discussion into disrepute. But because some men wrest the truth to their own destruction is no reason why we should burn the Bible as an unworthy book; because some churches apostatize and fall away is no reason why we should reject the church of Christ. Those who love the truth and who contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints should not grow angry and fight back in the same spirit because some who know no better misstate their true position. They should find comfort in the following scripture: "Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you." (Matt. 5: 10-12.) The time will never come so long as we are in the flesh that we will not make mistakes. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16: 32.) Man is his own worst enemy. The right kind of discussion should train and develop him and give him more strength to subdue his angry passions and to present the whole truth for the glory of God.

The man who loves party or partyism more than

he loves the truth is unfit to discuss religious subjects. It is wicked to exalt partyism above the truth of God. He is the worst sort of partisan who discusses a subject simply in order to gain a victory over his opponent. He is an enemy to the truth who will waste valuable time in discussing subjects that are not vital to the salvation of man. The Holy Spirit forbids the discussion of such subjects. The discussion of theories and speculations is not calculated to edify any one, and should be avoided. Paul left Timothy at Ephesus when he was going into Macedonia, that he might "charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine, neither to give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questionings, rather than a dispensation of God which is in faith," and said: "But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned: from which things some having swerved have turned aside unto vain talking; desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm." (1 Tim. 1: 4-7.) In all teaching, as well as in discussion, men should teach in the language of the Bible whenever it is possible. It would be better to avoid that teaching that cannot be couched in biblical phraseology. Again we find Paul admonishing Timothy: "If any man teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godli-

ness; he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, wranglings of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, supposing that godliness is a way of gain." (1 Tim. 6: 3-5.) Discussing about "disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings," will not edify or strengthen the hearers. The Holy Spirit admonishes us, instead of doing this, to "hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. 1: 13.) If men did not vaunt themselves and did not think of themselves more highly than they should, they would not turn away from the plain and simple teaching of the word of God to speculations and untaught questions. There is enough plain, simple teaching in the word of God to occupy the brightest minds until Gabriel blows his trumpet. There never has lived, and there never will live, any man who is able to fully grasp and comprehend all that is contained in the plainest truths of the Bible. If the last man who lives upon the earth had the combined wisdom of all men from Adam, the first man, to himself, that man would not be able to comprehend all that is clearly revealed in the Bible. Why, then, the necessity for turning away from that which is plain and simple to that which is above us and beyond us and which God never intended that we should fully comprehend? Only those who are wise in their own con-

ceit and think more highly of themselves than they should will be guilty of such conduct. The Bible not only admonishes us to hold to sound words, but to hold the *pattern* of sound words. Again, Paul admonishes his son, Timothy: "Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them in the sight of the Lord, that they strive not about words, to no profit, to the subverting of them that hear. Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth. But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymanæus and Philetus; men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some." (2 Tim. 2: 14-18.) Again, writing in the same strain, Paul charges Timothy: "But foolish and ignorant questionings refuse, knowing that they gender strifes. And the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle toward all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him unto his will." (Verses 23-26.) Above all, those who teach others and who write for our religious papers should be "an ensample of good works; in thy doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sound speech, that can-

not be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of us." (Tit. 2: 8.) While every child of God is under obligation to preach the truth, to present the truth boldly and fearlessly, yet he is also under obligation to manifest a spirit of gentleness and firmness in his advocacy of the truth. In the hands of such an advocate, the truth is not likely to suffer. Again, Paul admonishes Titus: "But shun foolish questionings, and genealogies, and strifes, and fightings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse; knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned." (Tit. 3: 9, 10.) While we are not disposed to discontinue the discussion of fundamental matters in the columns of the Gospel Advocate, we should like to urge upon our readers the necessity of teaching the truth in the spirit and in the love of the truth. How often is the truth damaged and injured by an ill-tempered, misguided advocate of it!

Much harm is done by speculating over untaught questions. There is as much wisdom, as much philanthropy, as much kindness and mercy in concealing some things as in revealing others. "Secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children." Every attempt, therefore, to derive knowledge from unrevealed questions is *prima facie* evidence of the speculator's unbelief

in divine revelation. "Blindness to the future is therefore kindly given" that we may not suffer a plurality of evils in fearing one, nor by long anticipation of prospective pleasures enervate their power to create pleasure and to give delight. Hence, it is no less a folly than a sin to lift the latch and force the door that God has in mercy and kindness shut, inasmuch as secret things belong to the Lord, while those revealed belong to us and our children. Speculators have not developed one new truth nor established one new fact by their written documents or otherwise. "Their mountains have long been in travail, and yet not even a mouse is born." Such speculations, in common with all delusions, render but one service—they reveal a class of professors who have a hereditary faith in the gospel, and nothing more; also those who are not established in the Christian evidences and those who follow the guidance of what they call "reason," and who are fond of novelties and dissatisfied with the details of true, Christian piety.

CHAPTER IX

WOMAN'S WORK

THE women are our sisters and we are their brothers. God created the brothers for the outdoor work and the sisters for the indoor work. To analyze and specify woman's work in detail would require volumes. Woman's exclusive work in life is to bear children; man should help her train them. No higher, more sacred and holy work has ever been committed to human beings. This is her chiefest work in life. She should not engage in any work incompatible with this. Campaigning, holding office, and engaging in any of the callings of life that demand a constant strain on the mind and constant care and anxiety for public affairs of church and State not only destroy her taste for home and cause her to neglect the home, but unfit her for marriage and motherhood. I believe it is wrong for woman to eagerly seek and to engage in any work voluntarily that is not in harmony with her life work. When God cursed man and woman, after they had fallen from a state of holiness and purity, he indicated the position in life in which each could best serve him. To ignore this appointment and assignment of Jehovah is to rebel against him. "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth chil-

dren; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3: 16-19.) The more closely men and women live in harmony with this law of Jehovah, the more useful and happy they will be. It is the duty of each to loyally serve God in the God-given sphere. He or she who serves best is noblest.

It was not anything she said;
It was the movement of her head,
The lifting of her lid.
And as she trod her path aright,
Power from her very garments stole;
For such is the mysterious might
God grants a noble soul.

In gentleness, in modesty, and in goodness, woman reigns supreme. A good, pure, godly woman is a crown and a blessing to any man. Solomon says: "A worthy woman is the crown of her husband; but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones." (Prov. 12: 4.) Sol-

omon, with all his shortcomings, is ready to honor a good woman, and he was not alone in this. "A worthy woman who can find? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband trusteth in her, and he shall have no lack of gain. She doeth him good and not evil all the days of her life." (Prov. 31: 10-12.) Solomon was not writing of the modern woman who is ambitious for power. He had in mind the gentle, modest woman who is content to serve God in her proper place. Women who usurp the throne as did Jezebel and who lust for power are not held up to the world as shining examples to follow. Cleopatra was very beautiful, possessed of a bright intellect and "very great" in wealth and power, yet her name is covered with infamy. With all her wealth, intellect, and beauty, she is not the character that God approves and which good people admire. It is better to live as God directs and leave no name, no heritage but the undying memory of piety and godliness.

O, what is woman, what her smile,
Her lips of love, her eyes of light?
What is she if her lips revile
The lowly Jesus? Love may write
His name upon her marble brow,
Or linger in her curls of jet;
The bright spring flowers may scarcely bow
Beneath her step, and yet—and yet,
Without that meeker grace, she'll be
A lighter thing than vanity."

The Spirit, through the apostle Peter, describes to us the true greatness of woman and in what it consists: "In like manner, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, even if any obey not the word, they may without the word be gained by the behavior of their wives; beholding your chaste behavior coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner aforetime the holy women also, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose children ye now are, if we do well, and are not put in fear by any terror." (1 Pet. 3: 1-6.) The woman with a pure heart who fears Jehovah and adorns herself with good works shall be praised. There is not a more honorable and influential person alive than is the woman who does this. This is true goodness and greatness. The husband who does not love, honor, and protect such a wife must think meanly of himself and of all God has created and ordained. The Holy Spirit also tells husbands how they should treat their wives: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might

present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself: for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church; because we are members of his body. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh." (Eph. 5: 25-31.) The husband who obeys this scripture will never hinder his wife from serving the Lord. He will encourage her to contribute and will not expect her to be so dominated by him as to have nothing distinct from him. He cannot pray in her stead; he cannot obey God for her; he cannot believe and repent for her; he cannot be baptized for her; he cannot commune for her; he cannot sing for her. There is no act of service or devotion that he can perform for her. Every one must serve God for himself or herself. Women labored with Paul in the gospel. Priscilla did it. Every Christian woman must be a laborer in the gospel. This she should be in a quiet, modest way. We have no account of women making public speeches with Paul. The woman who cheerfully serves and works as God has ordained is the noblest and greatest.

CHAPTER X

DIVINE FORGIVENESS AND PUNISHMENT

DESIGN is the order of the whole universe. It runs like a strand of gold through all the works of God; and whatever God does for man or requires man to do for himself, he has a purpose or design in it all. The proper use of punishment is right; the abuse of it is the most blighting and withering curse that has ever fallen on church or world. This abuse has grown out of the single thought that there is a purifying influence growing out of it; that it is a great factor in reforming moral nature; that it is disciplinary as applied to mind and heart. The idea that punishment purifies was conceived in hell; the devil is its father and sin its mother. If punishment purifies, then we should praise our redeemer and shout glory to the penal fires of hell. Punishment may control action until uplifting moral influences and teaching may be brought to bear on the heart of the transgressor which will lead him to hate and loathe sin. All purifying power is in God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. They purify our hearts by entering in and dwelling there; and they enter by faith, not by punishment. It is faith in God and his word in the heart of the transgressor that leads him to confess his sin; the hardened sinner who has no faith in Christ is not conscious of sin and

has no thought of confessing guilt for a violation of the law of God. Punishment does not reach the heart. The heathen on his post, the monk in his cell, wrapped in his hair clothing, with sharp-pointed tacks to pierce the flesh, with all their fastings, flagellations, and macerations, their hearts are not as pure as they would be if they mingled with their fellow men and sought to do them good in the *discharge* of life's *active duties*. All the punishment God inflicted upon Pharaoh did not purify his heart. God did not mean to make him love his people, but to control his action, and this he did. Christ, who was *pure*, suffered; Joseph, who was guileless and innocent, suffered; the *sinless* infant *suffers*.

All God's punishments are *beneficent*, looking to the good of the one punished. No earthly father who really loves his child has any thought of purifying his child by the use of the rod, but simply aims to control his action until he can fill his heart with principles that will lead him to hate wrongdoing. If the use of the rod *purified*, the wise father would use it on his child until he was sinless. God is not a tyrant, inflicting punishment simply to appease his anger, but he visits punishment on his children to bring them to a state of mind that they may see sin in all its hideousness and be influenced by his word to loathe it with all their hearts. David tells us the effect of affliction on his heart: "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now I observe thy word." (Ps. 119: 67.)

David again impresses the thought that through an understanding of God's precepts he was led to hate sin: "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way." (Verses 103, 104.) That it is faith in God and not punishment which leads to reformation is clear from Amos 4: 6: "And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah." *Not one was reformed.* It was even so with the children of Israel when they were afflicted for forty years in the wilderness. Our only hope is in the gospel, which is God's power unto salvation, and not in punishment.

I have heretofore referred to David's sin and God's dealing with him. I sought to establish two facts, and only two facts—viz., God forgave David and retained him in the exalted position of king over his people. No proof of these facts is needed more than the simple narrative itself, and most certainly no wrong use has been made of the divine record in showing how God treated one guilty of a heinous crime. In so far as the effects which followed David's sin in the way of trouble in his family and otherwise are concerned, they in no way alter the two facts that God *wiped out* his sin and kept him on the throne. If a bad example was set before the young men of Israel in retaining David on the throne, just remember that God himself

set the example and forever banish the thought of being more righteous than God. The naked facts are that in many cases the "consequences" which follow one who has violated God's law and has been pardoned emanate from man and not from God. These "consequences" are often due to a lack of forgiveness upon the part of man where God has forgiven. No doubt we are often more concerned about what the public will think than we are about the attitude God sustains to one he has pardoned, and thus we erect *public sentiment* as a standard of action toward one whom God has forgiven. When God pardoned David, was he not in "good standing" and fellowship with God? If the pardoned sinner is not also in "good standing" with us, we are out of harmony with God and, therefore, not in "good standing" with him. The one who has been pardoned of God is in "good standing" and full fellowship with all God's children, regardless of what the world may say or do. What *privileges* in the kingdom of God does Jesus Christ deny one who has been forgiven and cleansed from sin? Where is the law on the subject? Unless we know that some privilege is denied by the Head of the church to such a one, will we not be making a law where God has made none, and is not such a course a dangerous thing? Should we make a law and label it "expediency" when there is no greater support for it than public sentiment? Shall public sentiment lead us to assume a different attitude toward a sinner for-

given than God himself sustains toward him? Is the denial of any privilege in the kingdom of God any part of God's design in the punishment of sin? I do not so understand the matter, so for this reason I hesitate to follow a course simply because public sentiment demands it. If repentance and reformation do not establish one in the grace, fellowship, and service of God, with all the powers and talents one possesses, then it seems to me forgiveness does not reach very far, because it is the use of man's talents and capacities in the service of God that enables him to overcome temptation and sin. While it is true that certain things were ordered of God to come upon David's household which caused him bitter grief, yet that is no proof that David's standing with God was not in *every* respect the same as it was before he sinned. Hence, whatever punishment may be inflicted on man for his sins, let it be inflicted by the Lord and not by man, and especially not by God's professed children. Let us strive to ascertain God's attitude toward a forgiven person, and then let that be our attitude toward that person. I verily believe that the subject of forgiveness needs to be studied and practiced more by professed Christians.

When I observe how exceedingly gentle, kind, and merciful Christ was to the forgiven penitent sinner, I am afraid not to follow his example; and when I observe his terrible anathemas on the self-righteous Pharisees, I tremble for all who

are pharisaical. The prodigal pleading to be as a hired servant, forgiven and restored to the favor of the father and the privileges of the family, stood accepted and approved of God, while the self-righteous elder brother did not.

The history of David's sin and God's dealing with him furnish ample grounds for comfort, consolation, and hope—viz., that God will forgive sin and retain the one forgiven in his service in the same capacity wherein he or she was a servant. David's writings furnish abundant proof that many did not forgive him and felt that he was lost beyond redemption: "Many there are that say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. But thou, O Jehovah, art a shield about me; my glory, and the lifter up of my head." (Ps. 3: 2, 3.) God is our comfort and our salvation.

CHAPTER XI

THE FATHERLESS

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—In view of the splendid work accomplished by Brother McQuiddy while he served as president of the Tennessee Orphans' Home, I think it most appropriate that one of the many stirring appeals which he wrote in behalf of orphans be included in this book. It is a brief, but admirable, summary of the Christian's duty toward the helpless.]

WHILE there are many conflicting theories advocated and while confusion and strife prevail, yet I have never heard any one contend that it is not a duty to feed and clothe the fatherless, educate and train them for usefulness. James defines pure religion: "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." (James 1: 27.) "Visit" carries with it the idea of help, the duty of supplying necessities to the fatherless and widows in their affliction. It means far more than a social visit. It means to feed, warm, and educate the orphan bereft of father and mother. To see the eye of the orphan sparkle with gratitude, to observe the glow of appreciation that colors the cheek, more than repays the donor for all his gifts to the fatherless. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." A life that is not devoted

to doing good, to helping the helpless and to lifting up the fallen, is not worth living. With millions hoarded up, a life that takes no thought for others becomes a burden. God gave us our lives to use for others. "For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself." (Rom. 14: 7.) A selfish, miserly life that has no consideration for others always goes out in darkness. The real life is devoted to lifting burdens from other shoulders and in bringing joy and gladness to saddened hearts. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal. 6: 2.) "And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith." (Verses 9, 10.)

There are many childless husbands and wives who would be ready to sacrifice much if thereby they could have a child of their own. A daughter asked her father for twenty-five cents. A gentleman who heard the request said: "If I had a daughter like that, she could get all the quarters I have." He has a wife, but no child. Why not adopt an orphan and do his best to bring it up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?" This would be a good way to spend his quarters. Such a course would not only bring cheer to the orphan, but it would bring sunshine into his own life.

We should plead earnestly and eloquently for

the fatherless and widow. What can be more noble and what can bring us in a greater revenue of happiness than caring for an orphan? Isaiah, the prophet, pleaded with Israel: "Learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." (Isa. 1: 17.) Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, joins Isaiah in pleading the cause of the fatherless: "Thus saith Jehovah: Execute ye justice and righteousness, and deliver him that is robbed out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence, to the sojourner, the fatherless, nor the widow; neither shed innocent blood in this place." (Jer. 22: 3.) Again, the same prophet offers a reward to Israel if it oppressed not the widow and the orphan: "For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your own hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, from of old even for evermore." (Jer. 7: 5-7.) God is swift to execute vengeance upon those who oppress the fatherless and the widow: "And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against the false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the sojourner

from his right, and fear not me, saith Jehovah of hosts." (Mal. 3: 5.) Solomon takes up the cause of the fatherless and shows what a fearful thing it is not to be considerate of the orphan: "Remove not the ancient landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: for their Redeemer is strong; he will plead their cause against thee." (Prov. 23: 10, 11.) Under the law of Moses it was a duty and required that provisions be made for the fatherless: "And the Levite, because he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee, and the sojourner, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hand which thou doest." (Deut. 14: 29.) The law of Moses did not regard it a little thing for one to afflict the fatherless and widow: "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them at all, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless." (Ex. 22: 22, 23.)

If Moses and the prophets thus protected, pleaded for, and cared for the fatherless, what will God think of Christians who turn a deaf ear to the cry of orphans now? Shall we neglect them and go unpunished? Hardly.

CHAPTER XII

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

GREAT changes have been wrought in the past, and no doubt the future has in store still greater changes. Whether premillennialist or postmillennialist, we must all freely concede that we are far from the millennium, for no age has been more marked for unrest and dissatisfaction than is the present. If Christ were to come to-day to make up his jewels, he would not find faith covering the earth as the waters cover the sea. Wickedness and selfishness so abound that many have concluded that the church is a failure and that the gospel was never intended for the conversion of the world. Some are inquiring: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Judging the world by the immorality and wickedness that prevail to-day, we readily appreciate the force of the Savior's words in the Sermon on the Mount when he said: "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it." (Matt. 7: 13, 14.)

What I have said of the present is also true of the past, so far as it is known to us. The man

who is reaching forward to a nobler and purer life would not repeat the mistakes and sins of the years that are gone. Taken all in all, he would not live over the past. He would cheerfully accept again the happy days in which the mellow rays of sunshine streamed into his soul, but in horror he draws back from the sins of his youth and the horrible days of sorrow and grief brought on by his own wickedness. Each one has known days of sunshine and days of sorrow. At times the sunlight throws around the world a mantle of sunlight and splendor. At other times clouds throw a pall of darkness over our lives. In childhood we long to be men. The dreams of youth are contradicted by the realities of age. In manhood and old age we long to be as free from care and worry as a child.

O, when I was a tiny boy,
My days and hours were full of joy,
My mates were blithe and kind.
No wonder that I sometimes sigh,
And dash a teardrop from my eye,
And cast a look behind.

Like children, we sigh for earthly treasures, and when possessed we tire of them and long for something owned by another. We want an automobile like our neighbor has; we will not rest until our living room is furnished in the finest tapestries and most expensive upholstering. But—lo!—when it is done, our cup of joy is not full.

Man never *is*, but always *to be*, blest.

When we review our past and see the mistakes we have made, we should do better now so as to be more useful in the present and happier in the future. We know there is "no peace to the wicked," and that ambition, greed, covetousness, envy, and malice are responsible for our wretched condition. Selfishness is the damning sin of the age. It was responsible for the sin in the garden of Eden. One's imagined superiority over a brother often leads one to do him an injustice. On account of the sins of others the righteous suffer. Christ said to his disciples: "In the world ye shall have tribulation." (John 16: 33.) "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3: 12.) Joseph was innocent and virtuous, yet he suffered at the hands of a wicked and designing woman as though he had been an evildoer. Our own experience teaches us that in this world we cannot expect to be free from temptation, persecution, and misrepresentation. But none of these things should move us from a life of fidelity and devotion to God; yea, the rather, they should make us stand the more firmly for truth and righteousness.

Here we must fight if we would reign. This world is a state in which to prepare for rest in the future. Here we should profit by the mistakes we have made. This world is a nursery in which the heirs of glory are trained. It is a great gymnasium for moral and spiritual development.

In it we must run, seek, and fight, as it is the battlefield where victory is to be won. It is the scene of our pilgrimage to the skies. In the journey there is no place to quit, and in the battle we must never lay our armor by. In the voyage to the celestial port we must never set our sails to catch the popular breezes, but in our pilgrimage must rise higher and higher until we stand on the mountain top of a consecrated and perfected life. We must continue to rise to where the snows of purity forever gleam in the glow of heaven.

As to what the future will bring forth depends on the sowing we do to-day. "As we sow, so shall we reap." In all our sowing let us be true to God. If we make enemies by doing what we think is right and because we assume our own responsibilities, let us not be an enemy to any man. No one can afford to destroy his own usefulness and happiness on account of the sins of others. It is folly to sacrifice fidelity to God and to cease to do our duty in order to please any man.

This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

