



*Revivals; how  
to promote them*



*George Whitefield.*

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# REVIVALS.

HOW TO PROMOTE THEM.

AS

TAUGHT AND EXEMPLIFIED

BY

BISHOPS C. P. MCILVAINE AND M. SIMPSON, DRS. L. BEECHER,  
A. BARNES, J. A. BROADUS, T. L. CUYLER, R. W. DALE,  
J. DOWLING, C. G. FINNEY, J. HALL, E. F. HATFIELD,  
G. H. HEPWORTH, J. HOPPIN, J. KNAPP, J. MC-  
COSH, A. PARK, A. PHELPS, E. POND, W. B.  
SPRAGUE, G. SHEPARD, C. H. SPURGEON,  
T. D. TALMAGE, W. M. TAYLOR,  
J. TODD, AND OTHERS.

EDITED BY

REV. WALTER P. DOE.

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## P R E F A C E.

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The aim of this volume is to aid preachers and others in promoting genuine and continuous revivals of religion, by setting before them the teachings of eminent men, who have been greatly prospered in preaching the Gospel.

Theological students and young ministers desire to know the opinions and methods of such men as God has greatly blessed in the sanctification of Christians and the conversion of sinners. They wish to know how good theories succeed, when tested by experience and practical results.

These articles have, therefore, been collected and arranged in the hope of stimulating and encouraging ministers to preach with much greater pungency and power, so as to glorify God in the salvation of a much greater number of precious souls.

The correctness of the instructions herein contained has been repeatedly demonstrated

in the compiler's own experience and that of others in numerous revivals of true religion. They teach the imperative necessity of such deep piety in the ministry as shall ensure a very strong desire for the promotion of religion,—a definite aim, a clear and impressive method of sermonizing, and such skill, and such intense earnestness and force in the manner of delivery, as well as the employment of other appropriate means, as shall justify a rational expectation of positive and manifest success in preaching "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God."

They also teach that an effective sermon should commonly consist of a brief and lucid explanation in its exordium, and clear and convincing proof in the body of the discourse, and an instructive, searching and direct application to the different classes of hearers, such as saints and sinners, the young and the aged, the afflicted or the worldly, in the closing inferences, and personal and direct address. That the Law of Sinai should be preached with its searching application, that the wicked may perceive their atrocious guilt, with its fearful and endless penalty, as our "school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we may be justified as well as sanctified by faith,"

through the special and gracious operations of the "Holy Ghost, sent down from Heaven, and not by works of the law."

And it obviously follows that if men "by nature are children of wrath," under the condemnation of the law, and their souls are of more value than all worlds, then ambassadors of Christ should seek for and employ the most efficient methods in preaching, so as to save the greatest number of them!

For if it "pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe," and if "he that believeth not is condemned already," and if appropriate, forcible, earnest, and direct preaching of the Gospel is ordained of God, as the most hopeful and successful means of securing the conversion and sanctification of men, how vast the importance of preaching in such a way as shall be wisely adapted to be the power of God unto salvation; and thus render it as effective as practicable in turning the greatest number of precious souls from sin to holiness.

And if preaching does not seem to secure the Divine blessing, in directly and manifestly saving men to any great extent, should not those who preach strive to improve its method, not only as a means of instruction and conso-

lation, but of warning, that sinners in greater numbers shall be induced to "flee from the wrath to come."

All ministers should study to "show themselves approved unto God," "rightly dividing the word of truth," "that they may save themselves, and them that hear them," "as brands plucked out of the fire."

The subordinate officers and private members of the church are also imperatively bound, in view of the judgment seat of Christ, to employ and support the more devoted, effective and successful preachers of the Gospel, "lest the wicked die in their iniquity, and their blood be required at their hands."

And if God requires his watchmen to preach the Gospel faithfully and efficiently, as Prof. Park observes, "so ought the people to hear. They are bound to encourage the ministry in the path which they are obligated to pursue. And they should never condemn, but always defend that directness and pungency in preaching which is adapted to be most effective and saving."

## CONTENTS.

---

PORTRAIT OF GEORGE WHITEFIELD.....	Frontispiece.
	<b>PAGE.</b>
The Preacher's Aim.—E. F. Hatfield, D. D.....	13
The Effective Preacher.—George Shepherd, D. D.....	18
Power in the Pulpit.—Edwards A. Park, D. D.....	23
Perpetuating an Interest in Hearing the Gospel.—Edwards A. Park, D. D.....	28
Wisdom in Winning Souls.—Rev. Charles G. Finney.....	31
Churches should seek more Piety in the Ministry.—Rev. Chas. G. Finney.....	36
Take Heed to Thyself.—Rev. Charles G. Finney.....	39
How to Win Souls.—Rev. Charles G. Finney.....	45
Preaching so as to Convert Nobody.—Rev. Chas. G. Finney..	58
How to make Sinners Realize their Guilt.—Rev. Albert Barnes	65
The Successful Preacher's Reward.—Rev. Albert Barnes....	68
Clearness of Style in Preaching.—Rev. Albert Barnes.....	70
The Faithful Preacher's Chief Object.—Rev. Albert Barnes..	72
The Ministry for the Times.—Rev. Albert Barnes.....	78
The Revival Preaching of Dr. Asahel Nettleton, D. D.— Lyman Beecher, D. D.....	87
Revival Preaching of Lyman Beecher, D.D.—Mrs. Stowe....	89
The Successful Minister.—T. L. Cuyler, D.D.....	93
How to Preach.—T. L. Cuyler, D. D.....	104
Winning Souls to Christ.—T. L. Cuyler, D. D.....	109
The Revival we Need.—T. L. Cuyler, D. D.....	113
Kindling the Fire.—T. L. Cuyler, D.D.....	118

What shall I do to be Saved?—T. L. Cuyler, D.D. ....	123
Complete Consecration.—T. L. Cuyler, D. D. ....	129
The Successful Pastor.—T. L. Cuyler, D.D. ....	134
Expository Preaching.—Wm. M. Taylor, D.D., LL.D. ....	138
Dr. Guthrie's Early Ministry.—James McCosh, D.D., LL.D. ....	147
John Todd, D.D., as a Preacher.—J. E. Todd, D.D. ....	151
The Power of Illustration.—John Dowling, D.D. ....	156
Uses of Illustration.—John A. Broadus, D.D., LL.D. ....	166
Extemporaneous Speaking.—John A. Broadus, D.D., LL.D. ....	173
Application.—John A. Broadus, D.D., LL.D. ....	181
Extempore Sermons.—James M. Hoppin, D.D. ....	187
The Conclusion.—James M. Hoppin, D.D. ....	190
How to obtain, and retain the Attention.—Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. ....	195
Poetry in the Pulpit.—H. M. Grout, D.D. ....	199
Force in the Pulpit.—W. A. Stearns, D. D. ....	202
Preaching: Manner and Matter.—John Hall, D.D. ....	211
"What to Preach."—John Hall, D. D. ....	220
What shall Ministers Preach.—S. T. Spear, D.D. ....	224
Definite Doctrinal Sermons Needed.—Austin Phelps, D.D. ....	227
The Relation of Theology to Preaching.—Rev. Albert Barnes. ....	230
Doctrines adapted to Awaken and Convict.—Rev. Albert Barnes. ....	238
Improvements in Theology.—Enoch Pond, D. D. ....	248
Preaching Christ.—Bishop Charles P. McIlvaine, D.D. ....	252
The Ministry of Jesus.—Georgè H. Hepworth, D. D. ....	257
Success in the Gospel Ministry.—Rev. W. C. Walton. ....	262
Causes of Unsuccessfulness in the Ministry.—Rev. W. C. Walton ....	282
Characteristics and Rewards of the Successful Minister.—Rev. R. H. Conklin. ....	305
Preaching to the Masses.—T. DeWitt Talmage, D. D. ....	309



Elements of Moody and Sankey's Success.—R. W. Dale, D.D.	324
What Mr. Moody can do for us.—J. E. Rankin, D.D.	332
The Great Hindrances to Revival.—D. L. Moody	335
How to Instruct Inquirers.—Elder Jacob Knapp	339
Revival among the Little Ones.—Rev. G. H. Morss	343
Common Sense in Revivals.—Rev. E. P. Tinney	346
The Condition of a Revival.—Rev. L. H. Blake	350
Means of Promoting Revivals.—W. B. Sprague, D.D.	354
Treatment due to Awakened Sinners.—W. B. Sprague, D.D.	360
Revivals Contribute to the Joys of Heaven.—W. B. Sprague, D.D.	368
Genuine Revivals of Religion.—Rev. W. P. Doe	371
The Great Need of Revivals.—Rev. C. M. Southgate	394
Is Sinai Extinct?—T. L. Cuyler, D.D.	397
Shall we have Revivals?	401
Shall my Church be Revived?—Rev. E. S. Huntress	404
God's Personal Letters for a Revival.—Rev. C. H. Spurgeon	406
How to have a Revival	418
Methods in Revival Work.—Rev. H. M. Morey	421
What Revivals Accomplish.—C. L. Goodell, D.D.	426
Aggressive Revival Effort.—D. L. Moody	429
How to Succeed in Revivals.—Rev. Hugh Price Hughes	438
Preparation for a Revival.—Rev. W. N. Brodbeck, D.D.	441
The Free Gift.—Rev. C. H. Spurgeon	447
What is it to be a Christian?—Prof. Henry Drummond	451
Concerning a Revival of Religion.—W. M. Taylor, D.D.	454
The Gospel Message.—Arthur T. Pierson, D.D.	459
Heart Preparation.—J. E. Twitchell, D.D.	464
Working Out Salvation.—Rev. John McNeill	471
The Awakening of Faith.—F. C. Iglehart, D.D.	475
Gathering in the Sheaves.—J. M. Caldwell, D.D.	488
The Closing Appeal.—Bishop Matthew Simpson	493

## **Rev. George Whitefield.**

ALL that was mortal of this great evangelist now rests in peace under the pulpit of the "Old South" Presbyterian Church, Newburyport, Mass., and was there placed at his request. In one corner of the building is erected a handsome tablet of Italian marble to his memory, bearing upon its face the following

### INSCRIPTION :

**"This cenotaph is erected, with affectionate veneration to the Rev. George Whitefield, born at Gloucester, England, December 16, 1714. Educated at Oxford University ; ordained 1736. In a ministry of thirty-four years he crossed the Atlantic thirteen times, and preached more than eighteen thousand sermons. As a soldier of the cross, humble, devout, ardent, he put on the whole armor of God ; preferring the honor of Christ to his own interest, repose, reputation and life. As a Christian orator, his deep piety, disinterested zeal and vivid imagination gave unexampled energy to his look, utterance and action. Bold, fervent, pungent and popular in his eloquence, no other uninspired man ever preached to so large assemblies, or enforced the simple truths of the Gospel by motives so persuasive and awful, and with an influence so powerful on the hearts of his hearers. He died of asthma September 30, 1770, suddenly exchanging his life of unparalleled labors for his eternal rest."**

# HOW TO PROMOTE REVIVALS.

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## THE PREACHER'S AIM.

E. F. HATFIELD, D.D.

What is it? What should it be? Is it always what it should be? Look into thine own heart, and tell me what, when you pray, study, write, preach, visit, is the direct object of effort? What definite end do you propose to yourself?

Perhaps you are mourning over the fewness of conversions among your people. But have you ever, or for any considerable time, set your heart on numerous conversions, as the result of your labors?

In preparing your discourses, have you aimed at immediate conversions?

While preaching, have you looked that souls should be pricked in the heart?

If you have had some such feelings, have they been so strong as to overpower every other feeling, such as desire of applause, fear of offense, care for temporal support, reputation, and the like?

It is time that we look well into this matter. We are

doing but little in the work of bringing souls to Jesus. How many sermons have we preached, that have savored of nothing but death? A learned divine, not long ago, stated to a friend, that, although he had preached the gospel more than forty years, he did not know that his preaching had been the means of converting one soul!

Is this a solitary instance of like inefficiency? It is to be feared not. Look over the statistical tables of the annual reports of the churches, for the past few years, and how many report no additions to their church during the year on examination; how many only one, two or three! Now, what did the prophet mean, when he thus wrote: "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Was it hyperbole in Paul to say: "The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds?" Then why are no more souls converted?

In answering this question, I beseech you, dear brother, to look first at the state of your own heart. What is your ruling passion? Is it to win souls, or shine in courts? ecclesiastical courts, it may be? Do you feel deeply, in view of the condition of the unconverted part of your congregation, habitually feel what Paul felt when he said: "My heart's desire (the hearty longing desire of my soul) and prayer to God, for Israel, is that they might be saved? For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren"? Can this language, by any interpretation, be made to express anything but the most intense anxiety, even to death, for the salvation of souls?

But you shrink from a comparison with this inspired preacher. Let me, then, ask you to look at the hearts of other preachers, whose labors have not been in vain in the Lord.

It is said of the learned John Smith, "that he had resolved very much to lay aside other studies, and to travail in the salvation of men's souls, after whose good he most earnestly thirsted." Of Alleine, the author of "An Alarm to Unconverted Sinners," it is said that "he was infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls, and to this end he poured out his very heart in prayer and preaching." Said Bunyan: "In my preaching, I could not be satisfied, unless some fruits did appear in my work." "I would think it a greater happiness," said Matthew Henry, "to gain one soul to Christ, than mountains of silver and gold to myself. If I do not gain souls, I shall enjoy all my other gains with very little satisfaction, and I would rather beg my bread from door to door, than undertake this great work." Doddridge, writing to a friend, remarked: "I long for the conversion of souls more sensibly than for anything besides. 'Methinks I could not only labour, but die for it with pleasure.'" Similar is the death-bed testimony of the sainted Brown, of Haddington: "Now, after near forty years preaching of Christ, I think I would rather beg my bread all the labouring days of the week, for an opportunity of publishing the gospel on the Sabbath, than, without such a privilege, to enjoy the richest possessions of earth. Oh! labour, labour," said he to his sons, "to win souls to Christ." Rutherford could assure his flock that they were the objects of his tears, cares, fears and daily prayers—that he laboured among them early and late; "and my witness," said he, "is above, that your heaven would be two heavens to me, and the salvation of you all as two salvations to me." Fleming, in his "Fulfillment of Scripture," mentions the case of one John Welch, often in the coldest winter nights, rising for prayer, found weeping on the ground, and wrestling with the

Lord, on account of his people, and saying to his wife, when she pressed him for an explanation of his distress, "I have the souls of 3000 to answer for, while I know not how it is with many of them." Brainard could say of himself, on more than one occasion, "I cared not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through, so that I could but gain souls to Christ. While I was asleep, I dreamed of these things; and when I waked, the first thing I thought of was this great work. All my desire was for the conversion of the heathen, and all my hope was in God;" therefore he wrestled in prayer until he sweat through and through, and nature seemed exhausted.

Pages might be filled with such expressions, from the lips of beloved brethren, whose hearts were filled with the love of souls, and an insatiable thirst for their conversion, who are now enjoying the unspeakable reward of those "that turn many to righteousness."

When shall such be the experience of every minister of the gospel? Not until he has something of the same spirit which animated Paul when he said, "the love of Christ constraineth us," or of Whitefield, when he thus wrote: "The more we do, the more we may do for Jesus. I sleep and eat but little, and am constantly employed, from morning to midnight, and yet my strength is daily renewed. O, free grace! It fires my soul, and makes me long to do something for Jesus. I want more tongues, more bodies, more souls for the Lord Jesus. Had I ten thousand, he should have them all."

Do you think, my brother, that if you had such a spirit, you would have to cry out, "Who hath believed our report?" If you should, from this hour, forsaking the arena of controversy and sectarian strife, and the walks of ambition, devote all your energies to the speedy conversion of all your flock, laying yourself out in every possible way



to win souls, how long would it be before you would have joyful reason to exclaim, "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" Let me entreat you to answer these questions, without delay, as in the sight of God. "The time is short."

Therefore be sure, not only of a definite subject, but a definite object in preaching, so as to save sinners now.

2

## THE EFFECTIVE PREACHER.

GEORGE SHEPHERD, D. D.

We learn from the sacred scriptures, that when Paul and Barnabas preached in Iconium, in a Synagogue of the Jews, that they "so spake that a great multitude, both of the Jews and also of the Greeks, believed."

They preached effectively. Their style as preachers as well as their spirit had much to do with the result. The same remark holds good in reference to all preachers.

Some ministers are more successful in saving their hearers than others, because they are more skillful in presenting the truth. They draw attention to it, and produce conviction by it, so as to lead men to inquire what they must do to be saved. They reach and stir the conscience of those who hear, and plant arrows in their hearts. They convince, agitate, and persuade perishing sinners, in all their various conditions, to flee to Christ for salvation.

1st. *The effective preacher must understand the material he is to work with, namely: Truth, in its vast and various relations.*

2d. *He must understand the material he is to work upon, that is, man, in his complex and mysterious attributes.*

*He must be a clear and sound theologian.* He must aim to impress all classes with a sense of guilt, under condemnation by the law, and be able to point them earnestly to the mysterious method of mercy by the cross, and urge

forcibly the ground of obligation, and imperative duty in serving God.

The truth, the sword which the spirit will thus employ in all its searching operations, when wielded with sure aim, may at first be painful, but it will achieve benignant results. Therefore, the truth must be thrown upon the hearers in luminous and heavy masses.

The preacher must speak from experience, as though he had tasted of the bitter fruits of sin, of the anguish of repentance, and its consequent peace ; of faith, as one fired of its visions ; of love, as a flame ; of heaven, as one who had foretastes of its joys ; of hell, as one who has looked into its caverns of wrath and woe.

The fire of divine love must kindle and burn in his heart, so that he is constrained to pour forth its swelling and struggling contents. His head must be clear, and his heart must be warm, in order to kindle emotion in other hearts.

*He should combine, as far as practicable, strong logical power with deep feeling, to be effective.* Argument is necessary as a chain to conduct his feeling to his hearers. Logic will make the sinner see that he ought to repent, and, joined with emotion, will make him feel that he ought to repent. They will elaborate burning and luminous appeals.

The effective preacher must have a practical talent. He must aim to stir the souls of men, and have practical tact and skill in doing it. He must have a definite and pointed intention. If he preaches, it must be to enlighten and sanctify. If he preaches duty, it is that he may induce men to do it. His purpose is by the grace of God, to benefit his hearers directly and immediately, in the very effort, and in every effort. And in order to do this, he must know the human mind, not merely as learned in books,

but as read in practical life. He must know its reasonings, its feelings and actions. He must have a nice selective talent, so as to cull from the mass of his thoughts and materials such as are peculiarly adapted to the different minds of his hearers.

*Every sentence should be in its place and worthy of its place.* Let the preacher say just the things he ought to say, that he may be interesting, stirring and pungent. *He should make the introduction and discussion of his sermon entirely subservient to great pungency and directness in his closing, practical application.*

It is here the effective preacher reaches the sacred recesses of the heart, and deals with its finest and noblest sensibilities. His hand moves over cords which reach in their vibrations to the future world and eternal ages.

He must at times insert pangs in the hearts of his hearers, as the probing of a surgeon's knife. He must lodge the goading stings of truth in the conscience. He must uncover the pit, and give visions of its ascending smoke, and audience of its wailings. He must speak with great plainness. He should speak not only so that he may be understood, but so that he cannot fail to be understood. Polished and rounded sentences and periods rarely prick the heart. The lightning does not stop to polish its shafts in its rending, scorching track. He must not aim at mere elegance as an end, for a beautiful sermon is commonly an ineffective and useless one. If the preacher aim at flowers in every sentence, and music in every line, he may charm the people, he will be to them as a very lovely song, of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; they will hear his words, but do them not. If the blade of the truth he utters be burnished, it should also have a terrible keen-

ness of edge, so as to divide asunder the soul and spirit, the joints and marrow.

*In order to be truly effective, he must be a truly discriminative preacher,* "rightly dividing the word of truth," so as to make it felt in the hearts and consciences of his hearers. He must distinguish the different classes of his congregation, such as saints and sinners, such as serve God and such as serve him not, such as the moral and grossly immoral, and set before them clearly their respective conditions and duty.

When he is thus distinctive and characteristic in his message, in exhibiting their character and prospects, he will awaken their attention and interest. Hence the authority and effect of Christ's teaching. His blindest, hardest opposers found out ere he closed that he spake of them, so that the truth he employed had an intense and smarting fitness to their own characters, and they went away with an arrow quivering and rankling in their vitals. Let the effective preacher then endeavor to attain correct views of human nature in practical life, so as to make earnest and direct appeals to the consciences of different classes so as to lead them in the path of uprightness. Let him cultivate the spirit of holiness, and the spirit of compassion for his hearers, and the Holy Spirit will attend his message, and give it a double edge, and sharpened point, so as to pierce the hearts of his hearers.

*The effective preacher must also be earnest and impressive in the delivery of divine truth.* He must strive to be forcible in his manner of public address, in conveying his own conceptions to other minds, so as to make them vivid and productive there. He must aim at a full and effective delivery of his thoughts into the minds of his hearers. For this he needs to cultivate considerable strength of voice, as well as pleasantness and variety of tone. Atti-

tude and gesture are also to be regarded and cultivated, till all gross awkwardness is done away, and a reasonable ease and propriety are attained. At the same time he must aim to be natural and not palpably artificial. His manner must be natural and appropriate to himself, and not be an imitation of any example or teacher of elocution.

Earnestness is important as a means of securing naturalness, and indeed to almost all the desired results of public speaking. There cannot be any truly awakening power where there is a stupid and frozen manner. It is not enough that the preacher have feeling, he must be able to show it, to make it flash in the eye, glow in the countenance, tremble, and anon thunder in the voice.

There is a foundation in our nature for sure effect in all instances of agreeable warm-hearted address. Looks, tones, and gestures naturally move us. Therefore the successful preacher in saving souls, must not only give utterance to weighty and forcible matter, but he must be very earnest and impressive in its delivery.



## POWER IN THE PULPIT.

EDWARDS A. PARK, D. D.

When we call to mind the tens of thousands of ministers, who are exerting an influence, Sabbath after Sabbath, on hundreds of thousands of laymen; when we consider that the power of the pulpit has, in comparison with other efficiencies, declined among us to an alarming extent, within the last fifty years, and that an extensive religious apathy is one of the results of this decline; when we see that our intellectual and moral growth, our social order, and even our civil freedom are, under God, dependent on the preacher's instrumentality, and that the popular wants, if not the popular wish, demand a soul-reviving dispensation of the word, we feel constrained to say that the question, *what are the most efficient modes of preaching the gospel?* is the great question of the present age.

Various methods of moral reform have been proposed, but we have reason to believe that the chief and radical reformation of men will be the effect of the Divine Word orally delivered, and accompanied with the influence of Divine Grace.

In the first place. *In order that the pulpit shall be more powerful, the preaching must be more argumentative.* Accordingly we find the ablest ministers of the gospel have

been those "who applied their hearts to seek out wisdom and the reason of things."

In reading the sermons of the Elder Edwards, we stand in awe; for he speaks not as one who sings a pleasant song, but in the name of Him who says, "Preach the preaching that I bid thee." There is something in his discourses that presses us, follows hard after us, and if we flee from it, it is close upon our footsteps; and there is no sense in our trying to escape it. It is the power of God's word shown to be God's word, identified as such, and therefore we cannot stay it in its onward urging. Overcome by his argument, we fall a prey, at once, to his appeal. His discussion interests us; we are first surprised, then taken captive, and afterward borne along "whithersoever the governor listeth." So it was with Paul. "He reasoned in the synagogue, every Sabbath, and as he once reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, Felix trembled." He was not afraid of abstruse preaching, nor of metaphysical preaching; but he uttered words hard to be understood, and liable to be wrested by the unlearned and unstable; still he enforced them by such compressed ratiocination, as to make his hearers feel, that in striving against him they were striving against their God.

The direct tendency of strong argument is to transfer the reasoner's appeal from the sphere of his own opinions to the sphere of divine inspiration; and he who braces himself against this appeal strikes and presses against a brazen wall. Hence it is characteristic of every preacher, who fortifies his words by giving the reason for them, to speak with authority. "My words are not my own," he seems to declare, "but I have proved them, and you know them to be true. He that receiveth them, receiveth not me alone, but him that sent me. He that despiseth

them, poureth contempt not upon me alone, but upon his own mind, and upon his Maker, and shall at last wonder and perish."

Secondly. *The preaching of divine truth, in order to be powerful, must have a positive element*

In the Scriptures there is command, there is penalty, there is a strict condition, there is a "believe and be saved," a "disbelieve and be lost;" and if we waver in enforcing this positive law and penalty, we cut the sinews of our strength. The Scriptures do not affirm that our salvation depends upon gradually cultivating our native good principles merely, but they do affirm that our future life depends on crossing one plainly marked line, on taking one positive step. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And when these positive truths of entire depravity by nature, and salvation by grace, through faith in Christ's atonement, are urged pointedly upon the people, it makes the preaching "mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds."

Thirdly. *The power of preaching requires that the truths of the gospel be often presented singly.*

When a single doctrine is held out steadily to our gaze, we may view it with distinctness; its lineaments are not confused with the lines of other truths. Thus it penetrates deeply into our feeling. Hence Paul preached to the Romans, "the just shall live by faith," and James preached in his epistle that "faith without works is dead." Both doctrines are true. But, being preached separately, are the more effective.

Fourthly. *The preaching of the gospel, in order to be powerful, must be free and earnest.* Every sermon should be a transcript of the writer's own mind, should be free from guile, from all manœuvres to gain the applause of a

party ; it should be instinct with the spirit and truth of Jesus. His emotions should be free and unrestrained. He should preach earnestly, as the spirit giveth him utterance.

No man can preach with power, unless he regulate his feelings by the nature of his theme, letting his emotions well upward and onward, according to their own sweet will. He must unveil his heart to his hearers, if he would bring their hearts into unison with his own. He should smile or weep, as his subject constrains him. A word, earnestly spoken, gushing out of an honest heart, has a vitality in it which makes it powerful.

In order that the hearts of the people may be stirred on the subject of religion, and moved to right action, there must be earnest and sympathetic appeals to their feelings and their emotions, as well as to their reason and judgment.

Fifthly. *In order to be powerful the preacher must be humble and affectionate in his manner.* He must not only possess a compassionate love for his hearers, but in manner he must manifest this spirit in a special degree at the precise time of his addressing his auditory. His benevolence must flow downward to his hearers, and upward to God, and thus with one hand at the hearts of his people, and the other upon the throne of the Eternal, he must be the medium for the transmission of those influences which are conducted softly and silently to the bosom of the Church.

The effective preacher must also realize his dependence on the sanctifying spirit of God. When he banishes from his heart all pride and self confidence, then and then only he is filled with all the fullness of God. Feeling his dependence, he does all things through Christ that strengtheneth him; and he speaks eloquently, because it is

not he that speaks, but the grace of God which is with him, transforming his speech into the wisdom of God, and the power of God unto salvation.

When the preacher feels deeply that he is inadequate of himself to convert his hearers, they feel that they are wrestling with his God, and thus he speaks to them with the "demonstration of the Spirit and with power."

Finally. *In order to be powerful, the preacher must aim to produce an immediate and visible result.* Men are more affected by what is near, than by what is far off, and are more stimulated by the prospect of a visible good, than by the hope of an advantage which they may never recognize.

The effective preacher, therefore, must distinguish between those who serve God and those who serve him not. He should cry aloud: Who is on the Lord's side? While he encourages the Christian in the pathway of holy living, and stimulates him to faithful efforts for the salvation of others, he must warn the worldly and the careless of their increasing and immediate danger, and urge them to flee, without a moment's delay, from "the wrath to come."

He should cry aloud: "Now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation. Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. Hasten to the city of refuge, linger not in all the plain; thy judge will come quickly, and in the twinkling of an eye it may be too late."

## METHODS OF PERPETUATING AN INTEREST IN HEARING THE GOSPEL.

EDWARDS A. PARK, D.D.

*The first of these methods is that of unfolding the peculiar doctrines of revelation.* One of the most active desires of man is the desire of learning something new. "Did the Almighty" says Lessing, "holding in his right hand *Truth*, and in his left *Search after Truth*, deign to tender me the one I might prefer, in all humility, but without hesitation, I should request *Search after Truth*."

It is true that the will of man is by nature entirely sinful, but this does not benumb his sensibility to the truth which concerns him; and which rouses him partly because he is entirely sinful. He will cling to the very doctrine which gives him pain. So long as the soul endures, it must drink in the truth, as the lungs now inhale the air. If wrong-minded men do for a time refuse to hear effective preaching, right-minded men will continue to love it. They will love the true and distinctive doctrines of the Bible, as the aliment of their minds.

*A second method of securing a permanent interest in preaching the gospel, is the rational presentation of such truths as are mysterious.* There is in man an instinctive love of mystery. Almost every religion abounds with the incomprehensible. The demand for a theology somewhat



mysterious is justified, and therefore strengthened by reason.

God's absolute sovereignty in the government of men, and their own free agency, are both true, but the consistency of these truths must ever be mysterious. The effective preacher in promoting the permanent interest of his hearers, should not only teach the facts which may be clearly understood, but teach, in a rational manner, whatever may be understood of things apparently mysterious. He will illustrate the difference between the fact which we do understand, in which we do believe, and the modes of the fact which pass our understanding and with regard to which, as we have no specific apprehension, we have no specific belief.

If men see that the veil is partly raised, they are the more inquisitive to look behind it; and because they on one Sabbath do not take in all the truth, they will beseech that the same truths be repeated to them the next Sabbath.

*A third method of securing a permanent interest in the preaching of the gospel is to diversify the course of our teaching.* To the mind a change of employment is rest.

The Sabbath day becomes a relief, because it is a day, not of idleness, but of a new kind of work. The differing sensibilities of the soul will be addressed in their turn by the preacher, who desires to keep the attention of his hearers.

These principles, in regard to variety of style of address, must extend not only to variety of themes and the modes of treating them, *to the interchange of extemporaneous with written discourses, to the intermingling of argumentative, didactic, hortatory, historical, biographical and expository sermons, but to other methods.*

For instance, the preacher may explain the Sabbath-

school lesson of the ensuing week. He may inform his hearers on the previous Sabbath of the passage to be explained ; may request them to present their questions to him ; may read these questions and answer them, may thus make his discourse a kind of dignified conversation with his people, who thus become his scholars. Thus the pastor may so diversify the services of the Sabbath as to make his audience expect a freshness and new life in every sermon.

Finally, *In order to maintain a permanent interest in effective preaching it must be appropriate.* Every sermon should make some one truth prominent, and the style of writing and of elocution should be in harmony with that one truth. The spirit of it should breathe itself forth in the prayers and in the songs of the public service, and every service will have a fresh interest because unique.

The sermon should be wisely adapted to the varying conditions of the hearers. A doctrine or a truth has a meaning to the people at one period, when it is specially adapted to their character and condition, which it has not at another period. Such truth continues to awaken the reverence of men, if it be preached when it has peculiar force. "A word fitly spoken, how good is it." It is appropriate to both preacher and hearers, that he so preach as to make the principles of *goodness* prominent in his ministrations. His hearers should flock into the sanctuary expecting to catch a glimpse of some new glories in the character of the Sovereign, to be quickened with some new impulse for praising Him whom they ought to prize above their chief joy.

The idea of the sanctuary ought to be an idea of holy worship, and as there can be no Heaven unless the Lamb be the light thereof, so there can be no real worship unless the truth of God shine through it, and in it, and around it.

## WISDOM IN WINNING SOULS.

REV. CHARLES G. FINNEY.

The great end of preaching is to glorify God in the salvation of men.

But the very end for which preaching is appointed is one against which is arrayed the most powerful opposition of the very sinners themselves, who are in perishing need of salvation. Hence they are often ingenious in their efforts for defeating the means employed to save their souls.

And yet, in the very face of such dire infatuation and depravity, and of such formidable obstacles to the work to be achieved, God has ordained that the work of conversion and sanctification shall be mainly promoted by appropriate and forcible preaching.

For this reason, the wise and successful laborer in winning souls cannot ordinarily be indifferent and careless in the matter and manner of proclaiming saving truth to his hearers. He may not reasonably expect the divine blessing to crown his labors with great success, unless he aims definitely to awaken the careless, convict the sinful, and direct them in the shortest way to Christ, for salvation.

And under our first general division, let us consider the *matter of preaching* which is especially adapted to saving men.

In the first place. *All preaching should be practical.*

The proper end of all doctrine is practice. Anything brought forward as doctrine, which cannot be made use of as practical, is not preaching the gospel. To preach doctrines in an abstract way, and not in reference to practice, is absurd. God always brings in doctrine to regulate practice.

What can a minister preach, who preaches no doctrine? All preaching should be doctrinal, and all preaching should be practical.

2d. *Preaching should be direct.* The gospel should be preached to men, and not about them.

The minister must address his hearers. He must preach to them about themselves, and not leave the impression that he is preaching to them about others. He will never do them much good, farther than he succeeds in convincing each individual that he means him.

He must preach in reference to the sins of the congregation, in order to reform their lives and save their souls.

3d. *He should hunt after sinners and Christians, wherever they may have entrenched themselves in inaction.* It is not the design of preaching to make men easy and quiet, but to make them act rightly.

4th. *The sinner should be made to feel his guilt, and not be left to the impression that he is merely unfortunate.* He should be made to blame and condemn himself, in order that he may seek pardon.

5th. A prime object with the preacher must be to *make present obligation felt.* Very few, indeed, in ordinary times, in ordinary congregations, feel the pressure of immediate obligation to repent.

Very few ministers make the impression upon sinners that they are expected to repent now. And until the sinner's conscience is reached, on this point, the preaching affects him but little.

6th. *Sinners should be made to feel* that they have something to do, and that is to repent, and that this something they must do for themselves, because neither God nor any one else can do it for them. They should obey God, and not wait for anything. For religion is something to do, and not something to wait for.

7th. *All the excuses of sinners should be annihilated.* They should be shown that the plea of inability to love and obey God, is the worst of all excuses, because it is a wicked disinclination. It charges God with tyranny in commanding men to serve Him, when He has given them no capacity to strive to please Him.

Hence sinners should be shown that all pleas in excuse for continuing in impenitence and unbelief a single moment, are acts of rebellion against God.

8th. *Sinners should be made to feel the danger of grieving the Spirit of God.* They should be made to understand that unless they yield, and are made willing in the day of God's power, the Holy Ghost may leave them forever, and their damnation may be sealed long before death.

*Let us now consider the manner of preaching effectively.*

*In the first place. Preaching should be conversational.* In order to be clearly understood it should be colloquial in style.

In manner, a minister should preach more as he talks in earnest, familiar conversation, if he wishes to deeply impress and interest his hearers.

2d. *Preaching should be in the plain language of common life.* It should be intelligible to the hearers. It should be like the language of the gospels, easily understood by the common people.

3d. *It should be parabolical in style.* Illustrations should be frequently drawn from incidents, real or supposed.

Jesus Christ constantly illustrated his instructions in

this way. He would either advance a principle, and then illustrate it by a parable, that is, a short story of some event, real or imaginary, or else he would bring out the principle in the parable. "And the common people heard him gladly."

He frequently drew his illustrations from the affairs of common life. He illustrated his instructions by things that were taking place among the people,—with which their minds were familiar. He talked about hens and chickens, and children in the market places, and sheep and lambs, shepherds and farmers, husbands and merchants.

He often referred to historical facts, well known to the people at the time.

4th. *Preaching should be moderately repetitious.* A minister should repeat his main points, and whatever he perceives is not perfectly understood by his hearers.

Said an eminent lawyer: "In addressing a jury, I always expect that whatever I wish to impress upon their minds, I must repeat, in the same or different language. Otherwise I do not carry their minds along with me, so that they can deeply feel the force of the subsequent arguments or considerations."

5th. *In order to be deeply impressive, a minister should deeply feel his subject.* Then he will suit the action to the word, and the word to the action, so as to make the full impression which the truth is calculated to make. He should be in solemn earnest in what he says, and he will be effective.

6th. *He should avoid monotony in delivery.* If he preaches in a monotonous way, he will be very liable to preach the people to sleep. Any monotonous sound, loud or faint, if continued long, disposes people to sleep. You never hear this monotonous manner from people in earnest conversation. ;

7th. *He should address the feelings enough to secure attention, and then deal with the conscience, and probe it to the quick.* The only way to secure sound conversions is to deal faithfully with the conscience.

8th. *In order to be natural and impressive in delivery, preaching must be in some degree extemporaneous ; especially should this be done briefly at the termination of the main points, and at the conclusion.*

9th. *In order to success in winning souls, the minister must anticipate the objections and difficulties of sinners and answer them.*

What does the lawyer do, when pleading before a jury ?

He anticipates every objection which may be made by his antagonist, and carefully removes or explains them.

10th. *A minister should aim definitely at the conversion of his congregation.*

But you may ask, "does not all preaching aim at this ?"

No. A minister always has some aim in preaching, but many sermons do not seem to be aimed at the conversion of sinners. And if sinners were converted under them, the preacher himself would be amazed.

11th. *And hence, if ministers are wise in winning souls, such preaching will be revival preaching—it will be blessed "to the sanctification of Christians and the conversion of sinners."*

## THE CHURCH SHOULD SEEK MORE EMINENT PIETY IN THE MINISTRY.

REV. CHARLES G. FINNEY.

And if such are the essential qualifications on the part of the ministry in order to great success in winning souls to Christ, we may infer that *there is need of a great reformation on the part of the churches in seeking, as of the first importance, deeply spiritual and effective ministers.*

Now we have reason to believe that eminent piety and a reputation for marked success in promoting the prayerful activity and holiness of professing Christians, and the conversion of sinners are, to a great extent, made entirely subordinate to merely pleasing manners, and a popular and attractive style of preaching, which shall specially interest the young people, and increase the size of the congregation.

But if the edification and sanctification of Christians that they may be fitted for admission to heaven, and the awakening and salvation of perishing sinners is of transcendent importance, while an acceptable delivery and style are to be prized, *deep piety and effectiveness* in preaching are vastly more indispensable to a good minister of Jesus Christ, and a useful pastor to a Christian church.

Therefore, whatever other qualifications ministers may have to recommend them, if their record does not show



that they are "endued with power from on high" so as to render them truly effective in promoting the piety of the church and the conversion of sinners, they should be considered disqualified in a fundamental point.

It used to be the custom of churches, and I believe in some places is so still, in presenting a call to the pastorate, to certify, that having witnessed the spiritual fruits of his labors, they deem him qualified and called of God to the work of the ministry. And now if the churches desire to be restored to their former "refreshing from the presence of the Lord," they must reform their present practice, and prayerfully seek for, and sustain a ministry possessing spiritual unction, and which is successful in saving men, rather than a ministry which may excel *merely* in an attractive and pleasing essay-style of preaching, with but little adaptation to the promotion of true revivals of pure and undefiled religion.

And in order to secure such a pre-eminently desirable ministry, without which the churches must be doomed to perpetual barrenness, they must hold the Theological Seminaries to a strict account in fulfilling their duty in this matter. They should be impressed by the imperative demands of the churches, that it is necessary for them to make more special and direct efforts in striving to develop a much higher type of piety on the part of their students.

Some years since one branch of the Scotch Church was so tried with the want of unction and power in the ministers furnished them by their Theological Seminary, that they passed a resolution, that until the Seminary reformed in this respect, they would not employ the ministers educated there.

Hence we believe that if the excellent and learned Professors of the Seminaries should perceive that the churches

were earnestly seeking a ministry of truly earnest piety and effectiveness, as well as fair gifts and scholarship, they would give more attention to cultivating devotional and fervid piety among their students.

They would be more deeply impressed with the importance of making the seminaries schools for developing Christian experience and true holiness, and skill in soul saving, as well as sound learning in the doctrines and precepts of the sacred scriptures. And then the seminaries should avoid as far as practicable, recommending candidates for settlement over the churches who are not "endued with power from on high," and are striving for very high attainments in personal holiness. For however learned and eloquent their students may be, without these higher qualifications they cannot be "good ministers of Jesus Christ."

## TAKE HEED TO THYSELF.

REV. CHARLES G. FINNEY.

"Take heed to thyself, and to the doctrine ; continue in them ; for, in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." 1 Timothy, iv., 16.

I am not going to preach to preachers, but to suggest certain conditions upon which the salvation promised in this text may be secured by them.

1st. See that you are constrained by love to preach the Gospel, as Christ was to provide a Gospel.

2d. See that you have the special enduement of power from on high, by the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

3d. See that you have a heart, and not merely a head-call to undertake the preaching of the Gospel. By this I mean, be heartily and most intensely inclined to seek the salvation of souls as the great work of life, and do not undertake what you have no heart to.

4th. Constantly maintain a close walk with God.

5th. Make the Bible your book of books. Study it much, upon your knees, waiting for divine light.

6th. Beware of leaning on commentaries. Consult them when convenient ; but judge for yourself, in the light of the Holy Ghost.

7th. Keep yourself pure—in will, in thought, in feeling, in word and action.

8th. Contemplate much the guilt and danger of sinners, that your zeal for their salvation may be intensified,

9th. Also deeply ponder and dwell much upon the boundless love and compassion of Christ for them.

10th. So love them yourself as to be willing to die for them.

11th. Give your most intense thought to the study of ways and means by which you may save them. Make this the great and intense study of your life.

12th. Refuse to be diverted from this work. Guard against every temptation that would abate your interest in it.

13th. Believe the assertion of Christ that he is with you in this work always and everywhere, to give you all the help you need.

14th. "He that winneth souls is wise"; and, "if any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and he shall receive." "But let him ask in faith." Remember, therefore, that you are bound to have the wisdom that shall win souls to Christ.

15th. Being called of God to the work, make your calling your constant argument with God for all that you need for the accomplishment of the work.

16th. Be diligent and laborious, "in season and out of season."

17th. Converse much with all classes of your hearers on the question of their salvation, that you may understand their opinions, errors, and wants. Ascertain their prejudices, ignorance, temper, habits, and whatever you need to know to adapt your instruction to their necessities.

18th. See that your own habits are in all respects correct; that you are temperate in all things—free from the stain or smell of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or anything of which you have reason to be ashamed and which may stumble others,

19th. Be not "light-minded," but "set the Lord always before you."

20th. Bridle your tongue, and be not given to idle and unprofitable conversation.

21st. Always let your people see that you are in solemn earnest with them, both in the pulpit and out of it; and let not your daily intercourse with them nullify your serious teaching on the Sabbath.

22d. Resolve to "know nothing among your people" "save Jesus Christ and him crucified"; and let them understand that, as an ambassador of Christ, your business with them relates wholly to the salvation of their souls.

23d. Be sure to teach them as well by example as by precept. Practice yourself what you preach.

24th. Be especially guarded in your intercourse with women, to raise no thought or suspicion of the least impurity in yourself.

25th. Guard your weak points. If naturally tending to gayety and trifling, watch against occasions of failure in this direction.

26th. If naturally somber and unsocial, guard against moroseness and unsociability.

27th. Avoid all affectation and sham in all things. Be what you profess to be, and you will have no temptation to "make believe."

28th. Let simplicity, sincerity, and Christian propriety stamp your whole life.

29th. Spend much time every day and night in prayer and direct communion with God. This will make you a power for salvation. No amount of learning and study can compensate for the loss of this communion. If you fail to maintain communion with God, you are "weak as another man."

30th. Beware of the error that there are no means of

regeneration; and, consequently, no connection of means and ends in the regeneration of souls.

31st. Understand that regeneration is a moral and, therefore, a voluntary change.

32d. Understand that the Gospel is adapted to change the hearts of men, and in a wise presentation of it you may expect the efficient co-operation of the Holy Spirit.

33d. In the selection and treatment of your texts always secure the direct teaching of the Holy Spirit.

34th. Let all your sermons be heart and not merely head sermons.

35th. Preach from experience, and not from hearsay, or mere reading and study.

36th. Always present the subject which the Holy Spirit lays upon your heart for the occasion. Seize the points presented by the Holy Spirit to your own mind, and present them with the greatest possible directness to your congregation.

37th. Be full of prayer whenever you attempt to preach, and go from your closet to your pulpit with the inward groanings of the Spirit pressing for utterance at your lips.

38th. Get your mind fully imbued with your subject, so that it will press for utterance; then open your mouth, and let it forth like a torrent.

39th. See that "the fear of man that bringeth a snare" is not upon you. Let your people understand that you fear God too much to be afraid of them.

40th. Never let the question of your popularity with your people influence your preaching.

41st. Never let the question of salary deter you from "declaring the whole counsel of God, whether men will bear or forbear."

42d. Do not temporize, lest you lose the confidence of your people, and thus fail to save them. They cannot

thoroughly respect you as an ambassador of Christ if they see that you dare not do your duty.

43d. Be sure to "commend yourself to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

44th. Be "not a lover of filthy lucre."

45th. Avoid every appearance of vanity.

46th. Compel your people to respect your sincerity and your spiritual wisdom.

47th. Let them not for a moment suppose that you can be influenced in your preaching by any considerations of salary, more or less, or none at all.

48th. Do not make the impression that you are fond of good dinners, and like to be invited out to dine ; for this will be a snare to you, and a stumbling block to them.

49th. "Keep under your body, lest, after having preached to others, yourself should be a castaway."

50th. "Watch for souls as one who must give an account to God."

51st. Be a diligent student, and thoroughly instruct your people in all that is essential to their salvation.

52d. Never flatter the rich.

53d. Be especially attentive to the wants and instruction of the poor.

54th. Suffer not yourself to be bribed into a compromise with sin by donation parties.

55th. Suffer not yourself to be publicly treated as a mendicant, or you will come to be despised by a large class of your hearers.

56th. Repel every attempt to close your mouth against whatever is extravagant, wrong, or injurious amongst your people.

57th. Maintain your pastoral integrity and independence, lest you sear your conscience, quench the Holy

Spirit, forfeit the confidence of your people, and lose the favor of God.

58th. Be an example to the flock, and let your life illustrate your teaching. Remember that your actions and spirit will teach even more impressively than your sermons.

59th. If you preach that men should offer to God and their neighbor a love service, see that you do this yourself, and avoid all that tends to the belief that you are working for pay.

60th. Give to your people a love service, and encourage them to render to you, not a money equivalent for your labor, but a love reward, that will refresh both you and them.

61st. Repel every proposal to get money for you or for church purposes that will naturally disgust and excite the contempt of worldly but thoughtful men.

62d. Resist the introduction of tea parties, amusing lectures, and dissipating sociables, especially at those seasons most favorable for united efforts to convert souls to Christ. Be sure the Devil will try to head you off in this direction. When you are praying and planning for a revival of God's work, some of your worldly church-members will invite you to a party. Go not, or you are in for a circle of them, that will defeat your prayers.

63d. Do not be deceived. Your spiritual power with your people will never be increased by accepting such invitations at such times. If it is a good time to have parties, because the people have leisure, it is also a good time for religious meetings, and your influence should be used to draw the people to the house of God.

64th. See that you personally know and daily live upon Christ,



## HOW TO WIN SOULS.

REV. CHARLES G. FINNEY.

“Take heed to thyself, and unto the doctrine ; continue in *them* ; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.”—I Tim., iv, 16.

I beg leave in this article to suggest to my younger brethren in the ministry some thoughts on the philosophy of so preaching the Gospel as to secure the salvation of souls. They are the result of much study, much prayer for Divine teaching, and a practical experience of many years.

I understand the admonition at the head of this article to relate to the *matter*, *order*, and *manner* of preaching.

The problem is, how shall we win souls wholly to Christ? Certainly we must win them away from *themselves*.

1st. They are free moral agents, of course—rational, accountable.

2d. They are in *rebellion against God*, wholly *alienated*, intensely *prejudiced*, and *committed* against Him.

3d. They are committed to *self-gratification* as the end of their being.

4th. This committed *state* is moral depravity, the fountain of sin within them, from which flow, by a natural law, all their sinful ways. This committed voluntary state is

their "wicked heart." This it is that needs a *radical change*.

5th. God is infinitely benevolent, and unconverted sinners are supremely selfish; so that they are *radically opposed* to God. Their committal to the gratification of their appetites and propensities is known in Bible language as the "carnal mind;" or as in the margin, "the minding of the flesh," which is enmity against God.

6th. This enmity is voluntary, and must be overcome, if at all, by the word of God, made effectual by the *teaching* of the Holy Spirit.

7th. The gospel is adapted to this end, and when wisely presented we may confidently expect the effectual co-operation of the Holy Spirit. This is implied in our commission, "Go and disciple all nations, and lo ! I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

8th. If we are unwise, illogical, unphilosophical, and out of all natural order, in presenting the gospel, we have no warrant for expecting Divine co-operation.

9th. In winning souls, as in everything else, God works through and in accordance with natural laws. Hence, if we would win souls, we must wisely adapt means to this end. We must present those truths and in that order adapted to the natural laws of mind, of thought, and mental action. A false mental philosophy will greatly mislead us, and we shall often be found ignorantly working against the agency of the Holy Spirit.

10th. Sinners must be convicted of their enmity. They do not know God, and consequently are often ignorant of the opposition of their hearts to Him. "By the law is the knowledge of sin," because by the law the sinner gets his first true idea of God. By the law he

first learns that God is perfectly benevolent, and infinitely opposed to all selfishness. This law, then, should be arrayed in all its majesty against the selfishness and enmity of the sinner.

11th. This law carries irresistible conviction of its righteousness, and no moral agent can doubt it.

12th. All men know that they have sinned, but all are not *convicted* of the *guilt* and *ill desert* of sin. The many are careless, and do not feel the burden of sin, the horrors and terrors of remorse, and have not a sense of condemnation and of being lost.

13th. But without this they cannot understand or appreciate the Gospel method of salvation. One cannot *intelligently* and *heartily* ask or accept a pardon until he sees or feels the *fact* and *justice* of his condemnation.

14th. It is absurd to suppose that a careless, unconvicted sinner can *intelligently* and *thankfully* accept the Gospel offer of pardon, until he accepts the righteousness of God in his condemnation. Conversion to Christ is an intelligent change. Hence the conviction of ill desert must precede the acceptance of mercy; for without this conviction the soul does not understand its need of mercy. Of course, the offer is rejected. The Gospel is no glad tidings to the careless, unconvicted sinner.

15th. The spirituality of the law should be unsparingly applied to the conscience until the sinner's self-righteousness is annihilated, and he stands speechless and self-condemned before a holy God.

16th. In some men this conviction is already ripe, and the preacher may at once present Christ, with the hope of his being accepted; but at ordinary times such cases are exceptional. The great mass of sinners are careless, unconvicted, and to assume their conviction and

preparedness to receive Christ, and, hence, to urge sinners immediately to accept him, is to begin at the wrong end of our work—to render our teaching unintelligible. And such a course will be found to have been a mistaken one, whatever present appearances and professions may indicate. The sinner may obtain a hope under such teaching ; but unless the Holy Spirit supplies something which the preacher has failed to do, it will be found to be a false one. All the essential links of truth must be supplied.

17th. When the law has done its work, annihilated self-righteousness, and shut the sinner up to the acceptance of mercy, he should be made to understand the delicacy and danger of dispensing with the execution of the penalty when the precept of law has been violated.

18th. Right here the sinner should be made to understand that from the benevolence of God he cannot justly infer that God can consistently forgive him. For unless public justice can be satisfied the law of universal benevolence forbids the forgiveness of sin. If public justice is not regarded in the exercise of mercy, the good of the *public* is sacrificed to that of the *individual*. God will never do this.

19th. This teaching will shut the sinner up to look for some offering to *public* justice.

20th. Now give him the atonement as a *revealed fact*, and shut him up to Christ as his own sin offering. Press the *revealed fact* that God has accepted the death of Christ as a substitute for the sinner's death, and that this is to be received upon the *testimony* of God.

21st. Being already crushed into contrition by the convicting power of the law, the revelation of the love of God manifested in the death of Christ will naturally beget self-loathing, and that godly sorrow that needeth not

to be repented of. Under this showing the sinner can never forgive himself. God is holy and glorious ; and he a sinner saved by sovereign grace. This teaching may be more or less formal as the souls you address are more or less thoughtful, intelligent, and careful to understand.

22d. It was not by accident that the dispensation of law preceded the dispensation of grace ; but it is in the natural order of things, in accordance with established mental laws, and evermore the law must prepare the way for the Gospel. To overlook this in instructing souls is almost certain to result in false hope, the introduction of a false standard of Christian experience, and to fill the church with spurious converts. Time will make this plain.

23d. The truth should be preached *to* the persons present, and so personally applied as to compel every one to feel that you mean *him* or *her*. As has been often said of a certain preacher : " He does not preach, but explains what other people preach, and seems to be talking directly to *me*."

24th. This course will rivet attention, and cause your hearers to lose sight of the length of your sermon. They will tire if they feel no *personal* interest in what you say. To secure their individual interest in what you are saying is an indispensable condition of their being converted. And, while their individual interest is thus awakened, and held fast to your subject, they will seldom complain of the length of your sermon. In nearly all cases, if the people complain of the length of our sermons, it is because we fail to interest them *personally* in what we say.

25th. If we fail to interest them personally, it is either because we do not address them personally, or because we lack unction and earnestness, or because we lack clear-

ness and force, or certainly because we lack something that we ought to possess. To make them feel that we and God means *them* is indispensable.

26th. Do not think that earnest piety alone can make you successful in winning souls. This is only one condition of success. There must be common sense, there must be spiritual wisdom in adapting means to the end. Matter and manner and order and time and place all need to be wisely adjusted to the end we have in view.

27th. God may sometimes convert souls by men who are not spiritually minded, when they possess that natural sagacity which enables them to adapt means to that end, but the Bible warrants us in affirming that these are exceptional cases. Without this sagacity and adaptation of means to this end a *spiritual* mind will fail to win souls to Christ.

28th. Souls need instruction in accordance with the measure of their intelligence. A few simple truths, when wisely applied and illuminated by the Holy Ghost, will convert children to Christ. I say *wisely* applied, for they too are sinners, and need the application of the law, as a schoolmaster, to bring them to Christ, that they may be justified by faith. It will sooner or later appear that supposed conversions to Christ are spurious where the preparatory law work has been omitted, and Christ has not been embraced as a Saviour from sin and condemnation.

29th. Sinners of education and culture, who are, after all, unconverted and skeptical in their hearts, need a vastly more extended and thorough application of truth. Professional men need the Gospel net to be thrown quite around them, with no break through which they can escape; and, when thus dealt with, they are all the more sure to be converted in proportion to their real intelligence. I have found that a course of lectures addressed

to lawyers, and adapted to their habits of thought and reasoning, is most *sure* to convert them.

30th. To be successful in winning souls, we need to be observing—to study individual character, to press the facts of experience, observation, and revelation upon the consciences of all classes.

31st. Be sure to explain the terms you use. Before I was converted, I failed to hear the terms repentance, faith, regeneration, and conversion intelligibly explained. Repentance was described as a feeling. Faith was represented as an intellectual *act* or *state*, and not as a *voluntary* act of *trust*. Regeneration was represented as some physical change in the *nature*, produced by the *direct power* of the Holy Ghost, instead of a *voluntary* change of the *ultimate preference* of the soul, produced by the spiritual *illumination* of the Holy Ghost. Even conversion was represented as being the work of the Holy Ghost in such a sense as to cover up the fact that it is the sinner's own act, under the persuasions of the Holy Ghost.

32d. Urge the fact that repentance involves the voluntary and actual renunciation of all sin ; that it is a radical change of mind toward God.

33d. Also the fact that saving faith is *heart-trust* in Christ ; that it works by love, it purifies the heart, and overcomes the world ; that no faith is saving that has not these attributes.

34th. The sinner is required to put forth certain *mental acts*. What these are he needs to understand. Error in mental philosophy but embarrasses, and may fatally deceive the inquiring soul. Sinners are often put upon a wrong track. They are often put upon a strain to *feel* instead of putting forth the required acts of *will*. Before my conversion I never received from *man* any intelligible idea of the mental acts that God required of me.

35th. The deceitfulness of sin renders the inquiring soul exceedingly exposed to delusion ; therefore it behooves teachers to beat about every bush, and to search out every nook and corner where a soul can find a false refuge. Be so thorough and discriminating as to render it as nearly impossible as the nature of the case will admit that the inquirer should entertain a false hope.

36th. Do not fear to be thorough. Do not through false pity put on a plaster where the probe is needed. Do not fear that you shall discourage the convicted sinner, and turn him back, by searching him out to the bottom. If the Holy Spirit is dealing with him, the more you search and probe the more impossible it will be for the soul to turn back or rest in sin.

37th. If you would save the soul, do not spare a right hand, or right eye, or any darling idol ; but see to it that every form of sin is given up. Insist upon full confession of wrong, to all that have a right to confession. Insist upon full restitution, so far as is possible, to all injured parties. Do not fall short of the express teachings of Christ on this subject. Whoever the sinner may be, let him distinctly understand that unless he forsakes all that he has he cannot be the disciple of Christ. Insist upon entire and universal consecration of all the powers of body and mind, and of all property, possessions, character, and influence to God. Insist upon the total abandonment to God of all ownership of self, or anything else, as a condition of being accepted.

38th. Understand yourself, and, if possible, make the sinner understand that nothing short of this is involved in true faith or true repentance, and that true consecration involves them all.

39th. Keep constantly before the sinner's mind that it is the *personal* Christ with whom he is dealing, that *God*



*in Christ* is seeking his reconciliation to himself, and that the condition of his reconciliation is that he gives up his will and his whole being to God—that he leave not a hoof behind.

40th. Assure him that “God has given to him eternal life, and this life is in his son ;” that “Christ is made unto him wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption ;” and that from first to last he is to find his whole salvation in Christ.

41st. When satisfied that the soul intelligently receives all this doctrine, and the Christ herein revealed, then remember that he must persevere unto the end, as the further condition of his salvation. Here you have before you the great work of preventing the soul from backsliding, of securing its permanent sanctification and sealing for eternal glory.

42d. Does not the very common backsliding in heart of converts indicate some grave defect in the teachings of the pulpit on this subject ? What does it mean that so many hopeful converts, within a few months of their apparent conversion, lose their first love, lose all their fervency in religion, neglect their duty, and live on in name Christians, but in spirit and life worldings ?

43d. A truly successful preacher must not only win souls to Christ, but must keep them won. He must not only secure their conversion, but their permanent sanctification.

44th. Nothing in the Bible is more expressly promised in this life than *permanent sanctification*. 1 Thes., v. 23, 24: “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.” This is unquestionably a prayer of the apostle for

permanent sanctification in this life, with an express promise that he who has called us will do it.

45th. We learn from the Scriptures that "*after we believe*" we are or may be *sealed* with the Holy Spirit of promise, and that this sealing is the earnest of our salvation. Eph., i, 13, 14: "In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." His sealing this earnest of our inheritance is that which renders our salvation sure. Hence, in Eph., iv, 30, the apostle says: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." And in II Cor., i, 21st and 22d verses, the apostle says: "Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts." Thus we are *established* in Christ and *anointed* by the Spirit, and also *sealed* by the *earnest* of the Spirit in our hearts. And this, remember, is a blessing that we receive after that we believe, as Paul has informed us in his Epistle to the Ephesians, above quoted. Now it is of the last importance that converts should be taught not to rest short of this *permanent sanctification*, this sealing, this being established in Christ by the special anointing of the Holy Ghost.

46th. Now, brethren, unless we know what this means by our own experience, and lead converts to this experience, we fail most lamentably and essentially in our teaching. We leave out the very cream and fullness of the Gospel.

47th. It should be understood that while this experience is rare amongst ministers it will be discredited by

the churches, and it will be next to impossible for an isolated preacher of this doctrine to overcome the unbelief of his church. They will feel doubtful about it, because so few preach it or believe in it; and will account for their pastor's insisting upon it by saying that his experience is owing to his peculiar temperament, and thus they will fail to receive this anointing because of their unbelief. Under such circumstances it is all the more necessary to insist much upon the importance and privilege of permanent sanctification.

48th. Sin consists in carnal mindedness, in "obeying the desires of the flesh and of the mind." Permanent sanctification consists in entire and permanent consecration to God. It implies the refusal to obey the desires of the flesh or of the mind. The baptism or sealing of the Holy Spirit subdues the power of the desires and strengthens and confirms the will in resisting the impulse of desire, and in abiding permanently in a state of making the whole being an offering to God.

49th. If we are silent upon this subject, the natural inference will be that we do not believe in it, and, of course, that we know nothing about it in experience. This will inevitably be a stumbling-block to the church.

50th. Since this is undeniably an important doctrine, and plainly taught in the Gospel, and is, indeed, the marrow and fatness of the Gospel, to fail in teaching this is to rob the church of its richest inheritance.

51st. The testimony of the church, and to a great extent of the ministry, on the subject has been lamentably defective. This legacy has been withheld from the church, and is it any wonder that she so disgracefully backslides? The testimony of the comparatively few, here and there, that insist upon this doctrine is almost

nullified by the counter testimony or culpable silence of the great mass of Christ's witnesses.

52d. My dear brethren, my convictions are so ripe and my feelings so deep upon this subject that I must not conceal from you my fears that lack of personal experience, in many cases, is the reason of this great defect in preaching the Gospel. I do not say this to reproach you ; it is not in my heart to do so. It is not wonderful that many of you, at least, have not this experience. Your religious training has been defective. You have been led to take a different view of this subject. Various causes have operated to prejudice you against this blessed doctrine of the glorious Gospel. You have not intellectually believed it ; and, of course, have not received Christ in his fullness into your hearts. Perhaps this doctrine to you has been a stumbling-block and a rock of offense ; but I pray you let not prejudice prevail, but venture upon Christ by a present acceptance of him as your wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and see if He will not do for you exceeding abundantly above all that you asked or thought.

53d. No man, saint or sinner, should be left by us to rest or be quiet in the indulgence of *any sin*. No one should be allowed to entertain the hope of Heaven, if we can prevent it, who lives in the indulgence of known sin in any form. Our constant demand and persuasion should be, "Be ye holy, for God is holy." "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." Let us remember the manner in which Christ concludes his memorable Sermon on the Mount. After spreading out those awfully searching truths before his hearers, and demanding that they should be perfect, as their Father in Heaven was perfect, he concludes by assuring them that no one could be saved who did not receive and obey his teachings.

Instead of attempting to please our people in their sins, we should continually endeavor to hunt and persuade them *out* of their sins. Brethren, let us do it, as we would not have our skirts defiled with their blood. If we pursue this course, and constantly preach with unction and power, and abide in the fullness of the doctrine of Christ, we may joyfully expect to save ourselves and them that hear us.

## PREACHING SO AS TO CONVERT NOBODY.

REV. CHARLES G. FINNEY.

The design of this article is to propound several rules, by a steady conformity to any one of which a man may preach so as not to convert anybody. It is generally conceded at the present day that the Holy Spirit converts souls to Christ by means of truth *adapted to that end*. It follows that a selfish preacher will not skillfully adapt means to convert souls to Christ, for this is not his end.

Rule 1st. Let your supreme motive be to secure your own popularity ; then, of course, your preaching will be adapted to that end, and not to convert souls to Christ.

2d. Aim at pleasing, rather than at converting your hearers.

3d. Aim at securing for yourself the reputation of a beautiful writer.

4th. Let your sermons be written with a high degree of literary finish.

5th. Let them be short, occupying in the reading not to exceed from twenty to twenty-five minutes.

6th. Let your style be flowery, ornate, and quite above the comprehension of the common people.

7th. Be sparing of thought, lest your sermon contain truth enough to convert a soul.

8th. Lest your sermon should make a saving impres-

sion, announce no distinct propositions or heads, that will be remembered, to disturb the consciences of your hearers.

9th. Make no distinct points, and take no disturbing *issues* with the consciences of your hearers, lest they remember these issues, and become alarmed about their souls.

10th. Avoid a logical division and sub-division of your subject, lest you should too thoroughly instruct your people.

11th. Give your sermon the form and substance of a flowing, beautifully written, but never-to-be-remembered essay ; so that your hearers will say "it was a beautiful sermon," but can give no further account of it.

12th. Avoid preaching doctrines that are offensive to the carnal mind, lest they should say of you, as they did of Christ, "This is a hard saying. Who can hear it?" and that you are injuring your influence.

13th. Denounce sin in the abstract, but make no allusion to the sins of your present audience.

14th. Keep the spirituality of God's holy law, by which is the knowledge of sin, out of sight, lest the sinner should see his lost condition, and flee from the wrath to come.

15th. Preach the Gospel as a remedy, but conceal or ignore the fatal disease of the sinner.

16th. Preach salvation by grace ; but ignore the condemned and lost condition of the sinner, lest he should understand what you mean by grace, and feel his need of it.

17th. Preach Christ as an infinitely amiable and good-natured being ; but ignore those scathing rebukes of sinners and hypocrites which so often made his hearers tremble.

18th. Avoid especially preaching to those who are present. Preach about sinners, and not to them. Say *they*, and not *you*, lest any one should make a personal and saving application of your subject.

19th. Aim to make your hearers pleased with themselves and pleased with you, and be careful not to wound the feelings of any one.

20th. Preach no searching sermons, lest you convict and convert the worldly members of your church.

21st. Avoid awakening uncomfortable memories by reminding your hearers of their past sins.

22d. Do not make the impression that God commands your hearers now and here to obey the truth.

23d. Do not make the impression that you expect your hearers to commit themselves upon the spot and give their hearts to God.

24th. Leave the impression that they are expected to go away in their sins, and to consider the matter at their convenience.

25th. Dwell much upon their inability to obey, and leave the impression that they must wait for God to change their *natures*.

26th. Make no appeals to the fears of sinners ; but leave the impression that they have no reason to fear.

27th. Say so little of Hell that your people will infer that you do not believe in its existence.

28th. Make the impression that, if God is as good as you are, He will send no one to Hell.

29th. Preach the love of God, but ignore the holiness of His love, that will by no means clear the impenitent sinner.

30th. Often present God in His parental love and relations ; but ignore His governmental and legal relations to His subjects, lest the sinner should find himself condemned already, and the wrath of God abiding on him.



31st. Preach God as all mercy, lest a fuller representation of His character should alarm the consciences of your hearers.

32d. Try to convert sinners to Christ without producing any uncomfortable convictions of sin.

33d. Flatter the rich, so as to repel the poor, and you will convert none of either class.

34th. Make no disagreeable allusions to the doctrines of self-denial, cross-bearing, and crucifixion to the world, lest you should convict and convert some of your church members.

35th. Admit, either expressly or impliedly, that all men have some moral goodness in them ; lest sinners should understand that they need a radical change of heart, from sin to holiness.

36th. Avoid pressing the doctrine of total moral depravity ; lest you should offend, or even convict and convert, the moralist.

37th. Do not rebuke the worldly tendencies of the church, lest you should hurt their feelings, and finally convert some of them.

38th. Should any express anxiety about their souls, do not probe them by any uncomfortable allusion to their sin and ill-desert ; but encourage them to join the church at once, and exhort them to assume their perfect safety within the fold.

39th. Preach the love of Christ not as enlightened benevolence, that is holy, just, and sin-hating ; but as a sentiment, an involuntary and indiscriminating fondness.

40th. Be sure not to represent religion as a state of loving self-sacrifice for God and souls ; but rather as a free and easy state of self-indulgence. By thus doing, you will prevent sound conversions to Christ, and convert your hearers to yourself.

41st. So select your themes, and so present them, as to attract and flatter the wealthy, aristocratic, self-indulgent, extravagant, pleasure-seeking classes, and you will not convert any of them to the cross-bearing religion of Christ.

42d. Be time-serving, or you will endanger your salary ; and, besides, if you speak out and are faithful, you may convert somebody.

43d. Do not preach with a divine unction, lest your preaching make a saving impression.

44th. To avoid this, do not maintain a close walk with God, but rely upon your learning and study.

45th. Lest you should pray too much, engage in light reading and worldly amusements.

46th. That your people may not think you in earnest to save their souls, and, as a consequence, heed your preaching, encourage church-fairs, lotteries and other gambling and worldly expedients to raise money for church purposes.

47th. If you do not approve of such things, make no public mention of your disapprobation, lest your church should give them up, and turn their attention to saving souls and be saved themselves.

48th. Do not rebuke extravagance in dress, lest you should uncomfortably impress your vain and worldly church-members.

49th. Lest you should be troubled with revival scenes and labors, encourage parties, picnics, excursions, and worldly amusements, so as to divert attention from the serious work of saving souls.

50th. Ridicule solemn earnestness in pulling sinners out of the fire, and recommend, by precept and example, a jovial, fun-loving religion, and sinners will have little respect for your serious preaching.

51st. Cultivate a fastidious taste in your people, by

avoiding all disagreeable allusions to the last judgment and final retribution.

52d. Treat such uncomfortable doctrines as obsolete and out of place in these days of Christian refinement.

53d. Do not commit yourself to much-needed reforms, lest you should compromise your popularity and injure your influence. Or you may make some branch of outward reform a hobby, and dwell so much upon it as to divert attention from the great work of converting souls to Christ.

54th. So exhibit religion as to encourage the selfish pursuit of it. Make the impression upon sinners that their own safety and happiness is the supreme motive for being religious.

55th. Do not lay much stress upon the efficacy and necessity of prayer, lest the Holy Spirit should be poured out upon you and the congregation, and sinners should be converted.

56th. Make little or no impression upon your hearers, so that you can repeat your old sermons often without its being noticed.

57th. If your text suggest any alarming thought, pass lightly over it, and by no means dwell upon and enforce it.

58th. Avoid all illustrations, repetitions, and emphatic sentences, that may compel your people to remember what you say.

59th. Avoid all heat and earnestness in your delivery, lest you make the impression that you really believe what you say.

60th. Address the imagination, and not the conscience, of your hearers.

61st. Make it your great aim to be personally popular with all classes of your hearers.

62d. Be tame and timid in presenting the claims of God, as would become you in presenting your own claims.

63d. Be careful not to testify from your own personal experience of the power of the Gospel, lest you should produce the conviction upon your hearers that you have something which they need.

64th. See that you say nothing that will appear to any of your hearers to mean him or her, unless it be something flattering.

65th. Encourage church sociables, and attend them yourself, because they tend so strongly to levity as to compromise Christian dignity and sobriety, and thus paralyze the power of your preaching.

66th. Encourage the cultivation of the social in so many ways as to divert the attention of yourself and your church-members from the infinite guilt and danger of the unconverted among you.

67th. In those sociables talk a little about religion, but avoid any serious appeal to the heart and conscience of those who attend, lest you should discourage their attendance, always remembering that they do not go to socials to be earnestly dealt with in regard to their relations to God. In this way you will effectually so employ yourself and church-members as that your preaching will not convert anybody.

The experience of ministers who have steadily adhered to any of the above rules, will attest the soul-destroying efficacy of such a course, and churches whose ministers have steadily conformed to any of these rules can testify that such preaching does not convert souls to Christ.

## HOW TO MAKE SINNERS REALIZE THEIR GUILT.

REV. ALBERT BARNES.

As men, in their natural state, are very insensible and apathetic on the subject of religion, "being dead in trespasses and sins," where they are instructed in the truthfulness and fundamental doctrines and precepts of Christianity, the first and indispensable efforts of the preacher who aims at the conversion of his hearers must be, by the divine blessing, to awaken the careless and slumbering to a realizing sense of their aggravating guilt and imminent danger. And of course, in so doing, he must present with clearness and force the searching and absolute claims of God's holy law over the secret thoughts, intentions and volitions, as well as the words and deeds of sinners, with its fearful and eternal penalty of retribution, pronounced by God upon all who continue impenitent and unbelieving.

For "the law is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we may be justified by faith."

But in achieving this great work, formidable obstacles are to be encountered. Therefore, let us inquire how shall the effective preacher *make the sinner feel his guilt and danger*?

The first obstacle he must meet and overcome as far as practicable, is *the sinner's natural reluctance to feel a consciousness of his personal guilt and danger.*

2d. *The preacher must himself deeply realize the sinner's unwillingness to confess his absolute guilt.*

He will find not only the pharisaic moralist but the most wicked of men, ever ready to justify themselves and plead extenuating circumstances for their sinfulness and neglect of religion.

3d. He must explain and correct the *false philosophy and unscriptural opinions*, behind which the sinner may have *entrenched himself*, concerning his *physical depravity and inability* to obey God and turn from sin. The sinner must be made to realize that his own freedom in the choice of sin renders him wholly inexcusable.

4th. The preacher must show that the moral blindness of the sinner, leads him to view sin as a mere trifle, while God with his perfect holiness, regards it exceedingly wicked, and deserving of a most fearful penalty.

5th. He must aim to make the *pharisaic moralist* realize the aggravating *sin of worldliness*.

6th. He must consider that many remain insensible to the claims of religion because they have some unfinished *plans for gain, or of criminal indulgence*.

All such obstacles must be removed as far as possible in preparing the way, that the sinner may more fully realize the immediate and imperative claims of the Gospel.

And under my *second general division*, I observe that the successful preacher must keep in mind the susceptibilities on which the call to repentance may act with greater force.

1st. He must appeal to *reason*. 2d. *To conscience*. 3d. *To the emotions, hopes and fears*.

Then let him inquire what does the Gospel furnish, adapted to produce repentance.

1st. The Gospel comes to men under the full benefit of a concession to its **demands**.

2d. And with this assumption the preacher must enforce the terrors and *demands of the law*.

3d. He must approach men with *all the proofs of revelation*, for the end of these things is to make them *feel their guilt*.

4th. The history of the world shows that *men are guilty, and the guilty must suffer*.

5th. The preacher must show them how *the sufferings and death of Christ* are adapted to *make them feel their guilt*.

6th. And then he should bring before them the scenes of the *judgment*, and they will be constrained to inquire with real earnestness as they did on the day of Pentecost, "Men and brethren what must we do?"

## THE SUCCESSFUL PREACHER'S REWARD.

REV. ALBERT BARNES.

It is a proof of the favor of God, that ministers are permitted to preach the Gospel effectively.

It is a privilege and honor thus to preach. It is an honor far above that of conquerors, and he who does it will win a brighter and more glorious crown than he who goes forth to obtain glory by dethroning kings, and laying nations waste. The warrior's path is marked with blood and with smouldering ruins. Yet he is honored and his name is blazoned abroad, he is crowned with laurel, and triumphal arches are reared and monuments are erected to perpetuate his fame.

But the minister of Christ who preaches the Gospel effectively is the minister of peace.

He tells of salvation and a Heaven of blessedness. He elevates the intellect, he moulds the heart to virtue, he establishes schools and colleges, he promotes temperance and chastity, he wipes away tears and tells of Heaven.

His course is marked by intelligence and order, by peace and purity, by the joy of the domestic circle, and the happiness of a virtuous fireside, by consolation on the bed of pain, and by the hopes of Heaven that cheer the dying.

Who would not rather be a successful preacher of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God than have the honors of a blood-stained warrior?



Who would not rather have the wreath that shall encircle the brow of the successful minister of Christ, than the ephemeral laurels of Alexander and Cæsar?

In view of such a reward, said the faithful Apostle of the Gentiles, "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day."

A crown won in the cause of righteousness, and conferred as the reward of conflicts and efforts in the cause of holiness, in spreading the principles of holiness as far as possible through the world.

"There is a crown of dazzling light,  
Which he shall surely win,  
Who clad with heavenly panoply,  
Has triumphed over sin.

The preacher's crown—what priceless gems  
Triumphant he shall wear;  
Of wanderers saved from death and sin,  
And placed by Jesus there.

When those of earth have crumbled all  
To dust and passed away,  
This brilliant gem forever shines  
In realms of endless day.

Who would not wear this diadem  
Of life, and bliss, and peace;  
Who would not press to gain a prize  
Whose glory ne'er shall cease?"

## CLEARNESS OF STYLE IN PREACHING.

REV. ALBERT BARNES.

Preaching should be simple and intelligible. It should not be dry and abstruse, metaphysical, remote from the common manner of expression, and the common habits of thought among men.

The preaching of the Lord Jesus was simple, and intelligible even to a child. The most successful preachers have been those who have been most remarkable for their simplicity and clearness. Nor is simplicity and intelligibility of manner inconsistent with bright thought and profound sentiments. A diamond is the most pure of all minerals ; a river may be deep, and yet its water so pure that the bottom may be seen at a great depth ; and glass in the window is most valuable, the clearer and purer it is, when it is itself least seen, and when it gives no obstruction to the light. If the purpose is that the glass may be itself an ornament, it may be well to stain it ; if to give light, it should be pure. A very shallow stream may be very muddy ; and because the bottom cannot be seen, it is no evidence that it is deep.

So it is with style. If the purpose is to convey thought, to enlighten and save the soul, the style should be plain and simple and pure.

If it is to bewilder and confound, or be admired as unintelligible, or perhaps as profound, then an abstruse and

metaphysical, or a flowery manner may be adopted in the pulpit.

Preaching should always be characterized indeed by good sense, and ministers should show that they are not fools, and their preaching should be such as to interest thinking men—for there is no folly or nonsense in the Bible. But their preaching should not be obscure, metaphysical, enigmatical, and abstruse. It should be so simple that the unlettered may learn the plan of salvation ; so plain that no one shall mistake it except by his own fault. The *hopes* of the Gospel are so clear that there is no need of ambiguity or enigma ; no need of abstruse metaphysical reasoning in the pulpit. Nor should there be an attempt to *appear* wise or profound, by studying a dry, abstruse, and cold style and manner. The preacher should be open, plain, simple, sincere ; he should *testify* what he feels ; should be able to speak as himself animated by *hope*, and to tell of a world of glory to which he is himself looking forward with unspeakable joy.

## THE FAITHFUL PREACHER'S CHIEF OBJECT.

REV. ALBERT BARNES.

“He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully,” saith the prophet, “for I seek not yours, but you.”

“Ministers of the Gospel, who preach as they should do, engage in their work to win souls to Christ, not to induce them to admire eloquence : they come to teach men to adore the great and dreadful God, not to be loud in their praises of a mortal man. They should not aim to be admired. They should seek to be useful. They should seek to build up the people of God in holy faith and the conversion of sinners. The pulpit is the last place in which to seek admiration for mere gracefulness of manner, or mere fervid eloquence, or well timed periods, for the sake of securing a popular reputation among men.”

“For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.”

We are merely the *ambassadors* of another. We are not *principals* in this business, and do not dispatch it as a business of our own, but we transact it as the *agents* for another, *i. e.*, for the Lord Jesus, and we feel ourselves bound, therefore, to do it as he would have done it himself ; and as he was free from all trick and dishonest art, we feel bound to be also.

Ministers may be said to preach themselves in the following ways ;

1st. When their preaching has a primary reference to their own interest ; and when they engage in it to advance their reputation, or to secure in some way their own advantage. When they aim at exalting their authority, extending their influence, or in any way promoting their own welfare.

2d. When they proclaim their own opinions and not the Gospel of Christ ; when they derive their doctrines from their own reasonings, and not from the Bible.

3d. When they put themselves forward ; speak much of themselves ; refer often to themselves ; are vain of their powers of reasoning, of their eloquence, and of their learning, and seek to make these known rather than the simple truth of the gospel. In one word, when self is primary, and the gospel is secondary ; when they prostitute the ministry to gain popularity ; to live a life of ease ; to be respected ; to obtain a livelihood ; to gain influence ; to rule over a people ; and to make the preaching of the gospel merely *an occasion* of advancing themselves in the world.

#### PROOFS OF THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

*"But Christ Jesus the Lord."* This Paul states to be the only purpose of the ministry. It is so far the sole design of the ministry that had it not been known to the Lord Jesus, it would never have been established ; and whatever other objects are secured by its appointment, and whatever other truths are to be illustrated and enforced by the ministry, yet, if this is not the primary subject, and if every other object is not made subservient to this, the design of the ministry is not secured.

The Apostles, therefore, made it their sole business to make known Jesus the Messiah, or the Christ, as the supreme head and Lord of the people ; *i. e.*, to set forth

the Messiahship and the lordship of Jesus of Nazareth, appointed to these high offices by God. To do this, or to preach Jesus Christ the Lord, implies the following things:

1st. To prove that he is the Messiah so often predicted in the Old Testament, and so long expected by the Jewish people. To do this was a very vital part of the work of the ministry in the time of the apostles, and most essential to their success in all their attempts to convert the Jews; and to do this will be no less important in all attempts to bring the Jews now or in future times to the knowledge of the truth. No man *can* be successful among them who is not able to prove that Jesus is the Messiah.—It is not indeed so vital and leading a point now in reference to those to whom the ministers of the gospel usually preach; and it is probable that the importance of this argument is by many over-looked, and that it is not urged as it should be by those who “preach Christ Jesus the Lord.” It involves the whole argument for the truth of Christianity. It leads to all the demonstrations that this religion is from God; and the establishment of the proposition that Jesus is the Messiah is one of the most direct and certain ways of proving that his religion is from heaven. For (*a*) It contains the argument from the fulfillment of the prophecies—one of the main evidences of the truth of revelation; and (*b*) It involves an examination of all the evidences that Jesus gave that he was the Messiah sent from God, and of course an examination of all the miracles that he wrought in attestation of his divine mission. The first object of a preacher, therefore, is to demonstrate that Jesus is sent from God in accordance with the predictions of the prophets.

#### DOCTRINES OF CHRIST.

2d. To proclaim the truths that *he taught*. To make

known his sentiments, and his doctrines, and not our own. This includes, of course, all that he taught respecting God, and respecting man; all that he taught respecting his own nature, and the design of his coming; all that he taught respecting the character of the human heart, and about human obligation and duty; all that he taught respecting death, the judgment and eternity—respecting an eternal heaven, and an eternal hell. To explain, enforce, and vindicate his doctrines, is one great design of the ministry; and were there nothing else, this would be a field sufficiently ample to employ the best talents of man. The minister of the gospel is to teach the sentiments and doctrines of Jesus Christ, in contradistinction from all his own sentiments, and from all the doctrines of mere philosophy. He is not to teach science, or mere morals, but he is to proclaim and defend the doctrines of the Redeemer.

#### EXAMPLE OF CHRIST.

3d. He is to make known *the facts* of the Saviour's life. He is to show how he lived—to hold up his example in all the trying circumstances in which he was placed. For he came to show by his life what the law required; and to show how men *should* live. And it is the office of the Christian ministry, or a part of their work in preaching "Christ Jesus the Lord," to show how he lived, and to set forth his self-denial, his meekness, his purity, his blameless life, his spirit of prayer, his submission to the divine will, his patience in suffering, his forgiveness of his enemies, his tenderness to the afflicted, the weak, and the tempted; and the manner of his death. Were *this* all, it would be enough to employ the whole of a minister's life, and to command the best talents of the world. For he was the only perfectly pure model; and his example is to

be followed by all his people, and his example is designed to exert a deep and wide influence on the world. Piety flourishes just in proportion as the pure example of Jesus Christ is kept before a people ; and the world is made happier and better just as that example is kept constantly in view. To the gay and the thoughtless, the ministers of the gospel are to show how serious and calm was the Redeemer ; to the worldly-minded, to show how he lived above the world ; to the avaricious, how benevolent he was ; to the profane and licentious, how pure he was ; to the tempted, how he endured temptation ; to the afflicted, how patient and resigned ; to the dying, how he died :—to all, to show how holy, and heavenly-minded, and prayerful, and pure he was ; in order that they may be won to the same purity, and be prepared to dwell with him in his kingdom.

#### SUFFERINGS AND DEATH.

4th. To set forth the design of his death. To show why he came to die ; and what was the great object to be effected by his sufferings and death. To exhibit, therefore, the sorrows of his life ; to describe his many trials ; to dwell upon his sufferings in the garden of Gethsemane, and on the cross. To show *why* he died, and what was to be the influence of his death on the destiny of man. To show *how* it makes an atonement for sin ; how it reconciles God to man ; how it is made efficacious in the justification and the sanctification of the sinner. And were there nothing else, *this* would be sufficient to employ all the time, and the best talents in the ministry. For the salvation of the soul depends on the proper exhibition of the design of the death of the Redeemer. There is no salvation but through his blood ; and hence the nature and design of his atoning sacrifice is to be exhibited to every



man, and the offers of mercy through that death to be pressed upon the attention of every sinner.

#### RESURRECTION.

5th. To set forth the truth and the design of his resurrection. To *prove* that he rose from the dead, and that he ascended to heaven ; and to show the influence of his resurrection on our hopes and destiny. The whole structure of Christianity is dependent on making out the fact that he rose ; and *if* he rose, all the difficulties in the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead are removed at once, and his people will also rise. The influence of that fact, therefore, on our hopes and on our prospects for eternity, is to be shown by the ministry of the gospel ; and were there nothing else, *this* would be ample to command all the time, and the best talents of the ministry.

#### CHRIST'S SUPREME AUTHORITY.

6th. To proclaim him as "Lord." This is expressly specified in the passage before us. "For we preach Christ Jesus **THE LORD** ;" we proclaim him *as* the Lord. That is, he is to be preached as having dominion over the conscience ; as the supreme Ruler in his Church ; as above all councils, and synods, and conferences, and all human authority ; as having a right to legislate for his people ; a right to prescribe their mode of worship ; a right to define and determine the doctrines which they shall believe. He is to be proclaimed also as ruling over all, and as exalted in his mediatorial character over all worlds, and as having all things put beneath his feet.

## THE MINISTRY FOR THE TIMES.

REV. ALBERT BARNES.

The qualifications for the ministry, at all times, and in all lands, are essentially the same : a pious heart, a prudent mind, a sober judgment, well-directed and glowing zeal, self-denial, simplicity of aim, and deadness to the world ; but that these qualifications are to be somewhat modified by the peculiarities of each age ; and that the age in which men live must be studied in order that they may make " full proof of their ministry."

What are the qualifications for the ministry which are peculiarly demanded by our times and country ? What should be the grand aim of the ministry ? For what should the ministers of the gospel be peculiarly distinguished ?

1st. The times in which we live demand of the ministry a close, and patient, and honest investigation of the Bible. The truths which the ministry is to present are to be derived from the word of God.

The age in which we live is not, as it seems to me, distinguished for simple and direct appeals to the Bible, in defence of the doctrines of religion.

By many it is held or rather *felt*, that the system of religious doctrine has been settled by the investigations of the past ; that there is no hope of discovering any new truth ; that theology, as now held, is not susceptible of

improvement ; that the whole field has been dug over and over again with instruments as finished as our own, and by as keen-sighted laborers as any of the present age can be ; and that it is presumption for a man to hope to find in those mines a new gem that would sparkle in the gown of truth.

But can there be any improvement in theology ? Can there be any advance made on the discoveries of other times ? Is it not presumptuous for us to hope to see what the keen-sighted vision of other times has not seen ? Is not the system of theology perfect as it came from God ? I answer, yes. And so was astronomy a perfect system when the "morning stars sang together ;" but it is one thing for the system to be perfect as it came from God, and another for it to be perfect as it appears in the form in which we hold it.

So were the sciences of botany, and chemistry, and anatomy perfect as they came from God ; but ages have been required to understand them as they existed in His mind ; and other ages may yet furnish the means of improvement on those systems as held by man. So God has placed the gold under ground, and the pearls at the bottom of the sea for man—perfect in their nature as they came from his hand. Has all the gold been dug from the mines ? have all the pearls been fished from the bottom of the ocean ? The whole system of science was as perfect in the mind of God as the system of revealed truth ; yet all are given to man to be sought out ; to be elaborated by the process of ages ; to reward human diligence, and to make man a "co-worker with God." "Truth is the daughter of time ;" and is it to be assumed that all the truth is now known ? That there is no error in the views with which we now hold it ? That all is known of the power of truth yet on the human soul ?

I am now speaking of the ministry, and not of theology in general ; and I am urging to the study of the Bible with a view to a more successful preaching of the gospel. It seems to me that as yet we know comparatively little of the power of preaching the truths of the Bible.

That man has gained much as a preacher who is willing to investigate, by honest rules, the meaning of the Bible, and then to suffer the truth of God to speak out—no matter where it leads, and no matter on what man, or customs, or systems it impinges. Let it take its course like an unobstructed stream, or like a beam of light direct from the sun to the eyes of men. But when we seek to make embankments for the stream, to confine it within channels, such as we choose, how much of its beauty is lost, and how often do we obstruct it ! When we interpose *media* between us and the pure light of the sun that we deem ever so clear, how often do we turn aside the rays or divide the beam into scattered rays that may make a pretty picture, but which prevent the full glory of the unobstructed sun !

There is a power yet to be seen in preaching the Bible which the world has not fully understood ; and he does an incalculable service to his own times and to the world, who derives the truths which he inculcates directly from the Book of Life. Besides, the Bible is receiving constant illustrations and confirmations from every science, and from every traveler into the oriental world. Not a man comes back to us from the east who does not give us some new illustration of the truth or the beauty of the Bible.

2d. The times in which we live demand a ministry that shall be distinguished for sound and solid learning. Never, indeed, can this qualification be safely dispensed with ; but there is not a little in our age and country that pecul-

ially demands it. In no nation on the face of the earth has there been a more prevailing and permanent conviction that this was an important, if not an essential qualification for the ministry, than in our own; and to this conviction, and the natural result of that conviction in preparing the ministry for its work, is to be traced no small measure of the respect shown to the sacred office in our land.

But it is with reference to the office of Pastor; to the work of the ministry; to the business of saving souls, that I now urge the argument that the times demand a ministry that shall be distinguished for solid learning. And I am not ignorant of the objections which may be felt and urged to these remarks. I know it may be asked how is time to be found for these attainments? How shall health be secured for these objects? And another question, not less important, how shall the *heart* be kept, and the fire of devotion be maintained brightly burning on the altar of the heart, while making these preparations?

The sum of my remarks is, that we may not in this age have learned the art of making full proof of our ministry, there may be a blending of study, and piety, and pastoral fidelity such as shall greatly augment the usefulness of those who minister at the altar.

3d. The times demand a ministry of sober views; of settled habits of industry; of plain, practical good sense; of sound and judicious modes of thinking; a ministry that shall be patient, equable, persevering, and that shall look for success in the proper results of patient toil.

The age demands a ministry distinguished for sober industry. There is enough to accomplish to demand all the time, and it cannot be accomplished by mere genius, or by fitful efforts. It must be by patient toil. An industrious man, no matter what his talents, will always

make himself respectable ; an indolent man, no matter what his genius, never can be.

In the ministry, pre-eminently, no man should presume on his genius or talents, or superiority to the mass of minds around him. A man owes his best efforts to his people, and to his master ; to the one by a solemn compact when he becomes their pastor, to the other by sacred covenant when, deeply feeling the guilt of sin and the grateful sense of pardon, he gave himself to the great Redeemer in the ministry of reconciliation. An idle man in the ministry is a violator of at least two sacred compacts ; and upon such a man God will not, does not smile.

4th. The times demand men in the ministry who shall be the warm and unflinching advocates of every good cause.

1st. Men are required who shall have so well-settled and intelligent views of truth as not to be afraid of the examination of any opinion, or afraid to defend any sentiment which is in accordance with the word of God. They should be men of such independence of mind, that they will examine every subject, and every opinion that may be submitted to them, or on which they may be called to act.

The man of God is to enter the pulpit with a Bible as his guide, and is to be unawed in its exposition by any great names ; by any fear of personal violence ; by any decrees of councils ; or by any laws which this world can ever promulgate to fetter the freedom of thought. There, at least, is to be one place where truth may be examined, and where the voice of God may be heard in our world ; and there, as long as he who holds the stars in his right hand shall continue life, is the truth to shine forth on a dark world.

2d. Men are required in the ministry who shall be the warm and decided friends of the temperance reformation ;

and whose opinions and practice on this subject shall be shaped by the strictest laws of morals. For this opinion, the reasons are plain. The temperance reform is one of the features of the age. Revolutions do not go backward ; and this cause is destined, it is believed, to triumph, and ultimately to settle down on the principles of the most strict morals.

It was a sage remark of Jefferson, that no good cause is undertaken and persevered in, which does not ultimately overcome every obstacle and secure a final triumph ; and if anything certain respecting the future can be argued from the past, it is that this cause will secure an ultimate victory.

3d. In like manner, the times demand a ministry that shall be unflinching advocates of revivals of religion. Such men lived in other times ; and such scenes blessed the land where Davies, and Edwards, and Whitfield, and the Tennents lived.

What is needed now is the ministry of men who have an intelligent faith in revivals ; who have no fear of the effects which truth, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, shall have on the mind ; who shall so far understand the philosophy of revivals as to be able to vindicate them when assailed, and to show to men of intelligence that they are in accordance with the laws of our nature ; and whose preaching shall be such as shall be fitted, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, to secure such results on the minds of men. To revivals of religion our country owes more than to all other moral causes put together ; and if our institutions are preserved in safety, it must be by such extraordinary manifestations of the presence and the power of God.

Our sons forsake the homes of their fathers ; they wander away from the place of schools and churches to the

wilderness of the West ; they go from the sound of the Sabbath-bell, and they forget the Sabbath and the Bible, and the place of prayer ; they leave the place where their fathers sleep in their graves, and they forget the religion which sustained and comforted them. They go for gold, and they wander over the prairie, they fell the forest, they ascend the stream in pursuit of it, and they trample down the law of the Sabbath ; and soon, too, forget the laws of honesty and fair-dealing, in the insatiable love of gain.

Meantime, every man, such is our freedom, may advance any sentiments he pleases. He may defend them by all the power of argument, and enforce them by all the eloquence of persuasion. He may clothe his corrupt sentiments in the charms of verse, and he may make a thousand cottages beyond the mountains re-echo with the corrupt and corrupting strain. He may call to his aid the power of the press, and may secure a lodgment for his infidel sentiments in the most distant habitation in the republic.

What can meet this state of things, and arrest the evils that spread with the fleetness of the courser or the wind ? What can pursue and overtake these wanderers but revivals of religion—but that Spirit which, like the wind, acts where it pleases ? Yet they must be pursued. If our sons go thus, they are to be followed and reminded of the commands of God. None of them are to be suffered to go to any fertile vale or prairie in the west without the institutions of the gospel ; nor are they to be suffered to construct a hamlet, or to establish a village, or to build a city that shall be devoted to any other God than the God of their fathers.

By all the self-denials of benevolence ; by all the power of argument ; by all the implored influences of the Holy Ghost, they are to be persuaded to plant there the



rose of Sharon, and to make the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad, and the desert to bud and blossom as the rose. In such circumstances God HAS interposed ; and he has thus blessed our own land and times with signal revivals of religion.

Our whole country, thus far, has been guarded and protected by the presence of the Spirit of God ; and "*American revivals*" have been the objects of the most intense interest among those in other lands who have sought to understand the secret of our prosperity. That man who enters the pulpit with a cold heart and a doubtful mind in regard to such works of grace ; who looks with suspicion on the means which the Spirit of God has appointed and blessed for this object in past times ; and who coincides with the enemies of revivals in denouncing them as fanaticism, understands as little the history of his own country as he does the laws of the human mind and the Bible, and lacks the spirit which a man should have who stands in an American pulpit.

4th. Men are required who shall stand up as the firm advocates of missions, and of every proper project for the world's conversion. That great design of bringing this whole world, by the divine blessing, under the influence of Christian truth, is one of the strong features of the age ; and the hope and expectation of it has seized upon the churches with a tenacity which will not be relaxed.

He who does not enter on this work prepared to devote his talents and learning, his heart and bodily powers to the advancement of this cause, has not the spirit of the age, and falls behind the times in which he lives.

5th. The times demand men in the ministry who shall be men of peace. The period has arrived in the history of the world when there should be a full and fair illustration of the power of the gospel to produce a spirit of

*peace* in the hearts of all the ambassadors of him who was the "Prince of Peace."

There is now needed a ministry that shall "follow after things that make for peace;" where there shall be mutual confidence and charity; where there shall be candor for one another's imperfections; where there shall be toleration of opinions on points that do not affect the essentials of Christian doctrine; and where there shall be harmony of view and action on the great work of saving the world.

## THE REVIVAL PREACHING OF DR. NETTLETON.

LYMAN BEECHER, D. D.

“The power of his preaching included many things. It was highly intellectual, as opposed to declamation or oratorical, pathetic appeal, to imagination or the emotions. It was discriminately doctrinal, giving a clear and strong exhibition of doctrines denominated Calvinistic, explained, defined, proved and applied, and objections stated and answered. It was deeply experimental in the graphic developement of the experience of saints and sinners.”

But, with all this intellectualization, and discriminating argument, there was, in some of his sermons, unsurpassed power of description, which made the subject a matter of present reality. Such was his sermon on the deluge, one evening, in a village a few miles north of Albany.

It was in a very large and crowded hall, and the house was filled with consternation, as if they heard the falling of the rain, the roaring of the waves, the cries of the drowning, the bellowing of cattle, and neighing of horses, amid the darkness and desolation. The emotion rose to such a pitch that the floor seemed to tremble under the tones of his deep voice. He would say, pointing with his finger, “Will you take up the subject immediately?” and each would reply, “Yes, sir! Yes, sir!” as if Christ was speaking, and the day of judgment had come.

But there was another thing which gave accumulating power to his sermons. They were adapted to every state and stage of a revival, and condition of individual experience.

His revivals usually commenced with the church in confessions of sin and reformation. He introduced the doctrine of depravity, and made direct assaults on the conscience of sinners, explained regeneration, and cut off self-righteousness, and enforced immediate repentance and faith, and pressed to immediate submission in the earlier stages.

Toward the close he had a set of sermons to guard sinners against dropping the subject, such as "Putting the hand to the plow," "Quenching the spirit," "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man," etc. To this was added whatever was necessary on the signs of self-deception and the evidences of true religion, with sermons to young converts.

## THE REVIVAL PREACHING OF LYMAN BEECHER, D. D.

MRS. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

As to his preaching, it consisted commonly of three parts: first, careful explanatory statement concerning the real meaning of the text and subject; second, a logical and plain argument in the body of the discourse, addressed to the understanding, and third, a passionate and direct appeal, designed to urge his audience to some immediate, practical result.

The first part was often very clear, and as dry and condensed as a series of mathematical axioms. If preaching upon a doctrine, he commenced by the most clear and carefully worded statement of what it was not and what it was, before attempting to prove or disprove. It very often happened that these simple statements disarmed prejudice and removed antipathy, and to a people somewhat disposed to return to the faith of their fathers, if they could see their way clear, (as were many of the Unitarians,) rendered the succeeding argument almost needless.

I remember the introductory statement of a sermon on the doctrine of total depravity, in which, after telling much that it did not include, he reduced it simply to this proposition: *That men, by nature, do not love God supremely, and their neighbor as themselves.*

"All that is cultivated in intellect and refined in taste, much that is honorable in feeling and amiable in social relations," he said, "we concede. The temple is beautiful, but it is a temple in ruins; the divinity has departed, and the fire on the altar is extinct."

After this followed the scriptural argument, on which he always and unhesitatingly relied, without a shadow of a doubt that we do have in our English translation the authoritative, inspired declarations of God. Then came the answering of objections. Here he was conversational, sprightly, acute, and often drew the laugh by the involuntary suddenness and aptness of his replies and illustrations. Easy and colloquial in his dialect, he carried his audience with him through this part. They were stirred up and enlivened, and, as a plain countryman once said, "He says it so that you feel you could have said it all yourself."

Last of all came what he considered the heart of his discourse—the pungent application. His previous explanation and argument he regarded as a mere preparation, or a bridge to pass over, to reach the effective appeal. A sermon that did not induce anybody to do anything he considered a sermon thrown away.

The object of preaching, in his view, was not merely to enlighten the understanding, or even to induce pleasing or devout contemplation, but to make people set about a thorough change of heart and life. These closing portions of his sermons were the peculiarity of his preaching. He warned, he entreated, he pleaded, urging now this motive and now that, talking as if his audience were one individual, whom he must, before he left the pulpit, persuade to take a certain step. "If these things are so," he would say, "you, my friend, have neglected this matter too long. Are you not convinced

that you ought to do something now, to-night, this moment? Do you say, 'What shall I do'? One thing I will tell you, that if you do not do something more than you have, you will be lost. That you acknowledge, do you not?"

Then, changing the tone of his voice to the lowest key of personal conversation, he would say, "Now, there is one thing you can do: You can resolve before God from this moment, that the salvation of your soul shall be your first object, and that, whatever it may mean to be a Christian, you will not rest till you are one. You can do that. Are you not conscious that you can? I put it to you,—will you do it? You cannot refuse without periling your salvation. When you leave this place to-night, you can avoid distracting conversation. You can preserve this resolve as carefully as you would shade a lamp which the winds of heaven are seeking to extinguish. Will you do it? Will you go to some solitary place to-night, and there kneel down and pray? You are conscious that you can do it. Will you do it? Will you open your Bible and read a chapter? And lest you should not know where to look, I will tell you. Read the first chapter of Proverbs, and then kneel down, confess your sins, and try to give yourself to God for the rest of your life. Then seek the instruction of your minister, or Christian friends; break off all outward and known sins; put yourself in the way of all religious influences, and I will venture to say, you cannot pursue this course a fortnight, a week, without finding a new and blessed life dawning within you."

I recollect one sermon that he preached in Boston, addressed to business men, those who *were* so engrossed and burdened with cares that they were tempted to feel that they could not give the time necessary to become

Christians. The practical point for which he pleaded was, that he would come to a resolution to give half an hour a day to religious reading and prayer.

He pleaded with all his eloquence for this one thing. "You cannot give half an hour this week, without giving an hour the next : your eternal life or death may turn on your granting or refusing this one thing."

The many business men who became members of his church attest the practical value of this style of appeal. As he preached, he watched the faces of his hearers, and when he saw that one was moved, he followed him.

"A—B—has seemed to feel a good deal," he would say, "these several Sundays. I must go after him. Something seems to block his wheels."

Often he used to say to me, speaking of one and another with whom he had been talking, "I've been feeling round to find where the block is. I put my finger on this and that, and it don't move; but sometimes the Lord helps me, and I touch the right thing, and all goes right."



## THE SUCCESSFUL MINISTER.

THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

What shall the man do who cometh after the king? And not only one, but after a royal family of "kings and priests unto God?" I feel that the eminent brethren who have preceded me have reaped the field; let me *glean* for you a few spears and kernels from my own personal experience. I congratulate you on choosing the poorest of trades, and the noblest of callings.

How shall each of you become, by God's blessing, a *successful minister*? To this, let me attempt a half dozen practical answers.

1st. Put your whole soul into your work. Love it more than a hungry man loves to eat his dinner. Otherwise the manufacture of just so much sermon-matter every week, and the routine of calls from house to house will soon become the dreariest of drudgeries. Your chief aim must be, not merely to produce good sermons, or to make numerous visits, or to attract large auditories, but to *save souls from hell* and to *guide souls to heaven*. Your prayer must be, "give me *souls* or I die!" To the godly minister who knows how to handle his tools, success is the rule; utter failure is the rare exception.

2d. In preparing your sermons, aim to preach *the whole Bible*. Some ministers ride hobbies—such as the prophecies, or popular reforms, or metaphysical systems.

They commonly fall into *ruts*. To ensure variety and freshness every Sabbath, explore the whole Word of God. Your own brain will soon run dry ; but you can never exhaust the Bible.

Preach one Sunday a biographical sermon ; then a thorough arousing doctrinal sermon ; then a tender discourse of consolation ; then an experimental discourse on Christian living, with illustrations drawn from daily life. By going over every part of the Scriptures, and every phase of human experience, you will escape the wearisome fault of monotony. Whatever you do, pray keep clear of *monotony* in themes, and monotony in style, and monotony in delivery. That was a sharp criticism which old Dr. Emmons passed on a certain sermon, when he said that it was "like Seekonk Plain, *long and level*." Rich preaching should be as varied with mountain, vale, and running stream as a picturesque landscape. But never take your auditors where they cannot see the cross of Christ.

3d. In selecting your topics for the pulpit, choose the *great themes*, such as the attributes of God, the Divine Love in Redemption, Sin and its roots, Repentance, Faith, Atonement, Conversion and its evidences, the Resurrection, the Judgment, Heaven, and Hell. Yet as daily life is made up of minute acts, do not overlook the minute points of duty or danger. If Paul was inspired to say "be courteous," then you may preach on Christian politeness ; if the Bible says that "wine is a mocker," then you have a right to break every decanter you can reach from the pulpit. Set forth every grace that beautifies a Christian ; and wherever you see a sin *hit it !*

Choose your texts where you can find them. Christ gathered His off of fig trees and in corn fields. If you are in an orchard, you grasp a stone or club that will

bring down the apples. What you are after is—the *apples*. So wherever you find a passage that will defend a truth, or kill a doubt, or awaken a sinner, or relieve a human trouble, seize it and use it. Always get your *text first*, and plant it, and let it grow up into your sermon ; and let the main idea of your text be the trunk-thought of your sermon. Out of this central trunk let the limbs expand, and on its branches let the “fruits of the Spirit” grow. Never commit the absurd folly of building a sermon, and then perching a text on top of it. Never attempt either to cheat your people into the belief that they are hearing a new sermon by swapping off an old text for a new one ; for the decapitation of its text ought to be as *sure death* to a good discourse as would be the stroke of your own head from your body. The sap of the text should reach the farthest twig of the sermon.

It is a happy thing to find sometimes an out-of-the-way passage, and get a new and fresh truth out of it. I always thank the ingenious and diligent preacher who drives his pick-axe down in an unexpected spot and opens up to me a gold mine. Spurgeon often excels in a novel selection and handling of Scripture passages. But never stoop to the sensational trick of choosing texts for their *mere oddity*. That was a paltry pun which was made by the minister who preached from those words in the 27th chapter of Acts, “*let her drive!*” The rustic preacher fancied that he had quite settled our Baptist brethren when he delivered a sermon against immersion from the words “beware of *divers* ;” and then added the concluding words—“and strange doctrines.” When Mr. Spurgeon began to preach he indulged in puns and drolleries, but the grace of God and the grandeur of His work have *sobered* him in later years. To-day he is the first of living preachers on the globe.

4th. In these days I fear that good, sound, old-fashioned, stout, *doctrinal preaching* is going out of vogue. I beg of you not to yield to this unhappy drift—no! not for an hour. Sound doctrine is the backbone of truly successful preaching. The mightiest discourses that have shaken vast assemblies, and sent sinners trembling to the Cross of Christ, have been vitalized by some stupendous “*doctrina*” or revealed *teaching* of Almighty God. My brilliant neighbor, Beecher, has unwisely said that “doctrine is only the skin of truth set up, and stuffed!” Just imagine St. Paul writing to Timothy “give attendance to —*the stuffed skin of truth!*”

If you are ever dry, never be dry in your doctrinal sermons. Always preach doctrine with intense emotion. Heat your argument *red hot*. Introduce all the lively and picturesque illustrations you can into your doctrinal discourses; it will make them interesting, and the truth will become pictorial to the mind's eye and to the memory. This was our Saviour's method. What a matchless discourse on the doctrine of God's mercy to the sinner is the parable of the Prodigal Son? A good minister is nourished in the words of faith and of good doctrine.

The successful preacher must always have a *method of his own*. Find out your *forte* and then stick to it. Study Lyman Beecher; study Griffin and Addison Alexander, and Spurgeon, but don't try to be either. Be yourself. The worst form of plagiarism is to attempt to stand in another man's shoes. As to the methods of preparation for the pulpit, *no rule is the best rule*. God made some men to write, and made some men to extemporize. Dr. Chalmers wrote every syllable of his sermons, and delivered them like a tornado. Spurgeon never writes a single sentence for the pulpit. Both these men use the best method. If I may be allowed to refer to myself, my own custom is

to use *all* methods. Sometimes I use no manuscript ; sometimes I write two-thirds, and sometimes only one-half of the sermon. The remainder I deliver under the heat of the moment. I change, too, the *words* of my manuscript as I go on ; I make them shorter and sharper. If in my study I wrote the word "avocations," when I come to preach I say *business* ; if I wrote "this commercial metropolis" I shorten it into "this great city ;" and never either in writing or speaking do I use two fashionable words, so puzzling to the common people—*objective* and *subjective*.

Always preach to the plainest part of your audience. If you elaborate your discourse for the most cultivated portion, they alone can understand you. But if you have the rich man in your church and also his coachman or gardener or servant, then preach to the coachman and the gardener, and you will sweep in the whole audience to the door. Even the most cultivated lawyer or collegian will be best pleased with *simplicity* and *earnestness*. The profoundest men do not come to church to have their brains taxed, but to have their hearts made holier and their lives made better.

Do not begin your sermons in a slovenly or stupid manner—expecting to recover your audience afterwards. People will endure a prosy introduction, when their curiosity is piqued to hear a distinguished preacher ; but the great mass of preachers are not distinguished. If you let your auditors wander off to "their farms and their merchandise," or drop fast asleep at the outset, it will be difficult to bring them back to you. Put the strength of your sermon into the first ten minutes, and the last ten minutes. *Begin* to preach in such a style that you shall nail every ear to the pulpit ; *end* your discourse with an ap-

peal that shall clench the truth and send your hearer home with God's Word ringing in his memory.

Preach *positive* truths. Negations never touch a sinner's heart. Unitarianism has no *push* in it, because it is a mere loose aggregation of negatives. Confirm your auditors; give them tonics! Pray do not be a discouraging or disconsolate drawler; do not be everlastingly bemoaning and bewailing everything. It is something indeed to give a man a very poor opinion of himself; but it is a far better thing to lead him to a warmer and loftier love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and to strengthen him with the positive power of a stalwart faith.

Let me remind you, in the next place, my young brethren, that the successful preacher must always be a *fearless* preacher. I know well the temptations which we have to say popular things instead of true things; and when a pastor is sore pressed to maintain his family, he is even tempted sometimes to put salary above souls. The Evil One whispers to him, "You get only \$1000 a year and you must not drive away Judge A—— or Col. B——, your best supporters." To such subtle whispers say evermore "Get thee *behind* me, Satan!" The moment you begin to tremble before an auditor, you are gone! Fear God always; but man *never*!

In dealing faithfully with popular sins, you must expect opposition; but it will come quite as often from timid Christians, as from wrong-doers themselves. Sometimes you really please those whom you expected to offend. On a certain Sabbath in my early ministry, I preached pretty plainly and emphatically against the sin of making and vending alcoholic poisons. I *do* allude to that subject *occasionally*. A prominent trustee in my church who had made all his money by the manufacture of liquor, sat during the sermon and nibbled the head of his cane under the

gaze of the whole congregation. After service, some people said, "That sermon will drive the Squire off, *sure*." But when a friend said to him timidly, "Squire, how did you relish *that*?" he very nobly replied, "If the little man believes it, *let him say it*." Years afterwards he sent for me to come fifty miles and stand by his dying bed.

Another temptation is to write "splendid sermons," and to covet popular applause. To be told after preaching, "you gave us a magnificent discourse," may be a curse to you; but to be told "that sermon cut me to the heart," or "sent me to Jesus," is a blessing beyond measure. It is the seal of the spirit. You may toil all the week on an elaborate, ornamental discourse, and polish it with the pumice-stone to the last syllable, and say to yourself, "There! I fancy that is a great sermon." But it is probable that God will *not* think it a very great sermon, and He will smash your pride and self-conceit, by making it as barren of results as the East wind. On the other hand you will sometimes deliver a plain, simple sermon that you are almost ashamed of, and you shall afterwards learn that it drew some poor sinner to the Saviour.

The year after my licensure, I preached at Saratoga. The next day a baker in the village said to me, "Young man! you are a stranger here, and yesterday I pitied you when you began, for you did not know what a critical audience you had to address. But I have noticed that if a minister can only convince his congregation during the first five minutes that he cares for nothing but to *save their souls*, he will *kill all the critics in the house*." I have always thanked that baker for the best practical hint I ever got. Old Dr. Alexander never said a truer thing to us in the Seminary.

6th. This leads me to say that the highest element of

power in the successful preacher is *heart power*. At the outset, aim to win the affections of your people. Love them, and they will love you. You can do but little good to your auditors if they do not like you, and none at all, if they don't think enough of you to come and hear you. Give full play to your own heart while writing, and while you are preaching. Touch the tender chords. I very much doubt whether the man who has no pathos in his nature was ever called of God to the sacred ministry. Beecher's highest power is in his pathos ; so is Gough's ; so is Dr. Guthrie's. Remember that your people have cradles in their houses, and sick beds, and are all of them men and women "of like passions" with yourself. If you can't help weeping, then weep ; if your feelings overcome you, then *break down* ! It may break some others down too, and reach the fount of their tears. President McCosh lately described to me a wonderful scene in the Scotch General Assembly, when Alexander Duff spoke for two hours to an audience, who for the most part were opposed to his views, and yet he so completely broke them down by his overwhelming pathos, that every man in the multitude was weeping ; and the member of Parliament who went around to "lift" the missionary collection afterwards, walked with his handkerchief to his eyes, and the tears dropping from his cheeks ! The vast assembly was a perfect *Bochim*.

The two most successful ministers in this city are not men who preach splendid intellectual discourses, but are possessed of this heart-power in the pulpit, the prayer-meeting, and in their *pastoral work*.

7th. Young brethren ! aim from the start to be thorough pastors. During the week go to those whom you expect to come to you on the Sabbath. In the morning of each day, study books ; in the afternoon, study door-plates and



—*human nature*. Your people will give you material for your best practical sermons. After an effective Sunday work, go around among your flock, as Napoleon rode over the field after a battle, to see where the shot struck, and who were among the wounded.

In pastoral visiting go where you are needed the most. If you neglect anybody neglect the strong, the cultured and the godly. Go to the unconverted; go to the suffering; and go to those houses where the world comes the least. Get acquainted with everybody, and don't forget to recognize everybody on the street. Always have a tract or two in your pocket and a kind word on your lips. Be sure of this, that every person, high or low, likes personal attention.

There are two requisites for a successful minister that I must just allude to before I close these rambling remarks. The one is—and a very essential one, too—that he possess *vigorous health*.

The men who have produced the greatest effect in the pulpit—Chalmers, Lyman Beecher, Spurgeon, Guthrie, &c.,—have been men who had great volumes of animal heat. To preserve health, secure *sound sleep*. Never touch a sermon on Saturday night. Eat nourishing food, and use tea and coffee "as not abusing them." However jaded you may be, never touch any such treacherous stimulants as port wine and ale. When I cannot utter the message of the Holy Ghost without putting a bottle to my lips, I shall be quite sure that the Lord has *demitted* me from the Christian ministry. The weak point with many ministers is the throat; they get bronchial diseases by reading in the pulpit with their chins dropped down on the breast. Hold up your heads! Auctioneers and Methodist circuit-riders seldom have bronchitis.

In these days it is quite indispensable to success that a

pastor have administrative ability. Common sense is a part of the *divine* call to the ministry ; and you must use discretion and zeal in the direction and developement of your church activities. Aim to keep everybody at work. Set the new converts at some work straight-way. One great element of success with Dr. Asa D. Smith was the developement of his flock in laboring and giving. But when you have done your utmost to spur on your people to work for Christ, you will have drones enough left to vex your souls beyond measure.

Study the best models ; read carefully the lives and the methods of such men as Robert McCheyne, Payson, Chalmers, the elder Beecher, and the apostolic William C. Burns. Work for RESULTS. Preach for RESULTS. In your audience nearly every Sabbath will be some immortal soul who is hearing *his last sermon*. When I preached once in Grant's army I said to myself "Yonder is the man who will soon be carried wounded and dying *to the rear!*"

And now as you look out upon the vast field white to the harvest, and much of it perishing for want of reapers, let the view only quicken you to redouble your diligence, and to make your sickles sharp by study and by prayer ! Do not go until the blade is keen ; and then grasp and wield it until your hand is stiff in death ! Yonder waits your pulpit. Prepare to enter it in the love of Christ. When you are in it, remember that you will always have Almighty God as one of your auditors, and every sermon you preach may possibly be your last.

Father of mercies, bow thine ear,  
Attentive to our earnest prayer ;  
We plead for those who plead for Thee ;  
Successful may they ever be.

**Clothe them with energy divine,  
And let their messages be Thine ;  
To them Thy sacred truth reveal ;  
Suppress their fear, inflame their zeal.**

**Teach them to sow the precious seed ;  
Teach them Thy chosen flocks to feed ;  
Teach them immortal souls to gain—  
Souls that will reward their pain.**

## HOW TO PREACH.

THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

"Shall I write my sermons, or shall I preach extemporaneously? Please reply through *THE INDEPENDENT*, for the benefit of other young beginners like myself."

The good brother who sends this ancient and oft-agitated question might as well have accompanied it with the other equally ancient one, "What shall I eat for my dinner?" To both questions we would render the same answer: "Just what *agrees with you best*." Some men—like President Edwards and Dr. Chalmers—were created to preach with notes. Their minds worked to the best advantage in that method. Some other men—like Whitefield and Spurgeon—were created to preach without a line of prepared manuscript. Yet both of these latter preachers made thorough preparation for the pulpit, or they never would have won their marvelous success as effective preachers of the Gospel.

To the question of our young brother, "Shall I write my sermons?" we would unhesitatingly answer: "Yes. Write out just as carefully and thoroughly as possible at least one sermon every week." To a novice in the ministry this is almost indispensable. Writing makes an exact man, just as reading makes a full man. Thought should be bestowed on every sentence, and on every word in the sentence. Dr. Bethune once told us that he spent

a whole day on a single sentence in his oration before the "Porter Society," at Andover; but those half dozen lines are a masterpiece of powerful composition. Painful writing makes easy hearing for the auditors.

After you have written out your sermon, and pruned it to the last degree, you may either take the notes with you to the pulpit, or not, just as you prefer. It does not follow that, because you have written your discourse, you should *read* it afterward. If you can train your memory to recall the whole sermon, then so much the better; you can give your eyes to your audience, and not to your "parchments." Our excellent friend, Dr. John Hall, ranks as an extempore preacher, and one of the best; yet he said to us, lately: "I make it a rule to write one sermon every week." He writes it on his memory at the same time. This is a habit easily acquired. The Rev. Newman Hall delivered a capital discourse in our pulpit from a "brief" of twenty lines. Three months afterward he wrote out the same discourse *verbatim* for publication! Such a memory as that is a treasure. Our young brother can probably have just such a well-trained "beast of burden" of his own, if he chooses. Memory is the most docile of mental faculties. Its best strengthener is exercise.

Suppose that you take your notes to the pulpit. Must you pin your eyes upon them, and read them with slavish monotony? By no means. Dr. Chalmers wrote out his magnificent astronomical discourses, and then delivered them in tones that "made the rafters roar." Dr. Addison Alexander, in his best days, was never more eloquent than over his manuscript. Dr. Griffin's splendid sermon on the "Worth of the Soul" was finished to the last syllable, and then delivered with a tremendous vehemence, that made his auditors tremble. It is not so difficult a feat as many imagine to grow impassioned over a manuscript. A

preacher of God's Word has no business to go into the sacred desk unless he has the "fire in his bones," and that inward fire will kindle his paper into a blaze.

The man who is master of the situation may use notes, "as not abusing them." He may manage to interject in the midst of his written matter the most effective passages which flash upon him in the heat of the moment. This is one of Mr. Beecher's methods. For a true orator should have many methods, and be the slave of none. We have sat in the Plymouth pulpit with Boanerges, when he had fully one-half of his discourse on loose sheets before him. After reading a few moments, with great animation, he stepped to the end of his desk, threw up a rocket or two, or else introduced one of his pathetic master-strokes in a sweet undertone, and then returned to his notes again. This method combines the advantages of previous preparation and logical arrangement with the freedom of off hand utterance. If the word in the manuscript is not so short or so strong as it ought to be, the collected speaker can make the change on the instant. If in the quiet of his study he wrote the phrase "eternal retribution," he will be very apt to condense two big words into the single one, *hell*. If he had described a man as laboring under a "remarkable obliquity of intellect," he will probably pack the same thought into the word *fool*. The best word is often the very word that suggests itself in the heat of the occasion. One element of Spurgeon's power is the short, sharp, simple English which he always uses.

But Mr. Spurgeon, you may say, always extemporizes. So he does. His is one of those minds which work better under the magnetism of the pulpit and the crowd, than in the more chilling atmosphere of his study. There are some men who are oftener inspired through the tongue than they are through the pen. They are weak writers,

but powerful speakers. Henry Clay was such a man. So was the eloquent John Breckenridge, of Princeton Seminary. Even grand old Lyman Beecher was never so overwhelming as when in the full torrent of argument before an audience. He wrote with admirable vigor; but it required the electricity of the pulpit to make him "thunder all round the horizon" of truth. Lyman Beecher was the king of American preachers, and he never diluted his discourses with the wish-wash of what is often called in our day "Liberal Christianity."

Three things are essential to success in extemporaneous oratory. The first is, that the preacher be a master of his subject; and this requires previous study. The second is, that he be a master of language, and have a ready and copious supply of words at his command. The third is, that he have good *digestion*. It is a desperately difficult thing for a man to preach well when he is under the nightmare of dyspepsia. The highest success in the pulpit must depend not only on the help of God, but on a sound bodily constitution. Even the peerless Dr. Guthrie, of Scotland, whom the *London Times* well styled "the most eloquent man in Europe," has been stricken down from his work by physical disease.

If our young questioner has the gift of a ready utterance, let him by all means cultivate it. Let him pay no heed to old Dr. Emmons's famous witticism, that "extempore preaching is *pro tempore* preaching." Let him study his subject thoroughly, and with prayer. Let him write often and carefully, and then leave his notes at home, if he can get on possibly without them. Let him give full play to his instincts and his affections. The grandest power in the pulpit is *heart-power*.

Eloquence is truth in earnest. When God's truth gets full possession of a man's conscience; when all his sym-

thies are in full play; when the soul becomes luminous until the interior glow blazes out through every crevice; when the whole man is on fire from head to foot ; then is he naturally and honestly and irresistibly eloquent. To this result the heart contributes even more than the head. The grandest achievements of the pulpit have been reached when the minister of Christ has received the fullest celestial baptism of love, when self has been swallowed up in the love of souls and in the glory that surrounds the cross of Calvary.



## WINNING SOULS TO CHRIST.

THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

Let me suggest as a key-note for the coming year—*winning souls*. Some one inquired of Dr. Lyman Beecher, in his old age, "Doctor, you know many things ; but what do you think the main thing?" The sturdy old hero of forty revivals answered, "It is not theology ; it is not controversy ; it is saving souls."

This is a personal work. Each man and woman must be a fisher. It is a great mistake to suppose that a whole church can lay hold of a huge drag-net, and draw in, at a single haul, a "multitude of fishes." This is an individual work upon individual hearts. The pastor must do his part in the pulpit and in personal interviews. The Sunday school teacher must take hold of his pupils one by one. The Christian who would win Harlan Page's success must adopt Harlan Page's method; and that was to try to do *some good to every one he met*. Sometimes it was only a kind but impressive word ; sometimes it was a faithful private conversation ; sometimes he wrote a letter to the unconverted, inviting to the Saviour ; sometimes he did a kindness to unlock the heart, and then followed it by a close appeal. A great many crude things have been said about the "machinery of revivals ;" but there is one sort of machinery as old as the apostles, and which never wears out—it is the simple method of per-

sonal effort, prompted by love. The Acts of the Apostles are not a history of churches, but of individual Christians; the fishery for souls was not by a combined pull on an ecclesiastical drag-net, but each fisher dropped his own hook, baited with *love*.

We emphasize this last pithy word. Souls must be *loved* toward Christ. He that *winneth* is wise. Cutting words to the unconverted are only the foolish attempt to bait flies with vinegar. "Truthing it in love" is the literal reading of Paul's method which he commends in his letter to the brethren at Ephesus. Sinners will bear tremendously close and searching truth, if it is only spoken out of a heart that is unmistakably moved by an unselfish affection. The first point is persuasion; or, in other words, to move the sinner to move himself. It has been well said that the divine method for winning souls is not by a "thou *shalt*;" but by persuading each sinner to say for himself, I *will*." To accomplish this persuasion, the first essential is to love a man's soul, and to convince him that you do love him. The only people in our churches who really do much good are those who have established a confidence in their own sincerity, and who get credit for a disinterested benevolence. Ungodly persons will sometimes phrase their opinions of a church member on this wise: "I believe in Mr. A——. He pays his debts, and he came to sit up with me when I was sick. He's no Pharisee." Now, such a Mr. A—— is the only one who has sufficiently won the confidence of impenitent people to win them over to Christ. No others need make the attempt.

There is a class of censorious Christians who pray and speak vitriol and vinegar in the prayer meetings, who are perpetually berating the whole church for its coldness and lethargy, and whose stereotyped harangue is: "Men and

brethren, sinners all around us are going down by thousands to Hell!" These are the fishermen who perpetually lash the waters into commotion with their fishing-rods, but who never catch even a nibble. These people need a "revival" themselves—a revival of the spirit of Christ in their own hearts. Our All-wise Master never would have won Zaccheus over by denouncing him as an extortionate publican. He did win him by personal attention. When the man whom all Jericho was in the habit of kicking at, found at last a friend, who had a "fellow-feeling" for him, he opened his heart to him. Christ "went to be a guest with a man who was a sinner." He not only got into that sinner's house, but into his heart.

Whenever I think of *winning* souls to Christ, I recall the history of a beloved friend, who thirty years ago was a wretched waif on the current of "fast living" (which really means fast dying.) The reckless youth seemed abandoned of God and man. He spent his nights in the buffooneries of the dram-shop, and his days in the waking remorse of a drunkard. On a certain Sabbath afternoon he was sauntering through the public square of Worcester, out of humor with all the world and with himself. A kind voice suddenly saluted him. It was from a stranger, who touched him on the shoulder, and said, very cordially: "Mr. Gough, I believe?" "Yes, sir, that's my name." Then followed a few kind words from the benevolent stranger, with a pressing invitation "to come to our meeting to-morrow night, where I will introduce you to good friends, who will *help* you to keep a temperance pledge." The promise was made on the spot, and faithfully kept. The pledge was taken, and by God's help is kept to this hour. The poor boot-maker who tapped that youth on the shoulder has gone to Heaven. But the man he saved has touched more hearts to tears than any other living

man on the globe. Methinks, when I listen to the thunders of applause which greet John B. Gough in vast crowded lecture-halls, I am only hearing the echoes of that tap on the shoulder under the elms of Worcester. He that *winneth* souls is wise.

If I may be allowed to suggest the class upon whom the soul-winning process should be attempted, I would suggest, not the easy cases, but the *hardest*. It is not enough to reach those who are nearest to the Kingdom of Heaven. Let us try for those who are farthest off. A "revival" that shall gather in the scoffers and the Sabbath-breakers, the drunkards and the sensualists—in "high life," as well as in low—can only come from a revival of Christ's loving and laborious spirit in the hearts of his people. The best warfare against the Devil is to *win* away his victims, one by one, to the side of Jesus.

## THE REVIVAL WE NEED.

THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

The departure of the veteran Finney to his rest and the return of Messrs. Moody and Sankey to their native shores both call up to men's minds at once the word *revival*. The ascending Elijah of Oberlin, leaving his mantle to the returning Elisha, has entered upon his heavenly joys ; and not the least of these joys must be his discovery of many souls in Heaven whom his labors brought thither. That one successful "revivalist" has gone, and that another one, accompanied by his singing associate, has come to us, is very certain, but it is not absolutely certain that a general and powerful awakening is to come with him. To human eye it looks probable. Good men and women are looking, longing, and earnestly praying for a new Pentecost. But what kind of a revival is most needed ? What graces and forces of the Christian Church need most to be revived, what weak points need most to be strengthened, what broken walls require to be rebuilt ? God knoweth best, and His ways are higher than our ways. But there are some things that we mortals can see, and, seeing them, can strive to secure them.

It is very certain that one thing which sensible men ought not to strive after is a mere outbreak of spasmodic excitement, kindled by artificial methods. All religious awakenings must be attended with some degree of excite-

ment. Peter and John made no small stir in Jerusalem, as Brother Moody has made no small stir in London. But the excitement was an incident, not an end. When the noise of the thunder and the rain has passed away, the blessings of the spiritual shower remain. Good men should neither seek after popular excitement nor be afraid of it if it comes. The spiritual result is what should be aimed at, whether God shall order it in silence or amid violent demonstrations of popular feeling.

There were some methods employed by the late President Finney in the days of his grandest success, which were copied after the apostolic models and which cannot be easily improved. He preached God's Word, clear through, and without flinching. Never muffling the Sword of the Spirit, he made it cut to the very marrow. Sometimes he indulged in extravagant phrases, and often rung changes upon the word "hell" until the oft-reiteration somewhat cheapened its effect on the conscience. These were small blemishes upon a glorious work.

Finney's great aim was to make every hearer feel that he was a sinner against a holy God ; that sin was exceeding heinous and justly damnable ; that sin should be abandoned straightway, and the sinner should turn immediately unto God, who would abundantly pardon him, through Jesus Christ as a complete Saviour. It was no scrimped and shallow gospel that our American Boanerges preached ; but a thorough depravity to be fled from, and a thorough holiness of heart and life to be striven for. He put his plow in deep, clear under men's secret motives, and it often made ripping work.

The conviction of personal guilt produced by the Holy Spirit under Finney's powerful preaching was usually very acute and pungent. The conversions to a better life bore, usually, an impression as clean-cut as the stamp of

the die on a new dollar from the mint. Men of intellect and culture were reached by his trenchant arguments. Skeptics were revolutionized. The standard of daily life which he held up was a high and pure and manly and noble one. It demanded stern self-denial and proved its love of Jesus Christ by keeping his commandments.

As a subordinate agency to the preaching of the Word, Mr. Finney employed the "anxious seat" and the inquiry meeting very much as Mr. Moody has employed the inquiry meeting in Great Britain. The two-fold object was spiritual direction in order to *immediate decision* for Christ. Conversion was set forth not as an end, but only as the starting-point of a true and righteous life, with Heaven's perfection as its goal. It is not to be wondered at, that such methods wrought glorious results. Many of the best men and women of the last quarter of a century, who have led in Christian effort and in moral reforms, were the shining products of Charles G. Finney's powerful ministry.

We have outlined some of the chief characteristics of the preaching and the methods employed in the great revivals from 1820 to 1840, because we believe that those same features deserve to be employed again. Substantially, they have their foundations in God's Word and in the necessities of human nature, which are always the same.

We need now more thorough study of God's Word; and, what is far more important still, a thorough *keeping* of God's law. That law is no more obsolete than is the precious atoning blood of Calvary. The pulpit of our day needs to give greater emphasis to the guilt of sin and its inevitable retributions. A sinner needs to know just what he now is, before he is likely to seek to become better. Of a certain sort of mushy sentimentalism we have

had enough and too much. May God teach all his teachers how to teach dying souls the only way to Life.

The revival we need is not only a revival of sounder scriptural preaching, but a revival of true Christian *living*. We have had quite a surfeit of the religion which luxuriates in the devout fervors of the prayer-meeting and the camp-ground, which sings sweet hymns and applauds sweet sermons, and then goes straight off to its money-grasping and its pleasure-seeking and its panderings to self and sin. God forbid that we speak lightly of true spiritual emotion ! But the Christianity which Christ demands is something deeper than a song or a sermon or a sacrament. It is the holy and the humble imitation of himself.

The revival, then, which we need, is a revival of the religion which keeps God's commandments ; which tells the truth and sticks to its promises ; which pays twenty shillings to the pound ; which cares more for a good character than a fine coat ; which votes at the ballot-box in the same direction that it prays ; which denies ungodly lusts, and which can be trusted in every stress of temptation. A revival which will sweeten our homes, and chasten our press and purify our politics and cleanse our business and commerce from roguery and rottenness, would be a boon from Heaven. A revival which will bring not only a Bible-knowledge, but a *Bible conscience* to all, is what the land is dying for. The world's sorest want to-day is more Christ-like men and women. The preaching it needs is—more *sermons in shoes*.

If our honored and beloved countrymen, Moody and Sankey, have come to us freighted with such messages and aims and holy purposes, then may God give them an abundant entrance everywhere, and a mighty success. The field is ripe and ready for their sickles. The Divine



Spirit will surely attend them. God's true people will welcome them with prayer and eager sympathy. Scoffers may sneer and devils may rage ; but the word of Jehovah will grow mightily and prevail. To prepare for such a revival, let us be putting away sin from our hearts and be seeking an inflow of the spirit of Jesus.

## KINDLING THE FIRE.

REV. THEO. L. CUYLER, D. D.

"This looks like slow work," we remarked to Brother Moody, in the little prayer-room of Calvary Chapel, Brooklyn, during the winter of 1872.

"Yes," responded the modest evangelist, "it is slow, and it looks like a small work. But if you want to kindle a fire you collect a handful of sticks, light them with a match, and keep blowing until they begin to blaze. After the fire is once fairly started, you may heap on as much wood as you can get. So I am working here with a handful of Christians, endeavoring to get them to consecrate themselves fully to Jesus; and if they get well warmed with divine love, I have no fear but that a genuine revival will begin and sinners will be converted."

Mr. Moody was right. The handful of disciples in that meeting did receive a fresh baptism, and within two months over one hundred souls were converted and received into the fellowship of our church.

This little incident not only gives a clue to the success of Mr. Moody in more than one of his evangelistic campaigns, but it affords a timely hint to those pastors and working Christians who are longing for a revival in their own churches. God's word teaches us never to de-

spise the day of small things. The mightiest flame which dyes the heavens with its crimson glow was once a spark—a mere seed of fire.

Pentecost began with a small prayer-meeting in an upper room. Had there been a daily paper in Jerusalem about those times, it would probably have bestowed but a scanty notice upon that gathering of one hundred and twenty fishermen and publicans and other despised “fanatics,” who assembled to pay honor to the crucified Nazarene. But the fire was kindled in that upper room which, within a dozen years, had leaped over the civilized world. The Reformation of the sixteenth century had its seed of fire in Martin Luther’s chamber at Erfurth.

This is the way that revivals begin. Jeremiah Lamphier and Mahlon T. Hewitt, and one or two other zealous spirits, came together in the upper room in Fulton Street, New York, and prayed together till their hearts burned within them. Brother Hewitt told me that it seemed an even chance for several days whether the meeting would live or die. The Holy Spirit’s breath fanned the spark. It kindled, and by the end of four months, New York was in a blaze. No one has yet seen the ashes of that fire in Fulton street ; it has burned for eighteen years.

The late Dr. Thomas H. Skinner used to tell of a wonderful coming together of three men in his study in Philadelphia when he was pastor of the Arch Street Church. They travailed with God in prayer. They made a clean breast in confession of sin, and broke down before God. One and another church officer came in and joined them. The heavenly flame soon spread through the whole church in one of the most powerful revivals ever known in Philadelphia. It was during that awakening that Dr. Lyman Beecher delivered his celebrated discourse on the “Gov-

ernment of God," and when he came down from the pulpit he was asked : " Doctor, how long did it take you to prepare that sermon ? " " About forty years," replied the veteran. Such sermons as that are a growth, not a momentary inspiration. Oaks do not spring up like gourds.

Many a pastor has had some such experience as Dr. Skinner's in Arch Street. While going through my congregation one afternoon on a pastoral visitation, I found three persons under deep conviction of sin. I at once summoned my church-officers together and recommended a daily prayer-meeting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. When the first inquiry-meeting was held, the officers took their hats and went home. I wrote each one of them a sharp note. One or two were affronted, but the irritation proved a means of grace. It is a good thing to get a sleepy backslider thoroughly angry ; when a wound smarts it is commonly healing. Mr. Moody wittily says :  
( " When God awakens a sleeping soul, it generally wakes up *cross*." Let us never be alarmed when the truth, working in a conscience, produces sharp words. The fire is getting into the bones. In a few days I found all my staff of elders and deacons well warmed to the work. A blessed revival followed.

All these instances which I have cited—and I could multiply them largely—point one way. They all show that in kindling a spiritual fire the true method is for two or three earnest Christians to come together humbly, and in a penitential spirit, lay themselves down at the feet of Jesus, and ask him to pour into them his quickening Spirit. Let their consecration of themselves be entire and unreserved. First let them put away sin and unbelief, and ask the Lord to cleanse them thoroughly for his work. We

have got to be emptied before we are filled. Selfishness, and evil thoughts, and grudges, and the devil of unbelief, must be cast out before the Master will "make his abode" in our hearts. When a Christian has received the inpouring of Jesus into his or her soul, then is he or she prepared to go and labor for the conversion of the impenitent.

This labor must be personal and directed to individual cases. When Philip has received Jesus he goes off at once to find his friend Nathaniel and brings him to the Saviour. The Acts of the Apostles is mainly a record of individual labor, for, and with individual sinners. Paul did not think it beneath him to work upon one poor cripple at Lystra. Jesus himself gave a whole evening to one anxious inquirer, and a whole noonday to a single sinful woman at Sychar. The Scriptural lessons all teach the power of personal effort.

The danger in our churches is that individual responsibility will be lost sight of and each Christian will neglect his own duty while waiting for others to move. Instead of this let the ones who have consecrated themselves to Jesus begin at once to labor upon the cases that lie nearest to their hands. Thus the fire spreads. The few who are red-hot kindle others.

It is a humiliating fact that a church of blood-bought disciples should need a "revival." But there is only one remedy, and that is the new baptism of the Holy Ghost. Those who first felt the desire for this spiritual power from on high must betake themselves to penitential prayer and then to work. A half dozen such live coals are likely to kindle a whole church. Instead of waiting for a Moody or a Sankey to come, why will not the reader of this article implore the Divine Spirit to light his torch, and then let him carry his fire to his neighbor.

"Go preach my Gospel," saith the Lord,  
"Bid the whole earth my grace receive ;  
He shall be sav'd that trusts my word  
And he condemn'd that won't believe."

"I'll make your great commission known ;  
And ye shall prove my gospel true,  
By all the works that I have done,  
By all the wonders ye shall do."

## WHAT SHALL I DO TO BE SAVED ?

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

“Men and brethren, what shall we *do* !” This was the eager question of a large company of people at Jerusalem who were “pricked to the heart.” Their consciences were aroused under plain preaching to them as sinners who had “crucified and slain” the Messiah. They *felt* keenly. But the Apostle Peter did not stop to commend them for feeling so tenderly, or to exhort them to deepen their emotions. He endeavored to lift the whole matter of their salvation out of the vapory region of emotion, and to base it on the solid ground of *principle*.

It is a sad mischief to thousands in our congregations that they feel so much and *do so little*. They melt under eloquent preaching, perhaps shed tears. (So they do over a pathetic novel.) Their consciences are touched. They make good resolutions, and then go home, and straightway forget what manner of persons they have been. This is a most dangerous and damaging process. My friend, don't you know that to *weep* over sin, and then not to quit the sin—to have a good *feeling*, and not to carry it out into practice—does you a most serious harm ? It is a wrong upon the Holy Spirit, and a most terrible wrong to yourself. It hardens your heart most fearfully. The most difficult persons in our congregations to deal with are those emotional people who have wept and resolved

an hundred times, and yet have never lifted a finger to *obey Christ*. I am afraid that their tears in this world are but a prelude to bitter tears in perdition. Hell is full of weepers. Even Satan himself may be wrung with intense and inconceivable anguish. It is well to feel ; but it is not enough to feel. An ounce of faith is worth a ton of feeling.

But what answer does Peter make to his awakened and anxious auditors ? Does he tell them that they have no natural ability to do their duty ? Does he address them as "poor sinners," more to be pitied than to be blamed ? Does he offer to pray for them, and thus lead them to cling to his skirts, instead of clinging to the Saviour ? Does he urge them to take to good reading, or even to come often to hear him preach the Gospel ? No, indeed ! All such inventions and devices he leaves to modern pretenders and false guides in divinity. His auditors demanded to know what they should *do* ; and he gives them at once a piece of *work*—of thorough work for the heart and the daily life. He knew that sinners must "work out their own salvation," even while God was "working in them to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Peter's answer to their question begins with one short word, that flashes like a sabre, and cuts like a sabre, too, "REPENT !" "Oh ! but," they might say, "we are penitent ; we feel sorely ; we are pierced to the heart." Very true. But feeling keenly is not always repentance. For, if so, then every inebriate would be repentant ; no men suffer keener self-loathing and misery than does a drunkard while he is sober. Repentance is an infinitely deeper thing than sorrow, or suffering, or dread of a wrath to come. It is the taking a right view of sin *as sinful*, and then *quitting it*. I look at a glass of exhilarating drink which I hold in my hand, and say to myself : "That is a poison. It has an adder in it ; it is *death* !" and then I *drop* it in



a moment. That is a genuine repentance of the sin of tippling ; and it is the only kind of repentance that can save an inebriate. God's grace may be operating upon the inebriate ; but still he must renounce the fatal cup of his own accord and for himself.

The fact that God's Spirit awakens repentance and promotes repentance in a sinner's heart does not alter one whit that other fact that repentance must be your own act. You must forsake your sins voluntarily. There is no merit in a criminal's giving up the practice of plundering when he has no longer the power to plunder. If you only give up wrong-doing reluctantly, and then hanker after your sinful practices again, that is not repentance. Evangelical repentance implies change of mind, change of purpose, change of conduct. We repeat once more that it is a taking of a right view of all sin as utterly *wicked*, and then *quitting* it. My friend, have you done this ? Then you have put your foot on the first round of the ladder that leads upward and heavenward.

2d. Another vital point is unconditional submission to God. When a certain commander of a conquered fort inquired of his conqueror on what terms the fortress should be given up, the memorable reply was : " Unconditional surrender." If you are a sinner, then your heart is a rebel fortress. It must be yielded to the Lord ; yielded entirely and yielded without any conditions on your side. Do not stop to bargain with God. Put in no selfish demands. Saul of Tarsus yielded up every point when he cried out from the ground : " Lord, *what wilt thou have me to do ?*" An intelligent woman, who had been in deep distress for many weeks, finally said : " Peace with God, I know nothing about ; but *I have done quarreling with him*. I am justly condemned. I have resolved to submit to God, and serve him, and do all the good I can as long as I live ; and

then *go to Hell*, as I deserve." Her pastor quietly replied : " You will find it hard work to get to Hell in *that way*." He said no more. The frank, honest-hearted woman soon found that her calm, willing submission to God—her willingness that *God should reign*, while she patiently did her duty, was bringing her abiding peace and strength. She became a strong, consistent Christian. Her will yielded to God's will. To know the will of the Lord Jesus, and to *do it* in his strength, is the very core of true religion.

Especially I entreat you not to demand of God the ready pay of " comfort " and " joy." Don't stop to think about happiness. A wounded soldier must not expect any comfort until the bullet has been extracted. When the festering rifle-ball is out he will feel better and get well. So, when the festering sin comes out of your heart, and all the wicked enmity to God, you will find true comfort ; but not before. Do not be selfishly greedy of enjoyment. Paul was perfectly content to suffer hunger, and weariness, and prisons, and death for Jesus' sake. He was not everlastingly begging to be " happy, happy, happy," like certain watery professors nowadays. To do Christ's will and to save souls was his joy and crown. If Paul were living to-day, I venture to say that he would love those sweet lines of Anna L. Waring :

" Lord ! I would have my spirit filled  
With grateful love to Thee,  
More careful not to serve Thee much,  
But to *please Thee perfectly*."  
" There are briers besetting every path,  
That call for patient care;  
There is a cross in every lot,  
And an hourly need of prayer;  
And a lowly heart that leans on Thee  
*Is happy anywhere*."

3d. Peter did not stop with preaching repentance of sin. He pointed to CHRIST, and enjoined immediate confession of the Lord Jesus. To quit sin and to follow the Divine Saviour was the sum and substance of the duty which Peter laid upon those anxious inquirers. This, too, is *your* duty. Begin at once to do the first thing which Christ bids you. At whatever point Christ is pressing you, *yield!* Obey! When you yield even one single point to please Christ the change is begun. When you yield one point from principle, you will be ready to yield all. To be willing to trust *on* Christ and to go *with* Christ, is to be a converted man or woman. When you consent to obey Christ, and to do this at all hazards, and cost what it will, you are a Christian. As to raptures and ecstasies, it will be time enough to look for them when you get into heaven.

In these plain, practical counsels I have said nothing about prayer. For, if you are trying to *do* what the Word of God and the Holy Spirit command you, it must inevitably lead you to pray fervently. And, unless you actually do what the Lord requires of you, all the prayer in the universe cannot save your soul.

“Come, humble sinner, in whose breast

“A thousand thoughts revolve;

“Come, with your guilt and fear oppress’d,

“And make this last resolve :—

“I’ll go to Jesus, though my sin

“Hath like a mountain rose;

“I know his courts, I’ll enter in,

“Whatever may oppose.

“Prostrate I’ll lie before his throne,

“And there my guilt confess;

“I’ll tell him I’m a wretch undone,

“Without his sov’reign grace.

"I'll to the gracious King approach,  
" Whose sceptre pardon gives;  
"Perhaps he may command my touch—  
" And then the suppliant lives.

" Perhaps he will admit my plea,  
" Perhaps will hear my prayer;  
"But if I perish, I will pray,  
" And perish only there.

"I can but perish if I go,  
" I am resolv'd to try;  
"For if I stay away, I know  
" I must forever die."

## COMPLETE CONSECRATION.

THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

Complete consecration ! The very mention of these words makes the heart of some of our readers leap up within them. It is for that blessing they are now longing ; toward that goal of spiritual attainment they are pressing and struggling. And for all such earnest souls let us breathe anew that wonderful prayer of the Apostle Paul for his Thessalonian brethren : " May the very God of peace *sanctify you wholly* ; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This comprehensive prayer is worthy our most devout study. It bears more closely upon the great vital question before us than almost any passage in God's precious Word. It is a petition for complete consecration. The word translated " sanctify " in our version often has the meaning of *consecrate*, or set apart to a holy use. In the twenty-third chapter of Matthew we read that " the temple *consecrates* (*i. e.*, makes sacred) the gold." Paul speaks of a " vessel consecrated and meet for the Master's use." In his beautiful and extended prayer for his disciples our Lord might have used this same Greek word in this very sense. If so, he prayed as follows : " Consecrate them for thy truth." And then he adds : " For their sakes I *consecrate myself*, that they also may be consecrated

through [or for] the truth." He might thus mean to declare : I devote myself body and soul to my great atoning work, now to be consummated by my sacrificial death ; and then he prays for their consecration by the truth and for the preaching of the truth. Such eminent scholars as Moses Stuart and Dr. Edward Robinson hold that this is the proper interpretation of this word in our Lord's wonderful prayer on the eve of his sufferings.

Suppose we give the same meaning to the same word in Paul's prayer now before us. It would then read : "May the very God of peace *consecrate* you wholly." That is, may God set you apart to do his will. May God purify you for his service. May God employ you in his glorious work. May he endow you with his Holy Spirit. What a prayer that is. It sweeps in the entire man, physical and mental, the mortal part and the immortal, the portion of us that has to do with present material things and that higher part of us that has to do with things spiritual and eternal.

Paul goes still further, and "prays God that the whole spirit and soul and body be preserved without blame unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." About the meaning of this passage there has always been controversy. Two views are held ; and for each of them wise and devout men have contended. We will state them both very briefly.

1st. The first view is that the apostle intended to teach a three-fold nature, a "tripartite" nature in man, these three powers are body, soul, and spirit. Each one links us to a particular state of being. The "body" is our gross material part, with its physical senses, sufferings and enjoyments. The "soul," according to this theory, is the thinking and reasoning faculty in man. It reasons. It chooses. It loves the right or hates the wrong. It has

to do with the rest of humanity and the domain of thought. It is as much above the body as mind is above matter ; but it does not reach into the sublime regions of the divine and eternal. That province belongs to the third and highest power of man—viz, his “spirit.” The “spirit” is that immortal part which is untouched by death, which “pants after” God, which communes with him, and which shall be like unto Jesus when the believer meets him in glory. If this view be the correct one, then Paul prayed for a *three-fold* consecration or sanctification of his triple nature by the Divine Spirit. We simply state this theory, and leave it to stand upon its own merits.

2d. The other view and the popular view is that man has but a double nature. He is composed of a material body, with its senses and appetites ; and of a living, reasoning, immaterial “soul” or “spirit.” These two last-mentioned words mean substantially the same thing. According to this view, there is a mortal body. And there is a soul or spirit which survives the body, which loves and hates, which sins and is converted, which is “saved” or “lost.” “The soul that sinneth shall die.” “Give me thy heart.” Hope is said to be the “anchor of the soul.” “The end of our faith is the salvation of our souls.” In these passages it is claimed that the words “heart” and “soul” describe the immortal and spiritual part of us. It is also claimed that we are only conscious of a body and a soul, and are not conscious of any third “spirit,” as separate from the soul.

This has been and is the common view of the great majority of Christian people in past ages and at the present time. Dr. Hodge, in his profound and candid work on “Systematic Theology,” stands strongly for this view. He claims that when Paul speaks of “spirit and soul and body” he simply uses a periphrasis to describe the whole

man. In the same way Dr. Hodge interprets that command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." It was not intended to enumerate four distinct parts or substances in the human being. It was not intended to prove a four-fold nature. In all our prayers Dr. Hodge claims that we recognize only a frail mortal body and an immortal thinking "soul" or "heart" or "spirit," whichever word we may see fit to employ.

Now, we do not contend here for either one of these views as against the other. That is not our purpose in this article. Our readers must decide for themselves. But we do claim that, whether our natures be double or "tripartite," this glorious prayer of Paul's covers both views and embraces the whole man. Paul certainly prayed for complete consecration. And for that we ought to pray. Nor can any Christian attain to the full measure of peace and strength and joy and victory over sin until this becomes the master purpose and desire of his soul. He can never reach the highest usefulness until he has this entire consecration. Heart, tongue, purse, and will must all be Christ's.

But who is to do it? Are we to consecrate ourselves, purify ourselves, and make ourselves holy? Did Paul command his brethren to undertake a self sanctification? No. He was wiser than that. He called upon God to consecrate them. He looked up to the fountain-head of all grace and light and power, and asked for them "the power from on high." Ah! how often some of us have cried out with presumptuous zeal: "I will consecrate myself to the Lord." And presently there came a strain on us too hard for our poor weakness, and we had to cry out: "Hold thou us up, O God! for our feet had well nigh slipped."



Peter imagined that he had devoted himself entirely and unalterably to his Master when he spoke out so boldly: "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I." The poor crestfallen disciple soon discovered that only the Divine Strength could hold him fast to his loyalty. And so will we discover, to our sorrow.

But the God of peace can consecrate us, if we ask him fervently and if we put our whole trust in him. We must pray for this glorious and fruitful and joy-inspiring consecration by our conduct as well as with our lips. When we thus seek it, it will come! Those who thus seek it will possess this Christ-given boon. The infinite Jesus will keep us until his triumphant coming. Then we shall be like him and we shall see him as he is. Oh! for this complete consecration !

## THE SUCCESSFUL PASTOR.

THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

"The sermon always sounds better to me on Sunday, when I have had a shake of my minister's hand during the week."

This was a very natural remark of a very sensible parishioner. We always listen with a more open-hearted readiness to everything which falls from the lips of one who has won our friendship, or showed us a grateful attention. Even the instructions from God's word, and the precious invitations of the Gospel come more acceptably from one we love than from him who treats us with indifference or neglect.

After all, the great power of a good pastor over his people is *heart power*. Intellectual brilliancy may awaken the pride of a congregation in their minister, but it is his affectionate sympathy and personal kindness to them that awakens their love for him, and keeps it burning. When a pastor has gained a strong hold on the affections of his people, he may preach ever so pointedly against popular sins, and the people will receive his unpalatable truths without flinching, or hurling a reproach at him.

On the other hand, we have known fearless denouncers of wrong-doing to be ousted from their pulpits, simply because the radical thunderers had no grip on the affections of their flocks. The sermon against rum-drinking

or dishonesty was a mere pretext for black-balling him ; the secret was that they did not love the man.

Conscience sometimes requires a faithful ambassador of Christ to put a severe strain on the "tether" that binds him to his pastorate ; at such times it is a happy thing for him, if that tether is securely fastened to a hundred family altars and firesides. The great mass of the ministry are not men of genius ; and, even if they were, they could not afford to dispense with that heart-power which can only be acquired by personal kindness and sympathy with the people.

We could certainly name a certain successful pastor who, for a quarter of a century, has kept his church full and prosperous ; he has sided with most of the moral reforms of the day, and his vineyard has been irrigated with many a copious revival-shower. Yet he never could be accused of brilliant talents or profound learning. He has, in their stead, a warm heart, good sense, tact, winning manners, and fervent piety. He is not a powerful preacher, but he is a powerful pastor. He knows where all his congregation live, and he visits them. He never comes as a stranger, or in a ceremonious manner. If the parlor is cold, or locked up for repairs he drops into the nursery, takes a youngster on his lap, chats with the mother, inquires about the spiritual welfare of the family, and probably offers a fervent prayer with them before he departs. That family are pretty certain to be at church on the next Sunday.

If a business man in his congregation has met with a reverse, he calls in at his counting-room, gives him a warm shake of the hand and a kind word of encouragement. The unfortunate merchant feels the warm pressure of that hand the next time he goes to church ; he is ready to put in that hand the key to his own heart. If there is

a sick child in the flock, the pastor is kneeling beside its little crib ; if there is a bit of crape hanging at the door-knob, the pastor is quite sure to be found amid the weeping family within.

At every pastoral visit he makes he weaves a new strand into the cord of love that binds that household to him and to the sanctuary. Such a pastor bases the pulpit on the hearts of his people, and all the mischief making Guy Fawkes in the parish cannot put enough powder-kegs of discontent under that pulpit to blow out the incumbent.

It may be said that all this pastoral visitation consumes a vast amount of time. So it does, but it can generally be made in the afternoon, while the morning is devoted to study ; and the minister is studying human nature at every visit. Is not this next in importance to a knowledge of God's word ? It is idle for any pastor to plead that his flock is too large for him to visit them. The writer of this paragraph has over three hundred pews in his church, every one of them rented, to the last sitting, and he finds no difficulty in reaching every family, at least once in each year.

The very exercise of walking from house to house is a life-preserver. Every visit gives an observant pastor some information that he wants, and some new materials for a sermon. It would be a great mercy to many a minister, and to his people, if he could be dragged out of his books, and be brought into personal contact with every-day life.

There is about one minister in every generation who is so situated that he cannot be a visitant of his flock. Charles H. Spurgeon is such a one. With a congregation of five thousand souls, and a membership of over three thousand, with the charge of a theological school, the editorship of a religious magazine, and the oversight of

a dozen mission stations, he cannot be expected to visit six or seven hundred families. Spurgeon is the hundred-handed Briareus of the modern pulpit ; but the visitation of his immense flock he necessarily leaves to his board of elders. When he does encounter his parishioners, he is said to be very cordial and affable.

Many arguments might be urged in favor of regular and systematic visitation on the part of every Christian minister. For what is the real object and end of a minister's office ? Is it simply to preach sermons ? No ! It is to Christianize and save immortal souls. It is to edify Christ's church, to purify society, to fight sin, to lead souls to Jesus. Preaching sermons is one of the means to this end. It is, indeed, a chief and indispensable agency. But if a pastor can prepare more practical sermons, and can lodge those sermons more effectually in the hearts of his auditors, by constant pastoral intercourse with them, then is he morally bound to keep up that intercourse.

The mass of sinful men are only to be reached through their affections. Sympathy is power. Christ Jesus did not win Zaccheus the publican by argument. He simply went to his home and won him by a divine sympathy.

Methinks, as I close this article, I hear some good, plain, humble "fisher of souls," whisper to me: "Brother C, I thank you for your words of cheer. My Master never trusted me with ten talents, but he gave me one talent in my heart. I cannot be a Spurgeon, but I can go out and love somebody into the sphere of the gospel. With God's help I may become a successful pastor."

## EXPOSITORY PREACHING.

WM. M. TAYLOR, D. D., LL. D., NEW YORK.

By expository preaching I mean that method of pulpit discourse which consists in the consecutive explanation and practical enforcement of an epistle, or a gospel, or a sacred narrative. It is distinguished from topical preaching, which consists in the selection of a clause, or a verse, or a section of the inspired word, out of which some one principle is evolved, and kept continuously before the hearer's mind, as the speaker traces its manifold applications to present circumstances, and to human life. The two are not inconsistent with each other, or contradictory to each other. An efficient minister will systematically employ both. While, therefore, I proceed to say a few words in favor of the expository method, let no one suppose that I undervalue the other. In my own view, as in my own practice, they are coördinate, and we may apply to both of them the principle that underlies the Saviour's words: "This ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone."

Briefly, then, let me advert to the advantages of the systematic exposition of the word of God, and among these I place first the fact that *it brings both preacher and hearer into a close contact with the mind of the Spirit*. The open Bible on the sacred desk is a witness to the fact that both speaker and auditors regard it as the ultimate stand-

ard of appeal. In the pulpit the minister is not, in ordinary circumstances, dealing with those who repudiate the authority of the word of God. The very presence of his hearers in the sanctuary may be taken as an admission on their part that, like Cornelius before Peter, "they are all together before him to hear what is commanded them of God." There may be exceptional occasions on which he feels bound to deal with sceptical objections, but, as a general rule, the pulpit is not the place for that. As a brother said to us once, with great point : "When I am in the pulpit, I am not there to defend the Bible ; the Bible is there to defend me." The great aim of the preacher, therefore, ought to be to set before the people the mind of God. Now, in so far as he is successful as an expositor, this is precisely what he does.

In the topical sermon, there may be many of his own particular opinions which are matters of private interpretation, or of "doubtful disputation." But when he has succeeded in making plain the meaning of the passage which he is expounding, he can say : "This is the word of Christ," and the force of this upon his own heart and the hearts of his hearers will be overwhelming. When he so speaks, he will speak "with authority, and not as the scribes," and men will feel that they have been brought face to face with God. It is this, indeed, that gives the pulpit its peculiar power. Other men have genius, and can produce wondrous effects by the flashes of its erratic lightning or the beauty of its poetic musings ; other men have stores of information, on which they can draw at will, and with which they can enrich their utterances ; other men have force of logic, or power of invective, by which they can bear down all opposition ; but these are not the *differential* of the preacher. His special power is that *he has God's word behind him*, and if through the ne-

glect of expounding that word, he fails to use this power with effect, he is like Samson shorn of his locks, and will be sure to be made sport of by the Philistines of his generation. Hence, as an engine of power, I advocate most earnestly the systematic pulpit exposition of the Sacred Scriptures.

Another advantage of this method of discourse is that it secures variety in the ministrations of the preacher. Every man has his own idiosyncracies, and will be drawn more powerfully to some subjects than others. Unless, therefore, the preacher pursues some regular course of exposition, he will be in danger of confining himself to a few favorite themes, and ringing the changes upon them, until his hearers are well-nigh sick both of him and of them. But if he will follow the course of some book, or trace out consecutively some sacred biography, he will find the same old truths with ever fresh surroundings, and will secure that variety in unity which is the charm of God's book of revelation as much as of his book of nature. He will come upon principles *in situ* as the practical geologist comes upon the rocks in his survey, and thereby much that is of novel interest will be suggested to him. The topical preacher very soon wears himself out, because all through he is drawing mainly upon himself. But the expositor has the word of God before him, and his lifetime will not exhaust *that*. As he follows the discourses of Jesus, the infinite variety of these utterances will keep him from "running into ruts" of thought or of expression or of topic, and he will be like the well-instructed scribe of whom the Master speaks, "bringing out of his treasure-house things new and old."

Again, by following this plan, the preacher will be compelled to treat many subjects from which otherwise he might have shrunk, but which he feels must be dealt with



if he would not "shun to declare all the counsel of God." Every pastor knows that there are almost always members of his church who specially need to be enlightened on some points of duty or of danger. But if he were to select a subject purely for them, his object would be defeated, just because they would resent that which they felt to be a preaching *at* them rather than *to* them. Now, in following a regular course of exposition, opportunities are continually occurring for the presentation of timely truths, while yet no one can say that the subject was chosen with the special view of reaching them. Besides, there are whole classes of topics which would be completely ignored if we were to yield only to our own tastes and feelings in the selection of subjects. One man would dwell exclusively on doctrinal matters to the neglect of practical. Another, catching the modern infection which denounces dogma, would present practical subjects without thinking or saying much about the cross. One would deal with the love of God as if there were no other text in the Bible than "God is love;" another would present the governmental features of the Divine administration, as if there were no fatherly heart in him who rules the world. And thus, in spite of themselves, a defective presentation of the truth would be the result. Half-truths are ever the most insidious forms of error, and it is to be feared that many of the half-truths which are so popular in these days, have had their origin in the neglect of a thorough and systematic treatment of *the Word of God as a whole*. Now in expository preaching, we, as it were, go round the whole globe of truth, and have our one-sided prepossessions and opinions corrected by its full rounded completeness.

Again, the regular prosecution of this method of preaching will tend to promote the Biblical intelligence of a con-

gregation. Those who have not investigated the matter will be astonished to find how limited an acquaintance the average church-goer has with the Sacred Scriptures. He may be acute in business, and well "up" in all political knowledge, while yet he has never read through the more important portions of the Word of God. There are whole books of the Bible which to many worshippers in our pews are nearly as much a *terra incognita* as in the interior of the continent of Africa. They know the gospels pretty well, but they do not care much for the epistles; they have read many of the psalms again and again, but they have no acquaintance with or relish for the historical or prophetic books of the Old Testament.

I lately met with a young woman to whom I said something of Hagar, and the name which she gave to Jehovah when she said, "Thou God seest me;" when to my astonishment, I discovered that she knew nothing about the incident to which I had referred. When, some six or seven years ago, Mr John Bright, with that happy knack of giving appropriate names by which he is distinguished, spoke of Mr. Robert Lowe and his friends as having gone to the cave of Adullam (from which they were afterwards called the party of the cave), two members of Parliament were overheard conversing thus, as they were leaving the house:

"I say, where did Bright get that illustration of his to-night, about the cave?"

"O," was the reply, "I see what you're up to; you think I don't know; but do you suppose I haven't read the Arabian Nights?"

And yet these men were tolerably fair senators, according as senators go. I am persuaded that most of us in the pulpit overrate immensely the Biblical knowledge of our hearers, and that it would be of immense consequence to

them as well as to ourselves that we should give ourselves to consecutive exposition of the Scriptures. Even if the Bible were no more than a valuable production, its earnest study by pastor and people would tend to develop in them mental vigor and moral robustness, on the old principle, "Beware of the man of one book." But when we take its holy character and divine inspiration into the account, it becomes infinitely more important that we should concentrate our attention more thoroughly upon it. Men in the parlor and in the closet and in the counting-room are over-laying the Bible beneath the mountain of new books that are forever coming from the press; therefore in the pulpit we should more and more exalt it and seek to increase at once the acquaintance of our hearers with it, and their reverence for it.

Other advantages might be named, such as that, in the process of preparing his expository discourses, the preacher acquires great store of materials which he can use for other purposes, and in particular has constantly suggested to him subjects for topical sermons, so that he never knows what it is to lose whole days in hunting for a text. But I pass on to consider the great objection which is constantly made against this mode of preaching. "It is not popular," so it is said. "The people do not like it, and they will not stand it." Now in reply to this I have two things to say. First, the minister has to consult for the benefit of his hearers, as well as for their pleasure, and if he is persuaded in his own mind that they need such instruction as expository preaching alone can furnish, then he should give himself to it even at the risk of creating some little dissatisfaction at first; for as he goes on they will become more deeply interested and will come at length to enjoy it.

But, second, why is this sort of preaching not popular?

Is it not because those who have attempted it have done so without any adequate idea of its importance, and have gone on with it in the most slovenly and perfunctory fashion. They have taken to it because, as they imagined, it was easier for themselves than the writing of sermons, and so they have given to their people only a paraphrase of the passage, weakly diluted by the water of their undigested and extempore additions. They have had recourse to it with "feeling akin to those of him who said that he liked to take a chapter at a time, for when he was persecuted in one verse he could flee to another" Now this is fatal. Such preaching does not deserve to be popular, and it is a proof of the good sense of our congregations that it is not popular. Let no man who wishes to succeed in expository preaching imagine that he can do so without great labor. The oil must be *well beaten* or the light will not shine. No mere cursory perusal of the passage, no mere hasty study of it even, will suffice. He needs to enter into the spirit of the writer, to live and move and have his being for the time in the argument or narrative or parable which he is considering. He must follow the old canon : *te totum ad textum applica, ac totum textum applica ad te*. He must give himself wholly to the investigation of the passage, and then he must practically apply its whole teaching to his own heart.

Thus he will discover how he can reach the hearts of his hearers, and when he speaks to them, his words will have in them that "accent of conviction" which will make all who hear him feel that he is in earnest. Let him study the passage in the original, with such helps as he has at command. Let him read everything on the subject which his library contains (and to this end let him keep beside him an interleaved Bible in which he, as it were, indexes his reading, marking over each verse

anything bearing on it which he has met with). Then, having finished his reading, which ought if possible to be accomplished in the early days of the week, let him, so to say, lay the whole matter to steep in his heart and brain for a time, and when he has found some principle of order which he can employ, or some thread round which his thoughts will crystallize, let him sit down and carefully prepare his discourse, as carefully as he would any other, and he has mistaken his profession if he be not able to make it interesting.

One thing, however, he must guard against. He must not turn the pulpit into the chair of the exegetical professor, and spend a quarter of an hour in hunting down some poor Greek particle or digging up some obscure Hebrew root. These processes are to be gone through in the study, and the people should receive only the results. They do not want to know, either, what this or that German, English or American commentator has thought. Let him tell them what he has concluded for himself, with the ground on which he has adopted his opinion, and then let him pass on to press the practical application of the truth in the passage to the hearts and consciences and lives of his hearers.

That this kind of preaching will be both profitable and popular, we have abundant evidence, both from the past history of the pulpit and from many living examples. Let the young minister who is desirous to know how to do it, study such books as Dr. John Brown's "Discourses and Sayings of our Lord Illustrated," or the same author's "Expository Discourses on I Peter;" or the good Leighton's work on the same Epistle; or Dr. Hanna's "Life of Christ," and his more recent exposition on I Corinthians xv., which he has entitled "The Resurrection." Or, if he would see how to make

a history at once attractive and richly suggestive, let him read again and again Dr. Vaughan's volumes on the Acts of the Apostles. Above all let him remember here, as in all other things, his dependence on the help of the Holy Spirit, and prayerfully seeking that in the closet, while he diligently does his best in the study, let him go forward in the confidence that he will succeed.

## DR. GUTHRIE'S EARLY MINISTRY.

JAMES MC COSH, D.D., LL.D.

His preaching had already the characteristic which afterwards made him so marked a man, and made him what I was accustomed to call him, "the pictorial preacher" of the age. I was told that when he was licensed to preach the gospel he preached like other people (always preaching sound scriptural truth), but was not more popular than other people. Some years before I went to Arbroath he preached in the church of which I was afterwards minister, in order, it was understood, to receive a call, but the call did not come. When he became minister in Arberlot, *he began with preaching* after the *approved evangelical model* and delivered useful sermons. On the Sabbath afternoon he held an *exercise* for the young, and there he began to let out, at *first* timidly, his *peculiar gifts*. He would tell such a *story* as this: "If a man suffers for doing a good deed, God in his providence may find means of recompensing him." When the great preacher Willison was about to remove from Brechin to Dundee, he was so obnoxious to the Jacobite Lords who ruled in the district, that he could get no one for love or money to convey his furniture. An ancestor of mine, a farmer in Kincaig, in the parish of Brechin, knowing him to be a great and

good man, came forward boldly and lent him his horses to cart his goods without fee or reward.

Years rolled on, and in the year 1746, the Duke of Cumberland passed through the region in pursuit of Prince Charlie, and took away my forefather's horses. Wondering how he might get his property restored, he bethought him of his friend Willison, who wrote to the proper parties and got his horses returned. "Do what is right and kind, and you will be recompensed." The *dull eye* of the *plough boy* and the *servant girl* who had been toiling all the week among the horses and cows, *immediately brightened up as he spoke in this way*, and they were sure to go back next Sabbath and take others with them. The farmer and his wife began to think that they might spend their Sabbath afternoons as pleasantly in this way as in any other, and went with their children and domestics to the meeting. They were not sure that he was a profound scholarly preacher, like some of the men in the neighborhood who were made D. D.'s by the colleges: but they were sure their new minister was a warm hearted-man, and they were pleased to see him so attracting their sons and their daughters. He made it part of his *afternoon "exercise"* to catechise the young people on the sermon they had heard in the forenoon. "This," he was accustomed to say, "is a severe trial to a minister; it is sure to be so humbling, and yet he may profit much by it. How disappointed we feel when we find our *people remembering little or nothing of the passages we have written with such care. It was thus I learned to preach.* I noticed the parts that had not interested my audiences and were not remembered, henceforth I avoided that style of preaching. I marked the passages that stuck in the minds of my young people, *and set about preaching so as to interest them.*" As he told me this shortly after my settlement in my first



charge, I sought to profit by it, and came through an experience somewhat like his. I did not try to copy his graphic manner, but I endeavored to *preach so that everybody could understand me*. It should be added that his *unsurpassed power of illustration* was always employed to set forth the grand old cardinal truths of the Gospel.

His preparation for the pulpit was conscientiously careful. Possessed of a ready power of speech, he could have extemporized a sermon at any time, and thus saved himself much labor. But during all the years he was in Arberlot I believe he never entered the pulpit without having his discourse written and committed. Had he acted in any other way, he might have been left in Arberlot all his life, greatly esteemed in the district, but without occupying the wide sphere which God opened to him. Not that he kept slavishly to what he had written, being fully master of his subject, he felt himself *free to utter anything that occurred to him at the moment*. Even in writing, he kept an audience before his mind's eye, and he prepared *not an abstract essay, but an address to be spoken* to men and women, to young men and maidens. I often found him on the Saturday night amending and correcting what he had written, and filling his mind with the subject. *His illustrative style made his discourse more easily remembered by himself as it was more easily understood by his audience.*

He was already the most popular minister by far in the district, though as yet not much known beyond it. In all the surrounding country parishes, when he preached at the week-day services in connection with the dispensation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the whole *people rushed to hear him*. In Arbroath, where he often preached on the Sabbath evenings after officiating at home during the day, *the churches were crowded to excess*, and you would

have seen young men and women evidently moved, and old men and women *striving to conceal the tears that were running down their furrowed cheeks*. Some hard men thought that his discourses were not very logical; some finical men and women regarded his Forfarshire pronunciation as very broad, and his illustrations rather vivid; *they all went to hear him because their hearts were warmed*. And here I am tempted to remark that those critics have committed a great mistake who represent him as having no other quality than that of being able to move the feelings. Deeper down than even his power of exciting emotions by his pictures was a foundation of sound common sense with a profound knowledge of human nature, and his pathos was an efflorescence from this root. Some years after, Sir William Hamilton said to me quietly, "Your friend, Dr. Guthrie, is the *best preacher* I ever heard." I answered that I did not wonder at the opinion.

## DR. JOHN TODD AS A PREACHER.

JOHN E. TODD, D. D.

In his conception of the office of a preacher, the application of divine truth to the hearts and consciences of men stood most prominent. Hence the most important qualification for the ministry, after a sanctified heart, was, in his opinion, a thorough theological training; and whenever he was called to aid in settling a minister, he never failed to judge of the candidate's abilities and probable success by his appearance in his theological examination. Not that he approved of preaching scientific theology—in all his ministry he never preached but one course of sermons on theology, and could never be induced to repeat it—but he took the ground that no man can present truth clearly and forcibly, who has not its principles thoroughly comprehended and scientifically unfolded in his own mind. His own studies in theology were from the first unremitted and severe, and there was no subject which had such interest for him as this “greatest of sciences.”

Of *practical* preaching, as it is called, the rebuking of specific sins of his hearers, he did very little; and the preaching of politics, and cheap eloquence of the denunciation of those who did not hear him, he left wholly to others. In this, no one who knew him, or who reads the story of his Groton ministry, will accuse him of *fear*, a

feeling of which he seems to have been incapable, or of a desire to *propitiate* his hearers. The course which he pursued was adopted from principle ; and a settled conviction that it was the one most likely to make his hearers better. "I have not been accustomed to name and preach against any particular *amusements*—theatres, dramas, card-playing, and the like. I have thought it best to inculcate the great principles of the Bible on the conscience, to make the tree good, and the hearts holy, and then to trust the tree would bring forth good fruits. I have tried to make you live and act as seeing Him that is invisible. In my own experiences I have got along very comfortably, and been measurably cheerful, though I was never in a theatre, at the opera, or in a ball-room ; never saw a game of cards or billiards played. And you have all known by my way of educating my own family precisely how I have looked upon these things. I have often noticed that people are so much like children, that if you denounce an amusement, or a bad book, they will be sure to seek it. Let the pulpit recommend one good book, and perhaps one will buy it ; let it denounce a bad book, and ten will buy it. That is human nature."

The basis of his theology, and of all his preaching, was the Bible. In accepting his call to the first church under his care, he wrote : "In my preaching I shall keep closely to the Word of God ; by this I would have you test my instructions." And to this he faithfully adhered through his whole ministry. To interpret and expound the Word of God, rather than to philosophize and speculate, was, in his opinion, the business of the preacher. Often his sermons were expository ; often they were studies of Scripture characters ; often they were presentations of great facts and truths taught in the Scriptures ; and always they were full of Scripture language and imag-

ery, and appealed to Scripture authority. For the Bible he always entertained the deepest reverence. To him it was truly the Word of God. It was a feeling which the Andover professors of his day entertained to a remarkable degree, and with which they inspired the students. It was a feeling derived from his very earliest training. No objections or difficulties raised by scientific men ever shook his confidence in the Scriptures; he was ready to reject at once all scientific speculations that conflicted with what he knew to be true. Perhaps he was too ready to scout at scientific theories, and had too little consideration for honest doubt; but to him skepticism was not merely unknown, it was simply unintelligible. He probably never had an hour of doubt of the Bible in all his life. To him it was like the sun in the heavens, as great and indubitable.

It was his original intention to preach much of the time without notes. "I intend to preach extemporaneously half of the time after I am settled, and half written sermons. I am persuaded that no man can be really eloquent very frequently, who is wholly confined to notes." For some years this resolution was faithfully kept—in part of necessity—and not without satisfactory results. "I preach extempore in the pulpit about one half of the time, and these sermons do by far the most good." But gradually a practical difficulty arose. "I have been applying myself more closely to study than usual of late, and I feel it brings me back to my old feelings. I cannot speak extempore when I study hard. The reason I cannot assign; the *fact* I am sure of." As he was determined not to abandon study, and become an empty-headed, flashy speaker, he was naturally led to write out his sermons more and more, till in the last part of his ministry he seldom spoke from the pulpit without

at least very full notes. His habit in writing was, first, to select a text and map out a train of thought upon it. This was done, generally, not in his study, but in his walks or rides, or in sleepless hours, or wherever his mind met a suggestion, or fell into a constructive mood. The next step was to trace the skeleton on paper, as quickly and as fully as possible. "A few nights since, as I was watching over my sick child, the text, 'As for God, His way is perfect,' came into my mind with great force, and, taking my pencil, I worked out the particular train of thoughts which I am about to present you."

In writing out the sermon, he did not bind himself to any regular hours, though he usually wrote in the forenoon, when he was freshest and strongest; nor did he have to wait for inspiration; he seemed to have power of commanding the faculty of composition at pleasure. While writing, he sat in a low rocking-chair, so that his eyes were near the desk, his coat off, and his shirt-cuffs rolled back, his collar loosened or torn off, his glasses laid aside, and a warm soapstone at his feet to counteract the tendency of the blood to the head. He always wrote with a quill, and he wrote without stopping for an instant. While engaged in writing, he was entirely absorbed in his work. One of his first parishioners, referring to an occasion when several persons were in his study, writes: "While we were sewing, and chatting, and laughing in his study, all in the most hilarious spirits, he would sit at his table, so absorbed in writing a sermon as to be unconscious of persons or conversation in the room. But when he reached a point, or was tired, he would instantly drop the pen, and strike off in conversation with wonderful buoyancy and humor. Then, feeling rested, he would as suddenly take up the pen and fall back into abstraction. He possessed concentration and elasticity of mind in far greater degree than any man I ever knew."

These qualities remained with him through life. His study door was seldom locked, and conversation, and even children's play, unless too boisterous, rarely disturbed him. In fact, his abstraction was so great that he became unconscious of what he was doing, and in pursuing a train of thought would fall into most ludicrous errors of spelling and grammar, and into a very imperfect and disjointed style. "I strike only for the thought, write with great rapidity, and have no time to examine the wheelbarrow in which I trundle my ideas and impressions." Most of his errors he would detect as quickly, and laugh at as heartily, as any one, on reading over what he had written ; but, unfortunately, it was not always so easy to correct his sentences as to detect their faults, without wholly reconstructing them ; and as he cared but little for rhetorical finish, provided he was understood, he allowed his works to remain full of linguistic errors, for the enjoyment of critics who strain at gnats and swallow camels. After writing for an hour or so, he would drop his pen, and spring up and stretch himself, and walk up and down the room, or busy himself with his tools or traps, singing meantime, in a not unmelodious but perfectly uncultivated voice, some stave of a tune that ear never heard, and it never entered the heart of man to conceive before. In later years he often made a flying visit down to "Mary's room," and exchanged a few words and laughs with the suffering prisoner there, and those who were with her. After such an interval of a few moments, he would return to his desk, and in a moment be as rapidly at work as ever. Dinner seldom came before the sheets of at least half a sermon lay scattered on the floor. On Sunday morning he invariably shut himself up in his study with his sermons, and we would hear him for an hour or so, reading over in a low voice, and familiarizing himself with, what he was about to preach.

## THE POWER OF ILLUSTRATION.

JOHN DOWLING, D. D.

*"Eloquence is the art of speaking in such a way as is best adapted to attract, to instruct, to convince, and to persuade."*

For it is the power of pleasing which attracts ; it is the material of truth which instructs ; it is the force of argument which convinces ; and it is the power of appeal which persuades ; while the faculty of perceiving and applying analogies, in other words the power of illustration, contributes attractiveness, beauty and force to oratory.

There is, therefore, probably no single qualification of the orator so well adapted to attract, and to instruct an audience as a happy faculty of illustration. And here, unquestionably, is to be found the reason why many a man of limited literary attainments and entirely ignorant of the sciences of the schools, yet eminently endowed with the faculty of perceiving analogies, with industry enough by observation and reading to supply himself with the material of analogies, and strong common sense in their application, has wielded an influence over the popular mind and achieved an amount of solid good far beyond the accomplished scholar and learned divine who may have passed half a life-time in the halls of learning ;



but with all his acquisitions, has failed to cultivate the power of illustration.

The power of illustration must therefore be a **very** important element of pulpit success.

The great advantages resulting from the use of **striking** and **vivid** illustrations are, that they serve, (1) to attract and secure attention ; (2) to afford scope for copiousness and variety in the exhibition of truths which have long been familiar ; (3) to impress the memory by their point and force ; and (4) to render complex and difficult subjects easy and plain.

I. The word illustration signifies to make clear or manifest, to clear from darkness or obscurity by analogies, comparisons, or examples ; whether they be metaphors, similes, parables, illustrative examples, or historic illusions.

(1) *Both metaphors and similes are used by the inspired writers for illustrating the truth.* When the Psalmist says : "The Lord is my rock and my fortress," he illustrates by a metaphor the protection of the Almighty, for the comparison is implied. When he says : "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people," he illustrates the same idea by the simile ; for here the comparison is expressed.

Some preachers have a delightful faculty of illustrating truth, by means of happy and appropriate *suppositions* employed by way of simile or comparison. Dr. Payson had this faculty in an eminent degree.

"Suppose (said he) you wished to separate a quantity of brass and steel filings mixed together in one vessel ; how would you effect this separation ?" Apply a load-stone, and immediately every particle of iron will attach itself to it, while the brass filings remain behind. Thus if we see a company of true and false professors of relig-

ion we may not be able to distinguish between them ; but let Christ by the special renewing influences of his Spirit come among them, and all sincere followers will be attracted towards him, as the steel is drawn to the magnet, while those who have none of his spirit will remain at a distance and neglect his cause.

(2) Leaving the consideration of the metaphor, let us now proceed to *the parabolic form of illustration*.

A parable is a fable or allegorical relation or representation of something in real life or nature, from which a moral is drawn for instruction.

It consists of a continued narration of a fictitious event, applied by way of simile, to the illustration of some important truth.

With what inimitable beauty and skill does the Great Teacher employ this mode of enlightening the ignorance, rebuking the ingratitude or condemning the obduracy of his hearers !

His parables constitute a complete and invaluable model for the study and imitation of all whose duty it is to teach and to preach the truths of that Gospel which Christ himself proclaimed in such a way that the multitudes "hung upon his lips, and the common people heard him gladly." "All the people were very attentive to hear him."

And it is certainly a sufficient reply to those who affect to undervalue or to despise the illustrative mode of preaching or of teaching, that of all the public instructions of our *Lord Jesus Christ, the only perfect preacher* that ever lived, a very large proportion, probably *more than one-half* of all that are recorded, were delivered in *the form of comparison or parable*.

And ministers of the Gospel should never be ashamed to adopt Christ himself as their model in preaching.

They cannot be in better company than when traveling by his side. They cannot be in better employment than when listening to his words, and studying his example. They cannot be safer, than when the shaft of criticism or of censure hurled at themselves must, before it reaches them, light upon the Master whom they serve.

And here, I observe, there is another class of illustrations, which may be termed illustrations by *parabolic facts*, in distinction from *parabolic suppositions*.

In the latter, the narrative which forms the basis of the parable, is fictitious ; in the former it is real. In the one, the events of the narrative are imaginary ; in the other they are true.

The field of illustration thus opened in the class of parabolic or analogical facts, is one of vast extent and almost infinite variety. Its sources are well-nigh exhaustless, from Scripture, from history, and from anecdotes and facts of daily occurrence in all times.

(3.) *The illustrative example*, which is the next kind of illustration, consists in the relation of, or allusion to, actual occurrences, for the purpose of warning, encouragement, emulation or example. In an illustrative example, the illustration given is always similar in its nature to the truth illustrated. The 13th chapter of Matthew is a collection of parables. The 11th chapter of Hebrews is a collection of illustrative examples.

II. *Having thus explained the science of illustration and specified the principal classes of illustrations, let us now show what we mean by the power of illustration in the pulpit, and give some brief suggestions for its successful cultivation and improvement.*

"The power of illustration," says Dr. Bacon, "is nothing else than the ready perception of analogies, with an abundant store of various and familiar information. The

ready perception of analogies, and the possession of analogies to be perceived." In order that the power of illustration may be possessed in a high degree, there must be (1) a habit of observation ; (2) extensive and varied reading ; (3) a retentive memory, to be used as a store-house of facts, collected by observation and reading ; (4) a thorough acquaintance with the truths to be illustrated, and (5) a readiness in perceiving analogies, that the facts collected may be applied to the illustration of the truths to be taught.

How frequently do the inspired writers draw their tribute of illustration from the nature and habits of the animal creation !

"The eagle stirring up her nest," or "fluttering over her young," or "bearing them on her wings ;" the lion "greedy of his prey," or "lying in wait secretly," or "walking about, roaring, seeking whom he may devour ;" the bear "robbed of her whelps ;" the wolf "catching and scattering the sheep ;" the "ox which knoweth his owner," and the "ass his master's crib ;" the ant, which "provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest ;" the bird, in whose sight "the net is spread in vain ;" the fowls of the air, "which sow not, neither do they reap ;" the hen "gathereth her chickens under her wings,"—these, and a vast variety of similar illustrations are employed by the sacred writers, or by our blessed Lord himself, to add force, and beauty, and point, to their instructions, expostulations, arguments and entreaties.

If we turn to other fields of illustration, explored by the sacred writers, we shall find in them all a copiousness and variety almost equally rich.

*In the Bible, we find all nature and all history laid under tribute to furnish illustrations of the truth. The sun, the*

moon and the stars; the ocean, the troubled sea when it cannot rest, and the waters casting up mire and dirt; the winds, the rivers, and the still waters; the rocks, the hills, the mountains and the valley; the trees planted by the rivers of water; the oaks of Bashan, and the cedars of Lebanon; the vine, the olive, the pomegranate, the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley; the mustard plant, the wheat and the tares; the process of vegetation, the decomposition or death of the grain of wheat; the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear; the occupations of men, the husbandman, waiting for the precious fruits of the earth, the sower going forth to sow, the shepherd tending his flock, or the refiner purifying his silver and his gold; buildings, corner-stones, foundation-stones, precious stones, and jewels.

The common events of life, the discovery of a pearl in a field, the finding of a lost coin or a stray sheep, the casting of a net into the sea, the return of a spendthrift son, the compassion of a benevolent traveler, and the ceremonies of a marriage feast.

The events of history, the characters of good men or bad, the virtues they exercised or the vices they exhibited, the influence they exerted, the rewards or the punishments that resulted from their conduct.

All these, besides a multitude of other objects and events, formed the material of the rich and almost exhaustless fund of illustration, found in the inspired records. And no sermon can be complete unless its instructions are illustrated, and its positions are confirmed by the authoritative declarations of inspiration.

And if such were the practices of the primitive and inspired preachers of God's Word in the free use of illustration, and by whose ministry the glorious Gospel made such rapid progress throughout the known world in the

early ages of the church, *may not the great decline of interest in the modern pulpit*, and in its success in the promotion of the kingdom of Christ be attributable in a great measure *to its neglect of illustrating God's truth* as was done by the inspired models?

We have seen how largely our Lord himself employed this interesting and impressive method of instructing the multitudes which thronged his ministry. This was obviously *one of the strong reasons why "the common people heard him gladly."* And I apprehend it has been the common practice of nearly all successful revival preachers, from the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, to that of the late Dr. Guthrie, Scotland's best preacher, and to the honored and successful Moody of the present day. *And shall not the present generation of ministers endeavor to restore the interest and power of the pulpit?*

It is now much more difficult to awaken and keep the attention than formerly, even those who look at the minister steadily, are too frequently planning their business, and their minds, like the fool's eye, roving to the ends of the earth.

A few brief directions will conclude the present discourse. Would you acquire and retain in a high degree the power of illustration, my ministerial brethren?

Then, 1. *cultivate and give free scope to your habits of observation*, and your opportunities of inquiring and research. Keep your eyes and ears constantly open. Study men and things as you will meet them in the common walks of life.

Instead of isolating yourselves from the masses, as is too frequently done by men of study and literature, mingle freely with the people, and while you aim to do them good by a holy example, never be ashamed to ask and receive information, from any who are able to give it.

However humble their occupation, and however limited their literary attainments compared with your own, you will often discover a vein of good common sense, and a fund of valuable information on common things, possessed by the farmer, the mechanic, or the laborer, which cannot be acquired in the halls of learning or of sciences, and of which you will find it much to your advantage to avail yourselves.

2. Give attendance to reading. Cultivate a familiar acquaintance, next to the sacred Scriptures, with the history of the Church in every age, and the lives of the holy men who have been its defenders or its ornaments.

Study the secular history, too, of every age and nation, and the biography of the men who have become famous, either in ancient or modern times, for their power, their learning, their genius or their eloquence.

Explore, if possible, every field from which sources of illustrations can be drawn. Let the starry heavens above you, and the verdant earth beneath you, with its trees and plants and flowers ; the air with its winged inhabitants ; the sea with its finny tribe ; the land with its beasts and creeping things, all be the subjects of reading, observation and study, for all contribute their share to the illustration of the momentous themes of the pulpit.

3. *Cultivate your power of perceiving analogies.* Acquire the habit of pulpit-appropriation throughout the whole circle of your reading, observation and study. Whether you are reading history, or biography, or travel, science, or eloquence, or poetry, or any other department of literature, be constantly on the watch for analogies to illustrate the themes of the pulpit. To a mind ever thus on the watch for illustrations of truth or of duty, no intellectual pursuit will be barren of instruction or profit. All his mental acquisitions will be made to pay their tribute to

the pulpit ; and even the common occurrences of every day life, and the common journals of every day news, will contribute their quota to enrich that treasury of illustration laid up in the storehouse of his memory, to be used as occasion may require, and seldom will a single day be allowed to pass without adding to the stock on hand.

4. Finally, I would say, above all, cultivate a habit of *spiritual mindedness*, and that will turn everything into pulpit gold. Set your affections upon things above. Think much of Christ and Heaven. Breathe the atmosphere of Gethsemane and of Calvary, and let the eye of faith and of love be habitually fixed on the Saviour who there agonized and died.

To borrow the words of another : "I would say, Baptize your souls in 'Baxter's Saint's Rest,'" to which I would add, and in such works as "Flavel's Fountain of Life," or "Owen's Spiritual Mindedness," or his "Person and Glory of Christ," or "Ambrose's Looking to Jesus."

This habit of meditating upon the tender and subduing themes connected with the work of redeeming grace and love, will prepare the mind to pluck the flowers of spiritual instruction and delight from every field, and will consequently tend pre-eminently to qualify that minister or that teacher who thus lives, quite on the verge of Heaven, to be a successful spiritual instructor to others.

Let it be your aim, therefore, my ministerial brethren, so to live and so to labor, as you would if Christ himself, in a form which your bodily eyes might see, were standing by your side, and fixing on you his eyes of tenderness and love, as he did upon that disciple whom he loved, when leaning on his breast at supper, or when he spoke to him from his cross of agony; or as he did upon Peter who denied him, when that look of mingled tenderness, pity and reproach caused the too confident but



now broken-hearted disciple "to go out and weep bitterly."

And is it not in reality true, that Jesus still lives? that "He liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore?"

Is it not literally true, ye ministers of Christ, that the eye of the Master whom ye serve, is every moment resting its piercing glance upon you, just as really and just as truly as though your bodily eyes could behold him?

And is it not for your special encouragement that he assures you of the fact, when he says: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world?"

It is related of a chief of the MacGregors, a Highland clan, who had warmly espoused the cause of the exiled Stuarts, that when advancing under the banners of Charles Edward, against the English troops at the battle of Preston Pans, in 1715, he was struck to the ground by two balls from the enemy. The MacGregor clan, seeing their loved chieftain fall, began to waver, when the wounded captain instantly raised himself upon his elbow, and as the blood streamed from his wounds, exclaimed aloud: "I am not dead my children! I am looking at you to see if you do your duty!"

Thus ye ministers of Christ, as ye go forth to battle with the hosts of darkness, if ever your hearts falter, or your faith gives way, if ever your spiritual adversaries should seem to gain a temporary advantage, remember that the Master whom you serve, and who is at once your Saviour and your captain—the great captain of your salvation, is not dead but alive, and that from his throne on high He is looking at you, to see if you do your duty. Therefore, "*Press toward the mark for the prize.*" Remember, "they that be wise shall shine as the brightest of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

## USES OF ILLUSTRATION.

J. A. BROADUS, D.D., LL.D.

I. Illustrations are used to explain, to prove, to adorn, and to render impressive.

1. Perhaps the principal use of illustration is to *explain*. This they do either by presenting an example of the matter in hand, a case in point, or by presenting something similar or analogous to it, which will make the matter plain.

2. But illustrations are also very frequently employed to *prove*. This is done in some rare cases, by presenting an example which warrants an induction; commonly it is an argument from analogy.

3. *Illustrations are valuable as an ornament*. Their use, for this purpose, as to kind and amount, must be governed by the general principles which pertain to elegance of style.

4. Finally, they frequently serve to render a subject impressive, by exciting some kindred or preparatory emotion. Thus, in the parable of the Prodigal Son, the natural pathos of the story itself touches the heart, and prepares it to be all the more impressed by the thought of God's readiness to welcome the returning sinner.

The *importance of illustration in preaching is beyond expression*. In numerous cases it is our best means of explaining religious truth, and *often*, to the *popular mind*, our only *means of proving it*. Such was frequently the case with the first hearers of our Lord's parables.

In preaching to children, and to the great mass of adults, illustration is simply indispensable, if we would either interest, instruct or impress them ; while good illustration is always acceptable and useful to hearers of the highest talent and culture. The example of our Lord decides the whole question ; and the illustrations which so abound in the records of his preaching *ought* to be heedfully *studied by every preacher*, as to their source, their aim, their style, and their relation to the other elements of his teaching.

Among the Christian preachers of different ages who have most been remarkable for affluence and *felicity of illustration*, there may be mentioned Chrysostom, Jeremy Taylor, Christmas Evans, Chalmers, Spurgeon and Beecher.

## II. *Sources of illustration.*

1. *Observation.* It is pre-eminently important that the teacher of religion should be a close observer. *Nature* teems with analogies to moral truth, and we should not merely accept those which force themselves on our attention, but should be *constantly searching for them*.

A still richer field, if possible, is *human life*, with all its social relations and varied callings and pursuits, its business usages, mechanical processes, etc., and with all its changing experiences. Beecher has always been asking himself, till that has become a fixed habit of his mind, "What is this like ; What will this illustrate !" Hence the boundless variety, and the sparkling freshness of his illustrations ; and these form the chief element of his power as a preacher. Spurgeon, though not equal to Beecher in this respect, and though accustomed to draw much from his reading, has been a close observer, too, in many and various directions.

The great mass of our Lord's illustrations are drawn

from ordinary *human life*. The observation of *children* is particularly profitable to a religious teacher. *Narrations of actual experience* of the *religious life*, whether our own or that of others known to us, are apt to be generally interesting, and will often, as cases in point, furnish admirable illustration. The great *revival preachers* usually have a multitude of such *narratives*, drawn from their observation at other places, and they often use them with great effect.

2. *Pure invention*. It is perfectly lawful to *invent an illustration*, even in the form of a story, provided that it possess verisimilitude, and provided that we either show it to be imaginary, or let nothing depend upon the idea that it is real. It seems almost certain that some of our Lord's parables are, in this sense, fictitious.

3. *Science*. Besides what is derived from our own observation of nature and of human life, there is an immense fund of illustration in science, which, collecting the results of a far wider observation, classifies and seeks to explain them. Much of the finest scientific illustration demands more knowledge of science than the great mass of hearers really possess.

Now, an illustration which would be particularly acceptable and profitable to a few may sometimes be employed, provided we introduce it with some quiet remark, not saying that most persons are unacquainted with this subject, but that such persons as happen to have paid attention to such or such a matter, will remember, etc. Then no one will complain of our alluding to a topic of which he is ignorant.

4. *History*. Preachers have always made much use of *illustration from history*. The field is itself boundless, but is in practice greatly limited by the popular lack of extensive acquaintance with it. Here, as in the case of science,

we may skilfully introduce what is familiar to but few, and many often give briefly, without ostentation, and in an interesting manner, the requisite information. Spurgeon is very fond of illustrations from devout men ; and Richard Fuller employs all manner of historical and biographical incidents, both secular and religious, with rare felicity and power.

All preachers derive illustration from the news of the day. Some carry this too far, warranting the reproach that they "get the text from the Bible, and the sermon from the newspapers."

Anecdotes are a valuable means of illustration, which some preachers employ excessively or in bad taste, but which others ought to employ much more largely than they do. He who feels that his style would be degraded by introducing an anecdote, may profitably inquire whether his style be not too stilted, or at any rate too monotonous in its sustained elevation, for popular discourse. Let anecdotes be certainly true, if we present them as true, and let them be told without exaggeration or "embellishments." Let them not be ludicrous—though a slight tinge of delicate humor is sometimes lawful—not trivial, and especially not tedious. And as illustration is in general a subordinate thing in preaching, and that which is subordinate should rarely be allowed to become prominent, a preacher should avoid such a multiplication of anecdotes in the same sermon, or in successive sermons, as would attract very special attention. A greater freedom, both as to amount and kind, is more admissible in platform-speaking, than in those more grave discourses which are usually called sermons.

5. *Literature and Art.* Even when science and history have been excluded, literature, ancient and modern, in prose and in verse, covers an immense field, and offers a

vast store of illustrative material. Suggestions, pleasing or impressive sentiments, and striking expressions may be quoted, and illusion made to well known literary works and characters, whenever it will help to render the discourse interesting and useful. Quotations of poetry, though made by some men in offensive excess, are employed by very many with admirable effect; and while a few need to check their exuberance in this respect the great mass of ministers should stimulate themselves to observe and retain more largely, and to use more freely, any appropriate poetical quotations. No one can have failed to notice how often quotations from hymns, particularly when they are familiar, add greatly to the interest and impressiveness of a sermon. Spurgeon often uses these very effectively. The Pilgrim's Progress, with its strong sense and homely simplicity, its poetical charm and devotional sweetness, is so rich in the choicest illustration that every preacher ought to make himself thoroughly familiar with it, and to refresh his knowledge again and again through life.

*Proverbs* are a singularly valuable means of stating truth forcibly and impressively.

Great preachers for the people, such as have found their way to the universal heart of their fellows, have been ever great employers of *Proverbs*. Our Lord once expressly employs a proverb, and repeatedly uses expressions which appear to have been proverbial. This was one of the various ways in which he sought to strike the common minds, and impress the popular heart.

6. *Scripture*. The scriptures present materials of illustration suited to every legitimate subject of preaching, and belonging to almost every one of the above mentioned classes, especially history and biography, poetry and proverbs, and all manner of pointed sayings. Several causes combine to make this the best of all the sources of

illustration. The material is to some extent familiar to all, and thus the illustration will be readily intelligible. Again, this material will be much more impressive than any other, because of its sacredness, and its known and felt relations to ourselves. Besides, the frequent use of Scripture illustration serve to revive and extend the knowledge of Scripture among the hearers.

### III. *Cautions as to the Employment of Illustration.*

1. Do not use every illustration that occurs to you, nor *seek* after them for their *own sake*. The question is, whether this or that will really conduce to the objects of the discourse, or make it more interesting or impressive. Some men get a general notion that illustration is a good thing, and that it is their duty to employ it, and they laboriously bring forward so-called illustrations which really effect nothing, and are therefore but useless lumber. Others who have a fertile fancy or a well-stocked memory, while wanting in genuine culture and good taste, will excessively multiply or expand their illustrations. They forget that command of illustration, like command of words, involves not only copious production, but judicious selection and felicitous adaptation.

2. As a general rule, it is not well to talk about illustrating, but just to illustrate. If you can throw the light vividly on your subjects, it will seldom be necessary to give notice beforehand that you are about to do so.

3. Carefully avoid *turning attention away from the subject illustrated to the illustration itself*. This is obviously a very grave fault, but it is often committed. Illustrations stated at great length, with high-wrought imagery and polished phrases, such as Guthrie frequently employs, will almost inevitably have this effect ; though sometimes, as in the case of Chalmers, they may be so felicitous, and applied with such passionate earnestness, that we at last

forget everything in the subject illustrated. So many hearers are caring mainly for entertainments, that it is a sad thing if we divert their minds from some subject they ought to consider to the curious or admiring examination of the mere apparatus by which we throw light on it.

This fault occurs very frequently in speaking to children. There is a *mere succession of stories* or pictures, which teach nothing, impress nothing, and, serving as idle entertainments, *are* nothing.



## EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING.

JOHN A. BROADUS, D. D. LL.D.

In writing and reading sermons there are some advantages. Such as ease in fixing the mind on the subject, completeness of preparation, excellence in style and ease in delivery. The sermon can be used again, is ready for publication and gives facility in writing.

### DISADVANTAGES OF WRITING.

But there are some *disadvantages*. Such as rendering the writer dependent on such assistance, the writing may be hurried and superficial, it consumes much time in mere mechanical effort, and it compels the preacher to follow out the plan, when subsequent thought may show that another plan would be better. It deprives the preacher of the mental quickening produced by the exciting presence and sympathy of an attentive congregation.

As to *delivery* itself, *reading* is of necessity *less effective*, and in most cases immensely less effective for all the great purposes of oratory, than speaking. Greater coldness of manner is almost inevitable. If one attempts to be very animated or pathetic it will look unnatural.

The tones of voices are monotonous, or have a forced variety. The gestures are nearly always unnatural, because it is not natural to gesticulate much in reading, and

they scarcely ever raise us higher than to feel that this man *reads almost like speaking*.

Consider, too, that the most potent element in the delivery of a real orator is often *the expressiveness of the eye*. Every man has felt the marvelous, magical, at times almost superhuman power of an orator's eye. That look, how it pierces our inmost soul, now kindling us to passion, now melting us to tenderness.

Now in reading, this wonderful expressiveness of the eye is interrupted, grievously diminished in power, reduced to be nothing better than occasional sunbeams, breaking out for a moment among wintry clouds.

*Reading is merely a substitute for speaking*, and it can at best only approximate, never fully attain the same or equal effect in *preaching*. The habit of reading is injurious to the *voice*, and is liable to greatly embarrass a minister when circumstances demand that he should attempt to *speak without manuscript*.

#### EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING DEFINED.

Extemporaneous speaking is applied to cases in which there has been *preparation of the thought*, but the *language is left to be suggested at the moment*.

When the plan of the discourse is drawn out on paper, and all the principal points are stated or suggested, we call it extemporaneous speaking, because all this is regarded only as a means of arranging and recalling the thoughts, and the *language is extemporized*. If the brief notes are before him in delivery, he may read them. But if left at home and he repeats precisely their language, his delivery is so far a memoriter recitation and cannot be called entirely extemporaneous.

THE ADVANTAGES.

1. In preparation, this method accustoms one to *think more rapidly* and with less dependence on external helps, than if he habitually wrote in full.

2. It also enables a man to spend his strength chiefly upon the more difficult or more important parts of the subject. Says President Wayland : "A large proportion of our written discourses is prepared in a driving hurry, with little meditation." If the *same time* had been spent in *earnest thought* the sermon would have been better.

3. In general, this *method saves time* for general improvement and other pastoral work, after he has gained facility and self-reliance in preparation.

4. In the act of delivery, the *extemporaneous speaker* has *immense advantages*. With far *greater ease* and *effectiveness* he can turn to account *ideas which occur at the time*. Some of the noblest and most inspiring thoughts he ever gains will come while he is engaged in speaking. If full of his theme and impressed with its importance, he presently secures the interested and *sympathizing attention* of even a few *good listeners*, and the *fire of his eyes* comes *reflected back* from theirs, till *electric flashes* pass to and fro between them, and his very *soul glows, and blazes, and flames*, he cannot fail sometimes to strike out *thoughts more splendid and more precious* than ever visit his mind in solitary musing.

5. And there is more important gain than the new thoughts. The *whole mass* of prepared *material becomes brightened*, warmed, and sometimes transfigured by *this inspiration of delivery*.

6. Moreover, the preacher can *watch the effect* as he proceeds, and purposely *alter the forms* of expression, as well as the *manner of delivery*, according to his own feelings

and that of the audience. *Especially in the hortatory parts of a sermon*, which are often the most important parts, will their adoption be desirable. A few *sentences then striking precisely the right key* will wonderfully enhance the effect of the whole discourse.

7. It leads to *more dependence upon the Holy Spirit*, and prayer for his *help in preaching*.

8. As to the *delivery* itself, it is only in extemporaneous speaking, of one or another variety, that this can ever be perfectly natural, and achieve the highest effect. The ideal of speaking cannot be reached in any other way. *Only thus will the voice, the action, the eye, be just what nature dictates*, and attain their full power.

It is also an advantage of this method that it gives *facility in speaking without immediate preparation*.

10. With the masses of the people, it is the more popular method, (while a small minority prefer reading.)

#### DISADVANTAGES.

1. There may be a tendency to *neglect preparation*, after one has gained facility in this way. This is an *abuse and not a good reason for neglecting a valuable privilege*.

2. There is difficulty in *fixing the mind* upon the work of preparation without writing in full. This may be *removed by practice*. At the outset, it can be overcome either by making *copious notes*, or by speaking the subject over in private.

3. The extemporizer *cannot quote so largely* as the reader, from Scripture, or from the writings of others. But he is likely to *quote only what is important to the subject*, and thus easily remembered.

*Read quotations.* Where the quotation of the language itself is really important, and the *passage long*, one may

*read it* from the *Bible*, or if from some *other source*, may *write it off* and *read it*, expressly as an important quotation.

4. The *style* of an extemporaneous sermon is apt to be less condensed and less finished, than if it were written out and read. But this is *not necessarily a fault*. The style may be all the *better adapted to speaking*, as distinguished from the *essay style*.

Copiousness, amplification, even the frequent *repetition of a thought* under new forms or with other *illustrations*, are often absolutely necessary in addressing a popular audience.

In the case of *definitions*, or other brief passages in which the language becomes especially important, one may fix beforehand, whether with or without writing, the precise terms to be employed.

5. The success of an extemporaneous sermon is largely *dependent upon the preacher's feelings* at the time of *delivery*, and upon the circumstances; so that he is liable to decided failure. A man not capable of failure can never be eloquent.

A method of preaching which renders failure impossible, also renders the *greatest impressiveness impossible*.

6. If the sermon is to be used again, and has not been written out in full, it requires some renewed preparation. But this too is *rather a profit than a loss*; for thus the discourse can be more *easily and exactly adapted to the new circumstances*. And then the necessity for reworking the preparation makes it all fresh to the *preacher's mind*, and warm again to his heart. So the extemporaneous method does make the repeated use of the same sermon more laborious, but it also serves to make it *much more effective*.

7. Still another disadvantage is its tendency to prevent one's forming the habit of writing.

All the disadvantages of extemporaneous speaking can be obviated by resolute and judicious effort, while reading has many inherent disadvantages, which may, of course, be more or less diminished, but can never be removed.

The born speaker will be able to overcome the difficulties of extemporaneous speaking, and will find here, and here alone free play for his powers.

#### GENERAL AND SPECIAL PREPARATIONS FOR EXTEMPORANEOUS PREACHING.

*Health.* The preacher should be careful of his *health*, not only on other accounts, but because speaking, real speaking, demands a high degree of *nervous energy*, and power of endurance. Many a noble sermon is spoiled by the fact that the preacher begins to flag physically towards the close, and can neither feel high wrought emotion, nor speak with passion and power.

*Language.* Great attention ought to be given to the *use of language*, in ordinary *writing and conversation*. There should be the habit of seeking the most exact terms, and of constructing sentences which shall be grammatical and yet simple and easy. In order to speak well sometimes, it is necessary to speak well always.

*Begin immediately.* A young preacher who wishes to extemporize ought to *begin at once*. If extemporaneous preaching is best if properly practiced, the young minister should begin immediately to learn to extemporize. He should begin at once what he intends to make the habit of his life.

*Arrangement.* The extemporaneous preacher must carefully *arrange* his sermon, according to the natural order of the thoughts, and then he will have no difficulty in remembering.

The sermon must not wander at will on the subject, but have its *distinct and well marked-points*, and advance steadily from one to another.

In both these respects, what helps him, will also help the hearer. Whether it has any formal division or not, a popular address should *always have points*. And it is *one advantage of extemporaneous speaking, that it compels to such an arrangement*. If now one has stretching before him a well-defined track of thought, *divided by natural land marks into distinct sections*, he can diverge from it upon occasion and return without difficulty.

*Matter.* Says Alexander : " Never make the attempt to extemporize without being sure of your matter. Of all the defects of utterance, the most serious is having nothing to say."

*Notes Seldom in the Pulpit.* If a preacher makes notes in preparing, as it is usually best to do, he ought, in general, not to carry them into the pulpit. Particular subjects and modes of treatment may sometimes make this desirable.

*Reviewing.* But in general one should take time enough beforehand, to get matter of the sermon in solution in his mind, so that it flow freely, and get the track he is to follow so clear to his mental vision, that he can flash a single glance from beginning to end of it.

Great benefit too will be derived from this necessity of going thoroughly over the prepared matter shortly before preaching, for thus the mind and heart become kindled, and brought into sympathy with the particular subject treated. Sometimes the very words ought to be fixed beforehand. This applies generally to definitions, frequently to transitions, and sometimes to images, such as must be presented with precision and elegance, or they will be worse than nothing.

Passages of Scripture which are to be quoted, or other proposed quotations, should be *gone over in the mind during the immediate preparation*, that there may be *no blundering* or hesitation.

*Arrange* the discourse with great care, and again and again *think through the whole* making *no effort to retain the words* (same as to definitions, etc.), but getting the thoughts, and *their succession*, perfectly familiar. *Speaking it over in the study*, or in the forest may be profitable. Then *pray for help* and go forward, and facility will *rapidly increase*.

*Don't stop*. In actual preaching *if you forget* what you meant to say next, *do not stop*. Nothing is so awkward as a dead pause, and the awkwardness increases in geometrical ratio to the seconds of time. *Say something, repeat, recapitulate*, talk at random, even anything rather than stop.



## APPLICATION.

JOHN A. BROADUS, D. D. LL. D.

The application in a sermon is not merely an appendage to the discussion, or a subordinate part of it, but is the main thing to be done. Spurgeon says : "*Where the application begins there the sermon begins.*" We are not to speak *before* the people, but *to* them, and must earnestly strive to make them take what we say to themselves. Daniel Webster once said, and repeated it with emphasis : "When a man preaches to me I want him to make it a *personal matter*, a personal matter, a personal matter !" And it is our solemn duty thus to address all men, whether they wish it or not.

The sermons of Jonathan Edwards, with all their power show the evil of having always a regular "application, formally announced or indicated. Often a brief and informal application is best. Often, too, it is better not to reserve the application for the latter part of the discourse, but to apply each thought as it is presented, provided they all conspire towards a common result.

The term application is in general somewhat loosely employed in regard to preaching, for it includes two or three distinct things. Beside the application proper, in which we show the hearer how the truths of the sermon apply to him, and besides the frequent practical suggestions as to the best mode and means of performing the

duty urged, there is also commonly included all that we denote by the terms "persuasion" and "exhortation." But if the ideas conveyed are kept distinct, it is probably better to retain the term, with which all preachers and hearers are so familiar.

The *application* proper is often effected by means of "*inferences*" or "*remarks*." The former must not be theoretical or general deductions from the truths presented, but must really give to those truths a *practical bearing*.

But the chief part of what we commonly call application is *persuasion*. It is not enough to convince men of truth, nor enough to make them see how it applies to themselves, and how it might be practicable for them to act it out—but we must "persuade men." A distinguished minister once said that he could never exhort; he could explain and prove what was truth and duty, but then he must leave people to themselves. The apostle Paul, however, could not only argue, but could say: "We pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Do we not well know, from observation and from experience, that a man may see his duty and still neglect it? Have we not often been led by persuasion to do something, good or bad, from which we were shrinking? It is proper, then, to persuade, to exhort, even to entreat.

Persuasion is not generally best accomplished by a mere appeal to the feelings, but by urging, in the first place, some motive or motives for acting, or determining to act, as we propose. This is not properly called a process of argument. The motive presented may require previous proof that it is something true, or right, or good, but this proving is distinct from the act of presenting it as a motive; and if when bringing a motive to bear we have to prove anything concerning it, the proof ought to

have great brevity and directness, or it will delay and hinder the designed effect.

A preacher must of course appeal to none but worthy motives. The principal motives he is at liberty to use may be classed under three heads, viz: *happiness, holiness,* )  
*love.*

We may lawfully appeal to the desire for *happiness*. Those philosophers who insist that man ought always to do right simply and alone because it is right, are no philosophers at all, for they are either grossly ignorant of human nature, or else are indulging in mere fanciful speculation. No doubt some preachers err in that they treat happiness as the almost exclusive, at any rate as the chief motive. Certainly this should always be subordinated, to duty and affection ; but when thus subordinated it is a legitimate and a powerful motive. The Scriptures appeal not only to our *feelings of moral obligation* but to our *hopes* and *fears* for time and for eternity. "It is profitable for thee," is a consideration which the Great Teacher repeatedly employs in encouraging to self-denial. A desire for the pleasures of piety in this life, or even for the happiness of Heaven, would never, of itself alone, lead men to become Christians, or strengthen them to live as such; but combined with other motives, it does a great and useful work. And there is here included not only the pleasure to be derived from gratification of appetite and passion, but taste and of ambition.

All men desire *holiness*, at least in one sense of the term, though they often wish it united with sinful gratifications. The most abandoned man sometimes wishes to be good, nay, persuades himself that in certain respects he is good; and the great mass of mankind fully intend, after indulging a little longer in sinful pleasure, to become thoroughly good before they die. Here then is a great motive to

which the preacher may appeal. The thorough depravity of human nature should not make us forget that goodness can always touch at least a faintly responsive chord in the human breast. We ought to hold up before men the beauty of holiness, to educate the regenerate into doing right for its own sake, and not merely for the sake of its rewards. We ought to stimulate, and at the same time control, that hatred of evil, which is the natural and necessary counterpart to the love of holiness. And as regards the future life, we should habitually point men, not only to its happiness, but still more earnestly to its purity, and strive by God's blessing to make them long after its freedom from all sin and from all fear of sinning. Such noble and ennobling aspirations it is the preacher's high duty and privilege to cherish in his hearers, by the very fact of appealing to them. And the mightiest of all motives is *love*. In the relations of the present life, love is the great antagonist of selfishness.

But our task is not merely the calm exhibition of motives, that men may coolly act according to them. Many truths of religion are eminently adapted to stir the feelings, and to speak of such truths without feeling and awakening emotion, is unnatural and wrong. And so mighty is the opposition which the Gospel encounters in human nature, so averse is the natural heart to the obedience of faith, so powerful are the temptations of life, that we must arouse men to intense earnestness and often to impassioned emotion, if we would bring them to surmount all obstacles, and to conquer the world, the flesh, and the devil.

It is a matter of universal observation that a speaker who would *excite deep feeling must feel deeply himself*.

In order to excite any of the passions by speech, we have to operate chiefly through the *imagination*. "A pas-

sion is most strongly excited by sensation. The sight of danger, immediate or near, instantly rouseth fear; the feeling of an injury, and the presence of the injurer, in a moment kindle anger. Next to the influence of sense is that of memory, the effect of which upon passion, if the fact be recent and remembered distinctly and circumstantially, is almost equal. Next to the influence of memory is that of imagination." In proportion as the hearer's imagination is kindled, he *seems to see* that which we present, and the effect upon his feelings approximates to the effect of sight.

*Comparison* is often very effective in awakening emotion. Thus we make men feel more deeply how shameful is ingratitude to God, by first presenting some affecting case of ingratitude to a human benefactor. The emotion excited by something as regards which men feel readily and deeply, is transferred to the object compared. e. g.: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." The effect of *climax* gradually working the feelings up to the highest pitch, may also be very great, as every one has observed.

We must not try to be highly impassioned on all subjects, on all occasions, or in all parts of a discourse. Appeals to the feelings will usually be made only at the conclusion; sometimes, after the discussion of each successive topic, but then we must be sure that the interest first excited can be renewed, and gradually increased. It is a common fault with inexperienced preachers to make vehement appeals in the early part, even in the very beginning, of a sermon; in such cases there will almost inevitably be a reaction, and a decay of interest before the close. If several impassioned passages are to occur, those which come first should be comparatively brief, and followed by something calm or familiar. It is also important to avoid ex-

hausting our physical force, before reaching that portion of the sermon which calls for the most passionate earnestness. He who is exhausted not only cannot speak forcibly, but cannot feel deeply. And a concluding exhortation should never be prolonged beyond the point at which the preacher is still in full vigor, and the hearers feel a sustained interest.

## EXTEMPORE SERMONS

JAMES M. HOPPIN, D. D.

There is, without doubt, a wide-spread impression that something is greatly wanting in our preaching, and that there is a decided demand for more of practical effectiveness, simplicity and common interest, in this part of divine service.

No thought or logic can make up for the lack of that which excites a real interest in the audience.

Would not the more general cultivation of the extemporaneous style of sermonizing tend to make preaching more natural, free, and popularly interesting ?

It is certainly well for the younger ministers to hear the mutterings of the coming storm, and direct their attention to this inquiry.

Many preachers, who have produced the profoundest results, have been extempore preachers ; these have been preachers like Whitefield, Nettleton, Spurgeon, and Newman Hall.

1. Extempore preaching stimulates the preacher. It makes him a quick thinker. It goads him by the presence and sympathy of an expectant audience. It often originates new thoughts of living power that could not have come into the mind in the calm silence of the study.

2. It breaks up a stiff, artificial style. He who is a true preacher must mount the pulpit and speak even as on the day of Pentecost—fiery tongues, not writing pens, fell

from Heaven on the apostles. He learns in this way to express himself in a direct manner.

3. It is adapted to produce immediate effect. It makes the speaker thus to feel the pulse of an audience, to meet its exact wants. It gives the impression that one is really talking to the audience before him, and to no other.

Hence, extemporaneous preaching is peculiarly adapted to times of revivals; and it is a strong argument in its favor, that it does unconsciously take the place of other methods in times of real urgency.

4. It has more of outward and inward freedom. It gives play to the eye, the arm, the finger, the whole body, so that the whole man becomes an instrument of God's Spirit to speak through men. Then speech is electric; then there can be eloquence. There is a kind of inspiration, which at favored moments comes upon true preachers, in which they do become the mouth-pieces of God's Spirit.

We will give a few practical hints on extempore speaking.

*a.* Train yourself to think without writing.

*b.* Think through the subject beforehand. Never trust to the inspiration of the moment for the solid parts of the discourse—the main ideas, the arguments, the proofs, the conclusion. These should be thoroughly arranged in the mind.

*c.* Prepare beforehand, either mentally or on paper, the actual wording of your main proposition and the principal divisions, and perhaps of some of the most important passages. It may be recommended indeed to some beginners to combine the two methods of the written and extemporaneous sermon; i. e., to write a good portion of the sermon, the body of the sermon, and trust the rest to the utterance of the moment. The illustrations, for example, may be given extemporaneously, and will gain decidedly in freedom, vividness and life.



*d.* Cultivate the faculty of free and correct expression.

*e.* Make a beginning at once. Eloquent speaking is gained by always working and straining for the power of free and forceful utterance.

*f.* Do not choose too easy or familiar subjects.

*g.* Look above the opinion of men upon your preaching. Have courage and think more of duty than reputation.

*h.* Mingle the written and extemporaneous methods. Let one preach a written sermon in the morning, and an extemporaneous one in the afternoon, and let him never think of writing out his weekly lectures or other public addresses.

*i.* Cultivate oratorical delivery. Here elocution is of great importance. The extemporizer should acquire a clear, distinct articulation, rising and falling naturally with the thought, varied and yet even ; neat and yet capable of feeling, and of vehement, rending force ; and above all, free from tones of earthly passion, and breathing pure, holy spiritual emotions.

Those who would influence the age must think quickly and act boldly. We are bound to try every method, to strain every nerve, to be preachers equal to the demands of the time, and to seize its opportunities.

## THE CONCLUSION.

JAMES M. HOPPIN, D. D.

The conclusion of a sermon is the fit winding up and the practical application of all that has preceded. It is not really the sermon itself, but is the taking leave of the subject in such a way as to gather up and forcibly impress its teachings. It is indeed a great thing to know when to stop. Many an effective sermon has been greatly weakened by drawing out its conclusion to too great length.

The importance and advantages of a good conclusion are seen in the following reasons :—

1. It enables the preacher to carry out the true idea of preaching ; *i. e.*, to give a practical application to what he preaches, directing it to the conscience and heart of his hearers. The end of preaching is the actual conversion and sanctification of souls. There may be, however, exceptions to the rule that the application should come in the conclusion, (*a.*) When, from the nature of the discussion, there is necessarily a continuous application in the body of the sermon. (*b.*) When, from the nature of the audience or the occasion, there is necessarily a continuous application of the subject.

But, notwithstanding these exceptions, a good conclusion is needed to enforce the moral impression of a whole sermon ; and in the case of a strictly topical and argu-

mentative discourse, it is almost without exception essential.

2. It combines the scattered impressions of a sermon into one powerful impression, and thus adds to the effect of whatever has gone before. The skilful preacher understands this, and shapes his whole sermon so as to make the conclusion effective, and to leave a deep impression at last.

3. It preserves the sensibilities of preacher and hearer from being exhausted. It does this by retaining all the freshness and force of feeling for the final appeal.

In modern times, and especially in the sermon, the conclusion, rhetorically treated, is commonly divided into, 1. Recapitulation ; 2. Applications, inferences, and remarks ; 3. Appeal to the feelings, or personal appeal. Each of these, or all combined, may form the conclusion.

1. Recapitulation. This can be borne only by a decidedly argumentative discussion, and it is borrowed from forensic address. That kind of recapitulation often increases the power of a discourse by compressing its substance into a small space. It should not repeat arguments in precisely the same language as that employed in the body of the sermon, but should be cast in a fresh form.

2. Applicatory inferences and remarks. "Inferences are logical deductions from the argument ; remarks are natural suggestions drawn from it." Taken both together, they indicate the use which is made of the subject immediately after the discussion. They form a method of making the direct application of the arguments.

As to rules for inferences :—

1. They should be drawn directly from the whole character and development of the sermon. Thus in the argumentative sermon, after we have given the hearers a view

of the proofs, we may in the application bring home the truth that has been proved, more particularly to the hearer's own minds ; we follow out the same design we have heretofore pursued.

In the expository sermon, we may close with the uses and lessons we have gained, as applied to the different conditions of our hearers. In the persuasive sermon, there should be at the end a more close application of the motives as directed to the particular action to which we would persuade men.

2. They should be forcible, and drawn from the body of the sermon. As a general rule, it is more forcible to make, in the conclusion, a final concentration upon one point which has been more widely discussed and illustrated in the body of the sermon, rather than to make a final diffusion of thought, or widening out of the discussion into general remarks.

3. They should have regard to the character and states of mind of the hearers, as well as to the character and design of the subject ; e. g., when the hearer is reasonably supposed to be persuaded of the truth or necessity of a certain duty, he should then be told how to perform that duty, and should be helped to overcome its difficulties.

4. They should increase in force and importance. Remarks relating to truth or conviction should precede those respecting duty or persuasion. And in persuasion we should address those first who are most favorably disposed, and therefore *ceteris paribus* we should address the converted before the unconverted.

In the application there is more occasion for vehemence and force than in any other part.

3. Appeal to the feelings. There are usually three modes of ending a sermon : (a.) In the form of a series of

inferences as just suggested ; (b.) In the form of detached observations following generally biographical and historical subjects ; (c.) In the form of direct address or appeal, which follow out the aim of the sermon, or are appended directly to the body of the discourse. In this direct address is generally the place for the appeal to the feelings.

This address to the feelings is something above all art, and the more spontaneous and natural it is the better. That is often the inspired moment of the discourse ; it is inspired or not ; it is real or artificial ; it is everything or nothing. There should be true feeling in it, or the speaker should not attempt an appeal to the feelings of others.

1. The whole sermon should be more or less arranged for the moral and emotional effect of the conclusion. This should be unconsciously rather than artfully done. All should hasten to the end. One should begin the sermon with the end in view. He should strike the same chord at the end which he did at the beginning, though with tenfold force. If one has this aim to leave a deep and lasting impression on the hearts of the hearers, pathetic and passionate thoughts will present themselves while he is composing the sermon. These should be remembered and gathered up for the conclusive appeal.

2. The appeal should not be for rhetorical, but for true effect.

3. All appeals to feeling should be brief. For the real close itself, so far as the feelings are concerned, nothing is more impressive and moving than a feeling, solemn passage of the Scripture, either the text or some other perhaps still more pointed word of Scripture. Then the sermon begins and ends with the word of God.

A return now and then to the old method of direct ap-

peal to the impenitent, at the close of the sermon, might, in some case, be deeply effective.

As a suggestion in closing a sermon, let the preacher be kind in his words and manner even to the wickedest and worst. In the moment of the most solemn adjuration, or even burning rebuke and denunciation, let the tender affectionateness of the gospel glow. This personal appeal in all cases is difficult, and is often better to be indicated than actually made ; but there should be, directly or indirectly, with boldness, but in love, a personal application of the sermon ; and there may be times when nothing else is suitable, or nothing will reach the point, excepting the words of Nathan to David, "Thou art the man !" Love in the heart will teach us, and it alone will teach us, how to reach the hearts of our sinful fellow-men.

Let the preacher keep in mind that the end of preaching is not preaching itself, but a lodgment of the renovating truth in the hearts of those who hear ; in the language of Vinet, "God has purposed that man should be the channel of truth to man. Not only are words to be submitted and repeated ; a life is to be communicated."

## HOW TO OBTAIN AND RETAIN THE ATTENTION OF OUR HEARERS.

REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

We ought to interest all the audience, from the eldest to the youngest. We ought to make even children attentive. We want all eyes fixed upon us and all ears open to us.

You must secure your people's undistracted thoughts, turning them out of the channel in which they have been running six days into one suitable for the Sabbath.

*Frequently it is very difficult for congregations to attend, because of the place and the atmosphere.*

The next best thing to the grace of God for a preacher is oxygen. Pray that the windows of Heaven may be opened, but begin by opening the windows of your meeting-house.

Bad air makes me dull, and my hearers dull too. A gust of fresh air through the building might be to the people the next best thing to the gospel itself, at least it would put them in a fit frame of mind to receive the truth.

What next? *In order to get attention, the first golden rule is, always say something worth hearing.* Most persons possess an instinct which leads them to desire to hear a good thing. Give your hearers something which they can

treasure up and remember ; something likely to be useful to them, the best matter from the best of places, solid doctrine from the divine Word. *Do it, brethren. Do it continually, and you will have all the attention you can desire.*

*Let the good matter which you give them be very clearly arranged. Be sure, moreover, to speak plainly ;* because however excellent your matter, if a man does not comprehend it, it can be of no use to him. Go down to his level if he is a poor man ; go up to his understanding if he is an educated person.

Let your hearts indite a good matter, clearly arranged and plainly put, and you are pretty sure to gain the ear, and so the heart.

*Attend also to your manner of address ;* aim in that at the promotion of attention. And here I should say, *as a rule do not read your sermons.* If you must read, mind that you do it to *perfection*. Be the very *best* of *readers*, and you have need to be if you would secure attention.

In order to get attention, make your manner as *pleasing* as it can possibly be. Do not, for instance, indulge in monotonies. *Vary your voice continually.* Vary your speed as well—dash as rapidly as a lightning flash, and anon, travel forward in quiet majesty. Shift your accent, move your emphasis, and avoid sing-song. Vary the tone ; use the bass sometimes, and let the *thunders roll* within ; at other times speak as you ought to generally—from the lips, and let your *speech be conversational*. Anything for a change. Human nature craves for variety, and God grants it in nature, providence and grace ; let us have it in sermons also.

As a rule, *do not make the introduction TOO LONG.* It is always a pity to build a great porch to a little house. The introduction should have something striking in it. It is



well to fire a startling shot as a signal gun to clear the decks for action.

If you want to have the attention of your people—to have it thoroughly and always, *it can only be accomplished by their being led by the Spirit of God into an elevated and devout state of mind.*

*Be interested yourself*, and you will interest others. And then when your hearers see that the topic has engrossed you, it will by degrees engross them.

Do you wonder that people do not attend to a man who does not feel that he has anything important to say? Have something to say, and say it earnestly, and the congregation will be at your feet.

It may be superfluous to remark that for the mass of our people it is well that *there should be a goodly number of illustrations in our discourses.* We have the example of our Lord for that: and most of the greatest preachers have abounded in similes, metaphors, allegories, and *anecdotes.* But beware of overdoing this business.

In your sermons *cultivate what Father Taylor calls "the surprise power."* There is a great deal of force in that for winning attention. Do not say what everybody expected you would say. Brethren, take them at unawares. Let your thunderbolt drop out of a clear sky. When all is calm and bright let the tempest rush up, and by contrast make its terrors all the greater.

A very useful help in securing attention is *a pause.*

On a sultry Summer's day, if nothing will keep off the drowsy feeling, *be very short*, sing more than usual.

Again, we must *make the people feel that they have an interest in what we are saying to them.*

Preach upon practical themes, pressing present, personal matters, and you will secure an earnest hearing.

I will now give you a diamond rule and conclude.

( *Be yourself clothed with the Spirit of God.*

You have golden chains in your mouth which will hold them fast.

“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

## POETRY IN THE PULPIT.

H. M. GROUT, D. D.

A good lady, both devout and intellectual, once said to me : " If I were a preacher I should cultivate the poets, and should make a more frequent use of poetical quotations than most ministers do." The remark has suggested some thoughts upon a subject which has already been aired in certain quarters, but upon which it is easy to say more. I refer to the use of poetry in the pulpit, for which a variety of reasons occur to me. Some of these may strike the reader as of less gravity than the rest, but altogether they will be acknowledged to have a good deal of weight.

1. In the first place, a judicious use of *poetical quotations* is to be commended as rendering pulpit discourses *more pleasing and impressive*. There is no merit in pulpit dryness. A proper amount of adornment does not weaken the power of the truth. That kind of adornment under consideration is particularly agreeable to persons of æsthetic natures and literary tastes. We have observed that, to sentimental young ladies, extracts from the poets are far more pleasing than those from Jonathan Edwards, Jeremy Taylor, or Josephus. To preachers afflicted with poverty of thought, there could not be a more admirable resort, when other expedients have failed of arresting at-

tention. It gives the preacher a chance to show what elocutionary studies and exercises have done for him. To all this may be added the considerations that an appropriate quotation may be made use of to fix a thought in the memory ; to deepen its immediate impressiveness ; and to kindle devout emotions.

2. Then, to quote poetry one must read poetry. This improves æsthetic faculty ; strengthens and enriches the imagination ; is a restful and exhilarating change from severer studies ; and is of a particular advantage not only in the formation of a graceful and rhythmic style, but in the acquisition of copiousness ; if not of ideas, at least of fitting words for their expression. The two mental powers of especial importance to the composer of sermons, are that of *analysis*, by means of which one is able to divide, subdivide, and trace into its several branches the central thought to be expanded, and that of *imagination*, which clothes what would otherwise be a dry skeleton with living flesh ; what would otherwise be a leafless tree with rich and beautiful foliage. Scientific, theological, and similar studies improve the former, poetry the latter.

3. In the third place, it should be said that a very liberal use of poetry in the pulpit may be a means of grace. This is quite likely to be the case when the preacher discovers that half a dozen lines from some hymn of the ages have quite overshadowed, in the hearer's mind, all the good things he has tried to spread over a dozen or twenty pages. When the enthusiastic hearer remarks to the minister, as he descends from the pulpit : "That was a lovely quotation you gave us this morning," he is to be blamed if he does not go home a humbler and a better man.

It is hardly the thing to conclude these thoughts without an attempt to illustrate the excellence of the practice advocated ; which I do by quoting, in the way of an

apology for so brief treatment of so high a theme, the words of a distinguished master of noble English verse :

**“ Man wants but little here below,  
Nor wants that little long.”**

## FORCE IN THE PULPIT.

WM. A. STEARNS, D.D.

The leading quality of eloquence, and that which expresses its combined elements in one word is **FORCE**. We say *force*, rather than earnestness, for while we cannot be forceful without earnestness, we may, through lack of wisdom, be earnest without force.

Let us illustrate this quality by examples both secular and sacred, and then show some of the principles on which it depends.

Begin with Homer. The *Iliad*, though an epic poem, is everywhere alive with oratory. Its speeches are of course the creations of the poet, yet they are unquestionably conceived in the spirit of ancient eloquence, and become realities to the vivid imagination of the blind old bard. They are clear, rapid, concentrated, wisely directed, irresistible utterances. They burst out like lava from a volcanic mountain, pouring down in rivers of fire. They always have an end, a meaning, an object, and never forget that a "straight line is the shortest distance between two points."

Demosthenes was the very personification of force. In the oration for the crown, which Bossuet has somewhere pronounced the greatest work of the human mind, and of which Cicero says: "that in this oration for Ctesiphon, where the orator speaks of his own deeds, councils and

merits in respect to the republic, the *ideal* is filled, so that no higher eloquence can be required," in this oration for the crown, we say *force* is the predominating quality. In this master-piece of oratory, genius and judgment, logic and passion, vehemence and self-control, combine like so many chemical elements, to produce that livid intense heat, by which rock is melted and iron is consumed.

Cicero himself was like the Amazon, great in all its windings, and on the whole the broadest, largest, mightiest river in the world. But Demosthenes was one whole Niagara whose awful thundering flood nothing could resist. At the same time Cicero excelled most if not all other orators in those very attributes which made Demosthenes super-eminent. At the close of his great orations, he gathers his arguments and thoughts into one mass which, by ardor of emotion, he kindles into a devouring flame. It was this intenseness of feeling, especially in the peroration, to which he attributes principally his success.

In our own country, we need but mention Patrick Henry and Fisher Ames, as illustrations of the power which earnest feeling combined with wisdom gives to speech. Nor is one of our modern orators an exception. With a mind expansive as the globe, fertile as the country whose constitution he defended, solid and massive as the granite of his native state, his wise positions, his clear logic, his compact thought, his burning spirit, manifest in the eye, the cheek, the hand, the whole body, gave to his eloquence a power before which enemies quailed, and under the influence of which men sometimes held their breath, or shouted with involuntary applause. The leading characteristic of Webster's eloquence was force.

*We pass from secular oratory to the pulpit.* But here

let it be premised that force is not vehemence alone. There is force in the still small voice, as well as in the earthquake. That which produces conviction, that which deeply affects the feelings, that which moves to action partakes of this excellence.

Christian oratory demands its sons of consolation as well as its sons of thunder. *Pathos and unction*, so rarely seen or required in the senate, have their proper throne, in the sacred desk. The Christian religion is characterized less by vehemence than by tenderness. It appeals indeed to all the powers of the human mind. It affords opportunity for cool statement and reasoning, for awful sublimities, for gorgeous descriptions, for utterances of chilling horror ; it does not forbid sometimes a chastened wit, but its favorite theme is "that dear blood for sinners spilt, which shows my sin in all its guilt." This is the key-note of that holy psalm which, sweet as the harp of angels, more softly sad than the dirge of Mozart, is to be sounded out from Calvary's cross through all the world.

Whitefield belonged to two continents. He had a deep experimental perception of gospel truth, and an almost infinite sense of its importance. He saw, or thought he saw, the English and American churches reposing on the pillows of a dead orthodoxy, or in the freezing slumbers of a delusive Arminianism. The doctrines of regeneration, and justification by faith alone had to a great extent faded out of view. He looked upon our congregations as in immediate, fearful danger. He looked upon the cross of Christ as the only refuge. He felt the great truths of our religion, as almost no other man ever did. To him they were an ever present reality. He thought himself raised up to enforce them ; they were as a fire in his bones till he spoke. With great majesty and persuasiveness, he went forth as a divinely commissioned messenger to an-



nounce the wrath and mercy of God. At one moment he stands by the roaring flames of hell and cries, Flee, flee, flee, O sinner, flee ! at another by the cross, crying, Come, come, come, poor sinner, come ! He united the courage, the judgment, and the passions essential to a perfect popular orator, and by a complete self-abandonment to his work, and to its appropriate emotions, he became the *most effective of preachers*.

Our own great Edwards was eloquent, but in a different way. His mind was of crystal clearness, acute, logical, ratiocinative, ardent. His convictions of truth were as decided as Whitefield's. He was more solid, if possible more solemn, soul-searching, and soberly earnest. But he had not that power of appealing to all the passions of men in popular address. He wrote his sermons and confined himself to his notes. But he went on uncovering men's hearts, bringing out evil from the deepest recesses ; exhibiting the hideousness of sin in the magnifying glass of truth ; arresting the guilty and arraying them before the judgment seat of Christ ; painting heaven above and hell burning beneath, and wretched sinners suspended by a hair over its horrors ; till a whole assembly on one occasion rose and stood pale and trembling, ready to exclaim, where, O where, shall guilty souls find refuge ?

We have not time to proceed further in our illustrations of force, or the power of real, unaffected, heartfelt but wisely managed earnestness. We see that it is the soul of eloquence, and are now prepared to inquire more particularly on what it depends.

It depends first, and as a prerequisite, especially in this country, upon a well trained and well disciplined mind.

In any attempt to enforce divine truth, it is the preacher's business, first to convince the understanding. Error must be opposed, its walls must be assailed and shattered

by the hard-headed battering rams of logic. Sound doctrine must be presented, shown up, proved. The reasoner must be reasoned down, the arguer must be out-argued, the questioner mightily convinced, and the caviller silenced.

But here force requires condensation and concentration. Two or three invincible arguments clearly, fully stated, without redundancy of detail or of qualification, and expressed in the fewest possible words, will complete the work of conviction in the minds of a popular audience, better than long-continued processes, or innumerable feebler proofs. Whatever force there may be, over here and there a highly disciplined mind, in conclusions arrived at, after wearisome and tortuous wanderings through the labyrinths of a thoroughly metaphysical discourse, the mass of the people will neither be edified nor convinced. They must have argument, but it must be clear, invincible, and so brief, that the *media* of proof can be seen from beginning to end, and *recollected*. This is the preaching which captures the strong common-sense intellect of an American, and prepares the way for those effects which, based on solid and well remembered argument, rouses to action the powerful energies of his mind.

Next to argument comes *passion*. From the cooler region of the understanding we descend to the heart, and by metaphor, by imagination, by emotion, we kindle our foregoing logic into a flame. When the machinery and everything else is in readiness, the steam, which has been gradually rising and condensing, is made to press upon the wheels of discourse and set it in rapid motion. But *here* there is a point to be reached, there is an end to be obtained.

We should never commence our journey till we know where we are going to. Let the exordium and peroration

of a discourse stand over against each other like the two continents at Behring's Straits, with one or both of which always in sight, while you cross as soon as practicable the intermediate sea of discussion, and complete the voyage.

With this clear perception of the whole subject, force requires a deep sense of its importance, with corresponding self-forgetfulness and abandonment to its power. He who attempts eloquence for the sake of *being* eloquent, or securing a reputation for oratory, or gaining applause, may be sure of failure and of deserved contempt. Let no man speak till he has something to say. We must have a subject, and deeply feel our subject, and try to impress not ourselves but our subject upon our hearers. Even the stage-player must enter, for the time being, into the character he assumes. He must *be* frenzied Lear, maddened by the ingratitude of his daughters; or thoughtful Hamlet, shaken in spirit by his mother's crime and troubled by his father's ghost. We must sincerely feel what we say, and never think to excite emotions in others which we do not experience ourselves.

"If you wish me to weep, you must first weep yourself; then will your misfortunes grieve me, O Telephus or Peleus; but if you speak badly things commanded or on commission, I shall either sleep or laugh."

Robert Hall may have been constitutionally ambitious. But by self-discipline and by the power with which his gigantic intellect grappled an important truth, Robert Hall became distinguished for the manifest absorption of self in the greatness of his subjects. And this was one secret of his power. It was not so much the dissenting minister of Cambridge that Brougham and Jeffries ran to hear, as it was truth itself, moving in measured cadences, with irresistible cogency of argument, authority and emotion, right onward to its results.

And why should not the preacher abandon himself to his subject? In whose presence does he speak? First, in the presence of the Almighty, whose minister he is. Second, in the presence of miserable men whom he is commissioned to accuse. Third, of Jesus Christ who suffered death for them all and whose mercy he is to announce and enforce! Consider the awful circumstances in which he speaks—heaven glittering from afar, hell rumbling beneath, sinners hesitating, the time for decision coming to an end! Can one think of self, of his reputation, of the applause his demonstrations, his figures, his balanced sentences, his fine intonations are to secure? Shall he sue for flattery, or canvass for votes, or shrink from the breath of censure? Remember he is the minister of God Almighty to the dying men whom he addresses.

In this connection we see the necessity of *faith*. We speak of it now not as an essential to salvation, but as a requisite to Christian eloquence. When religious truth fades out of view, when themes of eternity, as awful verities, cease to stir the soul, something insincere, artificial, unreal, is suggested to the hearer, and the speaker finds himself lifeless and inefficient. Unbelief relaxes the nerves of oratory, and makes one an empty declaimer, instead of a powerful preacher. It requires the electricity of faith to produce sons of thunder.

It was this firm faith in the scriptural revelations, this vivid *realization* of the spiritual and the unseen, although of course never disconnected from divine influence, that gave the simple hearted Brainerd such irresistible power over the sons of the wilderness. Paul always spoke of eternal things as one *who knew*, and prophets uttered their terrific maledictions, and foretold coming glories, with the conviction of a conscious certainty. Grasp the truth with the simple but gigantic faith of a patriarch; live in the

atmosphere of the invisible when its night stars beam steadily upon the soul ; converse with God like old John Bunyan, like the reformer Knox, like the puritan Shepard ; penetrate eternity, by a living confidence in its revelations ; looking up steadfastly into Heaven, like the martyr Stephen, *see Jesus*,—and there will be an earnestness, a *reality*, a power which, if attended also with appropriate evidences, few can resist.

The force of speech depends also upon personal character. The ancients had a maxim, that no one could be eloquent but a good man. This is especially true of the pulpit. How can one recommend goodness, earnestly, powerfully, successfully, and for a series of years, unless he possesses it ? How can he impress upon us the beauty of holiness, the bliss of harmony and communion with God, the infinite value of the crucifixion, the tenderness of Jesus, unless he has experienced it ?

In order to successful pulpit eloquence, (we speak now in reference to the oratory,) the orator must at least *seem* good ; and the only way to seem good, taking life together, is to be so.

Some of the conditions have been stated, on which the power of the pulpit depends, such as a well trained and well furnished mind, including continued study, both of a general and particular character ; a clear perception of one whole subject, with precise statements, conclusive demonstrations, and earnest conclusions ; a deep feeling of the importance of what is delivered with self-forgetfulness in the utterance of truth and self-abandonment to its power ; also faith, judgment and character.

It remains, in conclusion, and as a stimulus to effort, that we allude to some of the motives by which the American pulpit excites its orators to a fulfilment of their mission.

These are found in the truth, in its author, and in its objects.

In the truth. Every Christian minister is an apostle of the truth. His commission is the highest ever given. "Is there a nobler work of God in the souls of men," says Herder, "than the divine thoughts, impulses, aims, and energies which he sometimes imparts to one chosen man for the cultivation of a thousand? "God himself is *truth*," says Milton, "in propagating which, as men display a greater integrity and zeal, they approach nearer to the similitude of God, and possess a greater portion of his *love*." And a wiser than Herder, a more sublime than Milton, exclaims: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion thy God reigneth." As ministers of Christ, we are entrusted with that whose value the whole material *creation* does not equal. We are brought into partnership with God. As he spake stars and suns into existence by his word, so as co-workers together with him, we are to create, in the souls of men, new heavens and new earths, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

There is the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. This is the nerve, the energy, the soul of the true Christian orator. Its influence will often come upon him, and while he utters the Spirit's truth, as revealed in the holy word, he will preach with the Spirit's demonstration and the Spirit's power; for it is not he that speaks, but his *Father* that speaketh in him.

## PREACHING—MANNER AND MATTER.

JOHN HALL, D. D.

We must pre-suppose on the part of those who will be preachers, good personal character—good moral qualities—especially sincerity, integrity, uprightness, truthfulness, goodness. Any good preacher must give the impression that the man is greater than any thing he says ; that behind what he utters to the people there is the great and noble personality of the man, that gives weight and force to what he says. A bullet thrown out of the human hand will have comparatively little power ; but let there be a cannon behind that bullet, and the explosive force of powder, and it will crush or penetrate. And the personal character of the man behind the things that he utters to the people must give them momentum and penetrating power. Even a heathen could see that one of the necessary qualifications to a good orator is, that he be a good man. Emphatically must this be the case with the Christian orator who would speak the truth as it is in Jesus, and win men to purity and goodness.

Over and above personal piety in preparation for the work of preaching, when a man goes to preach a particular sermon, it seems to me that special preparation for that occasion is essentially necessary. I think I ought to emphasize this statement.

For a particular discourse, at any time, in order that

that discourse may be thorough and effective, there must needs be special preparation. I do not mean by that, that every time a minister is to conduct a service he must necessarily prepare a new sermon for that service. I mean that if he is to preach well, he must make a special and peculiar preparation for that special service. If a man says to himself, "Well, I have a general knowledge of this subject, and I shall talk to the people of my knowledge of it," you may be reasonably sure he will not produce a very edifying discourse. That which is founded upon mere general knowledge will be so usually general in its character as to produce no particular results. It will be like those general invitations that are sometimes given, that are not supposed to involve any particulars. If any one says to me : "Come and see me some time," I shall not be very likely to go ; but if a person says : "Come and see me at four o'clock next Tuesday," he fixes upon something distinct and definite, and the chances are that I shall go. And that is just the difference between the general talks that are founded on general knowledge, and a distinct and specific preparation made for a distinct and specific occasion. I do not now speak only from what I have known by experience. I speak of what I have heard from many men who have made it their business to study how best to impress their fellow creatures, when I say, that with very rare exceptions, a man never speaks to his fellow-creatures with genuine and thorough effect but as the result of preparation. In some cases he is recalling and repeating what he has prepared upon previous occasions ; then he is utilizing his past resources ; but the addresses that are founded upon mere general understanding of particular subjects, as a rule are comparatively ineffective, and in the end become tiresome.



This brings me to the question, how should men make their preparations for the preaching of a sermon? He would make a very great mistake, it seems to me, who would lay down any cast-iron rule for all men upon this subject. There are diversities of tastes, gifts, and aptitudes; and some men work remarkably well in one way, who would fail in another.

There is a way, and when I mention that this is the way recommended by the late Dr. James W. Alexander, a man of the finest taste and the richest Christian experience, you will see that it deserves, at least, a passing notice at your hands. It is the plan of carefully thinking out what a man should say, and definitely arranging the thoughts, and writing them out, not necessarily with verbal accuracy and precision, but so that all the thought will be represented to the man's own eye, making his preparation thorough in this way, and then, barely fixing in his mind the illustrations and arguments, to go to the pulpit and talk over to the people as well as he knows how, in the language that the moment supplies, what he has prepared in this way in his study. The thing is hardly worth mentioning, but that is the way upon which, for my own part, I have been working now for twenty-five years, and all my own experience is in favor of it. It consists simply in thinking out the matter as clearly as any one can, and writing down all the thoughts, so that they can be produced at any future time, if necessary; fixing the order of argument and illustration in the mind, taking no heed of the words; and then proceeding to the pulpit and talking over to the people what has thus been prepared and fixed in the way I now mention.

"Now," says some one with reference to that plan, "what can be the possible use of writing—what is the good of it? A very proper question, and it ought to be

answered. I shall tell you exactly how it strikes myself; I cannot speak for others. In the first place, it has the great advantage of enabling a man to know with some tolerable clearness, whether he has anything to say or not. In England they have specie, as you know. A man may have in his pockets a whole handful of coins, and feeling them with his hand, he may persuade himself that he is tolerably well off—sovereigns, half-crowns, and pence will all feel and sound very much alike in his pockets; but if he takes out a handful of money and spreads it out, and looks at it, then he sees just how much he has. It is barely possible that the copper may greatly predominate over the silver or the gold. Just so I feel in the matter of making preparation in this way for preaching. A man thinks he has a great thought. Let him write it down and see how it looks on paper. I tell you that sometimes what would seem very great thoughts shrivel immensely when they are put down in black and white! There is something, perhaps, in your mind, something of which you have often talked, that has been very impressive to you, and you have given expression to your feeling by a series of interjections: "O my!" "awful!" "tremendous!" "wonderful!" "astonishing!" But a man cannot go on and repeat these interjections to the people; he must say something that will give an impression of what is "awful" and "tremendous." When he writes it down he will be able to see whether it is really awful and tremendous. That is one sufficient reason, it seems to me, for this process of writing out, and to me this is the main reason. The other two are subsidiary.

In the second place, a man has a comfortable sense of having honestly tried to do his duty when he has put down upon paper the thoughts that he is to give to the people,

and when he knows what he has to say to them. I speak for myself—I hope the egotism will be forgiven, for I have been directed to talk in this way—I should not feel free to speak in the most simple and informal manner without putting down on paper what I aimed to say. I came home very tired last night about half-past ten o'clock, and I knew I had to speak here this evening, but I should not have been able to sleep with a good conscience without putting down that line of thought I am evolving—(of no great value, I admit)—but, such as it is, I should not be free in my own mind if I had not done that, for I knew that I had to work all this day.

In the third place, if it should happen that a man has occasion to make subsequent use of prepared discourses, this plan enables him to turn his former labors to account, and after honest and careful preparation of this kind, as I know, he will be able to go back upon a manuscript of twenty years, and in a couple of hours, he will be able to so possess his own mind with what he wrote at that period as to communicate it freely and usefully to an ordinary congregation. That is the method, it seems to me, on the whole more wise for ordinary men to adopt.

If I write a sermon, and then take it to the pulpit and read it, it seems to me, as a matter of common sense, that by my reading it to the people I confess to them that I am not able to remember it myself; and it does seem a little unreasonable to expect the people to remember what the preacher confesses, by his reading, he himself is not able to remember.

Let us not bring into the pulpit the smart hits that are so successful with many a lecturer on the lecturing stage. He may do lawfully what we can only do at the cost of lowering ourselves and our mission. On the same principle all coarseness, or mere colloquialism or slang, every

thing, in fact, that vulgarizes the Gospel, the man, and the pulpit, ought to be religiously and earnestly kept away.

In enlarging a little upon that point I think I shall be safe in adding, that we ought to teach the truth in the proportions in which we find the truths in the book, in the proportions in which the truths are placed in this book. If we do that, we cannot fail to be evangelical preachers. That is to say, we cannot fail to make Jesus Christ the sum and substance of our ministry, for he is the sum and substance of this blessed book. And if we preach the truths in the proportions in which they are put in the word of God, we shall be most likely to edify the people and to build them up on their most holy faith. Shall I illustrate what I mean by this phrase—teaching the truths in the proportions they occupy in the Bible? In England the idea took possession of the minds of men—a very just and true idea—that the Church is not a mere voluntary society like a club or a debating union, but an organization called into existence by the Almighty, and therefore a divine institution. This truth ought to be taught in its place, and have as much place in our teaching as it has in the Bible. But certain good men gave that truth disproportionate place and Churchism grew up; then they proceeded to give to it more place, until they became High-Churchmen; then they proceeded to give it more place, and they became Ritualists; and I am sorry to say that upon that same line many of them proceeded until they became Romanists. So men have exaggerated the truth, giving it a proportion in their teachings that it does not have in the word.

We must speak to the people in the loving, gentle, patient spirit of the Gospel; and that need not hinder our speaking of what is called “the terror of the law,”

and the awfulness of eternal ruin. Dear brethren, just because we love the people, just because we would fain have them saved, just because we see the glory of Christ and the awfulness of eternal exile from him, we should speak as so to try to win them to him.

And so we must speak always, and the hardest and sternest truths of God's word we may speak with awe, speak with melting words, with stammering tongues, with flowing tears, if we would speak the truth in the spirit of him who "beheld the city and wept over it."

I am of opinion, for example, that in this country at this moment, it is a present truth to make the people understand something of the nature of Romanism. We shall have to fight that battle before a great many years, and we are singularly unprepared for it. There are great multitudes of leaders of public opinion—public educators—who have not the slightest readiness of mind; they have not begun to acquire even that condition of mind in which they are capable of dealing with that great Romish controversy. You will meet with very intelligent people who pooh-pooh Romanism—"The thing is absurd, ridiculous; the idea of intelligent, sensible men accepting a system like that!" I tell you, dear brethren, and I tell the students of this Seminary, that a man in that temper is in no condition to deal with Romanism. Romanism is a compact, concatenated, logical system, in which, having accepted premises, you are compelled to come to its conclusion. Educated Romanists know that very well, and feel the power of it. I tell you if I came to that state of mind that is now called "High-Church," as an honest man I would not stay there three days; I could not—the relentless, unanswerable logic of the system would compel me to go where I should stand under papal infallibility. If I may be pardoned for making the suggestion, young men

who are in college and seminary now might do many things worse than to give a little patient and careful study to that great controversy.

Romanism is a political corporation, as well as a religious creed ; it is an organization for ruling the bodies, the estates, and the consciences of men together, and when kings of the earth draw their swords and strike the sceptre out of its hand it has no right to remonstrate, for its sceptre is of a double character, secular and sacred, as well as tyrannical and destructive in its sway.

Now, I have in a very rapid, sketchy, colloquial way indicated to you a line of thought which I hope you will be able to follow out for yourselves. Will you permit me to conclude by saying one or two words of a more strictly personal character ?

Young men of this Seminary, I have a good enough memory to be able to put myself back in the position in which you are now, and to have some sympathy with you in your present aims, pursuits, and studies. Let me beg of you to aim at being pure and holy men. There are other things that will be of great advantage to you, and which, you will see, I do not depreciate. I am in favor of the highest intellectual culture being subsidized to the defense and statement of the Gospel. I would have ministers in every respect such men as to command the respect and confidence of educated and intellectual worldlings ; and as I read the character of Jesus Christ he produced this impression.

I should, if I could—make ministers stand forth as men who had trained, cultivated, able, vigorous minds ; who can see through the sophistries with which men cheat and beguile themselves, while holding forth the truth as it is in Jesus. Christian simplicity is not Christian simpleness by any means.

But, gentlemen, it is of all things important, with all these advantages, that you be holy and pure men. Somebody may not like the word holy. I like it. I don't see why we should not all like it ; but if they like another let them take it—consecrated men, godly men, spiritual men, Christ-like men, men filled with the Holy Ghost and with power. Be such men if you would have a ministry of power ! This makes all religious effort, address and conversation, in the truest sense, natural and spontaneous. When a vessel is filled to the very brim with water, the least agitation sends some over the side ; and when a man's heart is filled with love to God and filled with love to souls, what else shall he do than speak these great things to his fellow-creatures ?

I had one person in my congregation, a Sabbath-school teacher, a few years back—she is in Heaven now. The ladies will not be angry at my mentioning this here. She was comparatively young ; personally, very lovely ; but her main charm was, that she loved Christ. He filled her heart. I tell you it was as easy and as natural to that young girl to speak of Jesus Christ and the things of eternal life as it is to most of us to speak about the weather. That is what I mean by being at heart—thoroughly, through and through ; not so much possessing the truth, as possessed by the truth ; and then there will be freedom, there will be spontaneity to our efforts ; we shall be able by the manifestation of the truth to commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. May you be helped, dear young brethren, so to do ; and may God's blessing rest upon you !

## “WHAT TO PREACH.”

JOHN HALL, D. D.

The sinners to whom we preach are to be pitied, and we cannot show too much compassion for them ; but they are also to be blamed, and we are bound to tell them that they are culpable for rejecting and despising the Gospel we are sent to proclaim. Their condition, until they believe, is dreadful in the extreme, and we should labor to make them understand and feel that ; but it is the dreadful misery not of a misfortune that has come upon them, an evil chance that has happened to them, but of a crime which they are still committing and willingly persisting in.

Very likely this will not always gratify them ; very likely, instead of soothing them, this will vex and irritate them, and make them secretly angry ; and then we must go on and preach so and live so, that they shall, by the blessing of the Holy Ghost, see that they have no reason to be angry with us, who only carry God's message, but that, in point of fact, they are angry with the truth—in other words, with the message which the Lord sends them concerning themselves.

We cannot, again, feel too keen a sympathy with the people who hear us—some of them altogether in the dark, some of them opening their eyes a little, some of them



seeing men as trees walking, some of them loving the light, and craving more, and some of them sorely beaten down and crushed by trials and difficulties in their life.

We cannot feel too keen a sympathy with them, especially when we remember our own struggles, and the dim twilight through which many of us have groped, if now in God's light, we see clearly.

But what shall we do? What sympathy is best for all these varied conditions of the human spirit?

Here it is that the evangelical system—that is, the system which magnifies at every turn the objective truth regarding the person and work of Jesus Christ, gives, it seems to me, its true and proper power to the pulpit.

My sympathy is good as far as it goes; but divine sympathy is infinitely better.

And what do I know, what can I present of divine sympathy but in Jesus Christ? What can I gather and disclose of this sympathy from general considerations regarding Deity?

The world—God's world—is a mystery to all of us. Even to Christians Providence is a perpetual puzzle, and they must wait to see how good and wise God is by seeing the end.

But in the face of Jesus Christ, God's glory, aye, the light of the knowledge of it shines. Him we can preach to the people; on his sympathy we can expatiate, him we can lift up and unfold, the personal Redeemer, Son of God and son of man—divine—human, the might of omnipotence in his arm, even when it was nailed to the tree, him the prophet for the ignorance of man, the priest for the guilt of man, and daily occurring wants and sins of man, the king for the defence and government of man, the true and tender brother to the believer, the captain of salvation to the Christian soldier, the good master to the

disciple, the Lord and Saviour to the meanest and poorest believer, yes, to the weakest and least effective of his servants here, as truly as to the apostle Paul.

When we preach this Jesus to men, and they receive him, it is not only that they get more light, are elevated, helped, carried forward beyond the lengths to which other forms of teaching carry them, it is not this only, nor, indeed, this at all. It is that they are now enlightened with this kind of light for the first time, and they find out that whatever they knew before, in this kind of light they were blind, and in this kind of knowledge they were utterly ignorant.

Now they are the subjects of a change more or less conscious; call it conversion, or regeneration, or illumination, or any other name you will, that is understood in its meaning by the people, and in the preacher's sense of it, which ought to be the scriptural sense of it.

Now they have pardon, they are accepted, they are in Christ, they are in a new condition, and are set out upon the attainment of a new character.

It is not that this revelation of God's mercy through belief of which they are in Christ, has made them better, has improved their manhood, or elevated them,—a temperance society might do that,—it is that they are changed, that the secret springs of the will are touched. If any man be in Christ he is a better man? No. A broader man? No. He is a new creature—made a new man by an act of God, by his word—as truly a divine act as when God said: "Let there be light, and there was light."

And that we ministers ourselves thus enlightened by divine grace can preach this glorious gospel of the blessed God, and in lifting up Jesus Christ produce instrumentally these results. This seems to me to be the real power, and when done, the dignity and glory of the pulpit—any pulpit, ancient or modern.

We who preach are poor creatures ; but the word of the Lord is mighty. Of that word Jesus Christ is the sum and substance ; and the sum and substance of any ministry of permanent spiritual power must be the setting forth of him, the living Christ for dead souls, the bread of life for starving souls, the water of life for thirsty souls, the one life given of divine appointment, in coming to whom the dead in sins are quickened, and in cleaving to whom the new life of believers is fed and strengthened.

Now, as to this sensationalism in the pulpit there is but a word to be said.

When a minister, by the selection of odd and queer topics, in form or reality away from the Gospel—by unique or grotesque ways of putting himself, or putting his things before the people, by vulgarisms, or startling novelties of expression, aims at making a sensation, that terminates with the hour, or at least terminates upon the preacher, there is sensational preaching, which is offensive to true taste, as it is away from the spirit of the Gospel, and the dignity and power of the pulpit.

That is not only contemptible as trifling with the most solemn themes for selfish ends.

I hope there is not much such sensationalism.

But give us the ministers who go directly with Bible truth to the souls of men—who preach to them of their guilt in denying the Holy One and the Just, who urge this home on judgment and conscience with an earnestness, begotten of the Spirit of God, and flowing out of souls set on fire from above, until the crowds, carried away, subdued, and terrified cry out : "What shall we do to be saved ?" Let us have sensations like this, produced anywhere, by any ministry, and I for one—if no part of this honor is given me—shall yet fall on my knees, and give thanks to God who hath given such power unto men.

## WHAT SHALL MINISTERS PREACH?

S. T. SPEAR, D. D.

There are two classes of extremists in respect to preaching, with neither of which are we able fully to agree. Neither states the whole truth, and neither states even half of it so as properly to represent it. The one class claims that the themes of the pulpit should be almost exclusively *spiritual*, having reference to the thoughts, affections, and purposes of the heart toward God, and leaving these to work out their proper results in the ethical and mundane relations of the present life. This is deemed to be spiritual preaching, and no other is proper on the lips of the Christian ministry. The other class demands that the pulpit shall be as exclusively devoted to temporal moralities, growing out of the present relations of men, leaving dogmas, creeds, theologies, and what they deem spiritual abstractions and impalpabilities to books and professional experts. This is *practical* preaching, and just the kind most wanted in this world.

Both of these classes are right, and both wrong, in some respects; and hence neither presents the whole truth in its rounded, completed, and symmetrical form. Blend the two views together, so that each shall modify the other, and thus produce a compound somewhat different from either by a simple change of proportions; and

we then have the whole truth, as appearing in the Word of God, and enforced by a comprehensive reason. The Christian pulpit, when moving in such an orbit, is never out of its sphere. Though not preaching at any one time a whole system of theology, or a whole system of morals, and never running hobbies at the expense of general harmony, it aims to give to every man what the Bible calls a portion in due season.

Those doctrines and duties which have their centre in God, especially as revealed in the Gospel of Christ, are not mere ornamental parts of religion, simply to supply the rhetoric and the sanctions of preaching. Nor are they so obscure and impalpable as to embarrass utterance or perplex thought. They are vital, and withal indispensable to the formation of a sound religious character. They constitute really the strongest elements of appeal to human nature. It should always be a primary object with the Christian pulpit to turn men's hearts unto God ; and that, too, by preaching the true God in his attributes, relations, moral government, plan of grace, and providence over the world. A pulpit without a distinct and positive theology, which it enunciates, would be like a cranium without any brains inside. It would be a mere unvitalized shell. Virtue, even if it were possible, that has no basis in God, would not exist for the strongest reason, or be energized by the highest motives. A bad theology in the pulpit, as in the press and everywhere else, is a prodigious evil to humanity. It may not be as formidable in all respects as atheistical morality ; yet, as compared with truth and the normal effects thereof, it is a grave calamity to the world.

Equally clear is it that the ethics of time which grow out of the temporal relations of men, whether they be domestic, social, or political, should have the freest scope

in the utterances of the Christian teacher. There is nothing in this world too good to be commended, or too bad to be condemned ; and the Christian teacher is just the man of all others to commend the good and condemn the bad. There are no select vices, licensed by usage or sanctioned by law, which limit his functions of exposure and rebuke. The idea of some that because a subject has political relations it must be carefully ignored by the preacher, whatever may be its moral merits, is an error of thought founded in either sin or ignorant prejudice. Whatever concerns morality in any of its departments is an appropriate theme for Christian utterance, whether in the pulpit or out of it. The only question is one of opportune selection, due proportion, wise adaptation to existing wants, and discreet presentation so as best to gain the end.

The right and the duty of the pulpit, in things spiritual and things moral, to exercise the largest liberty of discussion ought to be most cheerfully conceded by the pew. A gagged ministry is not worth paying for. A timid ministry courts more criticism than it avoids, and licenses more opposition than it conciliates. A time-serving ministry is too contemptible to be entitled even to toleration. A one-sided ministry is not broad enough to meet the wants of its own position or those of the world. A bold and comprehensive ministry, metropolitan in the great elements of truth and cosmopolitan in their application, best honors itself while it best serves the purposes of preaching.

## DEFINITE DOCTRINAL SERMONS NEEDED.

AUSTIN PHELPS, D. D.

A straw may show which way the wind blows. So the drift of opinion indicates, as it seems to me, certain perils which we shall do well to ponder.

1. It indicates the danger of a disuse of Doctrinal preaching.

2. A second peril is that our theological faith itself will become obsolete. In this matter, the pew is dependent on the pulpit. The taste of the hearer will be formed by the practice of the preacher. Silence of doctrine in the pulpit means ignorance, and at last unbelief, in the pew.

The result does not come in the form of a catastrophe. No moral convulsion scatters the faith of centuries in a night. The end comes insidiously. A single doctrine of the system grows dim ; the people cannot give a reason for their faith in it ; a phosphorescent skepticism throws odium upon it ; fellowship with unbelievers in it becomes an open question ; and then the end of it is not far off. Yet it is more than the end of that doctrine. The faith we hold is a *system*. No mind can self-consistently, and no thoughtful mind will, surrender one element of it, without putting in pawn its faith in all the rest.

Do we not see signs of such theological degeneracy in our own times ? Is not the *taste* for theological inquiry

declining in our churches? Thirty years ago, I once heard Rev. Wm. M. Rogers, the brilliant pastor of the Central Church in Boston, say that there were laymen in his church who had read more theology than he had. Are there such laymen in the Central Church now? Who of our laymen now store their libraries with the standards of theological science? Who, outside of the clergy, reads now the works of President Edwards? Yet, I have in my library a copy of those works, well-worn by the thoughtful and devout study of the senior deacon of the Pine Street Church of Boston in 1845. His Sabbath recreation he used to find in reading Edwards on God's End in Creation.

I may be wrong; I surely do not mean to croak. But to my view, one of the most formidable signs of a decline of theological taste among us is this clamor of the people for sermons that are not doctrinal.

3. One other peril follows, as a matter of course. It is that our Congregational churches will deteriorate in character by a radical change of stock. From their beginning these churches have appealed to the most thoughtful classes of the people. They have been built up from a thinking stock. We have always demanded an educated clergy in our pulpits. We have esteemed as above all price a high-toned theological literature. Wherever New England Congregationalism goes, one of the first signs of its existence is a college. We build colleges before we build bridges.

Hence our denominational strength is in our pulpits. Our forms of worship are needlessly and perilously bare. Our ministry are not a priesthood, and our communion-tables are not altars. Our architectural taste is not fascinating. Our antiquity is nothing burthensome. Our strength is in our pulpits, or nowhere. In this respect we but represent the stalwart character of our theology. It



is yet to be proved that we can change our record in these things, without alienating from us the thoughtful and conservative classes, on whose support Congregationalism has lived, and whose religious sympathies it represents. It is a dangerous experiment to tamper with the old stock.

Specially is anything a peril to us which undermines our pulpit. Ours must be a reasoning pulpit. It must penetrate things, prove things, build deep and build high. To do this, it must discuss great themes in great ways. It must handle strong doctrines, elemental truths, the landmarks of Christian thought, which centuries have elaborated. It can never live on evangelistic labors, nor what is now understood by "revival-preaching."

The danger is that the result will be to hand over to wiser builders the *natural stock* of Congregational churches, and leave us to—the East wind !

But we do beg our thoughtful laymen, who can, and who ought to, give character to the public taste in this thing, that they will reconsider their apparent verdict, thus far expressed.

Encourage a *thinking* ministry. Cultivate studious hearing. Welcome doctrinal discussions. And that these things may be done, give the preachers opportunity to say their best wisdom, their richest experience, their profoundest teachings of the Holy Spirit. Do not make the tastes of your little children the rule of your pulpits. Are ye not *men* ? We are but men. We cannot preach by telegraph. The lightning does not play upon our tongue. Some of us are slow of speech. The bees did not drop honey upon our lips in our cradles. Bear with our infirmity ; and do not double it by requiring of us what apostles never did, and could not have done if they would.

## THE RELATION OF THEOLOGY TO PREACHING.

REV. ALBERT BARNES.

What is the theology which experience has shown to be the best adapted to the ends of preaching, and which we can preach with a hope of success ? What may be preached so as to answer the ends of preaching—so that men will perceive it to be true, and so that they will be converted to God ?

It is of but little use to preach to a sinner as having some strong propensities to evil ; but that he is not in such a state that what is needful for him is a radical and total change, but the developement of internal virtues still living within him ; the cultivation of his noble and god-like powers. That he does not need an entire transformation, securing the very beginning of goodness in the soul, but to cultivate the virtues already existing there, which need only to be unfolded.

The thing to be done in man is not what philosophy contemplates—*developement*, but it is *recovery* and *rescue*—a work peculiar to the gospel of Christ. Preaching addresses man as in ruins ; philosophy addresses him as what mind *would be* if the fall had never occurred—and *that* is not a system which can be *preached*. The primary thought, every one instinctively feels, in addressing

man from the pulpit, is that he is a sinner ; the grand theme is redemption, and reconciliation with God ; the issues referred to are an eternal heaven and hell ; the world, though full of beauty, is a world of probation, from which the results of human conduct are borne ever onward into far distant worlds ; and in reference to these things, and to the eternal judgment, the most amazing and wonderful events have occurred on earth—the incarnation and the atonement.

As a matter of fact, therefore, the doctrine of limited atonement, is not and cannot be preached. It is not preached when the soul is on fire with the love of men, and when the cross in its true grandeur and glory rises to view. It is *never* preached in a revival of religion—a proof, not fable, that the doctrine is not true.

Akin to this is the doctrine of man's natural inability to do the will of God, to repent of his sins, and to believe the gospel. This doctrine too has been taught in the schools ; it is found in books of theology ; it is embodied in creeds ; it is based on an ingenious philosophy ; it has been held by not a few eminent men ; but it is not a doctrine *to be preached*. If, here and there, a man has the moral courage to preach it and means honestly to apply his philosophy, and to make "full proof" of divinity, as he understands it, he soon "has his reward," and will see abundantly the fruit of his ministry. For why should men make an effort to be saved, when they are told that all effort is in vain ? And why should they hear a message which is only to tell them that they have no power, and that all exertion is fruitless ? And why should they put themselves under teaching which makes religion at variance with everything else that they do, and which, in a most active world, and where men *do* accomplish wonders by their efforts, tells them that effort is vain ? How will

they be persuaded that the same God is the author of the two systems ; and that in reference to transitory and temporary matters he has so made man that he can accomplish everything ; in reference to things of real and permanent interest, nothing ?

Thus, too, it is with the doctrine of the imputation of the sin of Adam—the doctrine that we are to blame for his transgression—and condemned for an act which was performed ages before we had a being. Such dogmas so come athwart the common sense of mankind ; they are so at variance with the principles on which men act in other things ; they so much isolate theology from common life, and from what men know to be just principles, that a preacher who attempts to defend them goes against the common sense and the consciences of his fellow-men, and against all the principles which prevail in the world, and they cannot be preached. Theology as viewed from an intelligent Christian pulpit, is of quite a different thing from what it is in the lecture room. The theology which Baxter and Payson and Whitefield *preached*, was quite a different thing from what theology is in Turretin.

I proceed to inquire more definitely what kind of theology may be preached. I refer to that which will be an *element of power in the pulpit* which, so far as theology is concerned, will make the pulpit what it should be. The Inquiry is substantially similar to what the inquiry would be, what kind of doctrines would have been adapted to make the *Bema* in Athens what it should be ; or would be fitted to call forth the eloquence of Roman orators ; or what kind of doctrines became the House of Lords, or the House of Commons in the days of the Earl of Chatham and of Burke. We wish to know what truths are appropriate to the place, and will stir up the soul to eloquence.

It is not enough to say that the end be reached by grace of manner, or by any rules of enunciation or gesture, or by the precepts which mere rhetoricians give, or by elegant diction and powerful declamation. The end is to be reached by the kind of theology which is taken into the pulpit, and which is habitually presented there. I refer to that kind of theology which will make the pulpit in the eyes of an intelligent community what it is designed to be ; which will secure the largest measure of success according to the talent that is given us ; which will make the pulpit what it should be in this age of the world, honorable and eminent among the places of influencing men by public speaking ; and which will be best adapted to the progress of religion.

What kind of theology, then, may be preached, to make the pulpit what it should be ?

1. First, it must be that which is based on obvious and honest principles of interpretation. The preacher, more than any other public speaker, is the interpreter of a *book* ; and no inconsiderable part of his work consists in explaining the volume which lies before him. And the truth is, that among the advances made on subjects connected with theology, there are none which are more manifest than those which pertain to the interpretation of the Bible.

2. That theology which can be preached must be such as shall *commend itself to the common sense of mankind*. It must be such as will find a response in the laws of our nature, and be in accordance with principles on which men everywhere feel and act. In other words a man who undertakes to preach theology should be a man of common sense, and should be acquainted with what man is. There is nothing in which theology has been more defective than in the want of adapting itself to the ways in which

men ordinarily think, and speak, and act. There is no one thing—take the world over—in which ministers are supposed to be so deficient as in regard to the maxims of common prudence, and a knowledge of human nature. There is no one thing in which the theology of the books needs a more thorough reformation, than in adapting it to the maxims of common sense.

What is eminently needed in a theology that is to be preached is, that its *philosophy shall be such as shall accord with the true laws of the mind*; that it shall be adapted to human nature as it is; and the ministers of religion shall show that they think and act like other men. It was one of the most striking peculiarities in the theology of our great Master, that, knowing all the secret springs of the human heart, and commending himself to his hearers by simple illustrations which every man understood, the “common people heard him gladly.”

The man who would preach theology successfully must study *man*—‘the proper study’ of the theologian as of other men—man in the great principles of his nature, and when off his guard. But how shall he do this and when? I cannot go largely into the answer to this question; but I will throw out a few hints. Let him, then, study man profoundly, as he is exhibited in the Bible, and feel habitually when he approaches that book which is to be his familiar guide, that he sees man as he has been drawn by Him who knows all the secret springs of the heart, and before whose eyes there was no veil or disguise when the character of man was drawn there—man as he always has been and will be.

3. The theology that is to be preached should sustain a proper relation to the spirit of the age. I mean that it should be adapted to the habits of thinking, and the modes of doing things, and the enterprises of the generation in which we live.

*a.* One is, that each age of the world has its own peculiarity of thinking and method of doing things ; and that a man who wishes to accomplish anything must be a man of that generation, and not a man of a by-gone age. It is an age of enterprise and action ; of rapid changes ; of new forms of thought ; of a disposition to apply any suggestion in science or morals, however slight, or however bad it may be, to new experiments, and to make the most of it ; of methods of rapid interchanges of thought among men ; an age when old barriers of opinion, and interests, and religion, and laws, are everywhere tumbling down, and the nations of the earth are becoming one. Now he who intends to preach the gospel, makes a great mistake if he does not study the age in which he lives, and does not appear as one *belonging* to that age.

*b.* Again. In a theology that is to be preached, the ministry should not only be endowed with the genial spirit of the age, but should be able to meet the new questions that are coming up in every generation, and to apply to them, in view of an intelligent community, the great principles of religion. Never were more such questions started than in this age, and never was there more need of studying profoundly the great principles of religion, by those who take upon themselves to be the guides of the public mind.

Great questions of liberty, of government, of education, of freedom of thought, of temperance, of the right of the Bible, of exclusiveness, of war and peace, of the social organization, of the adaptation of the Christian religion to man, are the points which this age, as such, are looking at.

*c.* But further. A preacher should not only be able to appreciate his age, and to come up to it in adapting his instructions to the great questions which are started

in the times in which he lives, but he should be in *advance* of his age. He should be able intelligently to take positions to which society in its progress has not yet come up, but which it will most certainly reach in its onward progress. He should be able to throw himself into the future, and, taking his stand on great principles which are to live in all times, and which are yet to be regarded as settled principles, he should be prepared to defend them, and to do what in him lies to bring the world to embrace them. There are not a few such in the Bible—in the comparatively unexplored views of divine truth, which are to be wrought out, and which are to make the world what it is yet to be. Whether those positions have been held in the past or not ; whether his own age adopts and practices on them or not, he who preaches the theology of the Bible should defend them, and should be able to show what important changes the fair application of the principles of the New Testament would make in the world. The men who have done much for the race have gone in advance of their age ; they have maintained positions, often in the midst of much persecution, which society has not yet reached, but to which it was destined yet to come, and have shown their greatness and their sagacity, and their acquaintance with the oracles of truth, by being able to take such advanced positions, and by holding and defending them in the face of the sneers and the frowns of the world. Such men were Luther and Knox ; such men were the Puritans and Pilgrims ; such a man in relation to the rights of conscience, to war and slavery, was William Penn. Thus, now, we are to take our stations on the watch-towers, and defend not only what has been defended, and maintain not only what has been inwrought into the texture of society, but we are to search out and maintain those great principles which *will* prevail in the



world's millennium, and to which, though slowly, yet most certainly, the world is advancing. The theology to be preached is not only that which has been settled as true in past times by experience ; not only that which is fitted to the great questions of these times, but that which will be fitted to the state of the world when society shall have made its highest progress, and shall have reached the point on which the eyes of prophets and apostles were fixed.

I had designed to have made some remarks on another point, by showing that the theology which is to be preached should be in accordance with the disclosures of science ; and that the minister of religion should be able to show that the system which he defends is not antagonistic with what is revealed by the blowpipe, the crucible, and the telescope ; that nothing is gained in the end by making war on such men as Galileo, and that much is lost by leaving it problematical in the view of the world whether the friends of the Christian revelation can hold their system consistently with the revelations of science.

## DOCTRINES ADAPTED TO AWAKEN AND CONVICT.

REV. ALBERT BARNES.

Why are not men in greater number more seriously awakened and convicted on the subject of religion ? The reason why men do not feel their guilt is found in the fact that they have different views of sin from those of God. He commands repentance on the ground of what He believes to be the human character, and repentance naturally results from the sinner's entertaining the same views. When *our* feelings coincide with those of God, it is impossible but that men should repent. Yet on no subject do men differ more from their maker than in this. He has declared *His* views in every possible form. No man can mistake what God thinks of him, if he will give credit to his declarations. He has expressed views of every man which no human law, and no poetic description, has ever expressed of the worst of men.

To charge a man with being a *hater* of God is to sum up all crimes in one ; and beyond that charge you cannot go. Yet God has charged this in man. He has done it not as an abstract and cold proceeding ; not as a matter of poetry, romance, or declamation ; not merely to produce to terror, but as the result of his profound knowledge of the human heart, and of the secret deeds of every man.

He has done it, too, in the most solemn and tender manner. In the midst of judgments, in his threatenings, in his promises, in the dying groans and agonies of his own Son.

While men differ from their maker, "far as from the center thrice to the utmost pole," while they regard sin as a trifle ; hell as an arbitrary appointment, a place of holy martyrdom in the cause of injured innocence ; and the scenes of Calvary as a pompous show, an unmeaning display, and a gorgeous parade, they will not repent. This *single* reason would account for the fact that men *will* not repent of their sins. The power of the mind to which the system of divine truth adapts itself is that of *conscience*. Its province is not to communicate truth, but to coincide with it and press it with convicting power on the mind. It seems almost to be an independent agent, which God has fitted up for the special designs of moral government—answering the purposes of an ever present divinity :—using the language which God himself would use ; and performing the office which the divinity would perform, if he attended to us every moment, spoke in our listening ears in solitude, or when allured by the world, or when under the influence of mighty and infatuating passions. It performs to men that office which Socrates fabled to be performed by his attending genius.

There is no more striking proof of God's power and wisdom than in placing this tremendous wisdom in any part of his moral government ; and in making the guilty mind to be its own tormentor and executioner. Its power—Its full power has not yet been known. Imitations of its terrible inflictions have been given in this world, just enough to tell us what it *may* be in hell. Again, man is a creature of *emotions*, of hopes, and fears, and love ; susceptible of pain, and joy ; of anxiety, or sorrow ; seeking

peace here, and capable of immortal joys in another world. The gospel addresses itself to all these ; and it is the gospel alone which meets them fully. The utmost power of *fear* may be felt when a man looks at an eternal hell. The farthest limit of *hope* may be met when he looks at an eternal heaven. All the desires of sympathy, friendship, love, may be gratified in the prospect of an eternal heaven. The utmost intensity of love may be exhausted in the effort to love God. And all the mightiest powers of the soul may be summoned in an effort to *understand* the works and word of God and to do his will. How does his heaving bosom, and the last kindling of his eye, and the last sighs of ambition show that he has never found what was adapted to *all* the original propensities of men. *That* is the gospel of the blessed God—the voice of pardon, the hopes of immortality. There the mind reposes and is at ease. There, like the weary traveler at the end of his journey, not among strangers, but at last *at home* it finds that which meets his demands ; nor is there a desire of happiness, or peace ; a susceptibility of hope, of fancy, of friendship, of love, of boundless wishes, that is not fully met by the gospel of God, and the looking forward to immortality.

When man feels this, he weeps, over the sins which so long shut it from his view, and repents and turns to God. He reclines his head on his redeemer's bosom, and every desire is satisfied, and he calmly waits his change. Further, to man the gospel comes with all the terrors and the demands of law. The thunders of Sinai were preliminary to the designs of the gospel. They denounce, for the purpose of arousing men to seek for mercy.

The law was a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ. It is designed to affect the hearts of men with a consciousness of guilt, that they may be led to seek for pardon. Men

are called upon to repent by all the evils of violated laws ; by all its solemn and awful claims ; by the beauty and order which obeyed law would confer on the universe. That law, if obeyed, would have diffused peace and happiness in all worlds. That law broken, has been the source of all our woes, and is now the great terrifier of men in view of future calamities.

Man may be made to feel that this law is right. His reason, his conscience, his fears, may all be roused, and his eye be fixed on the terrors of justice, and the pains of hell, till he trembles, turns pale, and his heart sinks within him at the remembrance of his sins. Yet that man should hear those truths ; and see that law ; and be fixed in contemplation of them, is indispensable in order that they may see their guilt. And we come to men with this advantage—presenting a law which conscience approves, and whose penalty has been fixed by the unerring decision of the wisest mind in the universe. When a man sees that he has injured a friend or a benefactor, he will weep. When a child is made conscious that he has violated the law of a parent, and that that law is good, he will weep. When a felon feels that he has injured his country ; that he has aimed a blow at its interests ; that in violating law, he has aimed a stab at all which gives to his fellow men security of property, reputation, or life ; when a man can be made to see that, you have found the way to bring him to repentance. And when to all this you add the higher laws of the universe, you have completed the pressure on the man's conscience, and the mighty sinner *must* bow before God and bewail his crimes.

And here we may remark, that the gospel owes much of its success in modern times to the doctrine of the *immediate obligation* of man to obey that law. In the preaching of the most successful ministers, and in the

revivals of religion which have characterized this age and land, this doctrine has more prominently than any other been kept before the view. Nor is it known, that any marked success has attended any other preaching than that which is based on this doctrine. This I regard as the cardinal point ; the limit which separates schools of divinity ; and draws the boundaries around the places where God eminently blessed the ministry. Let a man honestly and fully press this point, and on other subjects of practical preaching he will not be likely to go wrong. It was this which was connected with the prototype and grand exemplar of all true revivals of religion, on the day of Pentecost. And the reason of this fact is easily understood. Leave a man with the impression, that it is *not* his *duty* now to repent and believe, but that it *may be* at some future time, or under some more favorable influence from heaven, and you send a paralysis through his whole moral frame. No man will feel it and no man will care about future duty. No man will tremble or be alarmed unless he feels that he is guilty *now* and now bound to obey. On a sinner's soul there is now pressing all the elements of obligation that can sink it down in any future scenes. Duty relates not to the future. It presses now ; and that amazing pressure the sinner must be made to feel, or must jeopard the eternal interest of his soul.

Still further, the gospel, in the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, has exhausted all the appeals which can be made to men's sensibilities to make them feel their guilt. It comes in at the end of law ; and when all other topics of persuasion have been found to be ineffectual.

For four thousand years, in Pagan and Jewish lands, law had uttered its denunciations almost in vain. God had exhausted the forms of those appeals in the terrors of Sinai, the inflictions of a guilty conscience ; and the

threatening of hell. Men were guilty—they felt it—knew it. They mocked him with vain oblations, holy hands, and then returned to their pollution. It became needful that some *other* plan should be tried to see whether men could be made so effectually to see their guilt, and ill-desert, as to hate it, and abandon it. That plan is what was expressed in the cross of Christ. The essence of that plan consists in man's being made to see an innocent Being suffering unutterable agonies in his stead, and as the proper expression of his crime. Now the value of that plan may be seen by supposing, that human law had some such device.

One thing strikes every man in going into a court of justice. It is that criminal, who knows his guilt, and who may expect to die, is so unmoved by the scene, and the danger; and especially that he seems to have so little sense of the evil of the crime for which he is to die. One reason is, that there is little in the law that will make him feel; and less in the proceedings. His mind is taken off from his guilt, by the technicalities of the law; by the contests of advocates; by the discrepancies of witnesses; often by the coldness and want of feeling in the judge, the jury and hardened spectators. But suppose there could be placed in full view, where the man alone could see it, some innocent being voluntarily suffering what his crime deserved—illustrating on the rock, or amid flames just what he *ought* to suffer, and bearing this so patiently, so mildly, as he sank into the arms of death, as to be the highest expression of pure friendship. Suppose this was the brother or the father of the man he had slain, and that the dying man should tell him that he bore this to show the importance of maintaining violated laws, and that *but* for these sufferings the guilty wretch *could* not be saved from death, and how much more affecting would

be this, than the mere dryness of statutes, and the pleadings of counsels, and the charge of the judge. You may find here, perhaps, a slight illustration of the principle on which the gospel acts. Law had tried its power in vain, and the only effectual scheme is to place before the sinner the innocent Lamb of God, bleeding for his sins.

Thus it was said of him : " He shall be set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign to be spoken against," that thereby the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And thus, also, it was prophesied : " They shall look upon him whom they have pierced ; and shall mourn." Hence the apostles met with such success ; whose preaching was a little more than a simple statement of the truth that Jesus died and rose. And however it is to be accounted for, it is this which has in all ages been attended with the convictions of guilt among men. Gosner, the celebrated Bavarian Catholic priest, at present a protestant clergyman in Berlin, who has probably been the means of the immediate conversion of more souls than any man living, is said seldom to vary in his manner of preaching. The love of Christ is almost his constant theme, and his preaching is almost a constant pointing out of the warm effusions of the heart in the love of God, the preciousness of the Saviour, and the desirableness of heaven.

The affecting experience of the Moravian missionaries in Greenland is well known. For many years they endeavored to teach the benighted Pagans the existence and attributes of God, and the doctrines of retribution. Never was the work more unsuccessful than this. The heart of the Greenlander, cold as his own snows, was unmoved ; and the missionaries appeared to toil in vain. On one occasion it happened that one of them read in the hearing of a savage the account of the Saviour's sufferings



in the garden and on the cross. "How is this," said one of the savages, "tell me it once more, for I would be saved"—and laid his hand on his mouth and wept. Here was learned, almost by accident, the great secret of their success in the world. Here was illustrated anew the principle of the gospel, adapted to all ages and people, that the account of a suffering Redeemer is to be the grand means of teaching sinners everywhere their guilt ; and of drawing forth tears of repentance from eyes that, but for this, would never weep.

One other mode consists in bringing before a man, so that he must *see it*, the *tremendous scenes of the judgment*. We must diminish the apparent journey which he has to tread, and place him amid the scenes of the judgment day. 'This help religion furnishes to bring guilty men to repentance. It assures us that we shall be there ; and that that tribunal is a place where the sinner *must* feel. You, perhaps, have marked in a court of justice, some guilty man, who at the beginning of his trial, assumed the Stoic, and was bold, and apparently unconcerned. Yet, you have marked the change in the man when the witnesses have been called ; when one circumstance after another has *pointed* at his guilt ; when an argument to condemn him might already have been made out. And you may have marked the cloud on his brow, and the paleness on his cheek, when he sees some witness advance deliberately, who he knows is acquainted with his guilt, who he hoped or believed would not have been there, and who now solemnly swears to declare the whole truth. His last refuge has failed, and he must die. So the sinner must be made to draw near to the judgment. His delusions and evasions must be swept away. He must be born onward, and must look at those scenes. Time, and friends, and pleasures, and honors, must be made to leave him—

and he must be shut up and encompassed in the still, solemn scenes, where conscience shall no more be silent ; where the eye of the all-seeing Judge shall be witness enough of his guilt ; and where he must stand riveted by that eye, quailing beneath its piercing, horror stricken at an opening hell ; and amidst that vast multitude, trembling by himself—surrounded by numberless millions, yet weeping apart. All this power the gospel wields ; and with this, it intends to *press* on the soul till the haughty man is bowed down ; and the hardened man melts into tears, and the profligate man trembles in view of judgment and of hell. We see here what makes death so terrible to a sinner. The mask is then off. The world recedes and appears as it is. Its delusions have vanished. The mist is gone, and the naked soul, the conscience, the feelings, the apprehensions, are laid bare to the insufferable blaze of truth, and the piercings of the eye of God. The tossed sinner cannot help himself then. There is no delusion ; no new mist ; no cavern there ; no far-projecting rock ; no way to silence the voice, or turn away the eye of God. Thus it is everywhere. The sinner dying, may roll and toss. but the eye of God is there—everywhere—just as bright, as keen, as riving—as justice and indignation can make it—and as it will be, an eternal hell. And there too, is a finger mysteriously moving on the wall, nor can he turn from that—and writing his damnation. The man is afraid to live and afraid to die. Verily, it is a fearful thing to die a sinner ; and to die in such a death-bed as that. God grant that no such struggling spirit of any of my readers may go to the judgment seat of the eternal God !

“ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Knowing therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men ; but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."

Therefore, we, who are appointed to preach the gospel, having the fullest assurance of the terrors of the day of judgment and of the wrath of God, endeavor to persuade men to be prepared to meet Him, and to give up their account. The Lord Jesus, will be seated on the throne of judgment, and will decide the destiny of all men. Knowing how much the Lord is to be feared ; what an object of terror and alarm it will be to stand at the judgment seat ; how fearful and awful will be the consequences of the trial of that day. The Lord Jesus will be an object of terror and alarm, or it will be a subject inspiring terror and alarm to stand there on that day because (1) He has all power, and is appointed to execute judgment ; (2) Because all must there give a strict and impartial account of all that they have done ; (3) Because the wrath of God will be shown in the condemnation of the guilty. It will be a day of awful wailing and alarm when all the living and the dead shall be arraigned on trial with reference to their eternal destiny ; and when countless hosts of the guilty and impenitent shall be thrust down to an eternal hell. Who can describe the amazing terror of the scene ? Who can fancy the horrors of the hosts of the guilty and the wretched who shall then hear that their doom is to be fixed forever in a world of unspeakable woe ? Therefore, we persuade men. We endeavor to persuade them to flee from the wrath to come ; to be prepared to stand before the judgment seat, and to be fitted to enter into heaven ; we endeavor to induce them by all the arts of persuasion and argument to flee from the wrath to come,

## IMPROVEMENTS IN THEOLOGY.

ENOCH POND, D.D.

We live, it is continually said, in an age of improvement. The world moves, and while everything else is going forward, why should theology be stationary? Why may we not expect improvements in that as well as in other things?

We *may* expect improvements in theology. But how? In what respects? In what ways? Let us ascertain, as well as we can, and in the fewest words, *in what respects our theology may be improved or changed.*

It cannot be changed, as to the great *truths* or *facts*, which go to constitute it. These are as immutable as the great facts of natural science—as immutable as the eternal throne. Among these facts are the existence and personal attributes and perfections of God; the inspiration of the Scriptures; the facts of the Trinity—the One God existing in three distinct and equal persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the universal purposes and providence of God; the natural and entire depravity of unrenewed men; the all sufficiency of Christ and of the atonement by His death; the necessity of regeneration; justification by faith in Christ; the eternal salvation of all true believers; the immortality of the soul; the resurrection of the dead; the final and general judgment;

and the endless retributions of reward or punishment which lie beyond it. These facts are clearly taught, some of them by the light of nature, and all of them in the Bible, and are essential to the system of evangelical theology. They are essential to the gospel, constitute the gospel, and, as facts, can never be removed or changed. Any alleged improvement which displaces these great facts, or either of them, is a progress backward—a progress tending, not to edification, but to disintegration and destruction. “Thy truth endureth to all generations.”

But if this be so, it will be asked: What room for improvement in theology? And what remains to the theological student but to use the same form of words, and run in the same ruts, forever? These are fair questions, and I will attempt to answer them.

Although the great facts of theology cannot be removed or changed, there may be improvement, and I trust there will yet be great improvement, in the manner of stating, explaining, guarding, applying, and defending them. New light may be shed upon them, their mutual connections and dependencies may be better understood, and they may be used to better purpose, “for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness.”

In the respects here mentioned, there have already been great improvements in theology. Any one may be satisfied of this who will compare *our* standard theology with that of the church fathers. The early fathers of the church, though of great importance to us as *witnesses*, were miserable theologians. Whenever they went beyond the plain language of Scripture—whenever they undertook to restate and *philosophize*, they were sure to go astray. Much improvement has been made in the manner of stating and explaining the doctrine of atonement, since

the days of Origen and his followers, who represented the death of Christ as a ransom to Satan ; and also since the time of Anselm, who represented it as the payment of a debt. Our theology has been improved, in some of its statements, since the time of Luther and Calvin, making it more conformable to Scripture, better adapting it to human wants, and rendering it *more effectual in the salvation of souls.*

And as there have been improvements in theology in times past, without disturbing any of its great facts and principles, so, I trust, there may be in time to come. I fully sympathize with John Robinson in the belief that "more light may yet break forth out of God's Holy Word" —not to contradict what that Word has already settled, or to subvert any of the great truths of the Gospel, but to show them in fairer and better lights, and make them more effective in their saving influence. In the progress of study and improvement the truths of the Gospel may be more accurately defined ; apparent difficulties may be cleared away ; objections may be obviated ; and the defences of the Bible and its doctrines may be strengthened. Help in this matter may be gained, not only from the labors of critics and theologians, but by advances in the natural sciences. Much light has broken forth already, and more may be expected, from the researches of the geologist, the tombs of the Pharaohs, the relics of ruined cities, and explorations in the holy land.

Especially do I hope that there may be *great improvement in the mode of presenting the truths of the Gospel, so as to give them increased power and effect.* In themselves, these truths are of the most arousing, heart-stirring character. They are like "the fire and the hammer which break the rock in pieces." And though their efficiency depends ultimately on the promised aids of the Spirit, yet much

also depends on the feeling and manner with which they are presented. They may be so presented as to repel and harden ; and they may be so presented as to melt and subdue. There is room for great improvement here ; and my expectation is, that as we approach the millennium, great improvements, in this respect, may be realized.

But in attempting the improvements at which I have hinted, one caution is to be *strictly observed*. In our attempts to clear away rubbish, and make better explanations of Gospel truths, we must be sure we do not *explain them away*. That there is great danger in this direction, no one at all acquainted with the history of God's church can doubt. Most of the fatal subversions of Christian doctrines have been caused in this way. They have grown out of futile attempts to explain these doctrines, and make them more acceptable to the carnal mind and heart. The doctrine of God has been explained away into pantheism and a mere figure of speech.

The doctrine of the Trinity has been explained away into Sabellianism, Arianism, Socinianism, and infidelity. The atonement has been explained away to a shadow ; and regeneration to a gradual improvement of life. There must be, I repeat, the *strictest watchfulness* on this point. The great facts of the Gospel, as before stated, must be held with an unflinching hand ; and the result of all our attempted improvements must be, not to blink them out of sight, but to set them forth with increased vividness and prominence ; not to rob them of their saving power, but to make it *more searching and effective*. Thus may the Gospel go forth in its strength and brightness, till all the nations are blest with its influence, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

## PREACHING CHRIST.

BISHOP CHARLES P. MCILVAINE, D. D.

*"Go preach the gospel," is the substance of our Lord's commission to his ministers.*

And the apostles so understood Him that they "ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Regarding it as the *central point* of all strictly *evangelical preaching*, they testify : "*We preach Christ crucified.*"

Thus we have *our lesson and example.*

In the way they preached, so must we endeavor to preach the glorious gospel of the blessed God, the truth as it is in Jesus. His work of justification by his righteousness, through faith, and of sanctification by his spirit through faith. When we preach the law, with its searching and strict application and fearful penalty, it must be as our school master, to bring us unto Christ, that we may be justified by faith and not by works.

But more specifically, we may enquire : "*What is it to preach Christ?*"

We have a great *example*, our *Lord's own teaching*. It is written that after His resurrection, meeting His disciples, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them, in all the Scriptures, *the things concerning Himself*. We, therefore, must teach sinners to know Christ, and to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Him.



*He is the central point of a vast system of grace, around which there is a circle of doctrines, and duties and promises, mutually dependent upon Him and each other.* That system, like that of our sun, has a centre by which all the parts are held in place, from which all their light and life proceeds, and around which all revolve.

Now, what is *the best method* of setting forth this *system of divine grace*?

*We should begin by directing the sinner, conscious of guilt and ruin, to the Lamb of God.*

"For I delivered unto you, first of all," said St. Paul, "that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." We must "expound in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

We must preach Christ in His essential glory, *His divinity and humanity, "equal with God"*—"the man Christ Jesus,"—not only His atoning death, but His perfect, exemplary life. We must remember that "He is able to save to the uttermost, seeing He ever liveth to make intercessions for us."

As we preach a glorified, risen Saviour, we must proclaim His supreme authority, in receiving His redeemed children to heavenly felicity, and in casting *rejectors* of His gospel down *to hell*.

In all the tenderness of His invitations and promises to penitent sinners, He still threatens the rebellious and wicked with the consequences of sin. He points them to "the great day of the *wrath of the Lamb*."

He should also be preached as being Himself in His glory and communion, *the heaven of His people*. His promise to them is: "I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

We must also preach His ever-present, personal ministry in and to His Church on earth. He is the good Shep-

herd who calleth every one of His flock by name and leadeth him out. O, what a help and comfort it is to know that we have His living, loving, all-powerful presence !

We must preach, too, the *fullness and freeness* of His offers of salvation. The light of the sun is not more free to every man that cometh into the world, than is the salvation of Jesus to every believing sinner.

Again, we must preach Christ, not only as *our righteousness*, but as *our sanctification*.

The beginning of sanctification is to be born again of the Holy Ghost. But how shall we speak of so great a spiritual change, without speaking with equal stress of Him who produced it? Jesus said of the Holy Ghost : "He shall take of mine and show it unto you. He shall quicken your mortal bodies by His spirit that dwelleth in you.

We must also preach Christ as a *gracious Saviour*. For it is written, "By grace are ye saved, through faith ; and that not of yourselves ; it is the gift of God ; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

Therefore we must preach such *good works*, first, as absolutely *excluded* from having any part in procuring our *justification* before God ; secondly, as *essential fruits and evidences* of our having obtained such justification.

Further, we read of "*the goodness and severity of God*," "We beseech you," says the apostle, "by the mercies of God;" and again, "knowing the *terror of the Lord*, we *persuade* men ;" the love of God in Christ as a Saviour, and the wrath of God in Christ as a judge of quick and dead—a cloud of light and a cloud of darkness, each proceeding from the cross as accepted or rejected. We must do all in *tenderness* but all in *faithfulness*.

From what has now been said, we learn that in confining our preaching to so great an extent to Christ, we are not *circumscribed*. In reality, we have in preaching Christ crucified, the *whole vast range of truth—of natural and revealed religion*. You may take truth from the immediate neighborhood of the cross, or from the farthest domain of Christianity, and when its just relation to Christ and his redemption is exhibited, Christ is preached. Thus, there is no reason why, in the most faithful ministry, there may not be abundant *variety of topics of instruction*.

The sermon may be always shining in the light of our glorious Lord, while receiving it either by direct looking unto Him, or indirectly from secondary objects, which, as satellites of the sun, revolve around Him and shine in His glory. It may in all its spirit and tendency say : "Behold the Lamb of God."

In closing, I observe that in order to preach *Christ with effect*, the minister must be *thorough in faith*. Although the results of preaching should not immediately appear, it must not be *diluted* with any subterfuges or devices of men's wisdom. The minister must believe that God will bless as his own, "His wisdom and power unto salvation." For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.

*We must not change the message* to gratify the depravity of men. "We believe and therefore speak." The more the saving truth of the evangelical system is disrelished, so much the more must we proclaim it. God will see to the issue. "So we preach not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."

The old exhortation still sounds aloud through the church, and will to the end, "preach the word,"—the same old word—instant in season, and so do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of thy ministry. *Expect great results, and labor for great results*, and you shall see

the hearts of the *disobedient*, under the power of God, "*turned unto the wisdom of the just.*"

But to preach Christ effectively is not only a "work of faith, it is *a labor of love.*"

It is vastly important that ministers have a very earnest, tender, and overcoming love, to give living religion to our theology and the mind of Christ to our teachings concerning him. He will preach most effectively who *loves most*. His preaching will go most to the heart, and will be attended with most of the Spirit, who in all he says and does is most *constrained* by the *love of Christ* dictating, animating, sanctifying with the tenderness and patient earnestness of his Master's mind his whole discourse.

Oh, that we were more earnest to grow in this grace! What ought we to value in personal attainments compared with it!

And still with a trustful and loving spirit we must ever remember that "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." Therefore "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and make you good stewards of the unsearchable riches of Christ."

## THE MINISTRY OF JESUS.

GEO. H. HEPWORTH, D. D.

“We know that his testimony is true.—John xxi:24, 25.

As we sit at the feet of the Lord, how perfectly his words fit our experience, and develop for our acceptance the only course of education that can make us whole. We hear him saying: “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” It is evident, then, that it is not a matter of improvement, of which the moralist delights to speak, that He demands, but a thorough change of base. If we look at Rom. iii: 10, 11, 12, 23, we shall find what God thinks of human nature and its needs; and if we then carefully study our own hearts, we shall be compelled to confess that, until *some* change takes place, we are aliens and strangers.

We must never cease to think of Christ with deep gratitude, because in the fullness of His pity for us He was willing to undergo so great misery for our good. When I pray, I have a certain satisfaction in the feeling that Christ, though risen and glorified, is not forgetful of the weaknesses of the flesh, since He himself wrestled with and overcame them; and that for this reason He will have the more mercy on me. We know that God is acquainted with all these things; our Christ has experienced them in his own person; and that fact is a personal tie between us and him.

Then we will not forget that in the use of the simile of the vine and the branches, Christ made our duty to consist in trusting Him and receiving from Him. It will never do for the branch to be ambitious to have a root of its own, or for the soul to feel that it is personally responsible to find its own way through life. The glory of the branch is that it receives its life from the vine, and is satisfied simply to grow, and blossom, and bear fruit with thanksgiving; and the glory of the soul is to know that Christ will take care that the life is all right if only it love Him and cling to Him with trust. The worry drops out of life, and the peace comes in, when we give up trying to be the vine, and rest content to draw our life from the Lord.

Neither will we forget that we are taught self-denial and love of others as the shortest road to happiness. This is a novel doctrine, but not more novel than true. The supreme satisfactions come when we work and pray for others. We cannot find peace except by giving peace to our neighbors. Losing is finding is the Gospel doctrine. Love yourself last, is a motto hard to adopt, but it contains the secret of life. Jesus talked of this constantly, and exemplified it perfectly. Never did one tread the earth who loved as He did, or who was so willing to give himself if only the world could find light in darkness thereby. The cross is the symbol of an utter loss of self, and of an abounding and abiding love.

And lastly, when we turn our thoughts towards the setting sun, we find that even the shadows of night are tipped with glory. "I go to prepare a place for you," the Master said to his disciples, and ever since we have felt sure of the future. This life is like a winding country road that leads over the hill, across the plain, through the forest, and finally ends apparently at the margin of the

river. But the ending is only apparent, for with the eye of faith we can see that beyond the washing flood it continues through a country as yet unexplored.

And so we have found, in the lessons that stretch through the Bible, that Jesus holds every possible problem in his grasp. No man can have an experience in which the Lord cannot help him, and none can have a doubt which he cannot satisfy. It is our privilege to cling to the cross. In Europe the priests of certain churches will show you a minute atom, or splinter, of the cross, as a sacred relic. It is not enough. The whole cross is ours; and he that was nailed thereon is our best, our strongest, and our most loving friend. If we obey Him, life will be sweet, and death will be robbed of its terrors.

We have followed the footsteps of Jesus with such increasing wonder and awe, that we are now ready to exclaim with Thomas: "My Lord, and my God." He has been very tender in his dealings with the penitent, very uncompromising with the persistently evil-minded, and very compassionate towards every one in great sorrow and affliction.

I. From what we have seen him do, we have learned that he is the Counsellor, the Mighty God, prophesied by Isaiah. We believe this, if not by faith, at least for the "work's sake." Hence the authority that attaches to His commands. Our method of living is not left to our personal convictions at all; it is ordered by the Lord. We are never asked what we think of this or that duty, we are called upon to obey; and our best and truest convictions come always as the result of that obedience. We wrong ourselves, and put obstacles in our way, when we first theorize concerning right and wrong, and then search the Book for proof texts. If the Book is the Word of God, its authority is final, and we have no right to dis-

obey its injunctions or call in question its assertions. The highest life is the life of strictest obedience. The most important revelations of God's will come when the soul is passive and self-forgetful.

II. Christ's blessed ministry did not end at the cross. When he said : "I will come again," it was equivalent to a promise never to leave those that trust in Him. He said, also: "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father ; and I will love him, *and manifest* myself to him." Christ is in the world to-day, then, in answer to prayer. We can be "hidden with Christ," and, as it were, lose ourselves in gaining Him. When he was on earth, He was subject to the limitations of His body. He could not be in Galilee and Jerusalem at the same moment. Now that He has risen, however, He has become the very Spirit of God, that is neither confined by time nor space. I never tire of reading the fourteenth chapter of John, because it is full of the promise to minister to us at all times ; and I take especial delight in the twentieth verse of the seventeenth chapter, in which, while yet in the flesh, he actually prayed for you and me. It imposes on the soul a peculiar responsibility to know that Jesus remembered us in His petitions.

III. The written word, then, becomes our infallible guide, because it is the gift of God. It must not be forgotten, however, that to many the Bible is still "a stumbling-block" and "an offence." "The mystery of holiness" must not be denied. No one understands the Bible, or gets much comfort from it, unless he feels his need of it, and goes to it in that spirit. The critic, though he may recognize its rhetorical grandeur, can form no conception of its helpfulness so long as the critical spirit prevails. The hungry man appreciates food, and the soul-sick man understands the Bible. Standing outside the



cathedral, you may see enough of the stained windows to know that they must be beautiful and costly; but it is only when you cross the threshold and enter into the building when the sun is shining through them, that you see them in all their splendor. The Christian, not the critic, knows Christ.

## SUCCESS IN THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

REV. WM. C. WALTON.

While Dr. Robert Finley, of Basking Ridge, was preaching on a subject which had not in the preparation excited any unusual interest in his mind, he said : "there was given to him a *view* which was worth the world." *This "view" formed an era in his ministerial life ; it was the commencement of a powerful revival of religion ; it gave a new character to his preaching, and to it may be traced nearly all his subsequent usefulness.*

It was no new revelation. It was only a *correct* view of a truth which he had before seen but very indistinctly, and believed as though he believed it not. Before it had made only a feeble impression, now it thrilled through his soul with all the power and enthusiasm of a new discovery ; and prepared him to exhibit the Gospel message to his dying fellow-men, not as one who had learned it by hearsay, but as one who had "seen, and felt, and handled of the word of life."

The same has been true of many others ; and it is doubtless, in a great measure, owing to the want of such views and feelings, that the *ministrations of some men are so powerless*. Facts corroborate this conclusion. It was while the ministers of the Gospel were "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," that the "word of the Lord grew and multiplied" in primitive times.

The success of Luther was evidently connected with those discoveries of divine truth, which he said were "like opening to him the gates of paradise."

Livingston's sermon at the Kirk of Shotts, by which five hundred souls were converted, was preached under a similar influence. It was after a whole night spent in prayer and communion with God. His soul was filled with the spirit of Heaven, which caused his face to shine as did the face of Moses when he descended from the mount ; and gave a power and an unction to his appeals which melted the hearts of his hearers. And while hundreds and thousands were converted by the ministry of Whitefield, he said his experience verified our Saviour's declaration : " He that believeth in me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

Brainerd had such views of the worth of souls, of the guilt and wretchedness of their condition while impenitent, and such a desire that God might be glorified in their salvation, that at times he declared he felt as though he could not live, unless the Indians among whom he labored were converted. Those who have read his life will recollect with what amazing power his ministry was attended after such exercises. Besides the discoveries made to the Rev. Wm. Tennent, during the period of his suspended animation, he had on one occasion such views, while walking alone in a grove, just before preaching, that he fell prostrate upon the earth, and was unable to walk to the church without assistance.

The Rev. Mr. Flavel, while on a journey to a place where, I think, he had an appointment to preach, had views of the divine glory, and of heavenly things, which so absorbed and entranced his mind as to produce an entire oblivion of surrounding objects, and such an excitement of feeling as caused a profuse bleeding at the

nose. When he became conscious of his situation, he found himself sitting by a brook in the road, faint from the loss of blood. He continued in the same ecstatic state of mind during the whole afternoon and night—slept none at all, but said it was one of the most refreshing nights he ever spent. He used afterwards to call that day “one of the days of heaven.”

As to many, too, whose ministry has life and interest in it and whose discourses often produce a solemn impression, it is a serious question, whether they do not too generally preach without *aiming* at the *immediate* conversion of sinners? Is not such an event so far from their thoughts, that if it were to occur, it would occasion surprise? Do not their views terminate upon the mere discussion of the subject, or at most, on laying the foundation for future good to their hearers? *Are they looking for any present results*, corresponding to the objects contemplated in the ministerial commission?

The more we look at this subject, then, the more important will its discussion appear, especially to *theological students and to young ministers*. For such it was commenced, and to such it is affectionately addressed. My plan is to present, as far as my limits will permit, an analysis of the *views and feelings* which have been found by experience to be connected with *success in preaching the Gospel*. What are they? Among them are the following:

1. *An affecting view of our personal obligations to Christ, not only for redeeming mercy, but for the honor conferred upon us by putting us into the ministry.*

If God had associated with himself the angels in the work of creation, they would doubtless have regarded it as a high honor, but it would have been as far inferior to the honor conferred upon those who are employed in carrying forward the word of redemption as this world is inferior to the paradise above,

Yet all this superior honor is conferred upon ministers of the Gospel. They are called "laborers together with God." They are his "builders," his under-workmen in carrying forward that spiritual temple, which is to be a habitation for himself, which he has so magnificently described in the Bible, and which will doubtless be a theme of admiration and joy to the universe, to all eternity.

The Apostle Paul thought Moses judged correctly in preferring the reproach of Christ to the treasures of Egypt. And so he himself regarded all the obloquy and suffering connected with the Gospel ministry. What though he was cast off by his friends and kindred, and despised by the world, he could look to the thousands whom he had converted to Christ as his glory and joy, and his crown of rejoicing! He appeared to be amazed at the honor conferred upon him by putting him into the ministry, although it was connected with the most arduous, incessant, and exhausting labors, and exposed him to scorn and reproach, to suffering and death.

At the close of his career, standing as it were on the wreck of all he had sacrificed for Christ, and on the very verge of Heaven, he utters this triumphant language: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me *a crown of righteousness* which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me in that day."

Similar views and feelings have sweetened the toils of successful ministers in every age; reconciled them to hardship and suffering; given an unction to their preaching, and stimulated their minds to a holy and persevering activity; while those who were under the influence of other views and feelings, have yielded to indolence, or

sunk in despondency ; or like Salmasius, wasted their lives in laboriously doing nothing !

2. *A peculiar sensibility to the honor of God, and a desire for His glory, so strong as to amount to a ruling passion.* Worldly men feel that the honor of God is his own concern, and that an omnipotent being can take care of his own glory, without any care or co-operation on their part. Such, too, are the real feelings of cold-hearted Christians; and nothing is a more certain indication of incipient back-sliding, than a diminished anxiety for the honor of God, or a less acute sensibility to the contempt which is thrown upon him by impenitent sinners.

The faithful servant of Christ will spontaneously say with the Psalmist : "I beheld the transgressors and was *grieved*." "Rivers of waters run down my eyes, because men keep not thy law." "Horror has taken hold of me, because of the wicked who transgress thy law." The honor of his Saviour lies nearer to his heart than any other interest. The precious name of Jesus is an ointment poured forth to his soul ; and he desires above all things to see it honored by redeemed sinners.

3. *An affecting view of the guilt and wretchedness of those who are living without hope, and without God in the world.*

Those who have been most successful will testify that the pungency and power of their preaching have been almost in exact proportion to the clearness of their views of the guilt and wretchedness of the sinner,

Perhaps there is no one respect in which ministers and Christians *in* a revival differ from what they are *out* of a revival, more than in this. Never will a feeble impression of such a subject lead us to dwell upon it, and to give it that prominence in our prayers and preaching, which are essential to any proper effect in the minds of others. Every experienced minister knows that the most pathetic

appeals, founded on the mere danger to which the impenitent are exposed, and the most thundering representations of Hell and damnation, seldom produce any permanent effect, while the *cause* which exposes the sinner to danger is kept out of view. That cause is his guilt; and that guilt arises from the violation of his obligations.

The sinner must be made to see this; and he never can see it, until he is made to feel that he acted freely, and might have done otherwise; that this is true, not only in reference to some sins, but in reference to every sin. In this way alone can he be made to feel that he is *without excuse* for being an enemy to God, and for all his disobedience both to the law and to the Gospel.

It is evident that such views are *adapted* to produce conviction, and to lead to repentance; and that where these points are made clear, and urged in such a *manner* as the feelings of a minister will dictate, who himself sees them clearly and feels them deeply, an effect will be produced, very different from anything which could be expected to result from confused or erroneous representations of human agency, or from a cold and heartless exhibition, even of the truth itself.

Whatever may be the speculative opinions of ministers with regard to the nature of depravity, inability, regeneration, etc., it is a fact, that where their ministry is successful, as it is in revivals, they preach to sinners as if they believed them to be possessed of all the powers of moral agency, capable of turning to God, and *on this account* (and no other), inexcusable for not doing so.

But further: There must also be such a view of the sinner's present and prospective *wretchedness*, as will excite feelings of deep and tender sympathy, or that compassion which will prompt a minister to put in to re-

quisition the whole force of his mind, in the employment of the wisest and best adapted instrumentalities for saving those that are lost.

Under the influence of such feelings, he "gives himself to prayer and to the ministry of the word." He is "instant in season and out of season ;" "becomes all things to all men, if by any means he may save some." And while he keeps his mind fixed upon the object for which he is laboring, his "head is often as waters, and his eyes as a fountain of tears ;" for, in the light of divine truth, he sees his fellow-men accumulating guilt and wretchedness upon themselves, and sinking to endless sorrow and despair ; and he cannot but weep to think how many will be lost in spite of all his efforts to save them ; and also, to see how few Christians and ministers are laboring as if they really felt that they were "*pulling sinners out of the fire,*" and rescuing them from the damnation of hell.

4. *A strong sense of the absolute certainty of the promises to the church, and a correspondent joy and confidence of success in the work of the ministry.*

No man is prepared to speak with boldness, and ministerial authority, while he staggers at the promises ; or while his faith falters as to the aid which he may expect from God, in every well directed effort for the salvation of souls. And yet there is hardly any point in which ministers, as well as private Christians, fail more lamentably than they do here.

Who can doubt, that in a majority of cases, where efforts for a revival are without success, it is because the people of God do not *expect* to succeed ? On the contrary, when their confidence has been high, and yet humble, resting on the mighty power of the Spirit, and the efficacy of the word preached, when has God ever failed to send down his blessing ?



Two things, however, are absolutely essential to a well founded confidence of this kind. First, Christians must live such lives, as to enjoy full, *full* and *decisive* evidence, that they are the children of God, and are entitled to plead the promises as belonging to themselves. Secondly, they must be settled immovably, and on strict inquiry of their own, in the belief of the distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel—the great doctrines of grace.

Said Brainerd: "My soul breathed after God, and pleaded with him that 'a double portion of that spirit' which was given to Elijah, might rest on me. And that which was divinely refreshing and strengthening to my soul was, I saw, that *God is the same that he was in the days of Elijah. Nothing seemed too hard for God to perform ; nothing too great for me to hope for from Him.*" Again he says : "I saw with the greatest certainty, that the *arm of the Lord must be revealed* for the help of these poor heathen, if ever they were delivered from the bondage of the powers of darkness. Though the work of their conversion appeared *impossible with man, yet with God I saw all things were possible.*"

Said Payson : "O what a Master do I serve ! I have known nothing, felt nothing all my days, even in comparison with what I now see in him. Never was preaching such sweet work as it is now. Never did the world seem such a nothing ; never did heaven appear so near, so sweet, overwhelmingly glorious ! *God's promises appear so strong, so solid, so real, so substantial, more so than the rocks and everlasting hills.* And his perfections—what shall I say of them ? When I think of one, I wish to dwell upon it forever. But another and another, equally glorious, claims a share of admiration ; and when I begin to praise I wish never to cease, but have it the commencement of that song which shall never cease. Let who will be rich,

or admired, or prosperous, it is enough for me that there is such a God as Jehovah, such a Saviour as Jesus, and that they are infinitely and unchangeably glorious and happy."

Abraham believed that "what God had promised He was able also to perform."

An eminent servant of God in our day believed that "God could stop a steamboat" when it was necessary to accomplish an object of importance connected with his own glory ; and the event, in both cases, proved that it was not a vain thing to trust in God, and the circumstances of the one were almost as remarkable a proof of a divine interposition as those of the other. An ancient prophet, with the most appalling difficulties before him, could say with confidence, "*Is anything too hard for the Lord ?*" And Paul, with equal confidence, could say : "*I believe God, that it shall be even as he hath said.*" Such is the faith that is necessary to success in the ministry of the present day. It must be such as to give us the certainty of actual vision. It must be the confidence of things hoped for ; the persuasion of things not seen. With such a faith, a minister cannot only preach confidently, but act boldly and decidedly. It serves him as a sort of optical instrument, by which he can take such views of spiritual and eternal things as will stimulate his mind, warm his heart, and fill his mouth with arguments. And preaching under the influence of such views and feelings, he will make impressions upon the minds of others with regard to the *reality* of religion, and the certainty of God's declarations, which could never be made by one in the confused and doubtful state of mind before described. Gar-ric's reply to the minister who questioned him in regard to the comparative effects of pulpit and stage oratory, will here be remembered ; and nothing could be more

correct. "Why is it," said the minister, "that we who preach truth produce so little effect, while you who deliver nothing but fiction often excite such powerful emotions?" "The reason is this," said Garrick; "You preach truth as if it were fiction; and we deliver fiction as if it were truth."

Let every man who may read these pages ask himself how far he believes things simply on the ground of God's declarations? How far he is prepared to take God at his word, and to act upon what He states as being truth itself, more certain than the evidence of the senses, or the demonstrations of science? The answer to these questions will furnish him not only with a test of his own character, but with the probable measure of his future usefulness. To the want of faith in the divine promises and threatenings may be attributed, in a great degree, the want of *feeling*, which is apparent in most sermons we hear.

5. *A deep conviction of personal responsibility in reference to the conversion of sinners, and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom.*

The real and practical feeling of many respecting this subject is, that it is God's cause, and that he will take care of it, and convert as many sinners as he intended to convert, from the foundation of the world, whether means are used or not. But the successful preacher, while he believes that salvation is the work of God, does not believe so in any sense which would release ministers or private Christians from responsibility in relation to it. He understands the divine plan as so connecting the conversion of sinners with the right application of means, that he can find no rest for his soul in the neglect of these means. He believes further, that God will make use of ministers, in building up his kingdom, in proportion to

the skill and assiduity with which they employ the means, so that if they are unwise to win souls to Christ, or unfaithful in regard to the use of means, souls will be lost which might have been saved. That this sense of responsibility is connected with ministerial success, we have evidence in the fact, that it is always felt most deeply before a revival, and during its progress. It is indeed one of the most powerful stimulants to those efforts which God is wont to bless to the conversion of sinners.

6. *A strong sense of the folly and wickedness of suffering the mind to be unduly influenced by the opinions of men.*

Said Paul:—"It is a light thing to be judged of you, or of man's judgment." Again he says:—"Even so we preach, not as pleasing men, but God who trieth our hearts." "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Jesus Christ."

It was necessary to our Lord's success in the great work he had to accomplish, "*that he should make himself of no reputation.*" It is no less necessary, that his ministers should in an important sense do the same.

Said Pearce: "I feel a superiority to all fear and a conscious dignity in being an ambassador of God."

I thank God that I possess an abiding determination to aim at the consciences of the people in every discourse. I have borne the most positive testimony against the prevailing evils of professors here;—and last night told an immense crowd of professors, of the first rank, that if they made custom and fashion their plea, they were awfully deluding their own souls. For it had always been the fashion to insult God, to dissipate time, and to pursue the broad road to hell; but it would not lessen their torments there, that the way to damnation was the fashion.

7. *A strong, habitual sense of the one great object of our vocation which exerts a governing influence over the mind.*

It is pleasing to believe that an increasing number are, every year, entering the ministry from correct motives, and it is pleasing to anticipate the success of such. But there is reason to fear that not a few are led to adopt the ministry as a profession, only because they think it preferable to law or medicine. Without first apprehensions of the ministry ; and without these feelings which have been described as requisite to its success.

#### 8. *Practical Wisdom.*

This is shown in the adaptation of public discourses, private conversation, and all the other measures used to the characters and circumstances of the people addressed. Men of this character study to acquire such a knowledge of the state of things in their congregations as will enable them to operate upon the minds of their people to the greatest advantage. They avail themselves of every passing occurrence that excites interest, and of every rising tide of events or favorable state of feeling in the church ; and endeavor to make all such things subservient to the best interests of religion. When they see a good opportunity for making a "special effort," they do not shrink from any additional labor or responsibility it will devolve upon them, but meet both the labor and the responsibility, with cheerfulness and confidence in God ; rejoicing to be counted worthy either to do or to suffer anything which shall advance the Redeemer's glory. By cherishing an habitual and intense solicitude for the conversion of sinners, they require a peculiar tact in conducting meetings, and conversing with persons in an anxious state of mind.

Again. Errors have often been committed, in the appointment and management of *protracted meetings*. After these meetings became popular, and had been attended with great success, in some places, one was appointed at

— . No special efforts were made to *prepare* for it either by the minister or the church. They came together unhumbled, without the spirit of prayer, few or none prepared to take hold of the work in earnest. They had no preaching but such as the people were accustomed to hear from the neighboring ministers, who excited but little attention. They went through the routine of services, and it was a protracted meeting !

But no souls were converted, and the church was not aroused from its slumbers. The result was, the people lost their confidence in protracted meetings, instead of humbling themselves in the dust, and imputing the failure to their own folly and wickedness.

Another meeting was held under more favorable circumstances, at — . They had preaching of the best kind, but it was nearly all addressed to the impenitent, while the church remained cold, faithless, prayerless. They had prayer-meetings enough, but there was no broken hearted agonizing prayer. The result was, that some hundreds appeared to be awakened, but few or none were converted, and when the meeting closed, the church remained unaffected and the wicked were glad to be released from that pressure of truth and obligation which for some days had held them very uneasy. Men of practical wisdom and experience in such matters would *labor with the church*, both before the meeting and during its progress, and feel as if nothing would be accomplished, *until the church should awake* and call mightily upon God in the true spirit of prayer, confessing and putting away their sins, and striving together for the promotion of the work.

Further. In the discussion of subjects, ministers often consume much time, most unprofitably, in proving what nobody doubts ; multiplying arguments, dwelling upon narratives with which most of their hearers are familiar,

or in "declaiming about Noah, Abraham, and Job ;—laying the scene of action so far off that the present company can feel no special interest in it." And thus the effort is spent without producing any of those effects which a minister should aim at in preaching. There is no close *grappling with the conscience* and the heart ; none of the warmth and animation of direct appeal, and of earnest expostulation ; conveying to the hearers, irresistibly, the impression that they have a great work to do, and ought immediately to engage in the doing of it, and that everlasting consequences are depending upon the present hour.

Once more. A great want of wisdom is sometimes displayed in the manner of *conducting prayer-meetings* ; the consequence of which is that few attend, and no spirit of prayer is awakened, and thus one of the most powerful weapons which the church has to wield is divested of all its efficacy. The use of long and inappropriate prayers and hymns, and the neglect of weekly efforts to *gather the impenitent into the meetings*, and to labor with faith and zeal for their conversion, when there are errors which often pass without animadversion ; but which men of practical wisdom in such matters do always endeavor to correct. Such men generally accomplish a great deal, too, by setting others to work and teaching them how to work. They pay diligent attention to persons who begin to evince a serious concern for their spiritual condition ; and their active minds are ever devising ways and means to awaken the attention of the careless, and to give the greatest effect to divine truth, as the instrument of conversion. As to measures, they believe that neither old or new measures will succeed without the blessing of God. And while they rely upon that blessing, they feel themselves at liberty to pursue any course which circumstan-

ces and appearances may indicate ; always, however, taking care to keep clearly within the limits prescribed in the Bible ; willing that all their brethren should enjoy the same liberty and discretion. All they insist upon in the relation to this point, is, that some measure must be adopted which shall be efficient for the accomplishment of the object they have in view ; for they really believe that sinners, living without God and religion, are on their way to Hell, and must be converted, or they will soon be there.

9. *A disposition heartily to rejoice in the good done by others.*

When Barnabas visited " Antioch, and saw the grace of God " bestowed upon the disciples of Christ " he was glad," although he had no hand in their conversion, "*for he was a great man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.*" Paul rejoiced that the gospel was preached, even though it was done in "strife," by those who envied his reputation, and thought it would add affliction to his bonds, while he was a prisoner at Rome. " He that will be great among you, let him be least of all and servant of all." The spirit of Diotrephes has never been found in connection with eminent usefulness. We should ever be willing to acknowledge the gifts and graces bestowed upon the ministry, as well as upon the churches, and to give the glory of all to God, to whom alone it is due. *The success of such men is secured by divine promise.* " They shall prosper that love Thee ;" i. e. those who love " Jerusalem " shall prosper. So it has been and so it will be. Let those who love the cause of Christ then go on with their work ; and let it be seen that God is with them, and prospers them ; that souls are saved, and the tone of piety elevated, by their instrumentality ; and verily, all good men—all who are full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, will rejoice in their work.



10. *A spirit of deep humility.*

"The chief of sinners," and "least of all saints," are the epithets by which Paul characterizes himself. He said he was "least of the apostles, and not meet to be called an apostle, because he had persecuted the church of God." He speaks of himself as "nothing;" and when truth required him to admit that he had "labored more abundantly than all" the apostles, he adds, "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

11. *A full and deep conviction of the necessity of the Holy Spirit's operations to give success.*

Paul, with all his pre-eminent abilities and supernatural endowments, felt that he had no sufficiency of himself to accomplish the object of his ministry. He felt that he was "nothing, and Apollos nothing;" that while he "planted and Apollos watered, God gave the increase." To this sentiment all successful ministers of the gospel will not only heartily subscribe, but they are often heard to dwell upon it with great emphasis in prayer, and on all suitable occasions. Whitefield speaks of his hearers as "melted down under the word and power of God." He ascribes his success, everywhere, to his "Master's presence,"—to "the arm of the Lord;" and speaks of revivals and conversions as "*the work of God.*"

12. *Exalted apprehensions of the fullness and freeness of divine grace, flowing to sinners through the atonement and mediation of Christ.*

Ministers may not always have consistent theories with regard to election, or the extent of the atonement; but when successful in their preaching, they address sinners as if they believed all might be saved, if all would repent; and that there is no necessity, arising from any limitation of the atonement, or from any unwillingness on the part of God, or any arbitrary decree of heaven against them, why any should be lost.

The sermons of President Davies are remarkable for this characteristic. "If," says he, "you are really willing to fly to Jesus, and be saved by Him in His own way, you may be sure *He is infinitely more willing than you are.* Sinners complain of the want of *ability*; but what is their inability but their unwillingness? Coming to Christ is an act of the will, and therefore to will it heartily is to perform the act." And he represents the sinner's excuse, founded upon his supposed inability, to be as absurd as that of a thief who should say, "I have such an aversion to honesty, that I cannot possibly help stealing."

13. *A strong sense of the incomparable excellence of divine truth, and its admirable adaptation to convert the hearts of sinners.* Says the Apostle Paul, "I determined to *know* nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified;" and every successful preacher must have those absorbing views of the excellency of divine truth, which shall make him regardless of all other knowledge which does not very directly contribute to give efficacy to this. Nor is this all. Such views give unspeakable encouragement and support to a minister, in addressing these truths to the consciences of men. He knows the nature of the weapon which he is called to wield. It is "the sword of the spirit," "piercing to the dividing asunder of the joints and the marrow, and proving a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." While he presses upon the sinner the earnest expostulations, and pathetic entreaties, and tremendous denunciations of the Gospel, how is he encouraged to put forth every effort, by the reflection that these appeals are perfectly *adapted* to the nature of man! The truths he preaches are given by the inspiration of that very spirit to whose converting influences he looks for success. Well may he hope, then, that God, even through his feeble instrumentality, will "honor his word above all his name."

14. *A high degree of enjoyment in the work of the ministry.*

Paul and Silas in prison, and with their feet fast in the stocks, and stripes on their backs, were so happy that they could not sleep. At midnight they prayed and sang praises to God. Paul says at another time ; "I am filled with comfort ; I am exceeding joyful. Thanks be to God who always causeth us to triumph in Christ."

Whitefield, speaking of a place in London, where he and others held their prayer-meetings, says : "It was a Pentecost season indeed. Sometimes whole nights were spent in prayer. Often have we been filled as with new wine ; and often have I seen them overwhelmed with the divine presence, and crying out : 'Will God indeed dwell with men upon earth' ? How dreadful is this place ! There is no other than the house of God and the gates of Heaven."

He says in his journal : "I have been upon the stretch preaching constantly for almost three weeks, my body is often extremely weak, but the joy of the Lord is my strength, and by the help of God I intend going on till I drop, or this poor carcase can hold out no more." Again he complains of being sick, but says : "The Redeemer fills me with comfort. I am determined in his strength to die fighting." "Go where I will," says he, "in the Island of Bermuda, upon the least notice, houses are crowded, and the poor souls that follow are soon drenched 'in tears.'" In Scotland, he says : "Thousands and thousands have I seen, before it was possible to catch it by sympathy, melted down under the word and power of God." With such scenes almost constantly before him, how could he be otherwise than happy ?

It is said of Pearce, that "he seemed to have learned that heavenly art, so conspicuous among the primitive

Christians, of converting everything he met with into materials for love and joy, and praise. The constant happiness he enjoyed in God was apparent in the effects of his sermons upon others. Whatever we feel ourselves, we shall ordinarily communicate to our hearers; and it has been noticed that one of the distinguishing properties of his discourses was that they inspired the serious mind with the liveliest sensations of happiness. They descended upon the audience, not indeed like a transporting flood, but like a shower of dew, gently insinuating itself into the heart, insensibly dissipating its gloom, and gradually drawing forth the graces of faith, hope, love, and joy. While the countenance was brightened almost into a smile, tears of pleasure would rise, and glisten, and fall from the admiring eye."

Much of Payson's experience was like that of Brainerd. After passing through many dark hours and painful conflicts, the scene brightens, and he was favored with seasons of ecstatic enjoyment, equal to anything to be found in the records of experimental religion. "O what a Master do I serve!" says he: "I have known nothing, felt nothing all my days, even in comparison with what I now see in him. Never was preaching such sweet work as it is now."

"This good news," (referring to some indications of a revival), "filled me with joy and triumph. O, I wanted, even then, to begin my eternal song; and excess of happiness became almost painful. Could scarcely sleep for joy." At another time he speaks of his having such a manifestation that he says: "I would not have given a straw for the additional proof which a visible appearance of Christ would have afforded of his presence." Again, towards the close of life, he says: "If my happiness continues to increase, I cannot support it much longer." On

being asked if his views of Heaven were clearer and brighter than ever, he said : " For a few moments I may have had as bright, but formerly my joys were tumultuous ; now all is calm and peaceful." " I think the happiness I enjoy is similar to that enjoyed by glorified spirits before the resurrection."

His letter to his sister will be remembered by all who have read his life, as one of the most astonishing productions ever dictated by man while clothed with the garments of morality. " I can find no words to express my happiness ; I seem to be swimming in a river of pleasure which is carrying me on to the great fountain." Thus he continued until his sun set in a flood of glory, and he died exclaiming, " peace ! peace ! victory ! victory !" May the writer, and all who may read these pages, so live, that through grace we may end our lives thus triumphantly.

## CAUSES OF UNSUCCESSFULNESS IN THE MINISTRY.

REV. WM. C. WALTON.

The Christian ministry is an institution of God. Its object is the salvation of lost men ; and for the attainment of this object it is clothed with mighty energies. It is intrusted with the dispensation of a gospel, which is declared to be the wisdom and the power of God to salvation. Whatever is great and venerable in the character of the infinite God; whatever is imperative and binding in his moral government over men ; whatever is tender and winning in his boundless love in Christ Jesus, or momentous and solemn in the realities of eternity, “ the immortality of the soul, the felicities of heaven, and the punishments of hell ;” all is committed to the ministry of reconciliation, as means of accomplishing the great end of its institution,—the recovery of ruined man to the image and favor of his God. Yet this ministry, in the hands of men at the present day, seems, in many cases, strangely divested of its life-giving power. Its practical results, in the conversion and spiritual improvement of mankind are far less than might be expected from the nature and design of the institution, far less than they were in the early days of christianity, and far less, we may be sure, than they will be before the arrival of the latter-day glory of the church.

The evidences of this lamentable want of ministerial success are many and decisive. Look at the state of religion in our churches. Is it such as might be expected from the ample means of grace furnished in the gospel of Christ? The number, indeed, is not small, of those who, on the whole, appear to be Christians ; but how very imperfectly is the image of Christ drawn upon their hearts, or exemplified in their lives ! Of the greater part of the members of our churches, it may with the strictest truth be said, "that when for the time they ought to be teachers, they have need that one teach them again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat."

How, too, is it that so many, under the preaching of the present day, are deceiving themselves with a false hope ? The fact cannot be questioned. No one who forms his views of Christian character from the Bible can avoid the painful conviction that there are many in our churches who have a name to live, while they are dead, and are going down to ruin with a lie in their right hand. Would it be so, if the gospel, in its discriminating and exposing power, were duly pressed on the heart and conscience ?

Look, too, at the multitude of impenitent persons, who sit from year to year under the preaching of the present day, entirely secure in their sins. They come to and go from the house of God, from Sabbath to Sabbath, and that too, perhaps, for a long life, and yet remain wholly ignorant of their character and destiny, and receive their first conviction of guilt and condemnation on opening their eyes in a miserable eternity.

Notice, also, the infrequency and short continuance of revivals of religion. These precious visitations of mercy generally come at far distant intervals, last but a little while, and are too often greatly marred and injured by a

large mixture of deception and false religion,—a fact which has long appeared to us to indicate something wrong in the mode of conducting revivals of religion,—something deficient, unskilful and erroneous, in the manner of presenting God's truth, and using the other means of carrying on a work of grace.

But we need not enlarge on the evidences of a want of success in the ministry. The fact is as obvious as it is melancholy. The question now arises, to what causes is this want of success to be attributed? Why is it, that the gospel, as preached at the present day, so often fails of its end? Why is it not more generally proved by actual results, to be the power of God unto the salvation of them that hear it? Is it said that the heart of man is desperately wicked, and that the Holy Spirit only can change the heart and bring men to repentance? Nothing is more true. But the gospel, it should be remembered, is God's own ordinance,—his own appointed instrument for effecting this great spiritual change; and the divine influence, which is admitted to be indispensable to the conversion of a sinner, instead of rendering this instrument powerless, is the very thing which invests it with the high character claimed for it, of being the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation.

The question then returns,—What are the causes of un-successfulness in the ministry? Why are the preaching of the gospel, and the influence of the Holy Spirit to render it effectual, so often found in separation and at a distance, one from the other? Is the cause, every minister should seriously inquire, in no degree identified with myself? Is there nothing in the spirit and manner of my ministrations, which deprives them of the co-operating influences of God's spirit, and prevents their appropriate fruits from being more abundantly realized among the people of my charge?



In pursuing the question before us, we shall spend no time in remarks upon that sort of preaching, which denies or conceals the great doctrines of the gospel, which substitutes the inventions of men for the verities of God, and aims only to deceive its hearers with the sophistries of error, or to amuse them with prettiness of style and manner. There is much of this kind of preaching in our land and the cause of its utter unfruitfulness is too plain to need pointing out. The question relates to preaching which is essentially correct in doctrine, and evangelical in spirit and aim.

1. One cause, then, we apprehend, why preaching of this character is not more generally successful is found in a faulty method of presenting the doctrine of God's sovereignty and man's dependence.

These doctrines we hold to be true and important, and a scriptural exhibition of them is of eminent use in bringing sinners to repentance and salvation. The exhibition which we regard as scriptural, is that which brings the greatest amount of moral influence to bear on the heart and conscience ; which, while it cuts off self-confidence on the one hand, prevents self-justification and sloth on the other, and impels the subject, under a persuasion that it is "God who worketh in him to will and to do" to "work out his own salvation with fear and trembling." This is the true, practical effect of the doctrine of God's sovereignty and man's dependence, as taught in the Bible.

But the doctrine may be so stated, and if we mistake not, often has been so stated, as to weaken or destroy a sense of obligation, and lay the conscience asleep. Why is it, that so many are to be found sitting under the ministry of the present day, who constantly assert their dependence on God, as an excuse for continuance in sin,—

who are wont to meet every call to repentance with the plea that they cannot, but must wait God's time ; and are actually quieting themselves in a state of condemnation, under an impression that they have nothing to do, and can do nothing, in the great business of securing salvation? Why is it, too, that there are in our churches so many professors of religion, who, whenever summoned to prayer and effort, as the appointed and hopeful means of a revival in religion, fold their arms in sloth, and excuse themselves on the ground that this is the work of God, and they must wait his time to accomplish it? Here is a practical perversion of the doctrine of God's sovereignty and man's dependence,—a perversion of widespread and most pernicious influence ; and whatever other causes may be assigned for its prevalence, it must, we think, in no small part, be traced to a faulty method of stating the doctrine in question.

There is a theology quite too prevalent in some parts of our country, which is wont to present the sovereignty of God in such a light as to make it little else than the mere dictation of arbitrary will and power,—binding men in the chains of an inexorable fate ; which denies to man all proper ability to obey God, and makes his dependence on divine grace such as renders it physically impossible for him to perform spiritual duties. And even where this crude theology is not carried to the extent here represented, where, indeed, it is discarded as false, language is sometimes heard from the pulpit, respecting the doctrine now under consideration, which can hardly fail to make a wrong impression on the minds of sinners, ready as they always are to seize upon anything as an excuse for neglect of duty. If, for example, the doctrine of divine sovereignty and human dependence is so presented as to infringe on free agency, or set aside the connection be-

tween means and ends ; if men are told that they have no power to repent or do their duty ; that they are directly dependent on God for all their exercises, and are so under the dominion of a depraved nature, inherited from Adam, (or born with them and making a part of them,) and that they can do nothing to help, but only to hinder, their salvation; they will always receive the impression, that they cannot "be to blame" for being what and where they are,—that sin is their misfortune and not their crime, and that any attempt to escape from their condition and turn to God, is absurd and useless. The preacher who uses this language, may perhaps mean by it what is true and important ; but there is a great deal of the most hurtful error involved in it, and if he does not carefully guard his statements on the subject, he is sure to be misunderstood. While he seriously aims, it may be, to awaken and save his hearers, he is, in fact, administering to them a deadly opiate, and quieting them in the repose of undisturbed impenitence and sin.

Against this false and ruinous impression, every minister who would be successful in winning souls to Christ must direct his most strenuous efforts. While it remains, the case of the sinner is hopeless. Instruction and warning, exhortation and entreaty, can do him no good. The delusion that he has nothing to do, and can do nothing to secure salvation, is a triple shield to his conscience, and stupid continuance in sin is the inevitable consequence. The great aim of the preacher should be, so to present the doctrine of the Bible, as to lay upon the conscience of the sinner the full weight of his obligations, and to make him feel that whatever may be true respecting the sovereignty of God and man's dependence, there is nothing in either which in the least militates against free agency and accountability, or allows the slightest hope of salvation in a state of carelessness and sloth.

It should be made to appear, as it certainly may be, that the sinner's dependence on God for repentance is a dependence of his own creating, growing out of his love of sin and voluntary aversion to duty and which, while it suspends his salvation on the good pleasure of God, renders him altogether inexcusable and guilty for continuing a moment longer in his sins. This view of the subject cuts off excuse, and fixes the blame where it ought to rest. It leaves the whole weight of the sinner's obligation pressing on the conscience, and is well fitted to make him feel that if he perishes his blood will be upon his own head.

We close this topic with the remarks, that if a minister entertains any such views of the doctrines just considered, or of any other doctrines of the Bible, as in the least embarrass him in urging upon sinners an immediate compliance with the terms of salvation, or which when duly presented, would diminish in the transgressor a sense of obligation, and of guilt for neglect of duty ; such views, he may be sure, are radically false and of pernicious tendency. This is a practical test by which every minister would do to try his theological views.

2. Ministers are not enough in the habit of presenting the gospel to the minds of their hearers, as a cause fitted and designed to bring them to immediate repentance and submission to God. In its nature and design the gospel is such a cause. While it comes with the offer of pardon and life to lost men, its authoritative demand is that they report and accept the offer, and that they do it now. In this character it was uniformly presented by the apostles ; and thus urged, it wrought wonders in the hearts and lives of men. They met their hearers in the most free and unembarrassed manner, just as if they intended and expected to persuade them to become Christians on the

spot. In pressing home the claims of duty they appear not to have felt the least difficulty from any doctrinal views of the atonement, or of man's dependence, or of God's sovereignty and purposes. They addressed men as free moral agents, every way capacitated to hear and obey the voice of God. They addressed them as guilty, perishing sinners, standing in infinite need of the mercy offered them in the gospel; and having made known to them the way of salvation by Christ, they urged home the duty of an immediate acceptance by him, as the only and all-sufficient Saviour of lost men.

In their manner of delivering God's message, we see no protracted process of using the means of grace pointed out; no analysis of difficulties to be gotten over; no philosophical explanation of the origin and nature of sin, or of the mode of the change effected in regeneration; no allowance of any future time to repent, or of any delay of duty in the attitude of passively waiting God's time to give repentance. All was plain matter of fact—direct summons to duty. And was not this straight-forward, direct way of preaching the gospel, with the fixed design and earnest expectation of its being immediately and powerfully efficacious, which in primitive times produced such great and sudden results in the conviction and conversion of sinners? Repentance and faith are indeed preached at the present day, as duties of immediate obligation; but frequently, it is believed, with other statements which break the force of these duties, and quiet the conscience in sin; and instead of looking for effects in accordance with such preaching, nothing, perhaps, would strike the preacher himself with greater astonishment, than to see his hearers actually repenting, as did those of Peter, while he was yet announcing to them the message of God. The most he expects even from his best efforts is, that possi-

bly some of his hearers may be induced to attend to the subject ; or, to use a common illustration, that the seed sown may, perchance, spring up and bear fruit at some future day. Of anything beyond this, neither preacher or hearer scarcely ever dreams. The consequence is, that the gospel is in a great measure deprived of its power, and comparatively few immediate effects are realized from its ministrations.

The preacher too often expects little from the publication of God's message ; and this expectation is, ordinarily, the cause of its own fulfillment. It paralyzes effort, and prayer, and hope—makes his discourses from the pulpit abstract, cold, and distant, and renders the sword of the Spirit an ineffective, powerless weapon. For if ministers preach, or people hear, under an impression that no immediate effects are to be produced, what more can be expected, than that they should preach in vain, and the people hear in vain ? The gospel, ministered and heard in this manner, is not brought to bear in the heart and conscience. It does not so much as touch the main-springs of feeling and action in the soul. A wide space is created between it and the mind—a region of vacancy, over which no influence can pass, to awaken fear or impel to effort. No sinner ever repents till he is made to feel, that submission of God can be delayed no longer—that the surrender of the soul is a duty binding now, and to be done now. To produce this impression should be the great aim of a minister in all his preaching, conversation and prayers. Let him regard the gospel of Christ as an instrument of heavenly temper, adapted and intended to produce present results ; let him, in reliance upon the promised aids of the Spirit, prepare and deliver his discourses under the inspiring expectation of realizing such results, and who can doubt whether new life and power would be im-

parted to his ministry; and new and more abundant fruits be gathered therefrom? It is said of Whitefield, that he always entered the pulpit with an expectation that the message he had to deliver would be blessed to the salvation of some of his hearers. This is the true principle of faith—the vitality and power of the ministry; it honors God and honors his truth; and to a defect of this principle may be traced in no small degree, the want of success in the ministry.

3. And the cause of this is, *the want of skill in adapting divine truth to the particular state and character of those who attend upon the preaching of the gospel.* There is an exact correspondence between the truths of the Bible and the principles of the human mind; and when these truths are clearly presented, and faithfully applied, they never fail to produce impression and feeling. The skill thus to present and apply the truth of God, is the perfection of preaching. It was this which gave the preaching of Christ such amazing pungency and power. He always aimed at the heart; and as he knew what was in man, he was always able to apply to each one of his hearers the truth best adapted to meet his particular state and character. Hence it is worthy of special notice, that our Saviour rarely preached a sermon which did not produce very visible and marked effect—which did not confirm and comfort his friends, and disturb and distress his enemies. We know some preachers at the present day who possess, in a very high degree, this divine skill of dissecting the heart, and adapting the truths of God's word to the principles of the human mind; and such preachers are always impressive and powerful. While Christians are edified and established in the faith, under their clear and discriminating application of truth, sinners are distressed and alarmed, and are compelled to feel the guilt

and misery of their condition. Such a preacher was Edwards. With almost no aid from voice, or gesture and manner, he could fix an audience in breathless silence and deep solemnity of feeling. His profound knowledge of the Bible, and of the human heart enabled him to speak to the consciousness of every one who heard him ; so that each one was bound to reflect, in language like that of the woman of Sychar : " Here is a man revealing to me the secrets of my own heart and life : is not this man from God ? "

In no respect, perhaps, are sermons more apt to fail than in this. We hear a great deal of preaching which is entirely powerless, because it is not true to nature—not exact in its delineation of character, nor discriminating in its applications of truth. It is vague, declamatory and pointless ; proving what needs no proof ; explaining what needs no explanation ; keeping always at a distance from the heart and conscience, forever going round and round, but never coming directly to the point. It speaks of depravity and wickedness, of guilt and danger, of repentance and salvation, of heaven and hell ; but all in such an indefinite, indiscriminate manner, that no one feels himself described, or personally interested in what is said. Such preaching may have many attractive qualities ; it may be learned, and elegant, and popular ; but it altogether fails of the great end of preaching. It robs divine truth of its power to sanctify and save, and leaves the hearer to slumber on in his sins, utterly ignorant of himself and his future destiny. Such is the stupidity and blindness of man, the general truths do not affect him. To arouse him from his slumbers, and excite him to action, the preacher must come nearer, and speak so as to meet his particular case. He should aim to set each hearer by himself, and to make him feel that the truth ut-



tered is the very truth meant for him. This rarely fails to produce effect. It brings the gospel of God in direct contact with the conscience ; and when this is done, its power to awaken and impress must be felt.

4. Preaching often fails of success, *for want of boldness and directness in its exhibitions of God's truth.* We do not mean, by these qualities, any harshness of language or manner, or calling sinners by hard and irritating names : as if to do them good, it were necessary to make them angry. Nothing like this should ever be uttered from the sacred desk. There all should be respectful, kind, and winning. We mean by boldness, an undisguised, honest declaration of the whole counsel of God ; and by directness, such an application of the truths of his word as will make an audience feel that the preacher means them. There is in the preaching of the present day a great want of this plain, faithful dealing with the consciences of men. There is too much of what one very properly calls "pulpit exhibition,"—a mere flourish of fine language and brilliant images, or what is quite as bad, of useless disquisition, consisting in the discussion of topics foreign to the great business of salvation,—“in making nice and intricate distinctions, which, like the lines of the spider, are invisible, except to an eye of peculiar acuteness, and which, when seen, are like the same lines, of no possible use to man.” All ministers are apt to think that they are plain preachers : and it may be admitted that no preachers on earth have a juster claim to this character than the evangelical ministers of this country. But when we look into the New Testament, and see how Christ and his apostles dealt with their hearers ; when we consider the nature of the case, and reflect, that ministers are ambassadors for Christ to guilty men—that they stand daily in the midst of the dead and the dying, and are going, with the immor-

tal beings committed to their charge, to the bar of Christ, to meet the joyous or dread awards of His judgment seat, we cannot but feel that the most faithful need much more boldness and directness in the discharge of their ministerial duties. They are in danger of destroying their people, through fear of offending them. The case is desperate. Sinners must be awakened, or lost ; they must be converted or damned. This is the only alternative. The malady with which they are affected is so obstinate that no slight remedies will avail. The discussion of abstract principles, soft and distant hints of danger, cold and unimpassioned calls to repentance, meet not the exigency of the case.

Such treatment serves rather to delude and destroy, than to awaken and save. The whole truth of God must be told,—told, too, in plain and direct application to the hearers, and pressed on the conscience so closely, that each one shall feel that he has a personal interest in the message delivered. Thus did Christ preach ; thus did the apostles preach ; and all history and observation go to show, that it is the preaching which, in every age, has been crowned with the greatest success. There is, also, in the preaching of the present day, too much of a dry, cold, analytical method,—less indeed than formerly,—but still too much. Instead of expressing strong feeling in delivering the messages of God, many go about to analyze it. Instead of throwing themselves upon their hearers by bold, fervid, direct annunciation of the great facts and duties, and promises, and threatenings of the Bible, they proceed too much with the reserve and caution of a special pleader, as if they expected every position to be assailed, and every argument controverted. Hence their sermons have more of the character of a dissertation, or a theological lecture, than of a warm, solemn, persuasive

address to the heart and conscience. The train of thought, the illustration and language, though perhaps very ingenious, and adjusted with the greatest precision and taste, are entirely above the mass of hearers, and consequently convey no instruction, and make no impression. Discourses from the pulpit, too, are often greatly deficient, in a straight-forward, business-like character. They are formed too much according to rule, and not enough under the impulses of feeling and prayer, and with direct reference to impression and effect. They do not come home sufficiently to the bosoms and business of men; meeting them in their every-day character and wants, and appealing directly to known and common principles of action.

Religion is treated too much as a strange, anomalous concern,—as something that is to be taught, acquired and acted upon, in a manner entirely foreign to all that belongs to the common business and pursuits of men; whereas it ought to be presented as the plainest and most important concern of every man,—as a thing that addresses itself to every principle and feeling of the human mind, and as connected with all the relations and duties of life. Sermons often fail of effect, because they teach nothing,—are mere essays or fancy pieces,—have no method, no point, no weight; are composed without object and without aim; are as applicable to one audience as to another, and to the inhabitants of the planets, as to sinners on earth.

All this tends directly to obstruct and defeat the great end of preaching. Every sermon ought to be made with reference to a particular object; and every illustration and argument should have a direct bearing on the attainment of that object. In treating with men on the high concerns of judgment and mercy, there is no time for

playing with the imagination and passions ; none for metaphysical subtleties, or curious speculations, or vague and general reasonings, which have no reference to the case in hand. This is never done by the successful advocate at the bar ; it is never done by any man whose soul is set upon great objects, and who is deeply in earnest to accomplish them. Here all is plain, direct, and glowing. So it should be with the preacher. He should come directly to the point,—should feel that his business is with the immortal beings now before him ; and rejecting everything that is foreign to his object, he shall aim, by a fearless, direct, earnest application of God's truth to their particular state and character, to rouse them from their slumbers and bring them to Christ for salvation. So he would preach, if he knew it were his last sermon ; and no minister knows, when he meets his people in the house of God, but that it is the last time he shall meet them, till he meets them before the bar of judgment.

5. It deserves to be inquired, in this connection, whether, in the discourse of the present day, sufficient prominence is given to what is appropriately called *preaching Christ*. That in many of the pulpits of our land there is a lamentable deficiency in this respect admits of no question. Christ, in his appropriate character and work, is entirely lost sight of ; and his gospel, of course, is wholly deprived of its power to renovate and save. But may not the deficiency extend farther than is generally supposed ? May it not reach even the pulpits of our evangelical ministers, and operate, in some cases at least, to prevent the success of their ministrations ? Any one who has attentively observed the style of preaching most prevalent at the present day, must, we think, have noticed that the most common topics of pulpit discussion have been the moral law and government of God ; the

fall and depravity of man ; the nature and necessity of regeneration, natural and moral ability, the entire capacity and full obligation of sinners to obey God, together with their just and certain condemnation if they neglect to do this.

Now, we are not saying that these topics are unimportant. They are plainly of immense importance. Without a distinct and full exhibition of them, the gospel cannot be preached intelligibly, or with the least hope of success. But, then, they may fill too large a place in a minister's time and attention, and be exhibited by him too much in the form of dry, philosophical speculations, with no suitable reference to Christ and the great purpose of his mediation. Whenever this is the case, the effect, we cannot doubt, must be eminently unhappy. It is a remark of the excellent Cecil, that "men who lean toward the extreme of evangelical privileges in their ministry, do much more for the conversion of their hearers, than those who lean toward the extreme of requirement." A proper union of the two is the happy medium. The preaching that leaves Christ out of view, and dwells unduly upon what may be called the severer parts of religion, tends to produce insensibility and hardness. It spreads over a congregation the frosts and snows of a moral winter. All is dark, and cold, and cheerless, till warm and vivifying beams from the sun of righteousness penetrate and melt the ice, and quicken into life and fruitfulness the seed of the word.

"Christ is God's great ordinance,"—the grand expedient of infinite wisdom to subdue the enmity of the heart, and reclaim an alienated world to holiness and heaven. Nothing ever has been, or can be done to any good purpose, in saving sinners, and especially in perfecting the saints in holiness and love, any further than Christ is held

forth in the true glory of his character and excellence of his work. In this view, it may safely be affirmed, that the preaching which has in it most of Christ,—of Christ in the divine dignity of his person, in his mediation ; of Christ in his atonement, in his exaltation and intercession ; of Christ reigning in glory, and coming hereafter in judgment,—is the preaching which will be most successful in winning souls to him ; in forming them into a divine resemblance of himself, and in fitting them for his holy kingdom. There is a softening, subduing influence thrown over the ministry, that is deeply imbued with the spirit and doctrine of Christ, which turns into feebleness all the efforts of mere learning, and talents, and genius. Of this, the apostle was aware, and therefore determined to know nothing among his hearers, save Christ and him crucified. Every minister who would see the work of the Lord prosper in his hands, must come to the same determination. He must not rest satisfied with making the doctrine of the cross,—of Christ crucified, a topic of occasional exhibition. He must dwell upon it much and often, and with affectionate earnestness and interest, making it the very basis and burden of his ministry, and the life of all his services. He must have his heart and mind so filled with the spirit and meaning of this doctrine, that on whatever subject he preaches, or whatever duties he performs, Christ crucified to atone, and reigning to save, shall support all, illustrate all, enforce all, pervade all with its heavenly light and quickening power. All his instructions must tend toward Christ ; all his exhortations point to Christ ; all the lines of his ministry, and labors of his life, meet and centre in Christ, and be made subservient to the one grand purpose of displaying his glory, and extending the triumphs of his cross.

This is the preaching which wrought such wonders in

primitive times ; which caused the temples and the altars of idolatry to crumble into dust, and darkness to flee away from a thousand lands ; the preaching which kindled the light and extended the glory of the reformation ; the preaching in which Brainerd was engaged, when the holy spirit, like a mighty, rushing wind, pervaded his assembly of Indians, and melted and subdued them unto the obedience of faith ; the preaching which the Moravian missionaries found so efficacious in the salvation of the poor, benighted Greenlanders, after all other modes of instruction had been tried and proved ineffectual ; and the nearer we approximate to this kind of preaching, the more abundantly will the Holy Spirit shed down his influences to crown our doctrine with success.

6. Another cause of the unsuccessfulness of preaching *is the want of obvious entire devotedness on the part of ministers to the great business of their calling.* Far be it from us to intimate, that the great body of the ministers of the present day are not pious men. We only mean to say, that if they were more *eminently pious and devoted*, they would be more *eminently successful* in winning souls to Christ. Of this who can entertain a doubt ? Nothing gave such power to the ministrations of the apostles as their obvious, unre-served consecration to the service of God, and the good of their fellow-men. It was a standing miracle in the eyes of the heathen, and did more than all arguments, to convince them of the truth and importance of religion.

They saw in the men who spake to them the word of God a living illustration of the gospel which they were called to embrace, and the effect was great. So it must be from the nature of the case. Nothing will preach like a holy life ; nothing come home to the heart and conscience, like that disinterested, self-consecrating benevo-

lence, which, while it speaks the truth in love, shows itself ready to spend and be spent for the good of its object. Brainerd in his last sickness often spoke of the great need which ministers have of much of the spirit of Christ in their work, and how little good they are likely to do without it. "When ministers," he said "were under the special influences of the spirit of God, it assisted them to come at the consciences of men," and, as he expressed it, to handle them with their hands; whereas, without the spirit of God, said he, "whatever reason and oratory we employ, we do but make use of stumps, instead of hands."

When we read the life of Baxter, and witness his burning zeal, his untiring diligence, his supreme devotion to the cause of his Saviour, we are not surprised at the great and almost unequaled success of his ministry. When he settled in Kidderminster, the whole place was overrun with ignorance and profaneness; but in a short time, under his wise and faithful labors, it became as the garden of God,—having a church of more than six hundred members, of whom there were not twelve, as he tells us, concerning whose piety he did not entertain good hopes. Always in earnest, always alive and engaged in his Master's work, he conversed, and preached, and prayed, as if he saw the great white throne before him, and expected soon to be called to give up his account. So when we read the life of Shepard, and learn from his writings, particularly his "Parable of the Ten Virgins," the holy emotions of his spirit, his deep acquaintance with the heart, and his wonderful skill in opening and applying the truths of God's word, we are prepared to hear it stated of him that he rarely preached a sermon without a marked and visible effect; so that it was common for those who had been detained from the services of the sanctuary, to ask



of them who had been present, "On whom has the word wrought to-day?"

A minister who has a deep, habitual sense of divine things ; who is seen to be devoted in body, soul and spirit to the great duties of his calling, possesses a power of awakening the conscience and impressing the heart, which no acquisition of talents or learning can bestow. The spirit of holiness which dwells and reigns within, throws around his ministry a healthful, life-giving influence. It causes all his studies and attainments,—all his public and private services, to be instinct with life and feeling ; and under the influence of this inward, heartfelt conviction of eternal things, he will choose his subjects, not for show, but for profit ; He will handle them, not to set off himself, but to honor his Saviour ; he will preach, not to please, but to save his hearers ; he will deliver his message, "not coldly," as if he did not believe it ; but with the sincerity and earnestness of a man bent upon great efforts, and who feels, in the very depths of his soul the momentous realities of religion and eternity. In the same spirit he will move among his people as an angel of light. He is seen to be a man of God in the pulpit, and he is seen to be a man of God out of the pulpit. Every day, and on all occasions, his great governing purpose is manifest,—the salvation of those for whom God has appointed him to watch. For this purpose he is early and late in his study, that he may bring out of his treasure things new and old. For this purpose, he will throw himself ahead of his people in zeal and efforts to do good,—manifesting among them the spirit of a reformer, and leading them on to higher attainments in piety and usefulness. For this purpose he gathers around him the children and youth of his charge in the sabbath-school and bible-class,—appoints and maintains stated meetings

for conference and prayer,—visits from house to house, that he may learn the character and wants of his people, and know how to give to each a portion in due season. To crown all, he daily and humbly waits on God for his blessing, knowing, that without this, all means are unavailing. He waits not in the way of indolence, as if he had nothing to do ; nor in the way of presumption, as if God in his sovereignty would interpose, without regard to the connection between means and ends ; but he waits in humble, believing prayer, followed with corresponding exertions,—praying with a fervency and simplicity of reliance on God, as if all depended on him ; and at the same time, studying, preaching, and laboring, as if all depended on himself.

This is the true spirit of the ministry ; and it is not to a deficiency of this spirit, to a want of this entire devotedness to the duties of the sacred office, that we are to trace the frequent, the lamentable unsuccessfulness of ministerial labors ? We mean not here to reprove or accuse. Rather would we confess and mourn over our own unfruitfulness in the vineyard of our Lord. But when or where, we ask, was it ever known that a minister, giving himself wholly to his work, and conducting his ministrations in the spirit and manner here sketched, has been left to labor without manifest and most encouraging tokens of success ? True, God is a sovereign, and when the best means are used, it is he who giveth the increase. But he is a sovereign in no such sense as to invalidate his promises, or break the connection between means and ends. In dispensing the blessings of his grace, he acts in the line of second causes ; and all facts, as well as all scripture, go to prove that the ministry which is most deeply imbued with the spirit of Christ, and labors most assiduously and wisely in his cause, is the ministry which

he will crown with the greatest success. How weighty and solemn, then, are the motives which urge the ministry to high and untiring effort in the great work to which God has called them ! They watch for souls, as those who must give account ; and the destiny of many for eternal ages depends, in no small degree, on the manner in which they perform the duties of their high calling. O, what manner of persons, then, ought they to be in all holy conversation and godliness ! What simplicity of purpose, what purity of motive, what piety and devotedness, that they may save both themselves and those who hear them ! " Two things that are exceeding needful in ministers," says Edwards, as they would do any great matters to advance the kingdom of Christ, *are zeal and resolution*. The influence and power of these things, to bring to pass great effects, is greater than can well be imagined. A man of an ordinary capacity will do more with them than one of ten times the parts and learning can do without them. The very sight of a thoroughly engaged spirit with a fearless courage and unyielding resolution in any person that has undertaken the managing of any affair among mankind, goes a great way toward accomplishing the effect arrived at. When the people see these things apparently in a person, and to a great degree, it awes them, and has a commanding influence upon their minds ; it seems to them they must yield, without standing to contest or dispute the matter. But, while we are cold and heartless, and only go on in a dull manner, in an old formal round, we shall never do any great matters.

Our attempts, connected with the appearance of such coldness and irresolution, will not so much as make persons think of yielding ; they will hardly be sufficient to put it into their minds. He adds, " our misery is want of

zeal and courage ; for not only through want of these does all fail that we seem to attempt, but it prevents our attempting any thing very remarkable for the kingdom of Christ." O, for larger measures of spiritual influence to be shed down upon the ministry, to awaken in the heralds of salvation a warmer zeal and a more entire devotedness to the great work to which God has called them.

## CHARACTERISTICS AND REWARDS OF THE SUCCESSFUL MINISTER.

REV. R. H. CONKLIN.

As Christ came into the world to *save sinners*, the *successful minister* must be a "*worker together with Him*" in accomplishing His great object.

His *ruling purpose* must be to glorify God in the salvation of men.

He must *drink* deeply from the *wells of salvation*, that his preaching may become a tributary stream to the river of life, bearing on its broad bosom great multitudes of renewed and sanctified souls. So His ministers should look upon no class as beyond the hope of mercy.

Christ preached a system of definite truth, adapted to the wants of men. His ministers should preach in a similar manner, the same truths—no more—no less.

Christ sought to secure the immediate conversion of individual men. In this regard his ministers should *imitate* their Lord and Master, rather than make it their endeavors to exert a *general influence* by vestments, cathedrals and *music*, or by the delivery of mere *moral essays*.

If, as ministers, we desire the greatest religious success, we must *aim* supremely to *live perfectly holy* as Christ did, and *imitate his example in preaching* his gospel, as he preached it when on earth.

The minister of Christ must preach a pure gospel, and concentrate around the Cross the last hope of a dying world. His confidence must be in the efficacy of the word and spirit of Almighty God. For truth is the moral conductor of God's spirit—the *divine electric power to vitalize the world* with positive influence, that it may become a savor of life unto life. He must look beyond the most *formidable obstacles* and both seek and *expect* the interposition of the Almighty with whom nothing is impossible.

When he is *aiming* directly and specifically at a special *revival among christians and the conversion of sinners*, he must be careful not to *dissipate* or divert the *attention* of his hearers by too great a variety of subjects, but *concentrate* plain and appropriate *truth*, and press it earnestly on the *conscience* with unbroken force, until the grace of God triumphs and the object is gained. With *direct efforts* he must confidently *expect* success, for the Almighty hath said: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

But he must also have an *earnest manner*. His words must fall with convincing power, because they glow with the intense anxiety of his soul for the conversion and sanctification of men. His own soul must be a *furnace of heat*, that he may pour a flood of *burning truth* into the *hearts of his hearers*, so that by the divine blessing, souls shall be saved.

Finally, the *glorious reward* of the successful preacher should *stimulate* him to great *faithfulness* in his efforts.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."

That you may more highly appreciate this divine promise, go in the cloudless night, when the firmament of

*heaven is radiant with a thousand stars, gaze upward till your soul is overwhelmed with the inexpressible glory that surrounds you ; then remember it is only the type of glory that awaits the faithful minister in the future world. But before he shall attain that blessedness, God will give him a foretaste of what is to come.*

The final approval of "Well done, good and faithful servant," may be reserved to the last day, when the seals and trophies of his ministry shall appear with him in glory ; but even on earth, mingling with his sufferings and toil, communion with the Father, Son, and Spirit, and the sweet consciousness of a successful instrumentality in the conversion of great multitudes of sinners, will constitute an amount of blessedness far transcending the enjoyment of men who live for this world without God and the Christian hope.

Truly, in keeping the commandments of God, there is great reward.

Does the noble-hearted philanthropist who toils hard on the field of humanity, view with delight the results of his labors—the miserable and unfortunate restored to virtue and happiness—the tear of sorrow wiped away, and the smile of gladness, as once more the sun of prosperity sheds its cheerful light on the pathway of life ? How much more the successful preacher of the glorious gospel of the blessed God, whose *success passes beyond the limits of time*, and spreads itself over an eternity to come—the estimation of whose labor is not merely in temporal advantage, but an *eternal weight of glory* ! Even the anticipation of a joyful recognition in Heaven of individuals, saved through our ministry, is full of sacred pleasure. What then will be the reality—the unutterable emotions of the first interviews in Heaven, when conflict, doubt and fear no longer mar the communion of saint ?

We read that, "one star differeth from another star in glory."

Each star has its glory. But he who has turned many to righteousness shall become a *central star in a constellation of glorified spirits saved by his instrumentality.*

Each shall reflect his proper light, but *he shall shine with peculiar lustre and brilliancy*, as the brightness of the firmament in the kingdom of God "forever and ever, when Sun, Moon and Stars wax old, and pass away from the firmament."



## PREACHING TO THE MASSES.

T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D. D.

Who are the masses? The very great majority.

The people who do not belong to this class are the exception; they are men who, through vast accumulation of wealth or through unusual culture of mind, are set apart from other people in the community. What I understand by the word "masses" is, "the most of folks." Well, now it is a settled fact that the great majority of people in our cities and country do not come under religious influence. There are fifty thousand people in Edinburgh who receive not the gospel; there are one hundred thousand in Glasgow who come not under Christian influences; there are three hundred thousand people in the city of Brooklyn who are not touched by the churches; there are at least five or six hundred thousand people in the city of New York who are no more interested in the Church of the Lord Jesus than if they had never heard of a church. And the great and growing question of to-day is, "*How shall we bring these people in contact with the great heart of Christ?*"

We talk about large churches and large audiences. The largest audiences are not in the churches; they are in the temples of sin. The tears of unutterable woe are their baptism; the blood of crushed hearts is the wine of their awful sacrament; blasphemies their litany; the groans of

a lost world the organ-dirge of their worship. A vast multitude outside the kingdom of God are untouched. We do not come within five thousand miles of reaching them. We talk about people living four, five or six blocks from a church. There are in our great cities those who practically live thousands of miles from any church. A great many people suppose that the gospel is a sort of "swamp angel gun," with which you can stand away off and shoot six miles. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a sword; you have to clutch it in your right hand and go down where men are and strike right and left, slaying their sorrows and their sins. We must go down where the people *are*. If the Lord Jesus Christ had stood in the door of heaven inviting a lost world, would the world have come? No, no! Jesus Christ came down, and amid the sorrows, the sins, and the sufferings of the world, invited men up to something better.

The condition of a great majority of the people in our cities is illustrated by a lad who stood at the gate of one of our parks some time ago. A minister of Jesus Christ was passing along, and said: "You seem to be poorly off. Do you go to Sabbath-school?" "No." "Do you go to church?" "No." "You ought to be a good boy." He answered: "We poor chaps aint got no chance." That just expresses the condition, the desolation, the moral bankruptcy of a great multitude of people scattered all through the towns, villages and cities of this country. The great suffering class in this day is the middle class. Go into the cities and larger towns and you find the rich and the poor. The rich can go anywhere they please; they can get any kind of religious influence they please; they can pay large pew rentals; they can move in brilliant society, and if they do not like one church they can go to another. They are not the suffering class. For the

miserably poor, as they are called, there are mission-schools established, and these people, who are the very dregs of society, or so called, may be gathered up into these mission-schools. But how about the middle classes? and what do I mean by the middle classes? I mean the men who have to tug to get a living, who make a thousand dollars a year and spend a thousand, or who make two thousand and spend two thousand dollars a year of their income. That is the history of a vast majority of the people both in the country and in the city. The vast majority of people have no worldly surplus at the end of the year. These are the men who do not get the gospel; these are really the suffering classes. They cannot go to the high-rented pew church; they cannot seek out the brilliant sphere in which they would like to move, and they are too proud to go down into the mission-schools, and so they get no kind of religious influence.

This great mass outside the Church of Jesus Christ need to be brought in. They have their sorrows and their trials; they have their dead children in their houses; they have their sicknesses. Why is it that they are not brought to Christ? why is it not now, as it was when the Lord Jesus was upon earth and he went through the streets, and the people brought out their palsied and leprous? We have just as much suffering now as there was then, and far more; for the population of the world is so much increased. Why is it that the masses of the people do not bring out their suffering ones to Jesus Christ? Why don't mothers bring out their little ones, and say: "Lord Jesus, if thou canst not bless me, bless my child; and if thou canst not bless this one that is well, bless this poor little crippled one; let thy mercy fall on him."

I will now mention three or four reasons why the masses are not reached, and then give you some brotherly advice as to how you may be qualified to reach them.

The first reason of failure is, *intense denominationalism*. The world watches, and thinks we want to make them all Methodists, or all Presbyterians, or all Episcopalians. There is an intense denominationalism abroad in the Church of Jesus Christ. There are too many who cannot look over the wall of their own particular denomination. I believe that every denomination ought to look after its own interests, and that the fences ought to be kept up between the denominations ; but in every fence there ought to be a gate that might swing open, or bars that you might let down.

Now we need to show the world that we have a desire dominant over all sectarianism, and that our first desire is to bring the people into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, whether they join our Church or some other Church.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one Christ, one doxology, one heaven? The time must come when all the people belonging to the kingdom of Christ, of all names and denominations, can join hands around the cross and recite the creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, and *in the communion of saints*." But depend upon it, as long as the masses of the people outside have an idea that we are chiefly anxious to have our own sect and denomination prospered and dominant they will not come in.

Another reason why the masses have not yet been reached is because *we have adhered too much to the conventionalities and severe proprieties of the Church*. Take the matter of church architecture. For the most part the

churches in this country are not so attractive as the halls and the theatres. By a natural law, it seems to me that all audiences ought to be gathered as around a great fireplace, in a semicircular form of architecture. Then, instead of seeing simply the back of a man's head, which is the most uninteresting part of him, you see his face or his side face. When there is a half-circle form there is a law of sympathy flowing through from heart to heart that you cannot get in an angular church. While other buildings have been comparatively well ventilated, churches have been but poorly ventilated; while other edifices have been brilliantly lighted, churches were but dimly lighted. Christianity sits shivering in Gothic churches, and religion is laid out in state. Let every church committee that is going to put up a building resolve to have a church just to suit themselves, regardless of stereotyped notions. This disposition from generation to generation to stick to the angular kind of church has hindered the kingdom of God mightily among the masses. The people outside who have not been brought up to go to church will not go into a building which is unsympathetic and cold.

We have been attempting, also, to adhere too much to conventionalities in the item of preaching. The question is, "How do others preach?" Then we must preach just as they do. If we cannot save the world in our way we won't have it saved at all. Let the twelve hundred millions of the race die, but do not spoil our patent leathers! We have no right to be stopping to consider how others do the work. The question is, "How does God want us to do the work?" But the mere conventionalities and severe proprieties of the Church of God have kept back the people. To us who have been brought up in Christian families, and have been taught all our days to go to church, and to whom going to church is natural, it does

not make so much difference what is said, or the way it is said—we will go to church anyhow. But those people who come in from the outside, who have no proclivities toward the Church of Jesus Christ, if they sit down and find everything is cold, conventional, formal, and on stilts, they will not come a second time. So, I think, the Gospel has been kept back from the masses because we have been such sticklers for the mere technicalities of religion. I think it is very important that we have all the definitions of religion, and that, in our own mind, we have the technicalities ; but we never must bring them before the people. We must come in the plain vernacular, or they will not receive or understand us. I do not think there is anything more important than that the young man going out of a theological seminary should have all the definitions of faith, repentance, adoption, and sanctification in his mind. There are those men who think they are orthodox when they are not ; they simply do not know what are the grand definitions of religion.

But while every young man going into the ministry ought to be familiar with “theological terms,” he must not employ them before the people. After we get into the ministry we spend the first ten years in letting the people hear how much we know ; we spend the next ten years in getting them to know as much as we do ; and the next ten in finding out that none of us know anything as we ought. It is always a failure when a man in any department carries his technicalities into business. What would you think of a physician who should go among the people and talk about the “pericardium,” or the “intercostal muscles,” or “scorbutic symptoms.” He would scare a man to death. A man would be as much confounded as the one who was studying up the case of

his wife who was ill. He prided himself on doing everything by the book. He had a book upon practical medicine. He was talking with his neighbors, and said he had been reading his wife's case up, and as far as he could tell by the book, she was threatened with a *diagnosis*, and if she got that it would certainly kill her! Away with all your technicalities. If you want to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the masses do not talk about "complutensian edition," "hypostatic union," "French encyclopedism," "Erastianism," and "the eucharist." They would not listen ten minutes to it.

If you talked about these things you would see the people take their hats and clear out. When you come into the ministry there will sit before you hundreds of sinning, suffering, struggling, dying people. They come in hungry for the bread of life; they want to know how to be saved; they are fully persuaded that this world is a cheat, and cannot satisfy their immortal nature. There will be hundreds of people in the audience who do not care about your definitions. Give them something practical from the Bible and from your own heart, and they will take it; and they will not take it in any other way. Suppose when you get into the ministry you rise and preach an orthodox sermon on justification, and you say, in the words of a learned divine of the past century, whose definition I copied, for I could not remember it: "Justification is purely a forensic act, the act of a judge sitting in the forum in which the supreme ruler and judge, who is accountable to none, who alone knows the manner in which the ends of his universal government can best be attained, reckons that which was done by the substitute in the same manner as if it had been done by those who believed in the substitute, and not on account of anything done by them, but purely on account of this gracious

method of reckoning, grants them the full remission of their sins." Now, can any of you tell what justification is? A man would want a directory to find his way out of a church after hearing that. While this definition of justification may be most excellent, I should rather tell the people, "Justification is this: you trust in Christ and God will let you off."

I had in my first charge an Irish girl, who came to my house one Friday afternoon and said: "I would like to join the church to-morrow evening." "I said, "Bridget, do you think you are ready to come in?" She replied, "I think I am." "Well, now," said I, "you come to-morrow night to the meeting of church officers and we will talk it over, and if you are ready we will be very glad to have you." So on Saturday night she came. I put a few plain and simple questions to her, and she answered them all satisfactorily, whereupon a very good man in the consistory (for then I was in the Reformed Dutch Church) said: "Bridget, how many *covenants are there?*" Well, she burst out crying. Of course she could not answer. The good Scotchman who asked the question shook his head, as much as to say, "I don't hardly think she is ready to come." Well, I said I would like to ask that question all around of the consistory to see how many could tell how many covenants there are, and what they are. Then I said: Bridget, do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?" "Yes, I do." "Are you sure you love him?" "Yes, I am." "How do they treat you up in that place where you are now since you became a Christian?" "They treat me very badly because I have become a Christian, and they laugh at me a great deal." "How do you feel when they laugh and scoff at you?" "I feel very sorry for them, and I pray for them." I said: "I think that will do." She was just as fit to come into the church as any man in all that



consistory. She did not know how many covenants there are, but she knew Christ.

Another reason why we do not succeed in bringing the masses into the kingdom of God is *because of a real lack of sympathy for them.*

The masses come on the outside and they see, by reason of the conventionalities of the Church, "No admittance;" they go on to the second door, and there is something in the chilling frigidity which says again, "No admittance," but they press on through out of curiosity, and they get inside, and there they find us hammering out our little niceties of religious belief, pounding into shape our little peculiarities of theological sentiment—making pins. We seem to act as though we were disposed to say to these people who come in from the outside, "Why, this is a church for respectable sinners with a gloss on, and not for such sinners as you. The few people that we get into our Churches are the exceptional cases. The Church of God is very much like a hospital, into which you might go in the summer time, after a severe battle, and there find a thousand patients, and up in one corner of the hospital you find a doctor who is taking care of two or three patients; he is taking very good care of them. You say, "Doctor, haven't you attended to these other cases?" "No," he says: "I have three interesting cases." "How long have you been here!" "I have been here three days; these are very interesting cases; I am keeping the flies off." We have got a few nice cases in the Church, very interesting people, indeed. We are looking after them; but the great battle field is outside, and thousands and tens of thousands are dying of their wounds, and we have not the courage to go out and get them. I ask if those thousands outside are not worth more than the three or four inside!

Mark this : there is a judgment seat in every man's heart. Now the idea is abroad that in order to have an audience, especially in the cities, you must preach humanitarianism, or you must preach the doctrine of development, or you must hold back the idea of the necessity of the new birth, or that you must not tell the people that there is a hell, while on the other hand you tell them there is a heaven. There never was a greater mistake. There is, in every man's heart, a judgment seat. You come before that man ; he knows he is a sinner, and there is no need of your trying to persuade him anything else. You may please his ear by another story for a little while, but he goes away despising you. That judgment seat, which is in every man's heart, is what you need to appeal to ; and coming before an audience in that feeling and in that appreciation, you will make them hear and make them feel. It is not a question whether they like what you say or not ; they will come again, and the more you disturb them the more certainly will they come again. Do not be afraid of such holy recklessness, or of driving people away from your church. Where one man goes because you tell the whole and the flat-footed truth, there will be five men that will want his place.

I advise you, also, young gentlemen, in your effort to address the masses, to *study tact in the presentation of Christian truth.*

It is amazing how men with but little mental faculty, and little mental furniture, may accomplish great things for God just by studying the best way of doing the thing, by exercising Christian tact and strategy. I never was more impressed with that than by the conduct of Mr. Osborn, an American evangelist. Perhaps none of you ever saw him. He was an old man when I was a mere boy. He came to my father's house, and I was the only

one of the whole family that was not a Christian. We sat down by the fireside in the evening in the country, and Mr. Osborn said to my father: "Are all your children Christians?" Father said, "Yes, all but De Witt." Well, the old evangelist, sitting by the fire, did not even turn toward me, but looking into the fire, he began to tell a story about a lost lamb on a mountain, and it was a stormy night, very much like this, the wind blowing and howling around the house. He described the lost lamb out on the mountain, and how they tried to find it; how everything was warm in the sheepfold, and at last that lamb perished. It was all still in the room. Every body knew it meant me; I knew it meant me; but he did not say it meant me, and still kept looking into the fire. I never found any peace till I became a Christian. That is what I call Christian strategy. If he had turned to me after he got through and said: "DeWitt, I mean you!" I should have been as mad as fire.

Let us be cautious when we come to speak of the terrors of the law, and not preach as though we were glad to preach on that theme—not preach as though we were glad to have them perish if they kept on in their sins. Let there be something in the tone, something in the manner, which will represent to them the fact, "I am a sinner, too; if God by his infinite grace had not changed my heart, I should have been under the same condemnation."

Again: *Use great naturalness of manner.* Do not try to preach like any one else. See what you can do the easiest, and then do that. By that I do not mean to inculcate laziness, or to put a premium upon any kind of indolence; but it is generally the case that that which you can do easiest at the start, you can do the best and most successfully all the way through. In regard to

preaching without notes—a subject which every man discusses in this day who has any idea of the ministry—while it may be best for the majority of those who enter the ministry to preach without notes, I think there are marked cases where it is not a man's duty so to do. I know men who have ruined their life-time work by perpetual struggle to speak without notes. Though they had large intellect and warm Christian hearts, they never got facility in the extemporaneous use of language.

Let every man judge for himself the best way of preaching; but be natural, and let it be an improved naturalness. Why is it when men come to talk on religious themes they talk in a different tone and in a different way from that in which they talk on any other subject? I think we could reach the masses a good deal better if we had the naturalness of tone which we have in the street and shop. I do not know why there should be any such thing as a pulpit tone. It not only goes into the pulpit, but it goes into the pew—this disposition to act out a peculiar manner and a peculiar tone as fitted for religious service. You will find a man who stands on Friday afternoon in his store on Broadway selling a bill of goods. He wants to sell a bill of suspenders. Now he talks naturally and persuasively. He says to the purchaser that these are really the best suspenders in all the city, and the customer buys them saying: "What a delightful merchant this is! Where do you attend church?" "I attend such and such a church. We have a prayer-meeting to-night; won't you come around?" The customer says: "Yes." Well, Friday night he goes into the prayer-meeting, and the merchant who that afternoon had been talking so cheerfully about the suspenders, and in such a successful way, stands up in the prayer-meeting to recommend the religion of Jesus Christ; but he talks in such a

funeral tone, and in such a lugubrious manner, that it is enough to make an undertaker burst into tears. Now, why not have the same cheerfulness of tone in speaking of religion as in speaking of secular matters? The religion of Jesus Christ is the brightest thing that ever came down from heaven. It is compared to sunlight, to flowers, and to all that is beautiful and glorious. Why should we, in our manner and in our tones, indicate that it is anything else? We should certainly be as natural in the pulpit as in the street and in the home.

I advise you also to go forth in *the spirit of all prayer*. Certainly you believe we ought to believe in the power of prayer.

*Make every service decisive for eternity.* If you preach to the masses, the people will come in to one service and they will never come back again. It is an awful thing to stand in the pulpit and feel, "Now here is an audience, some of whom I will never meet until the thunders of the last day break on the world; if I do not touch them to-night they will never be touched." Just as certainly as you go into a service before the masses and resolve that there and then souls shall be saved, they will be saved. There will be no experiment about it. Now just single out one man. I think it is a grand thing to single out a man in the audience and preach to him. My custom is to single out a man on the last seat in the gallery—I mean in that line, or standing clear out by the door—for the reason that I have noticed I can make all the people hear between that point and this. I like everybody to hear in the church and if I preach to the last man in the gallery, I am pretty certain they will all hear me. I take a man far back, I imagine to myself that that man has never been in the church before, or has not been in a church for twenty years, and perhaps he will never be in

again; he may come from curiosity; this is my last chance; the Lord help me! Then I think of what man's soul is worth. What is a soul? Why, it is enough to break a minister down in the midst of his sermon to think of what a soul is. A wheel within a wheel, wound up for endless revolutions; a realm in which love shall forever lift its smile, or despair gnash its teeth, or pain strike its poignard, or hope kindle its auroras: a soul just poised on the pivot, and if it swing off or break away the lightnings of heaven have not feet swift enough to catch up with it. No wonder that many a man in his last moment has awakened to think he had a soul and was not prepared to go, and in the excitement of the moment ran his fingers through his hair, and then, though a minute before he lay helpless on the bed from disease, not able to turn his head, in the anguish of the moment rose up and shook off the three watchers and looked out into the darkness and cried, "O my soul, my *soul*, my SOUL!" Now to have fifty such souls or twenty such souls in the audience, and to feel that this is the only chance at those souls: it is awful. It seems to me it is like empaneling a jury for a trial. The verdict is to be rendered, the Judge of quick and dead has given the charge, the minister has now come to the close of his sermon, and they are to render the verdict, not about somebody else, but about themselves. What an overwhelming consideration!

I wish you great joy, young men. Great fields are opening for you. Be praying men; be holy men. Remember that you can never lift your people higher up than the place on which you stand. Consecrate yourself, body, mind and soul to God. Have high anticipations in the ministry. There are great solemnities, great trials, and great hardships; but where there is one hardship there are five hundred compensations in the inward cor-

sciousness of doing the Lord's service. I know a great many things are written in books this day about the hardships and the trials of the ministry, and they are all true. O for somebody to write a good, vivacious, enthusiastic, Christian book about the joys of the Christian ministry ! I have not wanted to make anything I say to-night personal ; I have not wanted to say anything about myself ; but I will tell you before I quit, the ministry to me is one long exhilaration. I believe I should have been dead if I had been engaged in anything else than in preaching the gospel of the grace of God. It is healthy ; it is good for the body, it is good for the mind, and it is good for the soul.

## ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS IN THE SERVICES OF MESSRS. MOODY AND SANKEY.

R. W. DALE, D. D.

Of Mr. Moody's own power I find it difficult to speak. It is so real, and yet so unlike the power of ordinary preachers, that I hardly know how to analyze it. Its reality is indisputable. Any man who can interest and impress an audience varying from three thousand to six thousand people for half an hour in the morning, and for three-quarters of an hour in the afternoon, and who can interest a third audience of thirteen or fifteen thousand people for three-quarters of an hour again in the evening, must have power of some kind. Of course, some people listened without caring much for what he said; but though I generally sat in a position which enabled me to see the kind of impression he produced, I rarely saw many faces which did not indicate the most active and earnest interest. The people were of all sorts, old and young, rich and poor, keen tradesmen, manufacturers and merchants, and young ladies who had just left school, rough boys who knew more about dogs and pigeons than about books, and cultivated women. For a time I could not understand it—I am not sure that I understand it now. At the first meeting Mr. Moody's address was simple, direct, kindly, and hopeful; it had a touch of humor and a touch of pathos; it was lit up with a story or two that



filled most eyes with tears ; but there seemed nothing in it very remarkable. Yet it *told*. A prayer-meeting, with an address, at eight o'clock on a damp, cold January morning, was hardly the kind of thing—let me say it frankly—that I should generally regard as attractive ; but I enjoyed it heartily ; it seemed one of the happiest meetings I had ever attended ; there was warmth and there was sunlight in it. At the evening meeting the same day, at Bingley Hall, I was still unable to make it out how it was that he had done so much in other parts of the kingdom. I listened with interest ; everybody listened with interest ; and I was conscious again of a certain warmth and brightness which made the service very pleasant, but I could not see that there was much to impress those that were careless about religious duty. The next morning at the prayer-meeting the address was more incisive and striking, and at the evening service I began to see that the stranger had a faculty for making the elementary truths of the Gospel intensely clear and vivid. But it still seemed most remarkable that he should have done so much, and on Tuesday I told Mr. Moody that the work was most plainly of God, for I could see no real relation between him and what he had done. He laughed cheerily, and said he should be very sorry if it were otherwise. I began to wonder whether what I had supposed to be a law of the Divine kingdom was perfectly uniform. I thought that there were scores of us who could preach as effectively as Mr. Moody, and who might, therefore, with God's good help, be equally successful.

In the course of a day or two my mistake was corrected : but to the last there were sensible people who listened to him with a kind of interest and delight with which they never listen to very “distinguished” and eloquent preachers, and who yet thought that though Mr. Moody was

"very simple and earnest," he had no particular power as a speaker. I do not intend to suggest any comparison between Mr. Moody and our great English orator, but I have met people who have talked in the same way about Mr. Bright and who seem to think that to speak like Mr. Bright was possible to nearly everybody.

One of the elements of Mr. Moody's power consists in his perfect naturalness. He has something to say, and he says it—says it as simply and directly to thirteen thousand people as to thirteen. He has nothing of the impudence into which some speakers are betrayed when they try to be easy and unconventional ; but he talks in a perfectly unconstrained and straight-forward way, just as he would talk to half-a-dozen old friends at his fireside. The effect of this is very intelligible. You no more think of criticising him than you think of criticising a man that you meet in the street, and who tells you the shortest way to a railway station. I can criticise most preachers and speakers ; I criticised Dr. Guthrie, though I was either laughing or crying the greater part of the time that I was listening to him ; but somehow I did not think of criticising Mr. Moody until I had got home. Generally there seemed nothing to criticise ; once or twice in the simplest and most inartistic manner, he said things which at the moment he said them I felt were of the kind to give a popular speaker great triumph, but his whole manner threw me out of the critical attitude. Some men force you to be critical. It is impossible to take a single coin from them without ringing it on the table to see whether it is properly "milled." From first to last, they provoke "watchful jealousy." It is clear that they are taking a great deal of trouble with their sentences ; it is disrespectful not to examine their work. It is clear, too, that they are giving you their best thoughts, their best arguments,

and their best illustrations, and they show them to you just as a collector of gems shows you his last triumphant acquisition. It is impossible—it is almost insulting—not to criticise. When a speech or sermon is plainly a work of art, criticism is inevitable. It is not necessary for any one to paint pictures, to sing songs, or to deliver artistic addresses ; but if a man insists on being an artist, and lets you know it, he forces upon you a critical examination of his performance.

Mr. Moody—so it seems to me—has an “art” of a very effective kind ; but he is infinitely more than an artist, and therefore people listen without criticising. This is an immense element of power. If our congregations came to hear us preach, instead of coming to hear *how* we preach, the effects of our sermons would be immeasurably great. Now and then Mr. Moody quoted a text in a very illegitimate sense ; now and then he advanced an argument which would not hold water ; now and then he laid down principles which seemed untenable ; and there was a momentary protest on the part of the critical faculty ; but the protest was only momentarily. I was not thrown out of sympathy with him.

It is objected that he is too “familiar” with sacred things. Generally—not always—the objection comes from persons who are extremely *unfamiliar* with them. The fault that is charged against him—if it be a fault—is perhaps not too common in these days. There are not too many people who live, and move, and have their being in the fair provinces of Christian truth, and Christian hope, and Christian joy. Mr. Moody is, no doubt, very “familiar” with things about which he talks. He is like a man who keeps Sunday every day in the week ; his mind does not put on Sunday clothes when he begins to speak about religion. Religious truth is the subject of

his constant thought ; he does not therefore assume the "Bible tone" when he begins to pray or preach. He does not tell stories because they are amusing ; but if an amusing story helps him to make a truth clearer, or to expose a common mistake, he does not refuse to tell it merely because it is amusing. The common things of common life are about him all the time he is speaking. He uses the words of the home and the street ; the plainer they are the better he likes them. The gowns and bands which some of our preachers wear are the symbols of the special costume in which they think it proper to array religious truth. Mr. Moody does without gown or bands, and speaks to men as he would speak to them at a meeting of the "United Kingdom Alliance," or at a political meeting during a contested election. He has given himself to God, all that he has, all that he is, and he uses every faculty and resource of his nature to prevail upon men to hate sin and to trust and love Christ. To him nothing is common or unclean. He has humor, and he uses it ; he has passion, and he uses it ; he can tell racy anecdotes, and he tells them ; he can make people cry as well as laugh, and he does it.

Reverence is due to God alone, and to Him in whom God is manifest in the flesh : of God, of our Lord Jesus Christ, there was never a word which was not inspired by fervent love, perfect trust, and devout worship. Of great saints, good men will speak with affection and respect ; and it was thus that Mr. Moody spoke of them.

There was something in his way of telling Scripture narratives from which preachers may learn very much. The Oriental drapery was stripped off, and he told the stories as though they had happened in Chicago just before he had left home, or in Birmingham an hour or two before the service began. At times this gave the stories

a certain air of grotesqueness, but it made the moral element in them intensely real. We are in the habit of making a double demand on our hearers ; we ask them, first, to reproduce, by a strong effort of imagination, the Oriental circumstances of the narratives, and we then ask them to apprehend the human passions and follies and virtues which the narratives illustrate. I believe that they get so interested in the mere drapery that the substantial facts are often missed ; or else the enduring human element looks so strange in its unfamiliar costume that its power is lost.

Of the aspect of the truth on which he dwells it is not necessary to say much. His great topic is the infinite love and power of Christ. That Christ wants to save men, and can do it, is the substance of nearly all his discourses. I asked him, after one of the morning services, whether he never used the element of terror in his preaching ? He said that he did sometimes, but that "a man's heart ought to be very tender" when speaking about the doom of the impenitent ; that the manner in which some preachers threatened unbelievers with the wrath to come, as though they had a kind of satisfaction of thinking of the sufferings of the lost, was to him very shocking. He added that in the course of his visit to a town he generally preached one sermon on Hell and one on Heaven. That night he preached on the text, "Son, remember !" I greatly regret that I happened to be absent ; I should like to have heard how he dealt with this difficult subject. I believe that in modern preaching there is too little said about the awful words of our Lord concerning the destiny of those who resist His authority and reject his salvation. The unwillingness of most of us to speak of this terrible subject ought to suggest very earnest self-examination. Christ's love for men, which was infinitely more tender

than ours, did not prevent Him from speaking of "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched," and it is surely presumptuous of us to assume that we are prevented from speaking of future punishment by the depth of our sympathy with the Divine mercy.

The possibility of "*instantaneous conversion*" was one of the points on which he insisted incessantly. I think I should prefer to speak of the *certainly of Christ's immediate response to a frank trust in His love and frank submission to His authority*. These, however, are only two ways of presenting the same truth ; and the vigor and earnestness with which he charged his hearers to obtain *at once* the pardon of sin and power to break away from a sinful life, were extremely effective.

Some of the most remarkable results of the visit of our American friends are to be found, perhaps, among those who have been long members of Christian Churches. I hardly know how to *describe the change which has passed over them*. It is like the change which comes upon a landscape when clouds which have been hanging over it for hours suddenly vanish, and the sunlight seems to fill both heaven and earth. There is a joyousness, and an elasticity of spirit, and a hopefulness, which have completely transformed them ; and the transformation shows itself in the unostentatious eagerness with which they are taking up Christian work.

If I thought it worth while, I could speak of some things in this work which are not to my taste, and some things which my judgment disapproves. But before Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey came to Birmingham I had arrived at the conclusion that what was said of the early evangelists at Antioch was the truest account of the work of these American evangelists in Scotland and Ireland. "The hand of the Lord was with them : and a greater

number believed and turned unto the Lord." This conviction has been deepened and confirmed by all that I have seen of them.

Those men especially who are in the habit of insisting on "breadth" of sympathy with all in whom there is genuine Christian earnestness, and who are always saying that rigid accuracy in doctrinal definitions is of inferior importance to a living faith in Christ, ought to be able to rise above the kind of objections which seem likely to alienate some of them from this work.

It is possible that in some places our American visitors may not achieve the kind of success which has hitherto followed them. Before they came to Birmingham I felt very doubtful whether they would accomplish here what they had accomplished in Dublin and Belfast. I believe they will accomplish very little in any place *where they are not sustained by the hearty sympathy of Christian people*, and where Christian Churches do not earnestly entreat God to manifest in connection with their work the transcendent greatness of His power and love. There were people among whom our Lord Himself "could do no mighty works, because of their unbelief."

## WHAT MR. MOODY CAN DO FOR US.

REV. J. E. RANKIN, D. D.

We cannot all *have* Mr. Moody, now that God has so distinguished him as a winner of souls. But we can all be taught by him. He can teach us, in the first place, how to use the English Bible. The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible. The use of the Bible as our only authority ; that use of it, too, which makes history and narrative illustrate and enforce doctrine which embodies truth in living instances, is the wisest and most forcible. Mr. Moody is a man of one book ; and that book the mightiest intellectual, moral and spiritual force in the whole universe ; that book the sword of the living God ! It is said that he has no time to read anything else. If so, he escapes the dissipating and corrupt influence of books and papers which are inspired by the spirit of this world's life, and he lives in the atmosphere of things not seen and eternal ; he is the constant companion of prophets and apostles, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ; he walks with God, and God talks with him face to face.

Mr. Moody teaches us, too, what is the layman's opportunity. It is not to mount the rostrum ; it is to guide inquirers. Mr. Moody evidently prefers the inquiry-meeting as his place of work.

And what does he find *most lacking* ? Competent men



and women to guide inquirers. Here, then, is the layman's opportunity. Let men and women learn the art of personally winning souls. Let the Sabbath-school teachers, who have so long sat face to face with their classes, and expected God some time to save them, now gird themselves for the work of bringing them at once into the fold of Christ.

Revivals, so called, of late years scarcely reach one-tenth of the church members. There is no general repentance, no general turning to God. There is no general renewal of effort to save men. The minister, and a few of the more spiritual members of the church, devote themselves to revival work. The bulk of the church attend as many places of fashionable dissipation as ever ; live just as ever.

Now, let any minister and his church agree to give themselves for the next three months, for instance, to the work of convincing men of their sins, and turning them to God; let the preaching and the teaching be aimed at this, and all has been gained without Mr. Moody, which Mr. Moody can bring. Mr. Moody aims to compel Christians to give up the world long enough to humble themselves before God, and to engage in active efforts for the salvation of men.

Another thing which Mr. Moody teaches us, is the wisdom of *frequently drawing the net*. Probably, no Lord's Day goes by, whether in the sanctuary or the Sabbath-school, when some souls are not set to unusual thinking. The prevalent custom is, to let the net remain in the deep water, where the fish can escape, instead of pulling it always to the shore. Our closing exercises on the Lord's Day, the artificial and set arrangement of everything, and especially the organ voluntary, with which and by which we are encouraged to forget all that has been said and done in God's house, seem well adapted to render this the

only arrangement possible. Could the congregation be tenderly and seriously dismissed ; and there be an *enquiry-meeting* to which warm-hearted Christians and all thoughtful persons among the impenitent are especially invited, at the close of each service, or, at any rate, at the close of the final service on the Lord's Day, the result might be very different.

In a word, then, Mr. Moody teaches us that he relies upon the Holy Spirit within himself and his co-workers—the Bible in their hands, and common sense in their methods—to save the souls of men. The *first* God will give us if we ask Him ; the *second* we have, if we will only learn to use it ; and the *third* is only the wisdom of this world, applied to things spiritual and eternal.

## THE GREAT HINDRANCES TO REVIVAL.

D. L. MOODY.

“Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it.” Numb. xiii., 30.

Let us get the surroundings of this text. You will remember that Moses was commanded to send men into the promised land to see how the land looked. I suppose they wanted to find out if God's word was true, and they said: “We will pick twelve men. We will send them the length and breadth of the land, and we will get their report before we go over.” All of the twelve admitted it was a land flowing with milk and honey, but these other ten—the unbelievers—said, “Oh, the people are strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled and very great, and we saw giants there and the sons of Anak. We are not able to possess the land.” I can imagine one of these ten men when he stood close to a tall giant and had had to look up into his face, seemed to himself, as the history states, like unto a grasshopper. When unbelief comes in we are like grasshoppers in the world's eyes, and when faith is with us these giants are like grasshoppers in our eyes.

Thank God, there were two men that *had faith*. Caleb said, “Just let me speak a few words. I have been through the land. I am one of the spies that went out, and I tell you we are well able to go up and possess the

land. We can take it at once. Let us go up at once and possess the land. There is no power that can hinder us if God is with us." If the people had only followed Caleb's advice they might have saved their forty years in the wilderness.

Bring it down to the present day. Four-fifths of the professed children of God are saying, "We are not able to go up and possess the land." I don't know how many people I have heard say to me since I came back, "Now, Mr. Moody, you must not expect so great a work in this country as in the old." I tell you if we don't expect it we won't have it. If we will cross at Kadesh-barnea, and just go right over, we can take the land at once. There isn't anything to hinder. If God delight in us, are we not able to go up and possess it? How easy it would be for God to pour us out such a blessing that there would not be room enough to receive it; how easy for him to turn away these dark waves of hell that come dashing against us. The difference between Caleb and Joshua and these ten men was this: The ten had their eyes on the great walls of those cities and the giants and the sons of Anak, but Caleb and Joshua lifted their eyes above that wall and saw Him who sitteth upon the throne of God, and I can imagine Caleb and Joshua, when they came back, saying, "It will be very easy for God to give us that country. He brought us through the Red Sea when we wanted to go through the wilderness. He opened his hand and gave us food; when we wanted water he spoke to the rock and it came bubbling out." "If God delight in us," says Joshua, "we are well able to go up and take the land. These giants are like grasshoppers in our sight."

That is the difference between the man of faith and the man of unbelief; and the greatest obstacle to a pure

revival in this country is the wretched unbelief in the Church of God. Our God is able, and what we want is to move forward, trusting in God and believing that he is able to give great and exceedingly abundant blessings above what we may ask or think.

My friends, if we are going to have our churches filled with fear and unbelief, and don't expect a blessing, we will not see one. What we want is men like Caleb and Joshua, who have got faith in a living God, who are able to go over and possess the land ; not looking at the wall or the giants, but to Him who is mighty to save—no other. If we are going to have a work in this country we must have this lesson, and the quicker the better—that is, let God work his own way. This idea of marking a channel for God to work in, the idea of making plans for him, is preposterous. When the Holy Ghost comes he will mark out a way for himself. When he comes he will make his own channel, and God, we must bear in mind, is the Sovereign, and he will use whom he will. And we want to say, "Lord, use me. If thou canst not, lay me aside and use some one else, only let the work be done." We have got to do away with all bickering and jealousy, and to stand in our place and say, "Lord, here I am. Let me take a part or let me have no position at all, only let God be glorified." Sometimes the Lord comes to us in a way we are unprepared for. Sometimes we look for him in the east and he comes right from the west. He takes, too, the weak and the foolish things to confound the mighty, that no flesh may glory in his sight. So if God is going to take Jericho he will do it how and when he pleases. And we must have faith to believe God can use us. I heard something in Scotland that did me good. A man said in one of our conventions that there was not a man in the whole camp of Israel but that knew God

could use any one of them to slay Goliath. They believed God *could* do it, but there was only one man that believed God *would* do it, and so he took him. We know he can do this work. All admit that, but let us believe that we are the men he will use.

*If we are going to have a revival work in this country it has got to be an individual effort :* this man trying to urge his neighbor to come to Christ ; this woman trying to urge her neighbor, her companion, her associate ; this young man bringing his companion to Christ. We have got to give up much ; we must give up the world ; we must give up our bazaars and festivals and these church amusements, and "come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty." This is what we must do. "Press toward the prize of the high calling." If I had the trumpet of God I should like to ask the American people, "Shall we go on and take the land ?" The seven hundred thousand Sunday-school teachers in this land can each bring a child to God. Christ died for us, and should we not be willing to do this ? Shall we not try to bring our neighbors to Christ ? I should like to speak to the hundred thousand men in the Young Men's Christian Associations and ask them if we shall go on and take the land ? Shall we rise up and cross at Kadesh-barnea and take the land in the name of God ?

## HOW TO INSTRUCT INQUIRERS.

ELDER JACOB KNAPP.

On this subject the Bible is our guide. Peter said to those who asked "What must we do?" "Repent and be baptized." When the jailer asked a similar question, Paul answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." These directions are substantially alike. No man believes in Christ without repenting, and no man comes to Christ without doing both ; and baptism is the symbol and profession of this moral experience.

The apostles called upon men to make an immediate surrender of their hearts to God. They required the exercise of repentance and faith on the spot. They made no provision for delays, and clearly implied that this very hesitancy was a resistance of the Holy Spirit, and an act of hostility to God. Any other instruction seems like tolerating impenitence, unbelief, and a rejection of Christ.

There are numerous influences which operate on inquirers to embarrass their efforts after salvation. Some are holding on to their companions and are unwilling to give them up for Christ. Others are depending on something which they have done, or intended to do, instead of depending on Christ alone. Some are unwilling to abandon

an unlawful business, or give up their unlawful gain. Others again have contracted bad habits, such as the use of tobacco, wine, rum, whiskey, or dancing. Every person is willing to give up something, but not the particular idol they worship. They make reservations, and say, "Pardon, O Lord, thy servant in this one thing." But Christ says, "whosoever doth not forsake all that he hath cannot be my disciple."

If persons who have been converted, are in a back-slidden state, now hoping and now doubting, it is safe to bring them to the same test that you do an enquirer. The great necessity is to bring every soul to trust in Christ solely and implicitly, and to serve him unreservedly, and leave all consequences with Him, who, with Christ, freely giveth us all things. It is ours to serve God ; it is his to save.

We are all directed to pray. The apostle told Simon to "pray God, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee." God "will have all men to pray everywhere." The mercy-seat should be the sinner's first resort. O, how strange it is that the soul should be so loath to come to Jesus, the sinner's friend, and his only "helper in time of trouble"—to him who has done for him more than any other being, and stands ready to save.

There is a difference to be observed in the kind of truth to be presented to different persons with a view to awakening them. Some can be moved by the constrainings of the love of Christ ; others may be aroused by the terrors of the law. It is common for most persons to place a great estimate on the value of that particular class of truths that interest them, and to think the method which secured their attention preferable to any other.



There is a difference in the length of time in which the Spirit strives with men. Some persons he follows after for years ; others may never have more than one distinct call. If that is rejected, they are forever lost.

These differences of operations are owing, in part, to the way in which the Spirit is treated. If it is rejected deliberately, he may leave the soul at once. But in other cases men sin ignorantly : seeking the truth, but unconsciously submitting to some unrecognized influences which hinder the Spirit's operations ; and God forbears. All these cases are to be treated differently.

There is also a difference in the degree or depth of conviction in different persons. Some need only to know the will of God concerning them, and they yield at once. Others are more stubborn in the natural disposition, and will not yield unless God puts the screws to them and almost kills them. Our instructions to the anxious must make "a difference" according to the different conditions of the person with whom the Spirit is striving.

There is a difference in the manner in which relief comes to persons. Some find it gradually, hardly knowing how or when. Others find the relief at once, and never forget the time or place when the burden rolls off from their minds. The conversion may be as genuine in the one case as in the other. Two men may be going up a long, steep hill, each with a bag of sand on his back. In one of these bags there is a hole, and the sand gradually falls out, and the man hardly perceives the lessening of the load, but soon it is all gone ; the other carries his load, and it seems to grow heavier and heavier. All at once the strap breaks and the bag falls to the ground. He knows the moment when the burden fell. But in the one case the relief is as actual and real as in the other. Each has got rid of his burden.

So also there is a difference as to the way in which light comes into the soul. Some see but a very few rays at first. Conversion is to them like the dawning of day. They never see any great light ; can hardly tell whether any change has come over them or not ; and because they have not felt, as some say they have, they are tempted to doubt the reality of their hopes. Still they love God, and love his people, and love his service. Others experience a divine illumination. All at once light is poured into their souls. The change is so great that they never forget the time. These persons need to be taught that the genuineness of their conversion does not depend on the degree of light they have enjoyed, but on the state of their affections ; whether they love God and keep his commandments ; whether they are in sympathy with Christ, his service, and his people. There was a difference between the conversion of the eunuch and that of Paul. But Paul never bases the reality of his conversion on the mere miraculous circumstances which attended it.

But I am constrained to say that I have never depended as much as some have on instructions to the anxious. Rather I have insisted on immediate decision—on instantaneous repentance, and faith in the Lord Jesus. In the anxious room I depend more on prayer, on prevailing supplication with God, than on all the instructions which can be given. Everything is dark to the sinner until enlightened by the Spirit ; no coaxing, no teaching, no driving will compel or induce the devil to leave his palace in the human soul, until the stronger than the strong man armed comes upon him and binds him. Then the work is done, and done effectually. Hence I get all on their knees, and set them to crying to God (both saints and sinners), till he sends down salvation. I have known fifty souls to be converted in one season of prayer, that is, before we have risen from our knees.

## REVIVAL AMONG THE LITTLE ONES.

REV. G. H. MORSS.

It came about on this wise. The teachers of our Sabbath-school met together to pray for, and consult as to what more we could do for the spiritual welfare of the children and young people. It was decided to hold *class* prayer-meetings. Each male teacher was to be responsible for the conducting of the meeting with his class, the superintendent being responsible for the conduct of the meetings of classes taught by female teachers.

The meetings commenced in private houses ; but soon it became apparent that larger room must be sought, and we were obliged to go to our mission school room. From the first meeting religious interest was manifested ; the children were deeply affected and in tears.

Dr. Todd's lectures to children were read to them, remarks made upon the subject thus introduced, prayers offered interspersed with singing. Soon the inquiry arose from many hearts : What must I do to be saved ? And after each meeting personal conversation was had with those who wished it. Our Sabbath service was followed with prayer and inquiry meetings. A deep and quiet interest pervaded each session of the school. Conversions were frequent, till soon twenty-five were rejoicing in a new-found Saviour.

Besides the class prayer meeting, the teachers' prayer-

meeting was kept up during the religious interest, and several appointed *special* seasons of prayer, each agreeing to be in his closet at a certain hour each day, pouring out their hearts to God for each individual member of their classes, expressed by name. The children, also, deeply pervaded by the Holy Spirit's influence, of their own accord met together, and prayed for their classes, teachers, and unconverted members of the school; spending a half hour thus, at some private house, on Sabbath afternoon before the session of the school; meeting also on Wednesday afternoon for the same purpose.

An incident connected with this meeting illustrates the faith of the children. They were under ten years of age. The Sabbath after their first meeting one of them said to her teacher: "We had a little prayer-meeting last week." "Did you?" said the teacher. "Who was there?" The little girl repeated over the names of two of her mates. "Was that all?" asked the teacher. "No," was the quick reply of the child; "there was one more." "And who was that?" asked the teacher. "Jesus," said the child. "But," said the teacher, "how do you know Jesus was there?" "Because," replied the child, "He has said: 'Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,' and we *felt* He was there."

The genuineness of the conversion which took place became apparent, not only in their countenances and words, but in little, though touching, acts of kindness towards each other at school, and in a very marked change in their behavior at home, to which their parents bore witness. While this was a mission school, most of these converts subsequently connected themselves, we believe, with some church.

The measures adopted to bring about this religious interest were such as might be made practicable in Sabbath

schools where there are also church privileges. The class prayer-meeting, not directly after the Methodist order, though that is good, may become a helpful aid to the teacher in making the spiritual application of the truths taught on the Sabbath. Try it, teacher. Try it, superintendent.

## COMMON SENSE IN REVIVALS.

REV. E. P. TINNEY.

Said Dr. Witherspoon to a divinity student : " If you have no piety, you know how to get it ; if you have no learning, you know where to get it ; but if you have no common sense, God have mercy on your souls." It is certain that nothing can take the place of what John Locke calls " good roundabout sense," in promoting revival works.

In the first place a man must know enough to keep well. The moment one's nerves are unstrung, he loses his hold on men. Coarse, rough and ready men have no appreciation of the fine sensibilities and over-work which break down a pastor. The common people have a great respect for tough clergymen. Revivalists must be able to endure hardness. The kingdom is the strongest. A good digestion and capacity for sleep are needful. Beef-steak and sound sleep will save souls ; but restless nights will not. Good judgment is a prime factor in successful revival work.

Further, it is a common sense rule in revivals to take things by the right handle, and handle the saints before wrestling with sinners. If God's people stand aloof, the devil's people will not turn to. The way of the Lord must be prepared. Sometimes it takes several months to get ready for a revival, but a steady pressure in one line will

clear the way. The end must be kept in sight Sunday and week day. Dr. Porter used to believe that, where there was no revival, the *minister was the greatest obstacle*; and he confessed that his own early ministry was at fault. *Revivals do not come without seeking them; they do come by seeking.* Yet, out of every hundred Congregational ministers, a great number are afraid lest the ark of God should move on some cart that is new, and be drawn by bullocks half wild. Many are afraid of multiplying meetings, and do not seem to know that the early church held daily meetings for 300 years. If men thoroughly believe in revivals, and vehemently give themselves to the work, the way will be prepared. *But it is imperative to keep the people to this one line.* Do pastor and people try to prepare for revival work during a fortnight, and then stop to tickle the young people by an evening's entertainment, or raise a few dollars by a fair? It is hard to get a half water-logged church into motion up the stream, and if the motion is stopped every now and then to give the crew time to sell gew-gaws, or play at blind man's buff, there will be no more progress than in an Arab boat ascending the Nile, when the boatmen throws out drags—to make their job hold out longer—and then explain the slow sailing by crying, "God wills it!" *There may be a revival in any parish, where there has been no general revival for some years, if the church will rise up and prepare the way.* There must be preaching in one line till the way is prepared. Sometimes an evangelist with a new voice may come in at the critical moment and supplement the work of the pastor, turning the tide. But absolutely nothing can be done if the pastor and the leading church members are afraid of disturbing the regular order of the meetings, and getting out of the ruts to save souls.

Some Christians will sit upon a fence waiting an eminent

evangelist to tell them to get down and go to work ; and multitudes will perish before they reach out a hand. Is there no other name under heaven than that of Moody, whereby men can be saved ? What about an evangelist ? The churches may rely upon a man ; but unless the power of God is brought down from Heaven, there will be no more light and warmth than if one were to kindle a handful of thorns, and let them crackle for an hour, hoping thereby to thaw out the frozen zone.

The only possible hope for a revival in any church is when, by the presence of an evangelist, or a *minister full of the Holy Ghost, the people stir themselves up to lay hold on God*. If several persons will put themselves in such spiritual posture that God loves to hear them pray, and then the truth is clearly and continuously urged upon the people, the Holy Ghost will certainly descend in connection with these two instrumentalities. This is attainable by common church members and common ministers. Fourteen winters of revival in one church, according to Finney, rose out of a habit the brethren had of praying for their minister far into the night just before each Sabbath. John Welsh sometimes spent seven or eight hours a day in prayer, and occasionally a whole night, shut up in his church pleading for his congregation.

The common sense rule about preaching is to let *the Holy Ghost do the preaching*. *And if the unction of God be not in the delivery of the sermon, it falls to the ground. The minister is to be the instrument of the Holy Ghost*. "Every sermon," says Joseph Cooke, "should be a chain ; but chain-lightning." It is God who electrifies through the preacher, His instrument. Sermon making is merely a tinker's job, unless a man prays over his sermon till the Holy Ghost puts life into it. Upon two memorable occasions, Augustine preached eloquently and the people ap-



plauded ; but he kept on until they cried, and he broke down and cried with them ; and then they did what he wanted them to do. Knox and the reformers were like the Hebrew prophets, speaking by inspiration. Payson in the pulpit plead with men ; and if they were not moved, he came down out of the pulpit and plead, until the men were moved, yielding to God, or spurning him. The most effective Welsh preachers used to expect present results, and were unwilling to leave off the service till they saw visible signs of the spirit's presence. Robert Roberts would, on any great occasion, prostrate himself upon the floor of his room all night, agonizing with God, praying that he might feel the power of the truth he was to utter. Two school boys went one day to hear him ; and they saw that the preacher began by an intensely earnest look upon the audience, his eyes piercing the people, and as he grew more and more earnest, some fainted and others cried out, and the place was thrilled, "as if an angel stood at his back to encourage him." One of the boys turned to the other, and with pale face, asked, "is he a man or an angel?" "Why an angel? did not you know?" "Great heaven! but how much better an angel preaches than a man!"

Angels live near to God. Let the angels of the churches live near to God, and revivals of religion will multiply.

## THE CONDITION.

REV. L. H. BLAKE.

This morning I received through the post office this note from one of my church members :

"Brother : Do you think the time has arrived—or are we very near it—when there should be a greater effort on the part of the church to induce men and women to come to Christ ?"

It seems to me that that postal card contained the *key-note of revival interest* ; namely : "*Is the church ready to work for it ?*" I have thought, sometimes, that the church were marvelously insensible to this. And I doubt not that more than one pastor has been discouraged because his people gave so little response to his earnest appeals to them to begin revival work. Do Christian people suppose that there can be a revival when they make no effort for it, or perhaps are themselves spiritually cold ?

Very many Christian people, while zealously talking of a revival, hoping for it, praying about it in the meetings, even expecting it, and descanting sensibly on "what needs to be," yet cannot be induced to commit themselves individually to active revival efforts. A pastor of our acquaintance, whose church had been for weeks in an expectant state respecting a revival, but who began to feel at length that something more definite was needed, finally

put the question definitely before his brethren one evening, at the church meeting : " If you are expecting and longing for a revival, and if, as you say, the work must begin in the church, are you willing individually to enter into active revival effort ?" To this question no response was made whatever, but the hour was consumed with the same spirited generalities as heretofore. Again he placed the matter before his church members in the same light ; result, the same as before. Then he preached on the subject, with the object of making it appear that *a revived church meant revived individuals, an active church, active church members*. But the result was to call out one response : " I am glad the pastor preached on that subject," and then—the usual generalities.

*There seems to be a wide-spread expectation of a great revival this winter.* " The feeling is in the atmosphere." etc., etc., etc. But that all amounts to little. If there is to be a far-reaching work of grace, then very many communities must be revived. And if a community be revived, the church must be revived and active ; for as *a rule, revivals begin with the church*, and if a church is to become revived and active, why then—it is the plainest sort of logic—the *individual members must become revived, and begin to work*.

So, then, the whole matter comes down to this ; each member must consecrate himself. Generalities will not do. When the church members stop talking about what may, can, must, might, could, would, and should be done, and begin to ask ; " Lord, what wilt thou have *me* to do ?" the revival will come with power.

## PERSONAL WORK.

REV. G. N. ANTHONY.

Some of the churches anticipate the assistance of an evangelist. That God may work glorious things by his agency, we will all pray. Others will pursue their way without an evangelist. In either case I counsel more attention to the work given to us individually, than to any extraneous thing. We will shut our mouths tight against narrow criticism and petty fault-finding. If *we* gain no benefit from any measures adopted, we will at least decline to stand in the way of men who do. Our want is the drawing of souls God-ward. Our duty lies largely in the personal work of self-humbling before God and before men ; of fresh and full consecration, and the work which shall show it to be true ; and the whole, inspired and sustained by faith, strong and hearty, in the Almighty Saviour, who leads individuals and churches on to the conquest of sin and of Satan.


## GOD'S WAY.

E. C. E.

"I feel sure we shall have a revival soon." We were startled one evening, while returning from our weekly prayer meeting, by hearing this remark at our very elbow. The meeting had been unusually cold and barren—at least we thought so.

"Why do you expect a revival?" we asked. The reply was characteristic of one whose faith looked beyond the bounds of sense. "I learned this evening that three different members of our church are praying for the same individuals," was the reply. "Each is ignorant of the other's strong desire for the conversion of these souls, and I conclude God's spirit only can thus simultaneously operate upon these minds, prompting them to pray for one and the same object. We shall surely enjoy a revival soon."

True to this prophecy, a few weeks elapsed ere a new atmosphere pervaded our prayer-meetings, and numbers were inquirers. Among these were those for whom prayer had been offered in secret, and they were the first fruits of a precious harvest.

 A revival is not to be waited for or sought inactively. To engage earnestly and constantly, in strong and simple faith, in doing the Lord's work lying all around us, will bring about all the results of a revival to Christians and to sinners.

## MEANS OF PROMOTING REVIVALS.

WM. B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

Much is to be done in producing and sustaining a revival by means of *conversation*.

This is a duty which devolves not only upon the minister and other officers of the church, but upon all private Christians according to their ability. And it is a duty which may be performed in a great variety of circumstances. There may be frequent opportunities for it in the common intercourse of life ; and no doubt a suitable degree of attention would discover many opportunities which are suffered to pass without observation. But this is a duty which, especially in a season of revival, should hold a distinct and prominent place among Christian duties ; and should not be left to the control of any contingency. There should be, so far as possible, a regular system of visiting, especially on the part of church officers ; with a view to alarm, to direct, or to quicken, according to the circumstances of each individual with whom they may converse.

It belongs to Christians on these occasions to stir up the minds of each other ; to endeavor to make each other feel more deeply their responsibility and the value of the souls around them, and the danger of their being lost : and if there be among their number any who are sluggish

and disposed to excuse themselves from coming up to the help of the Lord they are to be entreated affectionately, yet earnestly, to shake off their apathy and give themselves actively to the great work. And while Christians are to be faithful in their conversation with each other—to encourage, to arouse, to quicken, so also are they to be faithful in warning the wicked of his wicked way, and in endeavoring to open his eyes on the destruction that threatens him. And those whose consciences are awake they are to press with the obligation of immediate repentance; explaining to them, if need be, the terms of the gospel, and endeavoring to lead them without delay to the cross of Christ. They have an important duty to perform also in respect to those who have professedly come out of darkness into light; in assisting to detect false hopes and confirm good hopes; to guard against temptation, and establish principles of holy living, and form plans for future usefulness. Many a Christian has had occasion, through his whole religious life, to reflect that much of his usefulness and much of his happiness was to be referred under God to an unreserved intimacy, or perhaps to a single conversation, with some judicious Christian friend, at that critical moment subsequent to his conversion, when he was adopting principles for the regulation of his conduct.

Another important means for producing and sustaining a revival is *Sabbath-school and Bible class instruction*. It ought to be, and we doubt not is, to a great extent, regarded as the duty of every teacher, not merely to enlighten the understanding, but to impress divine truth upon the heart and conscience of each of his pupils; aiming at nothing short of a thorough moral renovation. Here is the best possible opportunity for the teacher to find his way to the heart. If, in the intercourse which he holds with his pupils, he is amiable and conciliatory, he

will almost of course secure their confidence ; and this is a most important preparation for their listening to him with attention and profit. And then let him, from time to time, commune faithfully with their consciences ; let him show them how the truths which he inculcates involve their interests and destiny for eternity ; let him press them frequently with those considerations which are most fitted to make them feel that religion is the one thing needful, and that there is no apology for neglecting it. Let him carefully watch every serious impression, following it up by suitable admonitions and counsels ; and finally let him bear the interests of these children before the throne of the heavenly grace ; and he has good reason to expect that such instrumentality will be honored in saving souls from death. It is familiar to you all that the records of Sabbath schools and the records of revivals are to a great extent identified ; that the noblest triumphs of God's grace have often been found in these nurseries of knowledge, virtue and piety.

*Revivals have frequently commenced in Bible classes,* and not a few instances have occurred in which all or nearly all the members of a class have become hopefully the subjects of renewing grace ; while the work, which had its beginning here, had extended on the right hand and on the left, till multitudes have experienced its quickening and renovating influence.

Again, the faithful discharge of *parental duty* is another important means of promoting a revival.

There is no human influence ever exerted in forming the character, more decisive, whether for good or evil, than that of parents ; and if it be a well directed religious influence, we have a right to expect, both from the nature of the case and from actual experience, that it will secure the happiest results. Let a parent train up his children



in the way which the Bible prescribes ; let him faithfully instruct them in the truths of God's word as soon as they are capable of being taught ; let him render his instructions as familiar and practical as possible, mingling with them appropriate counsels and admonitions ; and let him pray with them, and for them, and teach them to pray for themselves ; and if all this is not immediately instrumental of their conversion, it will, at least in all ordinary cases, render them peculiarly promising candidates for converting grace ; will be a happy preparation for the effectual work of God's Holy Spirit.

It deserves also to be remarked that much devolves upon Christian parents in immediately sustaining and carrying forward a revival. If they see their children, at such a time, manifesting an indifference to the things of religion, they are to press them most earnestly and affectionately with its obligations. If they see in them the least anxiety, they are to endeavor by every means to cherish it, and put them on their guard against grieving away the Holy Spirit, and take them by the hand, and lead them if possible, to the Lamb of God. If they see them rejoicing in the hope that their sins are forgiven, they are to aid them by lessons from God's word and their own experience, to ascertain the true character of their religious exercises, and to avoid the hope of the hypocrite. It is a reproach to many Christian parents, that they suffer a false delicacy to prevail against the faithful discharge of their duty in these most interesting circumstances. As God has constituted them the guardians of their children, it devolves upon them to be especially watchful in respect to their immortal interests ; and never is neglect more culpable, than when the Holy Spirit is offering to co-operate with them to secure their children's salvation.

The last means for promoting a revival which I shall

notice, is, *an exercise designed particularly for awakened sinners.*

At the close of a public service in which God's truth has been exhibited and enforced, let those who have been impressed by it, and who wish to have their impressions deepened, and to be instructed in reference to their duty and salvation, be requested to remain after the rest of the assembly have retired. And then let the minister, or some other competent person, address them earnestly and affectionately in reference to their peculiar condition; connecting with the address one or more prayers; and afterwards, so far as circumstances may admit, or occasion require, let them be met in a more private way, and let the particular state of each mind be ascertained; and let each receive appropriate counsel and instruction.

Our subject may assist us *to discover the cause of the decline of a revival.*

I admit that there is more or less of sovereignty here; and that the Spirit of God operates whenever and wherever, in infinite wisdom, he pleases. I acknowledge, too, that the strong excitement which often attends a revival cannot, so far as respects the same individuals, be kept up for a long time; nor is it at all essential, or even desirable, that it should be. But so far as a healthful and vigorous state of religious feeling is connected on the part of Christians, and I may add, in view of the promises of God to answer prayer, so far as the conversion of sinners is concerned, it is not irreverent to say, that while he is himself the great agent, he commits his work in an important sense into the hands of his people; and if it decline, there is blame resting upon them. It is because they have grown weary in their supplications, or because they have relaxed in the use of some other of the means which he has put within their reach. Let Christians then

tremble in view of their responsibility ; and when God is sending down his Spirit to work with them, let them take heed that they render a hearty and persevering co-operation. Let them take heed that they grieve not this divine agent to depart either from their own souls, lest they should be given up to barrenness ; or from the souls of inquiring sinners, lest there should fall upon them the curse of reprobation.

Once more : *How great is the privilege and the honor which Christians enjoy, of being permitted to co-operate with God in carrying forward His work.*

When you are laboring for the salvation of sinners around you, when you are using the various means which God has put into your hands to awaken them to conviction and bring them to repentance, you are laboring in the very cause which is identified with the success and the glory of Christ's mediation. Nay, you are a fellow worker with the Holy Ghost ; and while he honors your efforts with his saving blessing, they are set down to your account in the book of God's remembrance. Yes, Christians, all that you do in this cause brings glory to God in the highest, contributes to brighten your immortal crown, and subserves the great cause of man's salvation. What remains then but that you take these considerations to your heart as so many arguments, to labor in this holy cause with more untiring zeal, with more holy fidelity ? Is it a cause that demands sacrifices ? You can well afford to make them, for it brings happiness, and glory, and honor in its train. Let it be seen on earth, and let the angels report it in Heaven, that you are co-workers with God, in giving effect to the purposes of his grace, and in training up immortal souls for the glories of his kingdom.

## TREATMENT DUE TO AWAKENED SINNERS.

WM. B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

I. I am to present before you *the general course proper to be taken with an awakened sinner.*

When a person in these circumstances comes to ask your counsel, the first thing you have to determine is, *what is his amount of knowledge, and his amount of feeling.*

Let him be admonished, first of all, that *the duty of devoting himself to God by a compliance with the terms of the gospel, is of immediate obligation ; and that he is guilty, and becoming more and more guilty, in the neglect of it.*

Let the awakened sinner be admonished farther, that *the present is the best time for securing his soul's salvation.* For then there are facilities for becoming religious which do not exist at any other period. Supposing him, as I here do, to be in the midst of a revival, there is an energy and efficiency in all the means of grace which is, to a great extent, peculiar to such a scene. Ministers are encouraged to preach with unaccustomed earnestness, and are enabled to bring out the truth of God with great pungency and effect. Christians too pray with unwonted fervor, and converse with peculiar fidelity ; and there is the current of example setting strongly in favor of religion ; and the very atmosphere around seems to be per-

vaded by deep solemnity ; and with all this the sinner's own attention is awake ; and the Holy Spirit is striving with him to bring him to repentance. Let him be inquired of what circumstances can exist more favorable to his conversion than now exist. Let him be reminded that he has no reason to expect that such an assemblage of circumstances will again occur in the course of his life ; and that even if they should, the same disposition which would lead him to resist the Spirit now might lead him to resist it then. Dwell upon the appalling fact that trifling with divine influences must serve greatly to harden the heart ; and that if he return to the world from the point which he has now gained, he will, in all probability, go back to a point of obduracy at which he will be left, without any farther divine interposition, to take his own way down to the chambers of eternal death.

Admonish him, farther, that *he is in danger, from various causes, of losing his serious impressions.* This is a point in relation to which he may not improbably think himself safe ; and though he may not be able to anticipate any favorable result of his convictions, yet so pungent and overwhelming are they, that he cannot realize that there is any danger of their leaving him. But even the strongest religious impressions are sometimes driven away from the soul almost in an hour ; though in general the process is a gradual and almost imperceptible one. Admonish him to beware of the levities of the world ; for one light conversation with a careless friend may change decisively the current of his thoughts. Guard him against the influence of wordly care—even of his necessary daily employments ; for any thing of a mere worldly nature that occupies the mind is liable to turn it off from the great subject of salvation. Caution him, also, against yielding to a false shame ; for this cannot long prevail

without grieving away the Holy Spirit. Urge upon him, the importance of holding God's truth to his mind as constantly as possible, that thus the impressions which have already been made by it may have no opportunity to escape. And to give the greatest effect to all these cautions, point him to examples in the way of illustrating them ; and let him know that there are multitudes now in the ranks of profligacy and infidelity, who once even trembled under the awakening influences of God's Spirit. In view of the tremendous evil which must result from the departure of this divine agent from the soul on the one hand, and of the ease with which he may be grieved away on the other, you are to ring a monitory peal in the ear of the awakened sinner, adapted to make him cherish his impressions with the most watchful diligence.

And then, again you are to put him on his guard *against seeking salvation in a spirit of self-righteousness*. There is no natural predilection in man for the gospel plan of salvation : on the contrary, there is a strong original bias in favor of being saved by the deeds of the law : though unhappily there is no disposition to perform the deeds which the law requires. Hence the sinner, when he is first awakened, almost always puts himself upon a course of self-righteous effort ; and practically asks with the young man in the gospel : " what good thing he shall *do* that he may inherit eternal life." He forthwith begins an attendance upon all the means of grace, if he has neglected them before, or if he has been accustomed to attend upon them, he does it now with an increased degree of seriousness. He listens attentively to God's word ; is found in the meeting for social prayer, and religious conference ; passes much time in his closet, and in conversing with Christian friends : and in short, aims to perform externally every duty which God requires of him. And in all

this the secret feeling of his heart, is, even though he may not always be sensible of it, that he is performing something meritorious, which will catch and please the eye of God, and cause his name to be enrolled in the Lamb's book of life. Now it devolves upon you carefully to guard him against this error ; for so long as it is retained, it must be an effectual barrier to a compliance with the terms of the gospel. Do not discourage him from striving ; but admonish him to strive in the spirit of the new covenant, and not of the old. Tell him that there is no merit in any of his striving, and that he can never be saved till he becomes convinced of this, and falls down helpless at the feet of mercy, and is willing to accept of salvation as a gift of God through Christ, without any respect to his own deservings. The mistake to which I here refer may be made by those who speculatively understand the way of salvation, as well as those who do not ; and the only means by which it is discovered, is faithful communion with one's own heart. To the duty of self-communion then, with special references to this point, every inquiring sinner should be earnestly exhorted.

Council him, moreover, to beware of *making comfort rather than duty an ultimate end*. A state of conviction is a state of anxiety and alarm, and of course unhappiness. As the sinner, from the very constitution of his nature, desires happiness, it is not strange that in the agony of conviction he should often fasten his eye upon that as an ultimate object ; though nothing is more certain than that, so long as he pursues it as such, true religious comfort will never be attained. In doing this he places himself before God merely as a sufferer desiring to be relieved from distress ; whereas, the attitude which he ought to assume is that of a guilty offender, acknowledging and forsaking his evil courses, and turning unto the Lord.

What God requires of him is the discharge of duty ; repentance, faith, obedience; and in this way only has he a right either to seek or expect comfort. He is to regard himself first as a sinner, and then as a sufferer: if he repent of his sins he has reason to expect relief from his sufferings ; but if he hold fast his sins, how much soever he may supplicate God's mercy, he will either experience no relief, or none which he ought to desire. He must understand that it is the economy of God's grace that true Christian comfort can never be gained except as it is made a secondary consideration. He must keep his eye constantly fixed on duty : he must stir himself up to do what God requires of him ; and God will take care that he is no stranger to the joys of his salvation.

It may be well to caution him also *against seeking aid from too many advisers ; especially where their religious views do not harmonize.*

I add, once more, that he should be advised to *pass much of his time in the closet.*

II. Having now marked out a general course of treatment adapted to an awakened sinner, I proceed, secondly, to contemplate *some of the great variety of cases which require more special counsel and instruction.*

Suppose the sinner says that, though he is aware that his case is as bad as you represent it, yet *he can do nothing to render it any better, and therefore must be contented to remain where he is.* You are to endeavor, in the first place, to convince him by a direct appeal to his conscience, that the inability under which he labors is nothing more than a settled aversion of the heart from God ; and therefore is entirely without excuse. Let him see that he has all the powers of a moral agent ; that he has a conscience to distinguish between right and wrong, and a will by which he may choose the one and refuse the other. Let



him see that in withholding his heart from God, he is as free as in any other course of action ; and therefore blameworthy ; and therefore condemned in the plea which he sets up for doing nothing.

But what if he should plead still farther, as a ground of argument, that *many of his friends who were awakened at the same time with himself, have apparently given themselves to the Saviour, and are rejoicing in hope ; and that hence he has no reason to believe that there is any mercy for him—* Answer this plea by showing that God has given the same powers of moral agency to him as to them ; that he has made the same gracious provision to him as to them ; and that in both cases the offer is equally free, equally sincere. Remind him that God has nowhere promised that he shall have the comforts of a good hope at any particular time, but he *has* promised that they who seek him in a proper manner shall find ; and that promise he will certainly fulfil.

Suppose the sinner *should complain of great insensibility, and should express an earnest desire that he might have more pungent convictions—*While you endeavor to keep his thoughts fastened upon those great truths which are most fitted to convince and to dissolve, such as the holiness of God, the perfection of his law, the deep depravity of the heart, and the compassion and grace of a dying Saviour, you are to institute a faithful inquiry as to the ground of this desire ; and it is not improbable that you will discover that its leading element is self-righteousness ; that the sinner desires conviction because he imagines that there will be something of merit in it, to recommend him to divine favor. Let him see that in conviction he only looks at himself as he is ; and let his own conscience decide whether there can be any merit in merely beholding his guilt. The man who is convinced that his house is

on fire, and that he shall be burned to death if he remain in it, will make a hasty escape ; and his conviction of danger will have brought him to it ; though no one would say that there was anything of merit in that conviction. In like manner, the sinner who is effectually convinced that he must perish if he remains impenitent, and that he can be saved only by the free grace of God in Christ, actually throws himself a guilty and helpless creature into his Saviour's arms ; and it is the conviction he has of his ruin that leads him to do this ; but will the sinner himself say that there is more of merit in this case than in the other ?

Suppose the sinner to be *sinking down under the burden of his guilt into a state of despair*, with an impression that his sins have been so aggravated that mercy cannot be extended to him—what you have to do in this case is to give him juster views of the gospel. He has particularly lost sight of the truth that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin ; and this is the doctrine which you are to hold up to him in all its extent and glory. Bring to his mind God's own declarations, that he is able and willing to save all that come unto him ; that whosoever believeth on the Son hath everlasting life ; and whosoever will may come and take the water of life freely.

Suppose the sinner to become impressed with the idea that *he has had no conviction of sin*, and that all that he supposed to be conviction was delusion ; when at the same time he furnishes the most conclusive evidence that he is really a subject of powerful divine operation—in a case of this kind, I would endeavor to convince him, what is beyond all peradventure true—that the adversary is at work, trying to drive away his convictions, by making him believe that he has none. I would show him how reasonable it were to expect that it should be so ;—that the great enemy of all good should be upon the alert, in the use of his wiles, when he sees that he is in danger of

losing one of his subjects. And I would refer to the experience of many others, who have passed through similar trials, and who have at length become fully satisfied that they were suffering under a delusion, which was the effect of satanic influence. And when the point is once gained, that the sinner really believes that this impression in respect to his having no convictions is from below, he is prepared to resign it, and the delusion vanishes.

Finally, our subject teaches us *what are the best qualifications for directing and counselling awakened sinners.*

It is essential that a person who undertakes this office should have a good knowledge of God's word ; for this is the great instrument by which the whole work is to be accomplished. It will not suffice that there should be a mere superficial acquaintance with divine truth ; but it should be deep and thorough ; the doctrines of the Bible should be understood in their various bearings and connections. There should also be an intimate knowledge of the human heart—the subject on which this work is to be performed. There should be an ability to guide the sinner in the work of self-examination ; to ferret sin out from its various lurking places ; to bring principles and motives to bear upon the various faculties and affections of the soul, with discrimination and good effect. In short, there should be an intelligent and devoted piety ; for this secures a knowledge of divine truth on the one hand, and an acquaintance with the springs of human conduct on the other.

Go then, Christian, often into your closet, and study your own heart. Open God's blessed word, and apply yourself to its precious truths. Keep your soul constantly imbued with its spirit. Then the inquiring sinner may find in you a safe and skilful guide. Then you may hope that God will honor you as an instrument of saving souls from death, and hiding a multitude of sins.



## REVIVALS CONTRIBUTE TO THE JOYS OF HEAVEN.

WM. B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

Revivals *minister directly to the joy of the heavenly inhabitants.*

The *angels* are by no means indifferent spectators of these scenes. Our Saviour himself hath declared that "there is joy among the angels over one sinner that repenteth." Much more then must they rejoice when multitudes repent and believe, and have their destiny for eternity reversed.

But while revivals are a source of rich joy to the angels, we may suppose that they are so in a still higher degree to that part of the population of heaven who have *washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*. It is with them, in common with angels, a reason for joy that, in these triumphs of divine grace, they gain the most glorious view of the divine character ; and also that they contemplate in them a mighty addition to the amount of human happiness.

Moreover, it is reasonable to suppose that the joy which the redeemed feel in view of the triumph of God's grace on earth, must be heightened in many cases by the relations which they have themselves sustained to those who are the subjects of a gracious renovation. Suppose the

glorified parent looks down and sees the children whom he left walking in the road to death, turning into the path to life and setting their faces firmly towards heaven ; or suppose the wife beholds her husband, or the sister her brother for whom she had offered a thousand prayers but had died without seeing them answered, now waking up to a concern for his salvation, and laying hold on the hope set before him in the gospel, and solemnly dedicating himself to the Lord ; or suppose the faithful pastor to have gone down to his grave mourning over the obduracy of hearts which he could never reach, and to look down from Mount Zion above and see them pierced with conviction, and melted in penitence, and rejoicing in hope ; and I ask you whether you do not believe that in each of these cases, there would be a deeper thrill of joy in the breast of that glorified immortal ? Do you not believe that he would strike his harp to a higher and nobler note of thanksgiving, that those whom he loved while he was on earth and whom he still loves though he is in heaven, have not only been redeemed by the blood but renewed by the spirit of Christ, and are training up to be his companions through ages of happiness that will know no end ?

Revivals tend to the same grand result, *by increasing the number of the heavenly inhabitants.*

Who can estimate the number that have already not only had their names written among the redeemed, but have actually entered through the gate into the city, and taken up the anthems of heaven, who but for revivals of religion would have had no part nor lot in the matter ? All this countless multitude have escaped the pollution, and degradation, and wailing of the pit, and have risen to the purity, and glory, and ecstasy of heaven. The day of the resurrection and the judgment which, but for the renovation they have experienced, would have awakened

in them nothing but shame and agony, is a signal for exultation and triumph. They walk in the light of the Lamb. They know how to use angelic harps. They are kings and priests unto God. They go on from glory to glory, constantly approaching the perfection of the Highest, while immortality endures. Whose mind is not lost in contemplating the amount of felicity which revivals will secure to their subjects through all the ages of eternity. Pause now for a moment on the eminence to which we are brought, and so far as you can, let your eye take in at a glance the results of revivals, as they respect both worlds. Under their influence see the cause of moral renovation advancing, until this earth everywhere brightens into a field of millennial beauty. Behold also the inhabitants of heaven kindling with higher raptures in view of these wonderful works of God ! Not only those who have been subjects of revivals, but those who have not, not only the ransomed of the Lord but the principalities and powers in heavenly places, and even Jehovah who is over all blessed forever, rejoice, and will eternally rejoice, in these triumphs of redeeming grace. And this joy and glory is not only to be perpetual, but to be perpetually progressive. Say then whether such results will not justify the church even now in beginning her song of triumph? From the most distant point in eternity which an angel's mind can reach, let the church, when she remembers these scenes of mercy through which she is now passing, still shout forth her high praises in the same noble song ; and let seraphim and cherubim, and the whole angelic choir of the third heavens, join to increase the melody : " Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever, Amen ! "

## GENUINE REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

REV. WALTER P. DOE.

What are genuine revivals of religion? They are revivals of the spirit of true piety and practical righteousness in the hearts of some of God's children. They commonly result in the conversion and reformation of sinners. Hence the prayer of the Psalmist—"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners *shall* be converted unto thee." And the consequence is a religious reformation in the church, and a marked improvement in the private and public morals of our community.

As true religion consists in loving and obeying God, its genuine revival in a church and congregation consists in an increased degree of zeal and activity in this service on the part of a considerable number of Christians, and the multiplied conversion of sinners occurring about the same time. And it seems desirable that such an improved condition should be perpetual and become the normal state of the church. But such a state has never yet been realized for any very protracted period of time. Declensions too frequently occur and often continue through many years of comparatively little life and progress on the

part of by far too many professing Christians. *Then God again interposes by the special outpouring of His Spirit in answer to prayer, and produces through human agency a religious excitement,* and attention to eternal realities of more controlling power than the mere worldly excitements by which the people are surrounded. But while excitements are not always revivals, there are no revivals without excitements.

Hence the churches have always been distinguished for special manifestations of grace at special times. As Prof. Park observes: "The rain does not fall every day, nor the snow descend every month, seed time and harvest, summer and winter run their alternate rounds, and in our spiritual world there has been a like succession of influences. At one time the whole community are aroused to religious thought, the conscience of multitudes is quickened to a new remorse, their fears are impelling them to rush together for the narrow path. It has been said that these reasons of special excitement may be protracted through life. But they would not be special. Then they could not be awakening processes. It is not in human nature to endure a long continued agitation of those sensibilities which are prominent in the simultaneous rousing of an entire parish to the work of pressing sinners into the kingdom of God.

"There need be no inequality between the degree of holiness exercised during a religious awakening and the degree put forth when there is no concentrated attention of multitudes on the one query: 'What must we do to be saved?' But there should be variety in the mode of manifesting that unchanged degree of holiness. As the farmer will not plant in winter, nor reap in spring time, nor always busy himself in breaking up the fallow ground, but must sometimes lift up the axe upon the thick trees,



and sometimes gently train the vine upon the trellis, and sometimes may sit down in the cool of the evening, and enjoy the fruits of his toil, and regale himself with the freshness of the new mown hay, so the spiritual husbandman may be equally faithful in his service while he varie-gates the method of it."

While, therefore, some may mistake in maintaining that it is both practicable and expedient for all Christians to live constantly in an exalted state of religious fervor, it seems to us that they should constantly grow in grace, and be "always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that their labor is not in vain in the Lord." It may seem very desirable to us that we should always enjoy physical health. But, if, as a matter of fact, we fall sick, it is reasonable that we seek earnestly speedy restoration. And if Christians backslide, and lose in any measure their first love, they are bound to return immediately for restoration to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.

#### MEANS.

*Let us therefore inquire what are the means to be employed in promoting genuine revivals of religion?*

Some consider that these works of divine grace are nearly analogous to miracles, and are occasionally produced at remote periods from each other, by a species of independent and *arbitrary sovereignty, with little or no human agency or special responsibility*. Regarding them the work of the Holy Ghost, beyond human power, with God and with men to secure them by working in harmony with established and permanent Divine laws, through definite channels and *appropriate prayer and efforts*,

But those who are the most successful in efforts for promoting revivals, commonly hold that they are in a most rational and reasonable sense under the regulation and control of the law of cause and effect in the kingdom of divine grace. They maintain that the work of reviving grace in the hearts of Christians may be secured and the graces and fruits of the Spirit may be developed by obedience to definite and established divine laws.

And with the proper employment of appropriate means of divine ordination, *the special gifts of the Spirit* are to be as definitely and reasonably expected under earnest *prayerfulness and right culture as the fruits of the soil.*

The work of God in revivals and its results are compatible with His system of moral laws and are producible by taking advantage of these laws. *God in His righteous and reasonable sovereignty has ordained that man's agency shall be essential in promoting true revivals of religion by obedience to His laws.*

Therefore, revivals, at appropriate seasons, and under favorable circumstances, with appropriate and judicious means, are as *sure to follow* as an abundant harvest is with good husbandry, when God sends the sunshine and rains of heaven.

Hence, (as Pres. Finney has observed) "the connection between the right use of means for a revival, and a revival, is as philosophically sure as between the right use of means to raise grain and a crop of wheat. I believe, in fact, it is more certain, and that there are fewer instances of failure. The effect is more certain to follow. Probably the law connecting cause and effect is more un-deviating in spiritual than in natural things, and so there are fewer exceptions. The paramount importance of spiritual things makes it reasonable that it should be so.

"Take the Bible, the nature of the case, and the history

of the Church, all together, and you will find fewer failures in the use of means for a revival than in farming, or any other worldly business. In worldly business there are sometimes cases where counteracting causes annihilate all that a man can do.

"In raising grain, for instance, there are cases which are beyond the control of man, such as droughts, hard winter, worms and so on. So in laboring to promote a revival, there may many things occur to counteract it, something or other turning up to divert the public attention from religion, which may baffle every effort.

"But I believe there are fewer cases of failure in the moral than in the natural world. I believe a minister or any other Christian may enter on the work of promoting a revival, with as reasonable expectation of success as he can enter on any other work with an expectation of success, with the same expectation as the farmer has of a crop when he sows his grain."

Therefore, a genuine revival of religion must be promoted by the right use of appropriate means. "The means which God has enjoined for the production of a revival, doubtless, have a natural and gracious tendency to produce a revival. Otherwise God would not have enjoined them. But means will not produce a revival, we all know, without the blessing of God. It is impossible, also, for grain when it is sowed to produce a crop without the blessing of God. It is unreasonable for us to say that there is not as direct an influence or agency from God to produce a crop of grain as there is to produce a revival. What are the laws of nature according to which it is supposed the grain yields a crop? They are nothing but the constituted manner of the operations of God. In the Bible, the word of God is compared to grain, and preaching is compared to sowing seed, and

the results to the springing up and growth of the crop. And the result is just as philosophical in the one case as in the other, and is as naturally connected with the cause."

Now, if such are the facts in the judgment of those who have had the largest experience in religious revivals, how great must be the *mistake, if not aggravating guilt*, of that large class of ministers and churches, who through the influence of a *false theory* concerning *divine Sovereignty*, labor on from year to year, sowing and cultivating the spiritual vineyard, with comparatively *no special concerted efforts in the pulpit* or congregation at any period of the year, to revive Christians or gather into the kingdom of the Lord a *harvest of souls*!

As there is commonly some degree of revival interest in the churches about the beginning of the year—during the week of prayer, if it should be attended by *appropriate preaching* and holy living on the part of the *ministers* and private Christians, is it not reasonable to expect that God would add unto the churches many more precious souls?

Under such hopeful circumstances it is probable that the intelligent and devoted friends of true religion seldom or never pass through a more melancholy experience than when, as it too frequently occurs, that after God has revived his work in their hearts in some measure, and they intensely yearn for the salvation of sinners, for the want of appropriate *pungent revival preaching* the period is suffered to pass with very few or no conversions from the world of perishing sinners.

*O, how great, then, must be the responsibility of the ministry, who do not arouse themselves and make special efforts, and with definite and prayerful aim so preach as to justify the rational expectation that God will give special efficacy*

*to the preached word.* Through such neglect may not souls perish for whom Christ died? And may not the blood of souls at the last great day be required at the watchman's hand.

In what estimate would the conduct of the agriculturist be held, who should steadily and industriously plow and sow his fields and cultivate his crops from year to year, and when the period for the autumnal harvests should arrive, should *make no special and changed efforts to gather the crops* until the ripened grain in large portions should fall back again to be buried in the earth or be rotted by the wintry storms?

Would not his unreasonable and ungrateful conduct justify his friends and neighbors in leaving him to beg in harvest and have nothing?

Is there not a striking analogy between the laws which govern the labors of the husbandman in agriculture and those which control the ministers of Christ in their spiritual husbandry?

And, if God, upon whom the former depends for fertile soil and warm seasons, with rain and sunshine, holds him responsible for making special and appropriate efforts for harvesting in autumn, will He not require the ministers of Christ to give an account for the souls whom they might have saved by special efforts in revivals?

If this be so, it certainly seems reasonable that while all Christians are bound to live habitually in a *state of complete consecration*, as they commonly do not, but, almost imperceptibly to themselves, it may be, decline into a state of lessened sensibility on the subject of religion, the *minister* and more devoted and intelligent *members of the church* are under *special obligations to lead in seeking a refreshing upon their own souls*, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required."

And at the same time, the more indifferent and back-slidden members of the church may be expected to follow in the work of revival in proportion to their capabilities in their ready perception of truth and capacities to realize obligation. "For he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes."

And the practical question may still press right here, *how shall Christians seek a revival in their own hearts*, as a personal and immediate duty and privilege? God has given an inspired answer — an infallible prescription, which never fails? "Break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord till he come and rain righteousness upon you."

By this we understand, "break up your hearts—prepare your minds to bring forth fruit unto God." But how is this to be done? each individual may ask as a personal matter. Certainly it can not be done by making *direct efforts to increase religious feeling*. For the emotions are involuntary, and not under the direct and immediate control of the will. But we *may excite them by indirect and voluntary efforts* in harmony with the fixed laws of the mind.

*And in beginning the work of revival in our hearts our sense of dependence must lead us to importunate and extraordinary prayer* in the closet, in the family, and conference meeting. "For with God is the residue of the spirit." But it must not be formal and indifferent prayer. God says: "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss." There are faults in prayer which prevent its efficacy. Such as a feeble sense of want, or praying in advance of our real desires, or without a fixed determination to act in such a way as shall be adapted to answer our own prayers to the extent of our ability, or we may have wrong ends in view in

our requests. The motive may be selfish, and not for the glory of God ; or we may not sufficiently appreciate the efficacy of Christ's name in prayer ; or there may be a deficiency of faith. For "without faith it is impossible to please God." "For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."

*Really efficacious prayer for revival must be the prayer of faith.* And this must be indited by the Holy Ghost and His prevailing intercessions.

"Believers," (says Dr. Griffin) "are called the temple of the Holy Ghost, and he is represented as seated in that temple and praying for them, and God, as He comes down to examine the heart, is represented as hearing and understanding this intercession."

"The spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what to pray for as we ought ; but the spirit itself maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." In such prayer there will be earnest desire, submission, dependence, diligent use of means, humility, perseverance, and such trustful expectancy as shall prevail with God in securing revivals in the hearts of Christians.

*And then, if we expect God to answer our earnest prayers, we must employ reasonable human means to secure the blessing.* We must, by *self-examination and meditation, make our minds deeply feel on the subject of religion.* If we contemplate the character of God as a gracious and holy being, and think of Christ's love manifested in our redemption, and think of the persuasive strivings of the Holy Ghost in our regeneration and sanctification, our hearts must melt in penitence and love. Thus if we are indeed Christians, by perseverance in this course we shall as certainly increase our feelings on the subject of religion as we shall revive and increase the emotion of love and earnest regard for our dearest earthly friends by meditating

on their excellencies, and recounting with gratitude their many deeds of loving kindness towards us.

Hence, in beginning to labor for a *special work of grace*, when the providence and grace of God indicates that the "set time to favor Zion has come," the minister should obviously begin with his own heart and the hearts of professing Christians.

*And in preaching he should labor specifically to bring the Church by the blessing of God under conviction*, and secure their hearty confession and penitence. At such times it is profitable to publicly and unitedly renew their church covenant.

In doing this he may point out the sins of ingratitude, want of love to God and the brethren, neglect of the Bible, distrust and unbelief, neglect of prayer and other means of grace, neglect in warning sinners to "flee from the wrath to come," neglect of watchfulness over themselves and their brethren, as well as common neglect of self-denial and faithfulness in the service of the Lord, and too prevalent worldly mindedness and impatience.

For "the friendship of the world is enmity with God." *But ministers who anxiously desire a special work of grace may earnestly inquire what subjects and texts have been found by repeated experience to signally favor a revival among Christians. What truths should be specially emphasized to revive Christians.* I reply, such as are calculated to urge them to thorough self-examination, in reference to consistent Christian character and show them their *sins of omission as well as commission*.

And such as urge them to increased prayerfulness, entire consecration, and active personal efforts. Such texts as the following, in about the same order, when appropriately and legitimately treated, have frequently produced great results, by preaching them in alternate order, one a day, to each class of saints and sinners.



"Say ye to the righteous it shall be well with him," etc. "Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him," etc. Showing the radical, philosophical and scriptural distinction between the most defective of real Christians and the best of impenitent sinners, showing that the former *aim* supremely to *please God*, while the latter *seek* habitually the *gratification* of their own *natural desires*.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord." "Take up the stumbling blocks out of the way." "Where art thou?" "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath," etc. "Wilt thou not revive us again," etc. "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation," etc. "Bring ye all the tithes unto the store house," etc. "If my people which are called by my name," etc. "The backslider in heart," etc. "Break up your fallow ground," etc. "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion," etc. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," etc. "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing ye shall receive." "The people had a mind to work." "He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way," etc. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." "Be filled with the spirit," etc. "If two of you shall agree," etc. "Ye are my witnesses," etc. "He that winneth souls is wise." "Aaron and Hurr," etc.

*But the practical question may here arise, what truths ought to be specially emphasized in order to awaken the impenitent?*

It has been found by experience to be expedient to preach in a practical way on the moral attributes of God, "the purity and perfection of his law, with its endless penalty, the entire native depravity of the human heart, in its destitution of holiness, and voluntary neglect of

God's service ; the sufficiency of the atonement of Christ ; the freeness of the offer of pardon to all, on condition of faith and repentance ; the necessity of a voluntary and radical change of heart and life, by the Holy Ghost ; the utter inexcusableness of sinners in neglecting the free offers of mercy, and the duty and reasonableness of immediate and unconditional submission to God, and the permanent choice of his service through life, and throughout eternity."

*Sinners should be convicted of guilt and awful depravity before presenting to them the justice and fearfulness of their future doom and misery.*

Therefore, they should be shown the holiness of God, and the infinite evil of sin ; the spirituality and searching claims of the divine law.

After showing them the moral vileness of the human heart, they may be alarmed by showing them the misery that awaits them on earth and in eternity, and the limitations of the day of grace.

Then it is expedient to exhibit the freeness of salvation through Christ, with the pathetic exhortations and invitations of the Gospel. And all excuses must be swept away by the truth.

In awakening and convicting sinners, therefore, it is commonly found expedient to preach on such texts as the following: "Be troubled ye careless ones." "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost," etc. "There is no hope." "Have me excused." "Except a man be born again," etc. "Make you a new heart," etc. "That sin by the commandment," etc. Explain the ten commandments, and apply them to the thoughts and intents of the heart. "Except ye repent," etc. "By the deeds of the law," etc. "Being justified by faith," etc. "Of sin because ye believe not on me," etc. "What must I do to

be saved?" "The wages of sin is death." "He that is unjust let him be unjust still," etc. "Marvel not at this," etc. "Prepare to meet thy God." "Go thy way for the time," etc. "In thy presence is fullness of joy," etc. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." "Secret faults," etc. "His thoughts troubled him," etc. "He that covereth his sins," etc. "God so loved the world," etc. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," etc. "Son remember," etc. "Go thy way," etc. "Woe also to them when I depart from them." "How long halt ye," etc. "He that being often reprov'd," etc. "Why should the work cease?" "The harvest is past," etc. "The Lord added to the Church daily," etc. "The door was shut," etc. "Examine yourselves," etc. "What wilt thou have me to do?" "Whosoever therefore shall confess me," etc. "Go work to-day," etc. "Let us not be weary in well doing," etc. "My spirit shall not always strive," etc. "The heart is deceitful," etc. "It is a fearful thing to fall," etc. "Who hath warned you," etc. "Because I have called," etc. "To-day after so long a time," etc. "What shall it profit," etc. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found," etc. "How shall we escape," etc. "Ho ! every one that thirsteth," etc. "What more could I have done," etc. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," etc. "I was alive without the law once," etc. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," etc. "Be ye steadfast," etc. "He that endureth unto the end," etc. "Feed my Lambs," etc.

But do any inquire what additional means may be wisely employed beside appropriate subjects and texts and appropriate preaching.

#### INQUIRY MEETINGS.

I reply : Inquiry meetings especially, properly con-

ducted, are very favorable opportunities for persuading anxious and seriously minded sinners to decide immediately to begin the service of God by prayer and holy living. If the numbers are large, the anxious may be invited to rise in the Church or Lecture room. But if the numbers are few who attend, at the minister's home or in any private residence, it may be well for them to be seated around the parlor table, and begin by singing an appropriate hymn. Then all may be requested to kneel while the minister leads them in praying for a special blessing and guidance in entering the path of eternal life. Then it may be profitable to read responsively such appropriate Scriptures as the 51st Psalm, the 15th of Luke, the 2d of Acts, or the 2d of Romans ; with such brief and practical comments as shall have direct reference to the instruction and guidance of the anxious inquirers for salvation. At the close all should kneel and be urged to *offer oral prayer* for themselves, even if they can say nothing more than "God be merciful to me, a sinner, for Christ's sake !" or the Lord's prayer.

On such occasions their sins of omission as well as commission should be explained and enforced with great plainness as well as directness, and practical and obedient trust in Christ as their only and all sufficient Saviour should be urged upon them, while they abandon *entirely all reliance upon their own morality* and trust in their good works for either justification or sanctification.

If they fear to begin God's service, lest they fail to persevere, they should be shown that in trusting to the help of divine grace in Christ Jesus, he is pledged to keep them from falling, and bring them safely to his heavenly kingdom.

#### MEASURES.

In the minister's earnest desire for the progress of a

genuine work of divine grace, he will break loose, when it shall seem expedient, to some extent, from the old established methods of saving men, and exercise a more practical faith in devising new plans and experiments for doing good. He will be a bold operator in religious work. His faith in God's readiness to bless new means, will lead him to push out new lines to secure increased attention, to rouse the Church, and to awaken careless sinners.

Jehovah encourages new and special efforts. He says : " Prove me and see if I will not pour you out a blessing," etc. " Put me to the test and see the results." He has delighted in the practical faith of his people not only in prayer, but in the diligent use of appropriate means.

Therefore, we should cherish a faith with unfettered wings, not a faith limited, bound hand and foot in the stocks of established and ordinary means. We must not hesitate to try new measures which appear promising. We must use sanctified ingenuity and good sense in devising new plans, while we use as far as expedient our old ways.

Let us give practical heed to such earnest suggestions as the following, from Rev. S. R. Dennen, a successful preacher and laborer in the revivals. He inquires :—

" How, for instance, shall I reach and win to Christ such a person ? I study my subject ; he or she may be reticent and shy, or open and accessible. I become familiar with temperament ; the best time and way of approach ; I pick up some thread of personal experience or family history ; I reach out now on this side, now on that, in tentative experiments, praying that the Spirit may accept and bless some of them. I reach that soul, and all Heaven breaks forth into strains of joy ; some one of my lines hooks the fish. Suppose I put out only the regulation line of God's sovereignty and established means,

should I have landed my game? Perhaps so ; perhaps not. I use regular means ; but others also. I cast the net on both sides of the boat."

The prayer-meeting is in the ruts ; no unusual thing ; smitten with chronic dullness ; prayers long and wandering and prosy ; singing nasal and twangy ; same routine, prayer, singing, Scripture, a whole chapter ; exhortation by leader ; remarks, prayers and pauses by brethren ; benediction ; dispersion. The young are not there ; the sounds are too doleful. The church are not there for the same reason.

How shall it be raised to newness of life and freshness of power? Try experiments ; have variety, spring, sparkle. Mix things ; now a praise-meeting, now a promise-meeting, now both in one. Have topics, discuss them ; a Bible service in which all shall join ; bring along some passage on which your own soul has feasted, talk about it ; come full of enthusiasm for whatever means is to be tried, never criticising measures, and you will find the conference room a very Bethel. The practical value is this : you offer the Spirit a variety of means to use and energize. You give scope and range to the Blessed Comforter, and a pleasant variety to different minds.

The same may be said of the Sabbath school and Sabbath service. We should resort to Bunyan's tactics—take the ear-gate first, then, pressing in through this, storm the citadel.

Our churches have lost power, lost their hold of the masses, by our regulation style of work and worship. It seems to me often to amount to this : a manifesto to the Spirit, if He is pleased to bless in a certain way and by time-honored means, we welcome His presence ; otherwise we must forego His visit. Times, people, themes, habits, vary. What avails now fails sometime hence.

Methods that succeed in one revival fail in another, in the same place and among the same people.

To go on in the same way year after year in the work of saving men, using the same means, is like sailing a ship with just so much canvas, blow high or low, steering her the same way from whichever quarter the wind may chance to blow, ahead or astern. Oh, for the versatility and good sense in laboring for the kingdom of Christ which men show in secular affairs. This certainly is possible and practical ; and this I suggest to use in Christ's service ; such a variety of means have so much flexibility and life ; so much that is solidly and variantly attractive ; so much the Spirit can energize ; so many channels all open along which His converting grace may descend upon our churches ; that we shall not fail the coming season to secure more and more powerful revivals, and reap a richer, broader harvest of precious souls. This will we do, God helping us.

#### PERIODS FOR A SERIES OF RELIGIOUS MEETINGS.

In the beginning of every year let special efforts be made to promote a harvest season of souls. Have we not reason to apprehend that about all the year is commonly spent in sowing and cultivating the crop in the moral vineyard of the Lord, with comparatively but little very direct and specific measures for gathering in the harvest any more at one season than another ?

But ordinarily I apprehend that the *winter season* in connection with the observance of the week of prayer in the beginning of the year, a *protracted meeting* of several days duration may wisely be appointed for *appropriate revival preaching*, with other direct and specific efforts *for gathering in a harvest of souls*. For while Christians give

themselves to earnest and importunate prayer, and pungent and personal exhortation, if the *attendance* and continued attention of the impenitent can be secured for a few days to *pungent revival preaching*, they must be converted in great numbers, by "the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven."

While spring and summer may be favorable for sowing and cultivating a crop, doubtless faithful efforts may be expected to be blessed of heaven in gathering in occasional sheaves, and sometimes many. The autumn and winter are, in the nature and peculiarity of the seasons, more favorable periods for protracted meetings and larger harvests, by God's good providence, as well as by his special grace.

It is for the want of more earnest and protracted consideration on the subject of religion that Christians backslide, and sinners remain careless. But the invigorating influence of the winter season is favorable for securing their continuous attention during a protracted meeting so as to secure a revival.

Hence it is obvious that ministers and churches who appreciate genuine *revivals as the richest of heaven's blessings, and as indispensable to the preservation of our nation and the conversion of the world*, should avail themselves of the most *favorable periods* and circumstances for making *special efforts* for their promotion, knowing that God hath "set times to favor Zion, when he will arise and have mercy upon her and make her fruitful in every good work."

In anticipation of a series of daily and evening meetings, it is commonly expedient for the ministers to preach on the nature, history, importance, and means of promoting true revivals of religion.

And also on God's moral attributes and the moral evi-



dences for the truth of his inspired word, and the duty and method of preparing the way of the Lord.

And during the week of daily meetings, Christians should not only lay aside as far as practicable their *ordinary business* ; but they should engage in thorough *religious visitation* from house to house during the forenoons of each day ; but attend the meetings regularly in the afternoons and evenings.

In the afternoons it may be expedient for the minister to preach, as I have before stated, on such subjects as backsliding, worldliness, self examination, entire consecration, sanctification, the prayer of faith, and personal efforts for the conversion of sinners. In the evening, on preparation to meet God, on the new birth, on the great sinfulness of impenitent sinners, and on endless punishment ; on Heaven, and qualifications for admission there, on the atonement and justification by faith, on quenching the spirit, the prodigal son, confessing Christ before men, and procrastination. Then seek for the immediate results of each sermon at the close, and God will revive his work.

#### HOW SHALL THE INFLUENCE OF A REVIVAL BE PERPETUATED ?

And in order to secure the most effective and *permanent results* of our direct preaching, in promoting the revival by the regular services of the sanctuary, we should seek for the culmination of its power by announcing the select scriptural passages beforehand, to be read in the week-day evening meetings for conference and prayer, and that the passages for prayer meetings on sabbath evenings, when such meetings are held on that evening, will be the texts and their contexts, so that the lay-brethren may enforce in their familiar and direct way the great truths they have

recently heard from the pulpit. And in the judicious use of such means, the minister will have his own faith strengthened. He will have stronger confidence in the efficacy of divine truth and in God's promises and intention to give it efficacy in saving perishing men.

He will not only have increasing reasons to expect success, but such expectation is essential to the best and most effective results. It will influence his choice of appropriate texts and the preparation of his sermons. In aiming at and expecting to make decided impressions, he will carefully consider the character and conditions of his hearers, and will seek to adapt means to that end. The expectation of success will also have a powerful influence upon the delivery of a discourse and render him peculiarly sympathetic, tender and earnest. Will he not naturally throw his whole soul into it, and compel his hearers to feel that he feels himself speaking to immortal beings, in view of judgment and eternity. In using such appropriate and prayerful application of divine truth, he will expect God's blessing. For He hath said: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Knowing God's readiness to bless, if the work does not progress, he will seek to remove the hindrances in his own heart, and inquire of his people for the stumbling blocks, lest any perish for whom Christ died, lest any wicked man, through his neglect or unfaithfulness, die in his iniquity and his blood be required at the watchman's hand.

#### FINAL APPEAL TO MINISTERS.

Is it not for the want of a deeper sense of ministerial responsibility for the salvation of perishing souls and for

the want of more earnest and direct appeals in warning men to flee from the wrath to come, that such widespread apathy prevails among the people, on the subject of true religion, for a series of years as the rule, and revivals occur only occasionally as an exception?

The impenitent who are "dead in trespasses and sins" relieve themselves of a sense of guilt and danger with the inquiry: "Who is the Almighty that we should serve Him? and what profit shall we have if we pray unto Him?"

Professors of religion excuse their backsliding and declension, as well as neglect of growth in grace and personal sanctification, with the plea of worldly care, and their encouraging hope of heaven, which may prove spurious when God shall try the hearts of men.

And may not the ministry be in danger of exonerating themselves to an alarming degree from a realizing sense of their responsibility in awakening and saving their hearers with the plea that "with God is the residue of the spirit," and it is his prerogative to regenerate the heart. And thus they may fail to realize the great and indispensable importance of appropriate human agency, and the truth that, "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death." If this be so, does it not follow, as President Davies has said, that "ministers should preach as in the sight of God, as if they were to step from the pulpit to the supreme tribunal."

Certainly they should deeply feel their subject. They should "melt with emotion and tears, or shudder with horror when faithfulness constrains them to denounce "the terrors of the Lord," "the wrath of the Lamb."

They should glow and melt with sacred ecstasies, when the love of Jesus and the way of salvation is the theme of pathetic entreaty.

"They should preach as if they ne'er should preach again,  
And as dying men to dying men."

Should not the ministry of our times, in these days "of the right hand of the Most High," be stimulated to greater earnestness and fidelity in preaching, by the eloquent appeals of the sainted Griffin, whose labors were crowned with genuine, powerful and numerous revivals of true religion, through a long and successful life in saving souls?

"How soon, my brethren," said this eminent minister of Christ, "will the amazing reality of the judgment and eternity break upon our unearthly vision, and fill us with ecstasy or despair !

"I cast my thoughts forward but a little, and behold the dead are rising, the elements melting, saints rejoicing, devils trembling. The Judge appears upon the great white throne. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we are before the judgment seat with our respective flocks. The faithful and the unfaithful shepherds of every age are there. The trial proceeds, the books are closed, the final sentence is pronounced. The heavens are opened, and the pit yawns, the eternal song and the eternal wail are both begun. O! may we then rise to shine with a great multitude, saved through our unworthy instrumentality, to shine with them, as the brightness of the firmament, as the stars forever and ever."

## A REVIVAL OF RELIGION.

But what is a revival of religion? It is a condition of intensified spiritual activity, in which God specially blesses men who do their duty, and men—under God's special gracious influence—find it peculiarly easy to do their duty. Heaven seems very near. All good motives take on unusual force. The world appears a mean, poor, husky thing to live for. Sin becomes exceeding sinful. There is visible beauty in holiness. The Saviour is seen to be altogether lovely. The gentle leading of the Holy Spirit is recognized as a practical and abiding force, which can be relied on, and is quick and sensitive in its response to penitent appeals. The soul can trust. The heart can love. Self-denial becomes luxury. The Christian spirit goes forth eagerly toward all men. It will very gladly spend and be spent for them. By consequence—in God's tender willingness, and man's quickened activity—the truth is magnified, and a great number that believe turn unto the Lord; and day by day are added to the company of the Church those that are being saved.—*The Congregationalist*.

## THE GREAT NEED OF REVIVALS.

BY REV. C. M. SOUTHGATE.

"Shall we pray for a revival?" is asked. One pastor wants to answer, Yes; pray for a revival not only in weak and dying churches, but also in the healthy ones. I mean a revival as commonly understood, the presence of the Spirit with unusual converting power. Given a church with many members, efficient in Christian work, respected in the community, with additions at almost every communion, that church needs such a blessing.

1. It is good for the Christians. It lifts the busy from the oppression of their cares and the gay from the fascination of their pleasures, to breath the tonic air of spiritual mountain tops. Consecration is renewed and faith established. Smoky lanterns are cleansed, broken lights replaced, and their lights shine clearly once more. The home is blessed. Parents become more watchful of temper and tongue, ambitions for their children are purified, the long silence on personal religion is broken by tender words and tearful prayers. Neighbors look for the kingdom to come at their own doors. Faithful brethren and sisters have grace to heal little differences, and grub out roots of bitterness which have hidden beneath the surface. Better than all, deserted closets hear once more the voice of secret prayer. But these things ought always to be. Yes, but they are not. Is there one church in a hundred

so pure that a few months of genuine revival will not bless it in all these ways?

2. A revival gives opportunity for proclaiming a strong gospel. Revival theology is distinctively Pauline ; this is an observed fact. Where unevangelical or semi-evangelical teachings, nominally religious, abound in a community, such truths are ordinarily heard with disfavor. If preached earnestly most of the unconverted and some "professors" draw themselves in and shut up as tight—I can think of no fitter comparison—as a box-turtle. What pastor has not watched the process from his pulpit? Can he not be faithful if men will not hear? Surely ; but certain themes, such as the wrath of God and eternal punishment lose their impressiveness if often presented at length. He must choose the time when the spirit is touching deaf ears and slow hearts. And doubtless his own quickened sensitiveness to the Holy Presence has given him a deeper conviction of the reality and necessity of doctrines which no one loves to dwell upon.

3. Revivals win converts from classes not ordinarily reached. Additions to the church without marked revivals, however constant, are mainly from the near circles of Christian families and the Sabbath school. Times of aroused interest, with their greater faithfulness in work and prayer, and the healthy, blessed excitement which comes with the presence of a wonder-working God, reach outside. The godless and vicious are surprised by conscience and caught in the saving toils of repentance. If it were true that the average of additions to church-membership was not largely increased, the power of the church would yet be widely extended in the community. More men, more adults, more infidels, drunkards and blasphemers, proportionately, are saved by revivals than without them.

It is fair to expect that the influences mentioned will produce a deeper type of experience in converts ; and this I believe to be the fact. Convictions of sin and a full acceptance of salvation through the atonement are more frequent at such times ; while in other cases these experiences are too apt to be delayed till later years, and perhaps never come with power.

As for unhealthy reaction, it is scarcely to be feared when the work is kept within the control of the pastor, and mainly or wholly carried on by himself and his church. The methods of the millennium may, perhaps, omit revivals ; possibly one church in a thousand may not need them to-day ; but the churches which most of us know will fail in their mission unless often blessed by this peculiar converting presence of the Holy Spirit.



## IS SINAI EXTINCT?

THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

We have just laid down the fascinating biography of the late Dr. Eadie of Scotland—the erudite commentator, and one of the most robust Scotchmen of his time. The doctor describes a wonderful night which he spent at the base of Mount Sinai during a protracted thunder-storm. For hours, the whole atmosphere was ablaze with lightning, and the ancient mountain roared as if the chariots of Jehovah were coursing through the granite pinnacles. It was a most vivid reproduction of that scene when there were thunders and lightnings on the summit and all Israel waited trembling in the camp beneath.

As we read the striking narrative the thought arose in our mind : Oh ! that the people of our times could be made to hear more distinctly the solemn voices of Sinai, uttering forth the sacred authority of *law*, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the sure retribution of a wrath to come ! Never was there a time when there was a more urgent necessity for preaching God's holy law, in all its scope of righteous demand and just penalty. Never was there a time when the popular *conscience* needed a more thorough toning up. Never has there been a time when that sharp sword of the Spirit—which Finney used to wield—was oftener required to cleave sinners' hearts and to bring them to repentance.

Some people imagine that Sinai is extinct. Certain pulpits seem to be pitched so far away from the sublime mountain, that its august peak is no longer visible, and its righteous thunders against sin are no longer audible. With this school of rose-water ministers, the theology of law is voted obsolete and barbarous ; the world is to be tamed and sweetened and sanctified entirely by a theology of love. They preach a one-sided God—all mercy and no justice—with one-half of his glorious attributes put under eclipse. Even sinners are not to be warned, with tears and entreaties, to flee from the wrath to come. They are to be coaxed into holiness by a magical process which makes nothing of repentance, and simply requires a "faith" which costs no more labor than the snap of a finger. This shallow system may produce long rolls of "converts," but it does not produce solid, sub-soiled Christians.

Sinai is not an extinct mountain in Bible theology. Not one jot of its holy law has been lowerer or repealed. In one very vital sense no Christian is "free from the law." It would not be a "happy condition" for him if he were so, any more than it would be a happy condition for New York or Chicago to disband their police, and to let loose their criminals into the streets. So far from being a kindness, it would be eventual cruelty to any man, or any community, to place them beyond the reach and the just penalties of divine law.

This is especially an unfortunate time in which to preach a limber-backed theology which has no stiffening of the word "*ought*" in its fiber, and which seldom disturbs men's consciences with the retributions of sin. Society will not be regenerated with cologne-water. We need more of the sacred authority of *law* in our homes—more enforcement of law in the commonwealth—more

reverence for God's law in our hearts—more law preaching in our pulpits, and more "law-work" in the conversion of souls which are to represent Christ by keeping His commandments. Such successful workmen as Lyman Beecher (would to God that his voice could ring again in certain pulpits!) and Chas. G. Finney, and Kirk, and Daniel Baker, made much of the moral government of God. They never capped Sinai. Under their plain, bold preaching of the guilt of sin, and its deserved retribution, the hearts of sinners were pricked through with sharp conviction. Being thus convicted of their own guilt sinners came to know why they required an atonement, and they understood *why* they must flee to a glorious all sufficient Saviour. Such preaching of the truth broke up the fallow-ground, and produced great crops of thorough Christians.

Set it down as a truism that the minister does the best work who emphasizes most forcibly the depravity of the human heart, the majesty of law, and the complete sufficiency of Christ's life as our model, and Christ's death as the atoning sacrifice for sin. The apostles preached law as well as gospel. Peter "pricked the hearts" of three thousand sinners with the naked blade of truth, and they were converted to Christ before sunset. Paul reasoned about righteousness, temperance, judgment to come, in the very teeth of a licentious governor. All the best revival discourses of Whitefield, Edwards, Nettleton and Payson emphasized the holiness of God, the guilt of sin, and indispensableness of obeying Christ's commandments. The only criticism I have to make on the preaching of my beloved friend Moody, is that he does not make quite enough of repentance before a sinner trusts Christ, nor enough of holy living as the proof that he has trusted Christ. Brother Moody gloriously exalts the cross; but

“Christ crucified” is not the *whole* of the Bible, after all.

It is not only in awakening sinners that God’s law plays a vital part : it is equally vital as an element in healthy, vigorous, useful, well developed piety. Sweet and devout emotions are very pleasant in their place, but Christianity is a great deal more than a rapture. It does not begin or end in a song or a sacrament. It is a *living loyalty* to God. Holiness really signifies a willing submission to God, a constant obedience to Him. Christ cannot be sincerely loved except by the disciple who keeps His laws.

Then, dear brethren, in a time of laxity and license, when men break trusts, and varnish over frauds, and deride strictness as “puritanical,” and make a mock at God’s law, let us direct their eyes toward Sinai, as well as toward Calvary. Knowing the terror of the Lord, let us persuade men to repent and flee unto that crucified Jesus whose blood cleanseth from all sin. He who thundered on Sinai invites from Calvary.

## SHALL WE HAVE REVIVALS?

We believe in revivals of religion ; we believe in special efforts to promote them, and that such efforts are both rational and Scriptural. We are not afraid even of the expression, "getting up a revival." Why should we be? Are men afraid of special efforts when they wish to promote other interests, educational, financial, or patriotic? Who calls a man a fanatic if he pleads for the cleaning of his village or town, or for public improvements, or for better schools? Who does not know that to arouse the public attention, and to reach the individual in any good, often requires the most persistent, prolonged and earnest agitation? Why should we be so slow to see that the history of the race shows that the majority of men never see their highest good without powerful appeals to them on the part of others? The whole trend of Scripture is in favor of revivals of religion. The Christian Church was born in a revival. It has never lived without revivals, and it never will.

The tendency of the race is toward materialism in secular life and formalism in devotion. These things creep upon us as insidiously as malarial poison inoculates all who come in its way. There was never a greater need of genuine revivals of religion than at this moment. We do not deplore theological discussion if conducted in a Christian spirit. Calvinism, and Wesleyanism and Lutheranism

will not do. What these holy men taught and lived in the line with Christian teaching will remain. Whatever they held and taught that was not Christian must perish. Almost anything is better than indifference. An old pilot once said that you cannot steer a boat while it is lying still. There is more hope for a man who is trying honestly to promote an error than for one who lives carelessly and in false security. Movement is life. Stagnation is death. We are united strongly only when we are all lifted to a higher plane. Touch the heart, and you bring us together. Set before us the loss of a soul, and all that it means, and you break down our philosophy and science, falsely so-called, and merge us into an army for the salvation of the lost. It is easy to say that we want a revival. It is not so easy to get the consent of our worldly natures to the sacrifice and self-abnegation, and humiliation, and fervent prayer which must precede an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Whatever else the Church does, or does not do, whatever else a minister may or may not accomplish, all is failure unless souls are converted. "If my locks be shorn," said Samson, "then my strength goes from me, and I become just as any other man." That is it precisely. The Church may do many good things in a social way in the community, it may be a first-class ecclesiastical club, it may do much for higher culture, and so may any other organization. But the business of the ministry and of the Christian Church is to convert men from sin unto God; to turn men from the ways of death unto the path of eternal life. We will not argue this. Christians everywhere know that it is true. The world lieth in wickedness. Christ says that men who reject him now shall seek him and not find him. He says that the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever. The soul that sinneth,

it shall die. These shall go away into everlasting punishment. We put the responsibility for these doctrines on him. We receive our commission from him. He is the God that answereth by fire. Let us turn with all our hearts to him in humble submission and loving service, and faithful hearts—praying for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on all our churches. We die without it.—*Reformed Presbyterian.*

## SHALL MY CHURCH BE REVIVED?

REV. E. S. HUNTRESS.

"The signs of the times" seem to indicate that our churches are on the eve of a revival. *All* the signs are known only to the Spirit that "searcheth all things." The speculations of the past few years have driven saints to their knees. The unforeseen issue of our National Council means more than the most sagacious can at present understand. The question, however, which concerns each individual pastor is, "Shall *my* church be revived?"

No man can get up a revival; it must come down from the Father of Light. Many a minister has determined to have a revival and failed. The writer knew an honored Massachusetts pastor, now gone to his rest, who labored for years in this spirit, without success. "Man proposes, but God disposes." When, after repeated and mortifying failures, we realize our inefficiency, then the Spirit begins. And usually—not always—in the pastor's own heart first; the exceptions prove the rule of God's kingdom. We are under-shepherds of the flock. "When the good shepherd putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them and the sheep follow Him." St. Paul wrote, "Be thou an example to the believers." "I will give you pastors according to mine heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding."



Dear brethren, are we feeding the church of God? As our people listen to us on the Sabbath, are their souls fed with spiritual food? Do they with tearful eyes thank us for the truth? Oh, the satisfaction of hearing not a syllable of the preacher, but words of heartfelt praise of the Master! As we visit during the week, do we love to pray with the sick and the suffering? Can we, in the liberty of the Spirit, converse with the unsaved about their souls? Do we *preach* God's Word, instead of defending it? The "sword of the Spirit," like other swords, is proved by its use. Preaching *about* Christ will not save men. Are we revived in our own hearts? If our people were like us, would our church have a revival? Head power can never touch a heart. Culture must be baptized with the Holy Ghost before it can become a power.

Oh, for this special baptism upon us as ministers of the Word! The least longing of our heart for this baptism will be honored, for it is the Spirit Himself seeking to bless us. The Christian church has always believed that the Holy Spirit inspires the desire for Himself. There is deep significance in the change in our Lord's expression from, "Our Father who is *IN* the heavens," to "Our Father who is *OUT* of the heavens," as recorded in Luke xi: 2, 13.

This gift of the Spirit is the only one which God makes certain by a special promise. It comes even before the lips have uttered the audible prayer. "Before they call I will answer; and while they are speaking I will hear."

Tell him that his very longing is itself an answering cry,  
That his prayer, "Come, gracious Father," is my answer,  
"Here am I."

Every inmost aspiration is God's angel undefiled;  
And in every, "Oh, my Father!" slumbers deep a "Here,  
my child."

## GOD'S PERSONAL LETTERS FOR A REVIVAL.

REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"So the posts went with the letters from the king."

"So the posts passed from city to city,—but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them."—2 Chron. xxx., 6 and 10.

We have here given, in detail, some little history of a real revival. Ahaz has been sinning against God. He had built his idol homes and established his groves for guilt; but his successor, a young man of only twenty-five years of age, overthrew these gods and the system of idolatry, and as a leader he brought the people back to the worship of the true God. What a grand example for every youth to follow! We read of one in the days of old, who was afraid to "up and slay" the enemies of God; "for he feared, because he was yet a youth." It should have been his strongest reason why the deed ought to be done by him, and then he might have gloried in his young manhood which enabled him to accomplish the feat. Hezekiah came into a very high position, but he was equal to the responsibilities involved thereby. It is not always age that best fills the throne. Youth, at certain times, is the most blessed and the most useful. Hezekiah, under the dictates of the Spirit of God, with the gracious help vouchsafed by God, whom he so heartily trusted, was enabled to reform the nation, and to bring into the kingdom the worship of the right King. Young people

should be proud to serve God and obey King Jesus ; and even if age has established iniquity in the land, even if there be those that are older and know better and do not do it, that still reject Christ, that pass by his sanctuaries, overturn his sacred altars ; it is for us with the boldness of our youth to cry out against the same, and the manliness, which is imparted by the Spirit of God, to do our best to reform and bring about a spiritual revival as soon as we are able. The king had no easy work, but he was master of the toil. He had a trust which was stern and strong. In doing the right, he feared no man. He did, as you will find in the 5th verse of this chapter, that which was a great novelty and something old-fashioned. "They had come together to keep the passover of the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem, for they had not done it for a long time in such sort as it was written." Thus he established the remembrance of the delivering mercy of Jehovah. If we would bring back those that have slidden from the truth, if we would restore such as have fallen away from the faith, or even if we would win from the far-off country of prodigality those that know not and care not for him, we must remind them of redemption by blood. Let the passover be prominent, and men shall soon turn to God. Preach the besprinkled blood, and many shall be led to trust it. Old-fashioned as this doctrine of the atonement is, may it still flourish, and under God's blessing it shall "bear fruit in its old age." No man that approaches the cross of Christ and beholds the sacrifice upon it can long remain unmoved, but will soon repent, and clinging to the Crucified, become a consecrated creature. Put it to the test, and so make it a matter of bright experience in your own soul, dear reader.

Now, God has always, in every age, been pleased to send some kind messengers upon errands of mercy to a

rebellious people. Here the posts must be sent by the king, Hezekiah. I want to show that in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, the same gracious work is carried on under Divine authority. God, in sending out letters of promise and of mercy to the sinful, acts after the fashion of Hezekiah. I do not think that I shall be erring, nor shall I be going too far, if I borrow an illustration from the common person that we all know very well—the postman in our midst. I shall be like the Pattern Prince of Preachers. Christ himself condescended to use a sower as a living illustration to his discourse, he called men that sought to win souls, fishermen, he pictured a farmer's life, and preached a goodly sermon from such a subject. If the Holy Spirit be with the word, even a common theme may become profitable and redound to God's glory. So we say, "The postmen went from city to city, but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them." A postman does very much what a preacher has to do, and a good preacher ought to be very much like a postman. He is a man that is appointed to a work, and his is a special mission. He is sent to carry a message, and this is all his business. I have known a postman that has been a shoemaker as well, but that is just to fill in some few odd hours, and the post office authorities do not require him to mend boots. His sole duty is the collection and distribution of missives in a regular round. A real gospel preacher—a man that has had communication with the Great King—has to go in-and-out, up-and-down, round-about, amongst the pews, in aisles and galleries, leaving letters of love and missives of mercy which have come from Immanuel addressed to the fallen sons of men. What is more, this man has nothing to do with the message but to deliver it. Now there are a great many people that hear preachers that are

always critics, and cannot help being so, for they were born like it; still they ought to rectify the fault as soon as they can. They only come to hear, in order that they may just discuss and dissect the truths the preacher has enunciated. The postman has nothing to do with what anybody may like to say or think of the letter he has just delivered. Do you blame the man when he leaves a disagreeable note at your door? You know very well the good fellow has nothing to do with it. Then why should he who has been sent as an ambassador to deliver the message of God to sinners be always spoken against and criticised? Nay, it is our duty to preach that which we are convinced of as the truth. We are to speak that which we have seen and heard and which we do believe, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. You must quarrel with the Master and not with the servant, if you do not like the message. Then the servant of God should not be ashamed of his work. Every one that has anything to do, whether it is in just giving a tract—for that is passing on a message—if it is in reading from the old book to the bed-ridden, the sick, the sorrowing, if it is to preach from platform or pulpit, you are but giving out the letters from God; do not be ashamed of it. As the postman dons the livery of government, so may we, not by parsonic dress, recommend our preaching, but in our persons with holy boldness live the truth before our fellow-men. But what about the letters? We read: "So the posts went with the letters from the king;" yes, we do not preach that which we have written, but rather that which we have received from on High. Every letter bears the King's head, and the postmark of Heaven is upon it. Neither is it one of those disgusting epistles—an anonymous one. It is signed in a three-fold manner. The Father, Son and Spirit are one in this

divine work. What are we to do with the Word? Why, we ought to be in a hurry to make it known. We ought to deliver the glad tidings with despatch, for the "King's business requireth haste." There are some that think that opportunities may come to them to say something to somebody, somewhere, somehow, at sometime or other. Friend, do it at all times. Get to the unsaved and tell them of "Jesus the Mighty to save." The postman must be on his rounds daily, and in some cases hourly, and he can never shirk his duty. There is to be no loitering. Delays might cost mints of money and months of misery. It is ours to rush to the sinner and bear the gracious words of truth; those golden words of grace which God has given to us. And why? The answer we do not have to go far for; we see it down our streets, even on the sunniest Sabbath day. The funeral coach and the mourning car each speak to us of death; therefore, we should be swift to bear the words of salvation to dying men.

Let me be postman for awhile. In the Bible I have a satchel full of gracious letters, as full as ever it will hold, from cover to cover. How oftentimes have these messages been dropped into your hearts, but you have never taken notice of them. You have torn up the Word, or as I heard of a man the other day lighting his pipe with a page from God's book, you have burnt it. Perhaps you have done as the people in the text did with the King's messages, "laughed them to scorn, and mocked at them." Yet the mercy of God is towards you at this time, inasmuch as he comes again knocking at your door. Will you not let him in? Will you not listen to his voice? Will you not accept his gracious message?

Here are one or two of these letters. I think I can read on the envelope of one that it is addressed "*To a sinner in the city.*" It is the King that writes. Please

ponder, for "where there is the word of a King there is authority." "To a sinner in the city." "I came not to call the righteous but *sinners* to repentance." Have you got the letter, soul? Sinner, do just take that message for yourself. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*." Get hold of that note. Keep it in your heart. Cherish it, for Christ says it. "While we were yet *sinners* Christ died for us." Have I dropped it in anywhere? I trust the Spirit of God has, poor sinner; it is all for you.

"*Convicted one*," living in "*Repentance Villa*," here is a word for you—so sweet, so kind: "Come now, let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Does not that suit you? Is not that just the very message that you were wanting? You thought that He would have nothing more to do with you; your heart is bleeding; you are spirit broken; you are sorrowing, and the Saviour is, too, and he wants now to forgive you. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." There is hope for the despairer here, and for the conscience-convicted one.

Yet again—for the postman must just look at his envelope, ere he leaves it at the house—"To the sad," who dwell in "*Mournful Grove*." Oh, what kind of word shall we have for such as you? Well, this is the message. I leave it to you to open. Now read—"the bruised reed he shall not break nor quench the smoking flax." "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Come, dry up those tears, friend; hush those sighs, be sad no longer. Here is a love-letter from your Lord; listen to what he says. He will bind the broken reed: he will blow the smoking flax—not out, but to a flame. He it is that has pity and power to bless,

*"To the careless,"* residing in *"Indifference Road."* Is that where you live, man? You that are thoughtless; you that care for nobody and nothing, you say, except yourself; and I do not think that you do that, yet, for your soul is hastening to hell and to eternal destruction. There you are amongst the giddy crowd. Listen to this. "The axe is laid unto the root of the tree," and "He that believeth not is condemned already." It is not the preacher that speaks; it is a post from the King—a letter from the Monarch. Will you not hearken to it? He has marked the tree with a great cross; as I have seen done in the country lately. The woodman in the forest is hacking and hewing down the trees. Oh, with what a crash they fall! And there they must lie. So, soul, this word is to you to night in your indifferent condition. Take heed to it, lest a worse thing come unto you.

I have two here addressed alike, but the persons live in different places. *"Mr. Doubter," "Jailer at Phillippi."* He lives in a prison. You see, the postman has to call there as well as at other places. This keeper has sent up a question; he has written a letter from his heart to God, and it has been this: "What must I do to be saved?" Here is the answer: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Come, doubter, do as Christ tells you, and you will be saved too. And the postman has to go to the sea-ports, and find out the ships and the sailors. I find that *"Mr. Doubter"* was once in a boat on the *"Lake of Galilee,"* and even amongst the disciples; and this is the message which Christ sends to any believer who is unbelieving: "O ye of little faith, wherefore do ye doubt?" Come out of your fears and come to faith. Come away from doubting to simple trusting, and the waves shall be hushed, and you shall reach the shore, for Christ is there ready to save and willing to bless. Here



is one. I wonder whom this is for. I am sure that it is meant for somebody. It is addressed "*To a prodigal,*" in "*a far-off country.*" Where are you, young friend—got right away from home? Father has written to you. Do you not want to see what he says? "Oh, no, I am afraid that he is very angry with me. I dare not go home." But Father wants you—now you believe what I say. Just read. "I will heal your backslidings; I will love you freely." Is not that just like a father; for the right kind of father will always forget and forgive? And there is pleading, too, I think; it is a mother that has put a postscript to the note for this wayward daughter of hers, or this wilful boy that ran away from home, to read. Do you see how it is written? It is as if the Lord had the sympathy of a mother: "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die?" Oh, listen to this word. Take the letter, just carry it out, come home, and you will be blessed even now:

Return, O wanderer, to thy home,  
Thy Father calls for thee;  
No longer now an exile roam  
In guilt and misery.  
Return, return!

I think that sometimes the postman must be a very sad man when he has got in his bundle some of those letters with deep black borders. If I were to deliver such at any of your homes, I should do it with a trembling hand, and certainly with a tear in my eye. I should wonder what was inside. I am afraid that I could easily guess. These letters come, and they tell of death. Old age receives them, young men have them and maidens too, and hearty men and women in middle age, or in the very prime of youth, have the same. And what is the Word of God?

The post comes from the King of all. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." You with the grey hairs, as you read this, "how will you escape if you neglect so great salvation?" Flee from the wrath to come," you that have swift legs and power to run amongst the youth of the land; and you that are in the prime of age, listen—"This night thy soul is required of thee." Oh, I have another letter, and it is addressed to a young lady, "*Miss Timidity*," at *Simon's House, Bethany*." You know the woman that crept in and came around the couch where Christ was, and she was so frightened because she was a sinner. There is nothing that causes fear like sin. When you are guilty, you are a coward. This poor woman felt her guilt. Oh, what is the message to such? Christ deals graciously with you. He writes thus: "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven thee." "Mary, do not be frightened because Lazarus is dead; do not sit in that home of yours in Bethany and cry and cry." There is hope, for this is the message: "The Master is come, and calleth for thee; be not faithless but believing." Away with timorousness, and now bring in trust. Why there is one yonder—you cannot see him. You can just hear the postman's voice, perhaps, and the letter is addressed to "*A seeker*," in "*the House of Prayer*." "That is me," says one, "have you got a letter for me? Are you sure it has come right from the King, for I want his word and nobody else's? I believe what you and my best friends say, but I would believe more what Christ says." Well, he was a seeker after sinners, and this is what he says to-day to such: "I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." You are groping about; you are feeling your way to Christ. Friend, walk in, the door is wide open, for "him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Looking at our text, I read:

"So the posts went from city to city, but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them." But there were letters for them as well as for others, and I have a message for the "*Scoffer*" that lives in the "*World's Market*." Mark it well, you that ridicule religion. "I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh." "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, and the Lord shall have them in derision." You cannot bear to be laughed at. Now you know it. If anybody pokes a jest at you, you are disagreeable towards them, and will not speak to them, perhaps for a week or a month together. You cannot stand a joke. What will you do, soul, you that can ridicule and scoff so easily, and wag your head so lightly at sin and the Saviour? What will you do when "he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh at you, and mock when your fear cometh?" Take this letter, consider it, and continually come to God and seek his pardoning love. You know some of our envelopes have different monograms and crests upon them, and stamps at the back, and some are very artistic, and some are skilful, too, for there is a depth of meaning in them. I hold a letter in my hand—it is marked with a "tear drop;" and is addressed "*To the afflicted*" who live in "*Sorrow Street*." Oh, I think there are many like that, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." What is his message to such? "Jesus wept." Oh, is it not sweet to know that there is some one who can sympathize with you, because he has known what it is to cry, too? and, what is more, here is something else following. Oh, it is a kind letter that he writes. "I have seen your tears." You let them fall upon the ground, and they are lost, or perhaps wipe them with a handkerchief away; but he holds a bottle to catch them—he loves them; he counts them as precious diamonds, or dewdrops of infinite worth in his esteem. "I

have seen thy tears." And then he winds up with a sparkle of hope and bright blessing: "God shall wipe away all tears from all eyes." Weep not longer, mourner, here is comfort indeed. I have seen the postman sometimes carrying a great big bundle of letters all alike—circular letters, that will go round the whole neighborhood, about some goods to come into everybody's home. And there are letters for all in God's word. Here is one; it has got a red border to it, and is specially addressed "*To the poor*" that exist down "*Sin Alley*." "What! is the postman coming down to see us? Is our back slum going to be visited?" Yes, the gospel shall go down into the dens of infamy. Praise God for the open-air postmen who just preach at the street corners, and catch the wayfarers and the fools that are hurrying on to destruction. Here is the message; do not mar it: "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin." Is not that just the thing for a dirty place and for sinful souls—"*cleanseth from all sin?*" Poverty-stricken and polluted one, this is for you. Only believe it, and you will be saved.

But here is one. Oh, is it not got up well—a gilt edge all round it! Where is the postman going to take that, do you think? Well, the letter is addressed to "*My Lord and Lady*," and they inhabit the mansion in "*Guilty Square*." He has to leave them there as well as amongst the poor. "The poor have the gospel preached to them;" but "the Lord is equally present to heal" the Scribes and Pharisees and the high men of society. This is the letter unto such, written in gilt all the page o'er: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have everlasting life." My lord, my lady, aristocrat, well-to-do and wealthy, here is gold for you out of the mint of heaven.

Here is grace for you, and it can save your soul, if you will but believe it.

My last letter is this. It is silver-lined and it comes to those that live in "*Weary Lane*," up "*Steep Hill*." Are there none in the world, by nature as well as name, that are "Feeble?" What is the word of comfort that comes to such! Oh, how brightly it gleams! "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." See—it is sent right straight to your hearts. Will you take the letter? Tired as you are, the Lord still cares for you. Thank him for his message and trust him at all times. "So the posts went." May God bless the delivery of the letters for his glory's sake.—Amen.

## HOW TO HAVE A REVIVAL.

The building of every one over against his house, under Nehemiah's administration at Jerusalem more than two thousand years ago, is what of all things is needed at the present time. A great deal of work is required to be done by Christians in their own hearts, in order that they may not greatly fail of success in their work as the servants of Christ. In the absence of the most desirable of all prosperity, it is vain to look for a better state of things until there is an increase of personal piety among God's people individually ; and until concerning those who in these latter days claim to be on the Lord's side, there shall be a fulfillment of the prophet Zechariah's prediction as to the mourning "apart." Zech. 12:12-14. Returning unto the Lord must be, not in the mass, but one by one, personally, each one as an individual seeking the Lord. Renewed work for God must begin in the hearts of those who would not lose their reward as accepted laborers. Here at home, in the heart, is the evil, and the remedy must be applied here in order that the cause of God may prosper. If instead of complaining about the broken walls of Zion, and if instead of anxious care to ascertain at whose door the greatest breach in the wall is to be found, all would commence building over against their own doors, by humbling their hearts before God, the days of mourning would soon be ended, and the time of gladness would be hastened in its coming.

It may be the case that while some see with painful emotions that the walls remain unbuilt, and think they have a heart to work in rebuilding them, they may be too much engaged in building over against the houses of others, or at least in making estimates as to the amount of work required to be done against other houses than their own. In the turning of attention to the broken places in the wall, here and there, they may have lost sight of the work to be done nearer home, even against their own houses. And then, their desire for building up the wall, or the revival of religion, may have been too general, and without sufficient regard to the claims of the work upon them as individuals. They may have contemplated the work too much as a whole, and failed to duly consider the important part devolving upon them personally. Let each one begin with his own heart and make all right there, and the whole work will unquestionably soon be accomplished.

So long as the hearts of accredited workers are hard and unbroken, cold and unimpressible, indifferent and unconcerned, disaffected and unforgiven, resentful and unrelenting; so long as these nominal laborers are remiss in duty and culpable in conduct, inconsistent in life and harmful in influence; so long as their example is unworthy, and their position wrong,—so long there is a breach in the wall over against their own houses, loudly calling upon them for immediate, earnest, vigorous, and faithful work in building the wall there. If they are liable to the charge of Peter to Simon the Sorcerer, "Thy heart is not right in the sight of God," and if concerning various sins of omission and commission which they would or should condemn in others, they might be addressed as when Nathan said unto David, "Thou art the man," then they need to begin at once to build over

against their own houses, by repenting as in "dust and ashes," and turning unto God "with purpose of heart," saying with Elihu, "If I have done iniquity, I will do no more."

Those who would see the cause of God prospering must attend closely to their own piety, and see to it that it is not so defective as to greatly, if not entirely, hinder them from successfully working for God. Unquestionably, there are many who must look more to themselves than is ordinarily the case with them, if they would availingly pray, "O, Lord, revive thy work." The answer of this prayer, as offered by them, must commence with them. In their own revival must be the beginning of that revival for which they pray. So long as any think and talk about the desirableness that the church should be revived, and lose sight of the need that they as individual members of the church should be revived, they cannot reasonably expect that the God of heaven will prosper them, for they will never, in this way, properly arise and build. The psalmist prays, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit." His purpose and expectation, as to the answer of this prayer, are revealed when he immediately says, "Then will I teach transgressors thy ways and sinners shall be converted unto thee."—*Watchman*.



## METHODS IN REVIVAL WORK.

REV. H. M. MOREY.

There are no machine methods that will certainly produce revivals, or be effective in their conduct. Much more depends upon the presence of the Holy Spirit than upon methods, and with His help, almost any methods will be successful. Yet we are not to despise methods, for God works through instrumentalities, and He has blessed some men and some methods more than He has others. There are two mistakes that we should carefully avoid.

1. *We must not depend upon any men or any methods.* God and His Spirit and His Word are our reliance.

2. *We must not dictate to God, nor limit Him in His choice of instruments and methods.*

Because some have been truly converted who have come to the front seats as inquirers, we are not to imagine that any sanctity attaches to those seats, or that God is any more willing to save there than elsewhere. Because pastors are the wisely appointed leaders of the flock, we must not put conditions on the Lord, and tell Him that if He does not save our people through our instrumentality, no neighboring pastor or evangelist shall come to our help. If God blesses some churches with a regular and moderate growth, they should not be suspicious because in other churches persons are converted by scores, or even by thousands, as on the day of Pentecost. Christ-

ians whose ability and goodness are unchallenged, sometimes seem to hinder the cause they love. They are willing and anxious that God should convert men, if He will only do it in ways to which they and their fathers have been accustomed ; but they are suspicious of any other measures. Now God is a Sovereign, and has a great many methods of reaching the hearts of men for their conversion and revival, and if any church or any minister dictates to Him that He must bless only the one method to which they have been accustomed, probably He will not conform to their traditions. Some years of experience and observation convince me that this is one important reason why in some churches drouth prevails, and revivals are the rare exceptions. They pray and work and wonder why God passes them by. They do not honor His sovereignty. They bind His free and wondrous working to the narrow limits of their wisdom and their traditions.

What methods have been owned of God, so that we may expect His blessing on their use ?

1. *God has blessed the preaching of the truth as an important means of preparing the way for revivals, and for conducting them.*

What kinds of truth have been thus effective ? Those sermons that have been skimmed from the daily papers ? Those that are evolved from the columns of crimes and accidents, or from science, and history and poetry ? Those methods of preaching may be interesting ; they may gather congregations, and have much important truth in them. But if the aim of the preacher is to lead to Christ as well as to attract hearers, and to secure conversions rather than compliments, the great bulk of preaching will not be of that kind. We should aim rather to present those truths that tend to awaken faith in God and in the

Bible. We should aim to strengthen faith in God's promises to those who pray, and lead Christians to consecration and to an expectation of God's help. The preacher must honor the Holy Spirit, and make Him known in his character and his work. He will strive, as Peter did on the day of Pentecost, to deepen conviction of sin, and then will hold up Christ as a Saviour. He may not find this preaching popular; even members of the church may visit on him their indignation; but if these truths are kindly and intelligently presented, and are welcomed in any congregation, the Lord will certainly bless that church with frequent and gracious revivals.

Brethren, what is the conscious aim of all our preaching? Is it to promote a revived condition of our churches, and secure the conversion of the lost? In the answer to these questions, we may find the secret of the presence or the absence of revivals in our ministry.

2. *God has also honored the method of holding frequent and repeated services for prayer and preaching.*

Yet he is not confined to this method. There have been, in rare cases, revivals and rich ingatherings where only the ordinary services have been held.

There is a true philosophy, however, underlying this method of holding repeated services. Impressions are often made on the Sabbath, and they are wiped out completely by the six busy days of the week. During special services, this impression is repeated on Monday evening, and deepened on Tuesday and the following evenings. In this way, though there was no interest at first, the attention is gained, and attention deepens into conviction, and conviction leads to decision and conversion.

Churches often make a mistake in being afraid to begin special services unless there is already manifestation of

interest. If there are "indications," they will go forward; if not they will wait. That may be walking by sight, and not by faith. The widow woman, in obedience to the command of Elisha, and in reliance on his promises, sent out for the empty earthen vessels when there were no indications that her one pot of oil would overflow. If she had waited for "indications," doubtless there would have been none. The disciples were in one accord in prayer and supplication, in obedience to Christ's command and promise, when as yet there were no indications of the Pentecostal blessing. I have known many occasions when there were no special indications of a coming blessing, and the outlook seemed almost hopeless; and yet God has blessed the repeated presentation of His truth, till the attention was compelled and Christians were revived. If the members of any church in our Presbytery will gather around the pastor prayerfully, while the truth is presented by him night after night in a warm, earnest, believing manner, I firmly believe that God will bless that Church with a revival.

Sometimes there are great advantages in inviting a neighboring pastor or an evangelist to do most of the preaching, as that releases the pastor to do much personal work for which he is well qualified. This is a good time—the best time of the year—to begin such meetings. People are not as busy as at the holidays. Pleasures do not call and crowd so hard. The weather is beautiful and the roads are good. The people have been scattered during the Summer, and the social instinct draws them together. God is willing to bless at any time; but His time is *Now*. The only difficulty lies in our poor, weak faith, that is watching for "indications," and waiting for the traditional Week of Prayer, before we dare begin.

3. *God has blessed various methods of asking the thoughtful to manifest their interest.*

We do our churches harm if we dare to dictate to God that He must deal with inquirers only in ways to which we have been accustomed. A young man just from the seminary became assistant pastor of a large church in a Western city. The pastor was an able man, but was in feeble health. The young man, with enthusiasm of youth, pressed those truths that would naturally lead to a revival. Soon there was an interest manifested in the Sabbath-school, and two or three meetings were appointed for the children and young people, and the interest deepened. He felt strongly that it was best to ask those to rise who wished to become Christians. He knew that that method had never been tried in that church, and that the Pastor and Session disapproved of it. What could he do? He took the responsibility, and gave the invitation, and six young people rose. He went home and told the pastor; but the success had justified the attempt, and the pastor said nothing against it, and afterwards, when he was able to attend the meetings, he sometimes used the same method. During some union meetings in South Bend, we followed the method of our Methodist brethren and invited inquirers to come to the front seats. There were good results, and I never knew of any harm. In another series of union meetings in the same place, the lecture room was used for the inquirers. In another place, after the sermon, an opportunity was given for any to retire who wished; but all were invited to remain who were willing that the pastor should talk with them on the subject of personal religion. It matters not so much what method is employed, as that some way be taken to meet inquirers personally for their instruction. It is our duty not only to preach, but to press them to an immediate decision for Christ, and then lead them to a public confession of His name.

## WHAT REVIVALS ACCOMPLISH.

C. L. GOODELL, D. D.

The pastor builds thoroughly and powerfully when he seeks for his Church the converting presence of the Holy Ghost in his promised fullness. Such periods of Divine quickening accomplish great results. They arouse the indifferent, and reach the careless. A great number of those who have had no early religious training, or have passed to manhood untouched by it, will be saved in no other way.

By revival work I do not mean such spasmodic efforts as are followed by long periods of repose, or to such as leave the converts uncared for to return to their old ways. I mean a faithful ingathering after sowing—a sowing in order to a speedy and full reaping.

The indifference to the harvest sometimes seen—pastors thinking if they only sow, and go to sleep sowing, God will bring in the sheaves—is a fallacy and a sin. While the good man sleeps the enemy fills the field with tares over his sowing. God uses harvesters of living, tireless men, and he needs many for the fields that are white. “In due time we shall reap.” In many Churches the time is overdue because the pastor has not put in the sickle, but been waiting for God to do it.

Revivals will always have opposers, but they are a part of God's plan in saving the world. The Church was begun in a revival, and in spiritual outpouring it shall end,

nations being born in a day, the glory of God filling the earth. Earth's hope is in these visits of God to his people.

Revivals awaken respect and awe for Christianity. Skeptics who have ridiculed the Bible feel the might of God, and the testimony of bad men converted shuts the mouths of boasters, shaking down the castle of self-righteousness. Revivals make the Bible a new book. They deepen piety, incite to prayer, lift up the family altar, and quicken all the drooping graces of the Church. Laymen are set to work, new streams of influence are opened, and men are raised up to special service. Difficulties are healed, alienations set aside, brotherly love made to abound, and knowledge and experience of Christian truth extended. In revivals God and eternity seem great, Christ's love near and precious, and Christian duty pressing.

Revivals bring the Church back to the simplicities of doctrine and worship, and Christian living. They awaken regard for the Sabbath and the house of God, the prayer-meeting, and all the Divine ordinances. They fill up the evening service, and make that hour the best in the Sabbath for reaching and saving the masses. By revivals ministers and Churches are more united, pastors and people are drawn into more endearing fellowship, and better established, benevolence is enlarged, lost joy restored, and both home and public standards of piety are elevated. Revivals make preaching more scriptural and pointed. The work of God, pure and simple, comes to the front. A personal Christ is set forth, and the evil of sin and the eternal loss of the soul without salvation

The doctrines of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, forgiveness of sin through the sacrifice of Christ, and the re-

wards and retributions at the judgment-day, are made vivid and weighty, and half truths and heresies starve.

Revivals take Churches out of the ruts of formalism and the fashions and poms of this world, putting new life into every thing. They lighten the burdens of the ministry. It is never so easy to preach and pray as in the Spirit's presence. They pay Church debts, lift up the fallen, and give the Church a wider field and a fresh lease of life and usefulness. Many "almost persuaded," will never start till this time comes. Missionaries and ministers and teachers are born in revivals, and great Christian societies, which bless the world, follow them. The Church is always becoming cold and entangled with the world without this freshening power of the Spirit.

A revival is another chapter added to the Book of Acts. Ministers and Churches must have such seasons of Divine renewal, consecrating hearts more fully, multiplying offerings, increasing service, moving thought and feeling profoundly toward God and the new life. Preachers preach better, teachers teach better, and parents are led to a greater faithfulness, finding a new beauty and joy in the home.

The breath of the Highest is on the community, and the hearts of believers yield a sweet odor, like the fragrance of spices outpoured.



## AGGRESSIVE REVIVAL EFFORT.

D. L. MOODY.

And Caleb stilled the people before Moses and said, Let us go up at once and possess it for we are well able to overcome it.—Numbers 13, 30.

God has invited us to cross over at Kadesh and possess the land. We have been listening to the ten spies long enough. Why continue pondering over the prospect of defeat. Ten out of twelve within the church predict defeat. And so ten of the twelve spies spent out to spy the land brought back what we would call in these days a majority report. They probably brought back also charts and maps, and they said—"We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey. . . . Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in that land, and the cities are walled and very great, and moreover, we saw the children of Anak there." They said the walls of the cities were of great thickness and they could not be taken. How blind and inconsistent is unbelief! These spies reported that the land "eateth up the inhabitants thereof," and in the next breath they stated that all the people they saw in it "are of great stature." In the sight of such men they were "as grasshoppers." When we lift our eyes from God obstacles come in our way, and if we wish to accomplish His work by our own strength we look small as grasshoppers in the

sight of giants. But if we look up, like Caleb and Joshua, if we keep our eyes fixed on Christ, and go forward in faith, looking to Christ, to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth, no obstacles can mar our progress. I think it was a mistake sending out these spies. But you may ask, Why—did not God ask that they should be sent out? Yes, but it was because of the hardness of their hearts. Faith sends out no spies. When you have within your reach a land flowing with milk and honey, what do you want of spies? Go out and take possession of it. Some Christians are always picking out somebody else to be sent out as a spy to report on the state of the land. They are like a committee appointed to do a certain work. If you had a committee, say, of twenty-five, and some one suggested that a forward movement should be made, twenty out of the twenty-five would pile up more objections in half an hour than could be overcome in a week. And the men who raise the objections are the men who are always predicting defeat. I was going to ask this congregation who were the ten spies that made the majority report. You cannot tell. Neither can you tell who were the sceptics of the last generation. The ten spies were the picked men of their tribes, I suppose, but the men that have in all times left an impression on the world are men of faith. They, like Joshua and Caleb, are willing to go out and take possession of the land. Nine-tenths of professing Christians are always predicting defeat. They are afraid that things won't be done "decently and in order," that there is going to be defeat, and that they won't be able to take the land. I can imagine Gideon, with his thirty-two thousand men, thinking, when some one brought him in the report that there were one hundred and thirty-five thousand arrayed against him. "What are we going to do with our small army against so many."

But God saw things differently. He did not say "Gideon, you have too small an army to go out against one hundred and thirty-five thousand men." No. He said, "Gideon, you have too many." And he said also, "Sift out of your army all those that are afraid, and send them home to their wives and mothers; send them to the rear out of danger." Gideon did as the Lord commanded. He called out his army and told all who were afraid to go home. Instantly twenty-two thousand men wheeled out of line, and, like cowards, sprang out of the way of danger. Gideon, was, perhaps, afraid that his army was then too few, but the Lord had made no mistake. We would be stronger than we are if we had our people sifted. Instead of Gideon having too few left, the Lord said to him, "Gideon, you have still too many; try them once more." This time they were taken to the brook, and nine thousand seven hundred wheeled out of line. Gideon had, therefore, only 300 men left. But three hundred men with hearts filled with love to God, with enthusiasm for His work burning in their souls, are worth more than thirty thousand who would keep all the time looking at the sons of Anak, and predicting defeat. Gideon's three hundred men were successful. "They stood every man in his place around the camp, and all the host ran and cried and fled." But it was not Gideon or his men that prevailed: it was "the sword of the Lord." If we go forward in faith to do what the Lord has commanded us to do, there will be marvellous results. Then there is another thing of which I wish to remind you. Don't be afraid of revivals. Some ministers tremble from head to foot the moment you speak of revivals. If I understand the Bible aright, we have many instances of revivals recorded there. If we had not a revival we would not have had the flood. When Moses was sent

down to Egypt to bring the children of Israel out of bondage they could not believe that he was coming to deliver them. One man going to deliver three million slaves, one man going to take them out of the yoke of the Egyptians, one man going to take them out of the yoke of their taskmasters ! They were held as slaves and considered valuable property. He was going to take them out from under that yoke. And I can well imagine some of your modern infidels meeting Moses going down to Egypt, and saying, "Where are you going ?" "Down to Egypt." "What for ?" "To bring up my countrymen out of bondage through this desert to the promised land." "And what are you going to do it with ?" "This rod." Would such an idea not be thought contemptible ? Moses had only a rod in his hand, and with that rod he divided the waters of the Red Sea ; with it he smote the flinty rock, and springs of water gushed forth. "I am that sent you" was sufficient for Moses. And if God used Moses to deliver the children of Israel can He not also use us in the present day ? We are living in a different day, it is true, but we have the same God that Moses had. What was it but a revival when Joshua took possession of the land ? What was it but a great revival under the judges ? The Jewish people were wandering away, and God raised men up to bring them back. When the false gods were put away at Mizpah, what was it but a revival ? When Elijah came back to Carmel was it not also a revival ? Then you find again, John the Baptist. I suppose there never was a nation in the world moved as that nation was by the preaching of John the Baptist. I have not the slightest doubt that in the days of John the Baptist there were leading members who predicted, and said "This thing wont last ;" and, when John was beheaded, perhaps they said, "It has now come to an end."

Has it come to an end? No. It has survived all the centuries that in the long interval have passed. Was there ever a man who accomplished so much as John the Baptist, except the Master Himself? Everything was dark. Darkness had settled down on that nation when John came suddenly and burst upon it like the flash of a meteor. It was not in the churches, cathedrals, or temple that he preached. He met the multitude in the desert. Do you tell me there was no excitement there? When the inhabitants of the cities and even the king left his palace to go to hear John, was there no excitement? Don't we want excitement? We would get cold and dull sometimes without it. When Christ Himself began His labors among the people, we hear of thousands in the desert having nothing to eat. I suppose some of them slept in the wilderness. Was there no excitement there? My friends, we are not half awake yet. Do you mean to say there was no excitement when Christ sent His disciples out, two by two, to preach? Just imagine two men entering a strange city and commencing to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom of Christ—proclaiming that the Lamb of God had come. And yet people in these days are afraid. They say, "What is to be the end of this?" We say, "Let the end take care of itself." We are told to proclaim the glad news, and if people wake up and are glad to hear it, I thank God for it. I dare say some people thought John was mad. I wish we had many men smitten with such madness. I suppose the world considered that when Christ died on the Cross His work was a failure. What a grand work he accomplished! No, that work, thank God, was not a failure. Then we come along to the day of Pentecost. Was there no excitement on that day? Worldly men thought that would also come to an end. The influence of the Pentecost is alive at the present day. After

the martyrdom of Stephen, Saul sprang into the course, and so the work has gone on since. I have very little sympathy with those Christians who say they are afraid of revivals. There is not a Church in Christendom to-day that has not sprung out of a revival. Have not the Churches that claim to be apostolical sprung from the Pentecost? In a few days the anniversary of Martin Luther will be celebrated. What was the great work that he carried on, and that surged over Germany, but a great revival? Was there not a great revival in the days of John Knox? God used these men as instruments to revive the faith. Yet, there are people afraid lest the regular order of things should be destroyed—they have fears concerning their Church's dignity. It was Church dignity, that kind of regular order, that killed Jesus Christ. They put him outside because they thought He did not belong to the regular order. They put John outside because they thought he did not belong to the regular order. But when there was coldness God always raised up some one to stir up the people from their spiritual lethargy. In a particular place in America a minister found that some of his people did not want him to take part in revival meetings. He took up a list of the congregation, and found that four-fifths of his flock had been converted in times of revival. The following Sunday he went into the pulpit and preached a revival sermon. I would not be afraid to put it to every one here that has been converted, and say—go back in your mind to the time when you met Christ, and see was it not a time of awakening. Was not the breath of heaven upon the community, and was there not a quickening in the Church? What amazes me most is to find men converted in times of revival preaching against revival meetings. It is not long since a sermon was preached by an influential clergyman against awaken-

ings of this kind, and some of his people took the pains to see how many had been united to his Church through profession of their faith during the twelve years he has been in charge of it, and they found not one single soul. And yet that man preached against awakenings. When special meetings are being held in your community, have you not said a bad word, a sarcastic word, or something scornful against the man who was preaching on behalf of the son of God? And if you have, have not your children heard it? Let us be careful about these things. Mother, where is your boy this afternoon? Has he drifted into scepticism? Has he gone over to infidelity? Does he make light of your God or your Bible? Or is he confirmed in some sin that is dragging him down to an untimely grave? Well, then, it is time that we were putting forth some effort to save. Let us reconsecrate ourselves in God's service. Let us, when we return to our different fields of labor from this Convention, pray to God to bless and revive His blessed work in this community. Let us have faith in God, and continue His work, and He will bring results in His own good time. I know people say that revivals do not hold out—that conversions at revivals are not lasting. Well we find Paul lamenting that many who professed Christ turned away from Him, "O," he says, "foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" Neither did they all hold out under Christ. And yet there are Bible heroes whose names will endure to the end of time. I believe in this work one hundred times more now than I did eight years ago; and I'll tell you why. When I went to Cork, Limerick, and Waterford, I found that some of the most active Christians there had been converted at our meetings in Dublin. They returned to their homes in the South, and I have not been in a town or village there where I have not found fruit of the work of

eight years ago. You ask me is it going to last ? " Yes it will last away unto eternity. I went into a town in America some time ago, and a minister there said to me, " I hope this work will hold out better than the work of five years ago. I got one hundred men then into my church, and I don't know where they are to-day." I looked upon that statement as very discouraging, and I said, " If I thought the work would not last I would go back to business again." Another minister in the same place told me that he had also taken in one hundred men at the same time, and he could lay his hands on ninety-eight of them—only two had fallen away in five years. This minister asked me if the minister to whom I had first spoken told me what had taken place in his church, and I said " No." Then I learned that the first minister had set about building a new church, and his people commenced quarrelling, and eventually scattered, to look for spiritual food in some other church. Where are the men who were converted here years ago ? They are scattered and doing good all over Ireland. Some of them are at the present moment active men you have got in your pulpits. Let us cease talking about failure, and go to work. Let us take our position beside Joshua and Caleb, and go out and possess the land. I saw on one occasion an account of a sceptic who had been out tiger hunting in India, and, happening to meet with a missionary there, he thought he would take a thrust at him. He said to the missionary that he had been for some time in India, and he had never seen a convert. " Well," said the missionary, " have you seen any tigers ? " " Oh ! yes," said he, " I have not only seen them, but I have shot them." " Well," rejoined the missionary, " I have been here these twenty years, and I have never seen one." You see the one was looking for converts, and the other was looking for tigers. When a man



is converted do not imagine that he is going to run after you in the street and pull your coat tail and tell you he is converted. Neither is he likely to pull your door bell and tell you he is converted. If you want to find men converted, go into the vineyard and commence the work. Get into the work, and you will see fruit enough to encourage you. Some say that children ought to be educated from their cradle up like Timothy. That is so, but how many of you have got Timothies? I have little sympathy with those who look upon the Pentecost as a miracle. It was a specimen day—nothing more. Turn over a little further and you will find five thousand converted in one and three thousand in another. If the Church had faith, and if we went further in faith, looking for results, we would have greater results. And now, let me ask you to make up your minds to work with greater earnestness when you return to your homes. Don't let Satan cheat you by getting up bazaars and festivals. There is a quicker way by which you can help the Church than that. Labor to win souls for Christ. Some people are willing to do a great many things for the pastor, and yet they will not speak a word for Christ to the members of the Church. There are Christians who live on skim milk, so to speak, and they should try to get at the cream. Sunday-school teachers, pray to God for the conversion of your classes. Teach them faithfully the way of salvation, instruct them to lead useful lives and be helpful to others, and they will become a blessing to their parents and to the Church. I remember when I used to be anxious to keep the number of my Sunday school up. I could keep the number up, but I had no conversions. The school was as dry as Gideon's fleece. One day the teacher of a class came to me and said he was going to another part of the country, for he was weak and dying.

He began to cry, and I said—"Surely you are not afraid to die." "Oh!" said he, "the members of my class are not converted, and what shall I say to my Father in heaven about them?" He was not able to travel; he had a spitting of blood; and I got a cab for him and he went round and visited them. I thought it would be a good thing to have them brought together, and I sent out invitations to the members of the class. When we met, I, as superintendent, prayed, and the teacher prayed that God would bless them until he would meet them in the other world. What a change! One after another began to pray earnestly for the superintendent, for the teacher, and for the school. What a revelation that was to me! We then joined in singing "Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts." The next day when he was going away his pupils met him at the railway station, and joined their voices again in singing "Here we meet to part again, but when we meet on Canaan's shore there will be no parting." They could not finish it. Their feelings overcame them and they broke down. As the train moved out of the station, with tears straggling down his cheeks, the dying Sunday-school teacher pointed heavenward, and said, "I'll meet you yonder." That was twenty years ago, and the influence of that man is felt to the present in Chicago. May God help you, Sabbath-school teachers, to win your classes for Christ. May God help you, ministers, to go down to your homes, and preach in your respective churches as you have never preached before. May God help us to take possession of the land. May the blessing of heaven descend upon every one of us, and may we be fired with a holy fire to-day.

## HOW TO SUCCEED IN REVIVALS.

REV. HUGH PRICE HUGHES.

While Joshua was inspecting the fortifications of Jericho, perhaps musing on the plan of attack, the Captain of the Lord of Hosts appeared unto him with "his sword drawn in his hand," ready for action, and said, "Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city." The same God said so of Dublin, for He will have all men to be saved. The Lord Jehovah planned the campaign. He told Joshua how to go about the work, so as to ensure success. (1.) There must be thoroughness—"Ye shall compass the city round about." If they would succeed in their Revival Mission, they must make the best possible arrangements as to time and place, surroundings, assistants, and sermons. God will not put a premium on idleness. (2.) Unanimity required—they should "all" compass the city—men and women, young and old, officers as well as rank and file; all must come to the help of the Lord. Where there is such unanimity in a church in promoting the work of God, success is assured. (3.) Perseverance is essential—"Ye shall compass the city *six days*." If they had not as much success as they expected at the commencement of a revival campaign, let them not be discouraged. For six days the hosts of Israel compassed the city, and nothing whatever seemed to be accomplished. (4.) Publicity is absolutely needed—the priests were to "blow with the trumpets." Before they entered on such

a mission be sure to blow the trumpets. *Announce ! Announce !* Scatter hand-bills ; post placards ; blow the trumpets through the press ; advertise largely ; let the public know what you are about to do ; give them a chance. (5.) Self-sacrifice is demanded. "Ye shall compass the city *seven times*." Let business men make sacrifices, and give a portion of their time and money to this service of the Lord. Christ sacrificed Himself for us, and they should make sacrifices to promote His cause. So should all. (6.) *Absolute dependence on God alone for success* is an indispensable and constant necessity. Not in Joshua ; not in the armies of Israel ; not in plans and arrangements ; not in the Mission preacher and his helpers must you put your trust. The "ark of the Lord" should go before them. The ark was the symbol of the Divine presence. Nothing can be accomplished but by the power of God, with God nothing is impossible. Before Him obstacles as great as the frowning battlements of Jericho will fall down flat before you. (7.) Confident expectation must be in constant exercise. "Shout"—shout before the city is taken, in the fullest belief that Jehovah will fulfil His promise. Shout before the triumph, as if it had already taken place. Thank God not only for what he has done, but also for what He has promised to do, and what He is about to do. After our troops in Egypt had taken, by a rush, the fortifications of Tel-el-Kebir, they shouted so that the desert resounded far and wide. But before the charge there was the silence of the grave. Shout not only for what has been done, but for what He is going to do. "Shout," for the Lord hath given you the city. (8) Action is inseparably connected with living faith. They gave the "great shout"—the shout arising from faith in God. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days."

## PREPARATION FOR A REVIVAL.\*

REV. WILLIAM NAST BRODBECK, D.D.

### I. *Preparation on the Part of the Pastor.*

*An earnest desire for a revival.* A desire growing out of not mere personal ambition, or a simple anxiety for personal reputation, or a purpose to assure his continuance with his church, but a desire growing out of a supreme concern for the glory of God and the welfare of immortal souls. Now there may be a few instances in which a revival has come to a church when this state of mind did not exist in the pastor; but they are very few, and the results in all such cases have been temporary and unsatisfactory. A church usually takes its tone and spirit from its pastor. If he is indifferent with regard to a revival, the church will be so; but if he makes the revival supreme in his thought and labor, the church will soon catch his spirit. And this he must do by his words, his prayers, his pastoral visiting, the grasp of his hand, his very appearance—all must be vital with and breathe an intense concern for the salvation of the lost. He must be consumed with a passion for souls if he would see his people inspired with a like passion. But this intense desire he cannot have at will. He cannot say, "I will now be deeply concerned for the unsaved, and intensely desirous for a revival in my church,"

\* Part of an address before the Chicago Methodist Preachers' Meeting, by request.

and thus produce such a state of mind. The human mind does not work in that way. Hence there must be on his part

*Earnest prayer and searching of the Word of God.* Revivals of religion are born in travail of soul. "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." That travail must usually be in the soul of the pastor. I know there are apparent exceptions to this statement, but these only prove the rule. The pastor who would see a great revival in his church must first gain the victory himself, and that not in the public congregation, but on his knees, alone before God. There the battle must be fought and the victory won. There, by earnest, continuous, importunate prayer, by intense, devout study of the Word, by tearful meditation upon the condition of the lost souls about him, and the marvelous love and compassion of Christ, his heart must be brought into tender sympathy with the loving heart of the Redeemer in his yearnings over lost men, until he is ready to cry out, "O God, give me souls, or I die." This will lead on his part to

*Earnest preaching in the direction of a revival.* I mean by this, not simply during the special services held for its promotion, but before they begin, as a preparation for them. My own habit has been to commence early in the fall of each year to preach on Sabbath mornings upon themes bearing directly upon the individual and collective responsibility resting upon Christians and churches to win men to Christ. I perhaps cannot better enforce this thought than by naming the subjects used for several weeks before a late revival campaign. They were as follows: "David's Prayer for Restoration" (Ps. li. 12, 13); "The All-important Question" (Acts ix. 6); "A Name to Live, and yet Dead" (Rev. iii. 1); "Beginning at Jeru-

saalem" (Luke xxiv. 46-48); "The Church's Invitation to the World" (Num. x. 29); "Preparing the Way of the Lord" (Mark i. 3); "Concern for Lost Souls" (Rom. x. 1); "Entire Consecration" (Rom. xii. 1). But it does not matter so much what the subject may be as that the preaching be evangelistic. And by evangelistic I mean preaching which earnestly enforces upon Christians their supreme obligation to seek the lost; and upon the unsaved their imperative duty to repent and turn to God. Oftentimes the best preaching for this purpose is what is commonly known as doctrinal. Mr. Finney, we are told, frequently began his work in a community by preaching upon the great doctrines of "God's Sovereignty and Man's Free Agency," "The Atonement of Christ," "The Personal Responsibility and Accountability of the Soul to God," "The Final Judgment," and "The Unchangeable Character of Future Destiny." The great and important thing is to hold the thought and attention of the people to the one issue—that of bringing lost souls to Christ. Let this be the aim and effort of the pastor for weeks before the special services are begun, and the revival will surely come. But there must also be

## II. *Preparation on the Part of the Church.*

*The way must be thoroughly cleared for the revival.* The importance of this statement cannot be overestimated. A want of appreciation of this simple truth has blocked the progress of more possible revivals than any other one cause. The revival must have the supreme right of way, the track must be thoroughly cleared before it, or there can be but limited success, if any. All other things, such as socials, concerts, lectures, entertainments of all kinds—things which may be perfectly legitimate in themselves and proper at

other times—must now be set aside, and the thought and interest of the church be concentrated in the one supreme object, that of promoting the revival. The pastor himself must here be careful that no previous engagements on his part shall interfere. Nothing but sickness or death should take him away a single evening from the one great work. My custom is, before entering upon special services, to ask my people publicly not to invite myself or family to their homes during their continuance. I accept no invitations, go nowhere, but concentrate all my time and powers upon the work in hand. Under these conditions the church soon feels that the pastor is in earnest about the matter of a revival, and rapidly catches his spirit. There must also be on the part of the church

*Earnest prayer for and consecration to the revival.* Not only must the pastor pray: the people must be gotten to agonize before God also. Just how to secure this needed result is often a problem to the pastor. For several years I have succeeded well by the following plan: before beginning special services I have had cards printed reading as follows:

#### COVENANT CARD.

I hereby covenant with my pastor to pray at least three times a day for a revival in our church, and to be present at the services held for its promotion as constantly and regularly as possible.

Signed .....

#### SUBJECTS AND TEXTS FOR REVIVAL TALKS.

The need and cry for revival (HAB. iii. 2).

The Author of revival (Ps. cxxxviii. 7; TITUS iii. 5).

The subjects of revival (ISA. lvii. 15).

The continuance of revival (2 COR. iv. 16).

The fruits of revival (HOSEA xiv. 7).

The end and object of revival (HOSEA vi. 1-3).



## PENTECOST A LIVING POWER.

How can we get it? It is well enough to know that valuable possessions can be obtained, but it is well to know the means—how obtained. How can the church obtain Holy Spirit power? How can I obtain it? I answer, By asking for it, and then taking it. It is as free as the gift of eternal life. Pray for the Spirit's power. The early disciples were earnest in waiting prayer. To be sure, Christ had promised to send them a helper. Then why not sit down and simply wait till he would come? Suppose they had done that, how soon would he have come? Yes, they did wait, but it was the waiting of earnest, united, continued, believing prayer. And when he did come upon them with such mighty power, it was when they were holding a prayer-meeting.

Now the same conditions will produce practically the same results. Not that there will be another Pentecost in every particular, for God never repeats himself—his ways are as diversified as his works. He never makes two faces exactly alike. He never converts two souls in exactly the same way. He will never give us another Pentecost in particular, but in practical results we may have Pentecosts in abundance. Not that there will be a great noise like the rushing of wind; not that there will be a gift of tongues; not that there will be a terrible commotion; but there will be a mighty manifestation of God's converting and sanctifying power on the hearts of men. The Holy Spirit will

not come upon us with power unless we want him; and if we want him we will pray for him. "Your Heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask it." The Spirit must be sought. He must be sought earnestly.—*Rev. D. W. Lusk.*

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The power of Pentecost is not yet exhausted. It is well that the church should avail itself of the best human acquirements. Let everything that is true be consecrated to the service of God. But it is not by those that the world is to be won, nor by those that the good of this world is to be conquered. It is not by wisdom of words that we are to meet the world's wisdom of words; it is not by oratory that we are to meet oratory; it is not by culture that we are to meet culture; it is not by sensationalism that we are to meet sensationalism. If we would successfully confront the dark mass of human evil that rises around us, we must fall back on Pentecost and on pentecostal power. That is still in store for the church of God. For its full exercise it is responsible. The church has not cast anchor over an uncertain Bible or an uncertain creed. If it has, then it has no message to deliver and no authority to lift up its voice in the name of God and his Christ. It would better become it to be silent. But it believes, and therefore it speaks. It has a divine commission to stand upon and a true Gospel to deliver. Hence it can afford to face not only opposition, but disappointment and apparent failure. It can also afford to wait all the more because it has been forewarned of delay and of the need of patience: "He that believeth shall not make haste."—*Dr. Horatio Bonar.*

## THE FREE GIFT.

REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

It is remarkable that very often the most commonplace things that we say in our preaching strike attention and convey blessing. An evangelist, some time ago, while he was explaining faith, took up a book and handed it to a friend. "Now," said he to his friend, "suppose this to be salvation: I freely present it to you. Have you got it?" "Yes, I have it." "How did you get it? Did you buy it? Did you work for it? Did you make it?" "No; you gave it to me, and I took it." "I gave it to you, and you took it;" and that is how we receive salvation from the Lord. He gives it to us freely, and we take it by faith—that is all. Did the friend wash his hands, or put on kid gloves, before he took the book? No. If he had done so he would not more surely have received the book: his hand did very well just as it was. It is just so with the gift of God. If a very poor man asks you to help him, and you offer him a shilling, he does not say, "Please, sir, I cannot accept your money, for I am not dressed in good enough clothes." He is not so foolish: he asks no questions, but gladly takes what is freely given. Even so let us accept Christ as the gift of God. The worse we are the more we need Jesus; and the more unprepared for Christ we seem the more prepared we are for him, in the questionable sense that need is the best preparation for receiving charity. When the housewife looks out the linen for the laundry she does not say, "This garment is too dirty to be washed." No, no. As she looks over the household linen there may be a piece or two so little soiled that she

questions whether she shall send them to be washed ; but if one piece is worse than the rest, she is quite sure that it is fit to go, and she puts it without a question into the bag. O my sinful friend, your sinfulness is the reason why you should go to Christ for cleansing! Did you ever know a man to stop away from dinner because he was hungry? Did you ever say, "I must not drink because I am thirsty"? Do men say, "When I am not quite so thirsty, then I will drink; when I am not quite so faint, then I will eat"? Does any sick man say, "I am so ill that I shall not send for a doctor till I am better"? We do not talk in this fashion about this matter; then why do we talk so about our souls? Jesus Christ asks nothing of us except that we will receive him; and he presents himself to us freely. We say, "There is nothing freer than a gift," so there is nothing freer than the grace of God. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Some of you seem to me like the poor dogs that go about muzzled; if there is a bone you cannot get at it. It seems as if the devil had muzzled some of you, so that you dare not take the good things of the Gospel to yourselves. O Lord, be pleased to take the muzzles off these poor dogs! Oh, that they could but get a taste of what the Lord has prepared for them that love him! You may have any and every Gospel blessing if you dare to take it. Make a dash for it. Believe that Jesus Christ is able to save you. Trust him and he has saved you.

Do you say that you will not now believe, but will wait till your own heart is better, and you will feel more inward encouragement? How foolish! You will wait in vain.

Did you ever hear of the deaf man who waited to hear the ticking of a sun-dial? He was as wise a man as you are. Cease to look within, and look up. Jesus saves all those who trust him to save them.

Downcast and troubled Christian, come and glean to-day in the broad fields of promise. Here are abundance of precious promises. Take this one: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." Doth not that suit thy case? A reed, helpless, insignificant, and weak; a bruised reed out of which no music can come: weaker than weakness itself. A reed, and that reed bruised; yet he will not break thee, but, on the contrary, will strengthen thee.

Thou art like the smoking flax: no light, no warmth, can come from thee; but he will not quench thee. He will blow with his sweet breath of mercy till he fans thee to a flame. Wouldst thou glean another ear? "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." What soft words! Thy heart is tender, and the Master knows it, and therefore he speaketh so gently to thee. Wilt thou not obey him, and come to him even now? Take another ear of corn: "Fear not, thou worm Jacob and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel."

How canst thou fear with such a wonderful assurance as this? Thou mayest gather ten thousand such golden ears as these! "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins." Or this: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Or this: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Our Master's field is very rich; behold the handfuls. See, there they lie before thee, poor, timid believer: gather them up and make them thine own, for Jesus bids thee take them. Be not afraid, only believe! Grasp these secret promises; thresh them out by meditation, and feed on them with joy.

May we not sing with Watts:

“The bruised reed he never breaks,  
Nor scorns the meanest name;  
The smoking flax he'll never quench,  
But raise it to a flame”?

It is always a token of a revival of religion, it is said, when there is a revival of psalmody. When Luther's preaching began to tell upon men, you could hear plowmen at the plow-tail singing Luther's psalms. Whitefield and Wesley had never done the great work they did, if it had not been for Charles Wesley's poetry, and for the singing of such men as Toplady and Scott and Newton, and many others of the same class; and even now we mark that since there has been somewhat of a religious revival in our denominations, there are more hymn-books than ever there were, and far more attention is paid to Christian psalmody than before. When your heart is full of Christ, you will want to sing. It is a blessed thing to sing at your labor and work, if you are in a place where you can do so; and if the world should laugh at you, you must tell them that you have as good a right to sing the songs that delight your heart as they have to sing any of those songs in which their hearts delight. Let us as believers have our national hymn, and sing:

“Crown him, crown him Lord of all.”

## WHAT IS IT TO BE A CHRISTIAN?\*

PROF. HENRY DRUMMOND.

Some time ago I was talking in a certain village with a young man who was an infidel, and who said to me as an elderly gentleman passed us, "That is the founder of our infidel club." "But," I replied, "that gentleman is a leading elder in such and such a church." The young man answered, "I know he is; but he is the founder of our infidel club. Every man in the village knows that man's life—knows what a humbug he is—and so there is not a young man in the place who has any self-respect who will have anything to do with religion." Such men are the founders of many infidel clubs; but it is an illogical position for a man to give up Christianity because he happens to know a few poor specimens of Christians. Very few people know how much it means to be a Christian. For instance, to be a Christian is not to go to church. There are thousands of Christians who never go to church, and thousands who go to church are not Christians. To be a Christian does not mean to be a good man; every man ought to be a good man. There have been many good men among the heathen. Marcus Aurelius was a good man. Professor Huxley is a good man, and has done more good than many a Christian man has, and yet he does not call himself a Christian. Believing in certain doctrines does not con-

\* Extract from an address delivered in Paisley Road Free Church, Glasgow, in connection with a series of Evangelistic Services.

stitute a Christian. Many Christians believe almost no doctrines, and some who believe all the doctrines are not Christians. A man who believes in the doctrines of theology is neither the better nor the worse for them. If men cannot swallow Jonah and the whale, or accept the account of the creation in Genesis, they should not imagine that it is impossible for them to be Christians. The first disciples had almost no doctrines at all. Christ was never hard upon doubt; he was hard upon credulity, upon the Pharisees who believed everything. Man was made to doubt. Look at the wonderment in the child's eye—that is incipient doubt. The instrument with which we look at life is impaired. Some say it fell and the lenses got broken; by our prejudices we often put a cap over the glass. Most of the truths are doubtable. So a man must be true to his intellectual life. Many a man would be committing an intellectual sin if he were to believe some of the doctrines supposed to belong to Christianity. They are not essential to a man being a Christian. But what is essential? What did Christ mean by Christianity? Three or four hundred years before Christ came God issued the program of Christianity. You will find it in one of the chapters of Isaiah beginning thus: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me." There is nothing there about doctrine or even faith; it is all about doing—doing things for the sad, mourning world. When Christ came to carry out that program, he took up the cry of the Baptist, and said, "The kingdom of God is at hand." Christ came to start a brotherhood, a political movement among men, which he called the kingdom of God. It was for that kingdom he worked and lived, but you seldom hear anything about it now. Religion is made a little, narrow thing you could put into a thimble. The kingdom of God is for the present



life; the program of the other life is not out; we do not know what is coming. Christ said the kingdom of God was to be three things to the world—leaven, salt, and light. Religion is like leaven because it lifts men up. It is like salt because it keeps society from becoming rotten. To be a Christian is to be complete in all one's parts, to pull out all the stops of one's nature. I have not mentioned anything about your souls to-night; what I would say is, get your life saved. One Sunday afternoon I heard about a dozen open-air preachers, and they all described one and the same gate of entrance to heaven. But there are at least twelve gates to heaven. There is the gate John Bunyan went in at, the gate by which Mr. Moody entered, the gate through which Robertson, of Brighton, went, and the gate by which Charles Kingsley entered in. God loves variety in grace as in everything else.

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REVIVALS—THEIR RELATIONS TO NATIONS.—Historians seldom take note of so obscure an event; yet, if the secret connections of revivals with the destiny of nations could be disclosed, they would appear to be more critical evolutions of history than the Gothic invasions. A volume has been compiled, narrating the decisive battles of the world. But more significant than this, and probing deeper, the divine government of the world would be the history of revivals.—*Austin Phelps*.

## CONCERNING A REVIVAL OF RELIGION.

REV. W. M. TAYLOR, D.D.

A revival is very much needed. Many churches are cold, others are lukewarm ; sinners are sinking into perdition. All these deplorable conditions can be reached and rectified by a revival. But how can this great blessing be obtained ?

First of all, there are *obstacles* to be removed. Among these is unbelief. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh" (Acts ii. 17). "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children ; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke xi. 13). These are God's promises. They assure us of his great willingness to give his Spirit. Yet we do not take him at his word. We are unbelieving. This offends him. He will not revive us till our unbelief is removed.

Coldness and formality must also be removed. The hearts of many professing Christians are cold as icebergs ; any service they pretend to render to God is as formal as that of a mule on a treadmill. From such hearts and such service the heavenly Dove shrinks as a tropical plant would shrink from the blasts of an Arctic midwinter.

To a revival of religion we need to get clear of strife, division, and enmity. All these are contrary to "the mind of the Spirit." They grieve "the Holy Spirit of God."

He is a Spirit of love and peace. A minister was laboring for a revival, but all his efforts seemed to be in vain. At last, one night, just at the close of the service, two members who had been at enmity met in front of the pulpit, shook hands, forgave each other, and were reconciled. Others followed their example. Immediately God's Spirit came down; then and there a gracious revival began.

Worldly-mindedness and worldly conformity greatly hinder a religious awakening. The world is all right in its place; but when it gets uppermost in the heart it becomes perilous. "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. iii. 2). Yet the affections of many are like certain vines that run along on the ground and cling to the clods. The sainted Paul says, "Be not conformed to this world" (Rom. xii. 2). But all the same multitudes of professing Christians, in dancing, theater-going, card-playing, and the whole round of worldly amusements, go right along with the most worldly. They only separate, so far as worldly conformity is conformity, once in two or three months, when the nominal professor rushes apart for a little while to partake of the emblems which represent the broken body and shed blood of a crucified Redeemer. There is danger that such may "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. vi. 6); and that at the same time they may do "despite unto the Spirit of grace" (Heb. x. 29).

These obstacles in the way of a revival are like great rocks on the track, obstructing the train; or like mountains that turn the sea backward from its course; or like the frosts and storms of winter, which drive the birds of summer to some more genial clime. May the Almighty One help his people to remove every obstacle!

The hindrances laid aside, the next thing to be done is

to use the means of God's appointment, which the Holy Spirit, the sole agent in producing a revival, employs and blesses. Foremost stands prayer. In its use it will be best to begin with confession. How this ought to be done, and its wonderful effectiveness, may be learned from the examples of three eminent Old Testament saints—David, Daniel, and Nehemiah (Ps. li. 1-14; Dan. ix. 3-21; Neh. i. 4-11). Confession should be followed with fervent, believing, united, and importunate petition. Ten days of such "prayer and supplication" preceded Pentecost. Jonathan Edwards speaks of storming heaven by prayer! "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. xi. 12). Remember John Knox's prayer: "O God, give me Scotland, or I die!"

Nor should praise be neglected. When Solomon dedicated the temple there was a great praise-service. It was in connection with "praising and thanking the Lord" "that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God" (2 Chron. v. 13, 14). "To the unanimous, fervent adoration and praise of man, God bent a willing, gracious ear, and to earth the glory of heaven drew nigh."

Reading of, and meditation on, God's Word likewise stand connected with a work of grace. In this busy, rushing, driving age there must be less reading of newspapers, magazines, and works of fiction, to give more time for the reading of the Word of life and salvation. It was the reading of the Book of the Law that resulted in a great revival in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. viii). There needs to be more love of, delight in, and meditation upon, God's Word (Ps. i. 2; xix. 10).

To secure the desired blessing there must be plain, pungent, and practical preaching. In studying the sermons of

Edwards, Whitefield, Wesley, Finney, Daniel Baker, and Dwight Moody, preachers who have been eminent in revivals, we see their manner of presenting and applying both law and Gospel. Their object is to arouse sleeping saints and save sinners, and they go straight for the mark. They do not carve with the back of the knife, or harrow with the harrow turned upside down.

All-important, also, is earnest and arousing singing. Mr. Moody has done his most successful work when accompanied by the singer, Mr. Sankey. But there are not enough Mr. Sankeys to go all around. Nor is it necessary. There are plenty of singers in every church, if they will only sing. Let the whole congregation join in the service of song, as the few do sometimes in a warm, weekly prayer-meeting, and it will arouse everybody. "Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee" (Ps. lxxvii. 3). Who ever heard Spurgeon's great congregation singing one of the old and familiar hymns and was not refreshed and lifted heavenward by the mighty volume of sacred song?

Let there likewise be frequent and protracted services. Have prayer-meetings, Bible-readings, sermons, and conference meetings, day after day. Repeated strokes will not fail to make some impression. Cromwell said, "I not only 'strike while the iron is hot,' but make it hot by striking."

Joined to all should be zealous and faithful efforts on the part of members of the church. The pastor cannot do all the work. Nor should it be left to him and "the faithful few." When the walls of Jerusalem were broken down and the gates burned with fire, the whole was restored "in fifty and two days." Nehemiah tells the secret of this speedy rebuilding: "For the people had a mind to work."

In an army it is the rank and file that do the fighting

and win the victories. Dr. Finney says, "The counteracting influence of a church that will not work is worse than infidelity." "To every man his work" (Mark xiii. 34).

A further duty is to give the Lord his full dues. A great and immeasurable blessing is promised in connection with this. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. iii. 10). A stingy soul, or a parsimonious church, is too contracted to receive a generous blessing. But a successful winner of souls says, "As I have gone from place to place, laboring in revivals, I have always found that churches were blessed in proportion to their liberality." "He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. ix. 6).

Study Bible means and methods. Honor God's ordinances. Above all, honor the Holy Spirit. Plead the promises mightily. "Attempt great things; expect great things." "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out" (Solomon's Song, iv. 16).

## THE GOSPEL MESSAGE.

ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D.

In our Lord's last commission there are three distinct departments of church life indicated. First, "Go ye into all the world, and *preach the Gospel* to every creature;" second, "*baptizing* them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" third, "*teaching* them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

There are, then, three things to be done: *First*, far and wide to proclaim the Gospel message—that is *evangelizing* in its proper sense; *secondly*, to administer the sacraments, engrafting believers into Christ, leading them to a confession of their faith, and providing for their edification; and *thirdly*, a larger work of instruction in all things comprehended within the teachings of the Lord Jesus. Now if we are correct in our interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles, the work of the evangelist was in primitive times heralding the Gospel especially to those unacquainted with the good tidings; and the work of the pastor or bishop was to edify and educate believers in a fuller knowledge of the things of God, administering the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and systematically training the children of God in the knowledge and the practice of godliness. Whenever the evangelist invades the sphere of the pastor he seems to us out of place, and his misplacement must be vindicated, if at all, by some change in the conditions of church life and of society at large. We do not say that evangelists have no place in our church economy and

within our ordinary congregations; we simply raise the question for candid consideration.

And now as to the results in our own congregations. There is always a liability or possibility of erroneous teaching when a stranger comes into our pulpits to preach for any length of time who does not come by authority of the ecclesiastical body with which we are connected, and whose views are not known to be in accord with the views entertained and promulgated by the pastor himself. It is oftentimes out of the power of the minister of Christ to protest against these erroneous views without interfering with the success of the evangelist, while at the same time the minister may thoroughly disapprove of that to which he feels compelled tacitly to submit. It may also be a question whether there be not, after prolonged evangelistic services, a tendency to relapse into an abnormal condition of discouragement and idleness. The excitement passes away, the special services come to an end, the visible results begin decidedly to diminish, and the tendency is to create and foster a distrust as to the efficiency of the means of grace as ordinarily carried forward. We have heard a godly and aged minister of Christ affirm that he had taken particular notice of the fact that the churches whose growth during fifty years was largest and most steady were those which never had an evangelist within their walls, whose pastor was an evangelist and an educator at the same time.

Now, having raised these questions, we venture a few suggestions on a general subject. *First*, that evangelists shall be encouraged to bestow their labors for the most part among those who do not now attend any house of God; to go into the neglected quarters of our great cities or rural districts and undertake to bring under the power of the Gospel those who are ignorant and indifferent. There are



districts within a mile of the established churches in our great metropolitan centers where virtually heathen abound, and into which overworked pastors cannot be expected largely to go. We need especially a class of men and women who will make these neglected districts the spheres of their labors; and here evangelists might carry on their activities with the hearty consent and coöperation of Christian churches, without any reasonable objection ever being raised to their labors; and untold blessings might follow in the train of such efforts.

*Secondly*, we have long felt that, if pastors need occasionally in their churches the assistance of evangelists in times of special religious interest, it might be well if *other pastors*, having decidedly evangelistic qualifications, might come to the aid of their brethren at such times, and thus fill up the gap, leaving the professed evangelist free for this other and larger work among the neglecters of Christ and the Gospel. Such methods are largely followed in the Anglican churches to-day. Such pastors might be known as "pastoral evangelists," coming to stand by the side of their brethren in the ministry, in full sympathy with all the toils and trials of a pastor's life, amenable to the same ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and in assured sympathy as to doctrinal views and practical methods. In such cases, also, the reins would not be passed out of the pastor's hand. He would still be in the conduct of the affairs of his own church, having another pastor at his side as a temporary helper.

*Thirdly*, personally we have a strong conservative feeling with respect to what are called "revivals." In our own ministerial life we have had many proofs of the sovereignty of grace; that revivals cannot be gotten up, but must come down; and that the true method is to follow the leadership

of the Holy Spirit; and when a state of things in a congregation seems to demand some special effort, to be ready promptly to fall in with the leadings of Divine Providence and grace. It is to be feared that oftentimes we invert this order by seeking to produce a higher state of religious feeling simply by the multiplication of religious services. We remember seeing an entire Sunday-school bowed before Almighty God in tears under the simplest ordinary presentation of the truth in Christ; but that awakening had been preceded by much prayer to Almighty God, and resulted in the conversion of nearly every Sunday-school scholar in the school. We are confident that, if the ordinary means of grace were more diligently and prayerfully pursued, if pastors themselves expected and taught their people to expect a perpetual blessing on the means of grace, there would very few religious services be held, or sermons be preached, or Sunday-school lessons be taught, that would not, properly followed up, be found to be fruitful in the conversion of souls.

We add one last consideration, which is, perhaps, the most emphatic of all. We must teach our people that a part, a necessary part, of our organic life is the exhibition of an evangelistic activity by every true disciple of Jesus Christ; that the minister is but the leader of a church *force* for which the whole world is the *field*. We must educate our people that they are not to be simply receivers, but distributors of the grace of God; not sponges put asoak in Gospel doctrine, but means to illumine the darkness that has overspread the world. When church-members learn this fundamental truth that every believer is a herald and a witness for Christ, church-members will cease to regard themselves as the objects of labor, and become themselves laborers for others. God's will is that, so soon as we learn

sufficient of the truth to become teachers of those more ignorant than ourselves, we shall cease simply to be as those who hear, and become those who speak that others may hear. Such a return to apostolic methods of universal Christian activity would settle not only all the practical questions raised in this paper, but many more besides having a vital relation to progressive and aggressive church life.

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THE INVITATION.—“If any thirst.” “Any!” Those who are grimed with sin. “Any!” Those who have no claim but their exceeding need. “Any!” Those whom all the world and the church spurn. “Any!” Publicans and sinners; outcasts and dying malefactors; persecutors and procrastinators. Richard Baxter used to say that if his name had stood on this page, he would have feared that it referred to some other who bore it; but since the Lord said *any*, he knew that even he was welcome. The one and only qualification is *thirst*. *Coming* to him is believing on him. It is the touch of the soul and the Saviour. With no effort at self-improvement or endeavor to adjust the circumstances of the outward life, lift your eyes to him and say, “O Lamb of God, I come!” and instantly you are at the land whither you go. As you come on the earth side, he comes on the heaven side; you go to the utmost bourne of the visible, he comes to the same spot from the bourne of the invisible; and on the border-land you meet him. Perhaps it were true to say that his arrival there is attraction, which, without you realizing it, draws you to arise and go forth to him. The sun attracts sparks; the earth, asteroids; the ocean, rivers; and Jesus, souls. To answer that attraction, however feebly, is to come.—*Rev. F. B. Meyers.*

## HEART-PREPARATION FOR REVIVAL WORK.\*

J. E. TWITCHELL, D.D.

Every true minister of the Gospel is anxious to be successful in winning souls to Christ. All his prayer and study and labor are unto the end of salvation for the unsaved and sanctification for believers. When these results appear he rejoices with exceeding joy, and no honor in all the earth seems so great as that given him in ministering at the altar.

The *ideal* church is one in which these results are constant and somewhat uniform. The *actual* church, however, with which we are familiar, and possibly where our lot is cast, has not this uniformity, either of love and zeal or increase of membership. Hence we look and labor for what are termed "revivals." These are understood as chiefly, if not wholly, to be an unfamiliar attention to the subject of personal religion on the part of unchristian people.

The word "revival," however, literally means a *reliving*. It therefore presupposes spiritual life—thus Christian experience of a real and recognizable character. In a "revival" all the gifts and graces of the Spirit are quickened in the believer's heart, and his life made more manifestly Christian. Ordinarily, too, a "revival" results in the conversion and gathering into the church of many who previously had little, if any, interest in Christ or in his cause.

\* From the magazine, "Treasury of Religious Thought."

Sometimes the church experiences a blessed revival, with little fruit from the outside world. Revivals, however, may be expected, not only to reanimate and reconstruct the church, but also to reach and bring in large numbers of the hitherto unsaved.

Our topic is *Heart-Preparation for this work*. This is wholly different from the question of preaching. It relates to what the preacher is, or should be, rather than to what he says or does. It takes hold of an inner and unuttered experience. It brings before us for inspection the soul's vital relation to God, and its hold on him, so as to be influential over men.

Notice three facts :

1. We, as ministers of the Gospel, have varying Christian experiences. This likely ought not to be so in relation to faith, love, zeal, expectation ; but it is so, and it will not harm us to confess it. Whatever uniformity of experience ought to be ours, we are not always the same, either in the closeness of our walk with Christ, or in our conception of the value of souls, or in our enthusiastic effort to make full proof of our ministry.

Brethren, doubtless you, as ministers of the Gospel, know more than I of the fullness and fruitfulness of Christian experience, more of the "constraining" of the love of Christ : when preaching is easy, prayer a precious coming into the immediate presence of our Lord ; when personal appeal is, as it were, spontaneous ; when, in all things, you feel yourself led of the Spirit ; when your faith as to results is above all questionings ; and when all the great things of God have a sublime glow upon them. No true man is long in the ministry without these loftier visions and larger possessions. They are his "Pisgahs" and "Mounts of Transfiguration." There, like Peter, we would build our

tabernacle and abide. But somehow the vision passes : the valley is entered, and we plod on again, content with little fruit, and consoling ourselves with the false conception of seasons of spiritual barrenness as a part of God's plan for us and for his church.

2. The second fact confronting us is that we reach varying results of labor. I do not mean manifest results merely, but actual results.

We may not forget that the causes which combine to lead men to Christ are many, and, some of them, remote ; that we can form no accurate estimate of the final outcome of prayers and deeds ; that in heaven we shall have happy surprises, as the ransomed come up to tell the story of their lives, and seek out those who have been instrumental in their conversion or their sanctification. No doubt it shall be found at last that all prayer and all effort have been influential. These things we may remember for our encouragement. It is, however, unquestionably true that sometimes our prayers and labors are vastly more influential than at other times.

We touch times when our prayers seem not to rise above our heads ; when the study of the Word does not peculiarly enrich our hearts ; when we preach to little purpose ; when we find it almost impossible to make personal appeal ; when we shrink from the closer contact of heart with heart ; when we should be surprised to learn of anxious inquiries among our people.

Then again we touch times when, praying, we seem in the very audience-chamber of God, and lay hold on the very "horns of the altar" ; when the Scriptures are all aglow with vastest provisions and richest promises ; when we can close no sermon, make no call on family of our charge, without pressing the claims of Christ ; when we are

impelled to seek the unsaved; and when all our work is wrought under a controlling sense of the companionship of Jesus: Oh, how blessed such experience; and if it be a thing of the past, how we long to live in it again, and to have it our unfailing portion!

This is not the place for the discussion of causes. We therefore notice consequences, and remark:

3. That *results* vary with these experiences.

It is not safe to say that always the preacher's heart will have its answer in the spiritual condition of his people, nor that always when preacher and people are anxious and earnest in the work of the Lord, souls will be found inquiring the way of life.

Twice at least, during my ministry, have I seen the pastor, for long weeks, agonizing in prayer for his people, and preaching with an unction which proved him thoroughly given to the work of winning souls, yet unable to arouse the church—those prayers and that preaching continuing until overcome of discouragement. Several times, too, have I seen churches, through special efforts, lifted out of coldness and indifference regarding themselves into a sweet and restful and recognizable experience of the indwelling spirit, yet no fruit, or comparatively none, from the ranks of the irreligious around. Revival services were carried on for weeks amid great humbling and searching of heart. The members of those churches learned more of Christ than they had ever known before, and illustrated vastly more of the true Christian spirit. But so far as was then seen, or was ever known, scarce a single soul was converted to Christ.

These are facts with which I became familiar, and never was my sympathy more enlisted. They are, however, exceptions. Where one case of this kind can be cited, scores

and hundreds are at hand showing that results vary with *experiences* on the part of him who ministers at the altar. Almost always the church will catch the spirit of their pastor. If his soul is all aflame with love, theirs will come to be; and when theirs are, the unconverted will be reached. Under God, everything hinges on the hearts of Christian workers, especially on the heart of the under-shepherd. This fact cannot be too greatly emphasized nor too fully realized. We who preach the Gospel must live in the large experience of its peace and joy, else we shall never be workmen "needing not to be ashamed."

As helps to this heart-experience I suggest:

1. A consciousness of the ministry as not a profession, rather a calling. It is not to be classed with that of the lawyer or the physician or any other workman of the world. The minister is to live by his labor; he is worthy of his hire; but he is not worthy of his position as an ambassador of Christ unless he has felt in his very soul that "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel."

2. We can lead souls no nearer to Christ than we are ourselves. God may use a man, if he is cold-hearted, and, indeed, if he be not a Christian, in accomplishing his purposes of salvation. Man may feed others on truth of which he has had little, if any, taste. In spite of him, the Word he preaches may prove the "savor of life unto life" for some. But ordinarily the people will have no closer walk with Jesus than he who preaches to them; nor will their vision and experience of redeeming love be larger than his. According as he knows the sorrow of sin and the ecstatic joy of forgiveness; according as he has faith in the fatherhood of God and in final solution of all the mysteries of earth; according as he lives in the largeness of love and in the power of an all-prevailing faith; accord-



ing as his religion is to him a real possession—according as these are his experiences he will be helpful to others.

3. It is of large advantage to dwell much on the deliverances of the Gospel. These are from the guilt, the dominion, and the final consequences of sin. Of these I suppose the ripest saints, in their most exalted hours, have low conception. Never on this earth will any of us realize all that is contained in the word *redeemed*. It will help us, however, into heart-preparation for our work, to think much of the sad condition of the unforgiven, and of the deliverance which faith in Christ effects.

4. We need to have larger estimate of the Christian's possessions. Of these we may mention reconciliation to God, through faith in Christ; adoption into the family of God, with all the privileges and provisions thereof; the "working together for good" of all life's varying and seemingly harmful affairs; the guidance of the Spirit in every choice and every decision of life; support under all trial; comfort in all sorrow; calmness, if not ecstasy, in the hour of departure; justification at the judgment; welcome by the Saviour; and eternal joy at God's right hand.

These are some of the possessions of believers; and I know of nothing more calculated to stir the soul and qualify for revival work than this comprehensive view of the deliverances and possessions of the children of God.

5. We need to realize the peril of souls that are out of Christ. Men are accustomed to speak of the unsaved as in danger. The fact is they are *lost*; and they have only to remain as they are now to be forever lost. The peril is that they will thus remain—our friends, our children. Shall we reach them and save them? Shall we be instrumental in discovering to them their peril, and leading them into

the paths of safety? This is our desire; but we shall not be in earnest unless we realize their lost condition.

What we need to move us is the great fact, burning in upon our souls, that unless we are instrumental in saving these lost souls, they must be forever lost.

I simply suggest further that we need to be much in prayer; that we should depend on the Spirit; that we should expect results; that we should seek souls for their sake rather than for the sake of the local church; that we should be tolerant and patient, and be willing to bear reproach for the sake of Christ.

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**THE HARVEST.**—These sermons, these songs, and these meetings are a savor of life unto life or of death unto death; the same sermon, the same song, or the same meeting that brings one man to Jesus Christ fits another for perdition. It is a dreadful thought that the same hot sun that ripens the wheat ripens the tares by its side. And you never saw a time, friends, when you could commit the unpardonable sin as easily as you can now. The grain that is not brought in in the time of harvest is generally lost. There is a great deal of grain that is cut down by the sickle and the scythe that never comes into the barn. The sickle has done its work, the scythe has reached it; it has fallen, but it is not gathered. Unless some Ruth goes across that field and picks up those heads, they will perish in the field. And how many persons are convicted of sin that are never brought in? You felt your need of Christ, and you went so far as to rise and ask everybody to pray for you, but you are not converted yet, Convicted, but not converted,—*Rev. A. B. Earle*,

## WORKING OUT SALVATION.

REV. JOHN MCNEILL, REGENT SQUARE PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH, LONDON.

Let us take this expression, "Your own salvation," in the light of Scripture teaching elsewhere, so that our somewhat unfortunate English may not mislead us. "Your own salvation"—what does that mean? That is a rare word in the Bible—the Bible is not fond of calling anything our own. It rather comes to us in all our pride of possession, strips us bare, and says to us, "You have nothing that is your own; your friends, your health, your strength are not your own. There is nothing your own but sin; that is yours in actual possession, and in all the entail of guilt and misery here and hereafter that belong to such an inheritance. Ye shall be filled with your own ways, ye shall eat of the fruit of your own doings." Alas, sin is the only thing that is mine!—my sin, my guilt, my misery, my curse, my condemnation. "My sin is ever before me," said a man when he began to realize that that was his only actual absolute possession—sin, and the clinging curse through sin. "My sin is my own; it is ever before me. I can no more get rid of it than I can of my shadow." Now that is the Bible, and yet the same Bible makes out salvation to be our own.

Let me enhance this thought in your mind—the thought that salvation is made over to us as our own in a Book which from beginning to end strips us of all real ownership. "This is mine," says a man here, or a man not here. "This is my pile; I scraped it together. I rose early, I sat up late;"

and as he says it he jerks his money-bags or turns over his bank-book to the balance. "Mine arm," he declares, "and the greatness of mine industry have gotten me this wealth, to have and to hold and enjoy. It is not yours."

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." You have to be active. God's sovereignty and power evoke human responsibility and activity. You have it, therefore work it out. To use a common illustration: there is a load of bricks here, a load of timber; and some slates. That is not a house. No; but there is the making of one, and you can make the house out of it. Now the Lord lays all down at our door; he puts it into our hearts; he comes with the plan and the specification and the material, and says, "Now work them out." Rise to the work; you have got to build a temple for your God, and a house for yourself in which to live and dwell forever; you have to build a spiritual house; you have got to raise in your character and life a spiritual fabric, a copy of the Lord Jesus Christ—work out this business. The Greek has at its root the idea of "energize." The doctrines are lying on your souls like great unwrought lumps of dough that you have not worked out—I speak to housewives—and no man can feed on dough; it will kill him. Many of you are dyspeptics, feeding on Gospel doctrines that you have not kneaded and fired—and I don't know what—but you understand what I mean. "Work out your own salvation."

But there is a teaching abroad that is too passive. Its favorite illustration of the fact that you are in Christ, and Christ is in you, is the sponge. The sponge is in the sea and the sea is in the sponge, and there you are! There you may be, but I prefer to come here. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Work, because, as the text shall afterward show, you are not working in

your own strength; behind all your energies there is this eternal mainspring that enables you to work easily, swiftly, without friction, and without failure—"God worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Now you know what to do. You have a bad temper—work out your salvation. You are getting to be a pest in the house because of this temper. You are not to go and cuddle up this temper, and say, "I am a child of God though I have a little infirmity." Be saved from your infirmity, O sweet child of God! "I do believe," says another, "I am in a state of grace; but I have a weakness for a dram." Save yourself from that weakness, or, as Christmas is coming, you may be as drunk as any pagan! Another says, "I do believe that I am saved, but I am inconsistent." Well, save yourself from this inconsistency; "work out your own salvation." What would you think of the man who went about with his hands in his pockets, whistling and joking, because he had a load of bricks and stones and timber lying all around there; and wanting shelter on a wintry day, he creeps under the bricks and says, "This is my house: here will I dwell." Are not some of us doing so? Why, if you could see your spiritual house as the Lord sees it, you would get in an awful fright. I grant the house has a foundation—if you are in Christ you are on the foundation; and maybe there is a wee bit of the first course of masonry beginning to rise, and a sort of indication of where the windows are coming and where the doors are to be, and there is just a faint look as there was a plan; but ye have stopped, and though it is without a roof and without walls, ye are living as if the work were done. O man, "work out your own salvation"!

The next question is, How? Here is the *modus operandi*: "with fear and trembling." Do not make the mistake

that many are apt to make, who think this a queer text, partly because it calls them to work, and partly because it says, "with fear and trembling." They have made it a kind of gloomy ogre, and do not like to come near it. It is like a dull, foggy time of the year, when we would rather go to bed like the bears, and sleep through it, to wake again in the spring. "With fear and trembling"—what does it mean? It does not mean that we are to go through life with our knees forever smiting each other because in such an hour as we think not we will drop into the pit again. Many take that meaning out of it, and it paralyses work. It does not mean the fear that brings you into bondage, that brings the frost and chill on your soul, that disjoins you from the Saviour's grace and the Spirit's sanctifying power; but the fear, rather, that makes you work sustainedly, eagerly, strenuously, unflinchingly.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." The cup of salvation is so full, it is so brimming, it is so sweet, that it would be "too sweet to be wholesome"; it would go to the head and make us reel and stagger, and become unwatchful and hilarious, and defeat its own purpose. But wherever Christ gives the cup of salvation, he puts in an infusion of these tonic bitters, "fear and trembling," so that grace may not cloy and clog. These are the bitter herbs with which we eat our Passover. The more freely you take of Christ the more careful you become in life and conduct; the more you look diligently the more you walk circumspectly, looking where to put your foot next; for it is a dirty world, and the most careful may go over into the mud. "Walk circumspectly, redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

## THE AWAKENING OF FAITH.\*

REV. FERDINAND C. IGLEHART, D.D., NEW YORK CITY.

"Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?"—Ps. lxxxv. 6.

Every religion has some characteristic. Brahmanism represents the idea that nature is God. Buddhism expresses the idea of spiritual rest produced by the human will. Confucianism teaches the salvation of the soul by obedience to moral law. Mohammedanism expresses accountability to God. Judaism incarnates the thought of sinful man reaching a holy God through sacrifice. Christianity represents God saving the race through the death of his Son. Catholicism emphasizes the power of the visible church in human redemption. Protestantism is the expression of the thought, "The just shall live by faith."

In all other religions man saves himself; in the Christian religion God saves him. Buddha was a man who pretended to become God. Christ was God and became man. Buddha said life was bad and man's chief good was in forgetting it; his Nirvana was an eternal sleep. Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

Christianity represents the idea of God saving man by the mediation of Christ. A genuine revival represents the same idea: the awakening of sinners and their salvation by faith in Christ. Methodism took its name from the method of its founders, but its characteristic is spiritual zeal. Born

\* An address opening the Methodist Branch of the World's Parliament of Religions at Chicago, delivered September 25, 1893.

in a revival in the English Church, it has been the fruitful parent of revivals ever since.

The Methodist Church is the largest Protestant denomination in America. One out of every twelve of the population of the United States is a member of the Methodist Church.

The Methodist Church gains very little by immigration to this country ; most of her members have come into her communion through the doorway of the revival. Ever since the church began there have been periods of spiritual declension when God's law has been forgotten, his Spirit grieved, and error and vice allowed to dominate the heart. At such times penitence has been awakened, faith renewed, and, under the leadership of some hero whom Providence has had in readiness, the church has been lifted up out of its spiritual lethargy and moral corruption into a sense of the divine life and love. The word "revival" was coined to express these seasons of divine quickening. As these seasons were always attended by accessions to the church, the word "revival" came to be applied to spiritual awakenings which result in the conversion of souls. Revivals, like the tongue mentioned by the philosopher, are of two kinds, good and bad ; if good, there is nothing better, if bad, there is nothing worse. There are parodies on revivals which bear their name ; there are counterfeits that take the name of the coin. There are cold-hearted, business-like, noisy, brassy human instrumentalities sometimes employed guaranteed to get up a revival at any time.

Such agencies cheapen religion and bring the name of revival into reproach. Patent rainmakers, with their expensive artillery, may promise great things, but they cannot make it rain. The parched earth is begging for rain ; the flowers are wilted, the corn-leaves are twisted, the pastures



are brown, the springs are dried up, and the dusty cattle are panting for drink. The rain comes; the garden is painted with lovelier hues, the corn with a darker green, springs are replenished, and beast and man are supplied with drink. There is plenty in the field, there is joy to the farmer. This is the genuine revival: the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the church like rain on the thirsty ground, calling up the seeds of saving truth into beautiful flowers and luscious fruit—the refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

The earth is parched, the gardens and fields and flocks are famishing for drink. A black cloud promises relief. The lightning flashes and the thunders roll. The storm sweeps over, the crops are thrown on the ground to spoil; there is not a drop of rain, it is only wind; this is the so-called revival. The blackest cloud, with the reddest lightning and the loudest thunder, but only wind, with damage to field and disappointment to farmer. These so-called revivals, with the plus human and minus divine, have wrought such spiritual harm that some reliable churches are afraid of any kind of revival at all. It is of genuine revivals we desire to speak.

In every true revival there are two indispensable factors: first, the divine will; second, the human will. God is always willing to revive his work. He has a deep, unceasing desire to quicken his children, convert sinners, and save the lost. We are so inconstant that we can form no adequate conception of the constancy of God's love for us. We sometimes think that God is upon a journey or asleep; that he is indifferent to his children; and that he has to be implored to pour special blessings on his church. When the clouds of sin and unbelief gather above us we imagine the sun has ceased shining, and when the darkness of night

settles about us we think the sun has turned his face away from us because we have allowed the world to come between him and us. The everlasting hills and the sun, the most impressive emblem of the eternal, are fickle to the constancy of God's love. The atmosphere which presses in on us from all sides and fans the breath of life is not so near to us as the Divine Spirit, who desires to breathe himself into our natures, lighting them with the rays, kindling them with the fires, and quickening them with the energy of God. It is always God's will that his church should be refreshed.

The second factor is the human will. If man more nearly resembled God in his constancy the Holy Spirit would immediately sanctify the church and speedily convert the world. Man is constitutionally inconstant. His vital force is so frail that he can go only a few hours without eating, and when he has eaten about three times he has to lie down and sleep all night to be fit for anything the next day. And after six days of eating and sleeping he has to have a day as well as the night for rest. His mind is hard to handle, hard to hold to one thought or plan. Unless it be under splendid discipline it will fly in a dozen directions in one moment, or entertain itself with many plans in a single hour. An uninterrupted revival to such a character is an impossibility. A year of revival services and of exalted revival experiences would about bodily kill all who undertook to maintain them. The revival in the winter-time, at which so much fun has been made, has its reason in man's constitution. Providence seems to recognize the frailty of the human instrument, and to adjust his plans accordingly. He intends that this frail man, who can scarcely keep himself alive from day to day, shall save his race; that his seasons of work and rest, his exaltations

and depressions, his hopes and fears, his joys and sorrows, shall minister to a comely self-discipline, as well as contribute to the salvation of his fellows. These human limitations that make continuous revivals impossible have an illustration in the law of action and reaction which obtains in nature. What goes up must come down; the pendulum swings first to one side and then to the other. Motion and rest are two halves of one of God's great thoughts. Nerves that are kept to a high pitch must be unstrung. Nature does not have a revival all the year round—only once a year. The rest of the time, though in silence and apparent death, she is doing radical work necessary to the harvest. Some ministers and people want to be in the harvest-field all the time, unwilling to plow and harrow and plant the seed, that there may be a harvest.

Another reason why revivals must be occasional is that while the conversion of the individual soul is the chief work of the Holy Spirit, it is his plan to employ organized agencies for the purpose.

Organization is necessary to all created life. Everything that lives has a house. Even God, when he wanted to manifest himself to the world, made a human body his house; and now he lives in a house made with men's hands. When the Holy Spirit prompts an individual or a society to build a church he does that which is necessary to the conversion of the individual soul.

A human society must live in the material house made for God. A spiritual Christianity without a visible church is an impossibility. The society must have a belief and rules. Theology has been used by the Holy Spirit in the redemption of the individual soul. "It makes no difference what a man believes so long as he is honest in his belief" is a statement which is as false as it is common. What

a man believes makes the difference between heaven and hell in this world or in the next. There is a loud call nowadays for the church to give up its theological doctrine. Those who make the call, as a rule, could spare their theology with little hurt to the world. Some theologies have broadened till they have gotten very thin. Denominational creeds, so often criticized, have been friendly to the spread of the Gospel. It is a question whether the church was ever so spiritual or so efficient in the salvation of men as since denominations have appeared. The denominationalism of to-day is not a curse, but a blessing. It expresses the idea of spiritual unity in intellectual variety, the idea of division of labor. If the early Christian church had been more careful in the organization of its societies and in formulating its theology it might have been saved five hundred years in the work of evangelizing the world, and spared centuries of revival efforts to reform itself. It would have assimilated the institutions that it conquered instead of having been corrupted by them. Education has been used as a powerful instrument in the conversion of the world. When in the midst of the struggle between force and love the world went down into the night of the dark ages, the universities springing up were the first expression of the mastery of love, and became powerful factors in its complete enthronement. Almost all the reformers in the history of the church have been university-bred men. Nearly all the great universities of Europe and America have been founded by the church or by followers of Christ out of their loyalty to him.

Sanctified learning has been a powerful agent in saving the world. The Holy Spirit has taught the church that in the work of the Sabbath-school it is as easy to form the character of a hundred as to reform the character of ten.

God has used the missionary cause as an engine of untold power in saving men. No better men ever lived than the missionaries in foreign lands. The injustice of those who have criticized them in this congress is only equaled by the ingratitude of those Christians who were prejudiced by, and applauded, the expressions of their defamers.

As an evidence that the missionary does bear the spirit and present the truth of his Master, we note that the people of India, through the instrumentality of the Methodist Church alone, are coming to Christ at the rate of ten thousand a year. The Spirit of God uses the practical benevolences and the practical moralities of life as agents in bringing souls to his kingdom. Revivals, then, are only one of the many instrumentalities the Holy Spirit uses for the conversion of the individual soul. And the minister who builds a church, or organizes a society, or preaches a true theology, or presides over a conference or a college, or develops the young in the Sunday-school, or edits a paper, or goes to foreign fields, or builds a hospital, or reforms public morals, has as much to do in the salvation of the world as the one who stands in the altar and bids men come to Christ. The Holy Spirit not only designs the conversion of the individual soul, but also its complete development and its preparation for the employments and enjoyments of immortality. The revival is one of several necessary factors the Lord employs in bringing the world to himself.

Let us look at some of the practical agencies to be employed in a genuine revival of religion. There should be public meetings for the purpose. In arithmetic two and two are four; in the spiritual world two and two are five. The disciples in the upper room were with one accord in one place when the Holy Ghost came. He is very likely to reveal himself to a similar gathering now. The pastor

should have charge of these meetings. It is quite popular in some places to set the pastor aside and employ a professional evangelist to take his place. These evangelists, like pastors, are of various shades of ability and grace. Some advertise themselves like the advance agent of a circus, preach questionable doctrines, exhibit a prodigious ability for numbers in counting converts, abuse the ministers of the place who do not come under their banner and work with their methods, charging that they are fighting against the Holy Ghost, blessing a town like a forest fire does a forest, like a hurricane does a fleet. Other evangelists are modest, brilliant, consecrated, affectionate, and bring untold blessings to the church and the world. It should be with extreme caution that even the most brilliant and holy evangelist should be allowed to push the pastor from the throne of spiritual influence on which God or the church has placed him. When the officers of the church, even with the consent of his will, ask a pastor to step aside for the professional leader, they withdraw even in their own minds a part of that respect and affection which belong to him who does the hard work of the year in getting ready for the revival, and who has to risk the peril of the reaction after it is over. If they would give their pastor as much money and time for the meetings as they have to promise the visitor, the result would in the long run be more satisfactory. Their minister should have a deep solicitude for souls, which should be shared by the members of the church. There should be much use made of the Bible in a revival; the minister should believe it profoundly from first to last. He who hunts for errors in it will not find many souls. The minister should preach short sermons. He should not fail to preach the severe side of the truth a part of the time. If there is a lack in the evangelism of

to-day it is the want of a deep conviction of sin—such a conviction as follows the preaching of “righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.” Sinners are sometimes addressed as though it would be a compliment to the Almighty, a favor to the pastor, and an honor to the church for them to become converted.

The enormity of sin, the brevity of life, the terrible realities of eternity are themes that will convict the cultivated as well as uncultivated if they are preached with the power of the Holy Ghost. The mild side of the truth should also be preached: the love of God, the sacrifice of Christ, the pleadings of the Spirit, the beauty of holiness, the glory of heaven, and the certainty of salvation by faith in Christ. There should be testimony given by the members, especially by the young converts; there should also be as much lay exhortation and instruction as possible. Earnest, prevailing prayer on the part of the pastor and people is indispensable to the success of a revival.

Music is valuable in a revival; the Lord has always used it in his service. It is a question whether the sermons of John Wesley or the hymns of Charles Wesley were more potential in founding the Methodist Church. How much Whittle lost when Bliss went up in a chariot of fire! Moody and Sankey seemed to be two halves of one evangelistic personality.

The last human factor in a revival we will mention is the will of the sinner. This is so often overlooked. The Holy Spirit may be willing, the pastor and the members may be willing, there may be preaching, praying, singing, and yet the sinner may, and often does, refuse to come to the Saviour. It is quite popular nowadays, not only for the enemies, but the friends of Christ, to apologize for sinners and publicly abuse the church because the unconverted are

not brought into the fold. This course is as mistaken in policy as it is bad in principle. The avarice of Judas was more powerful than the love of Christ. The logic of these abusers of the church would blame Christ for not saving Judas, and the apostles for not holding a prayer-meeting and pleading for his conversion. It was his own will, and not the weakness of the church, that damned Judas. The records of the last day will reveal that a majority of those who go up for the gracious Gospel privileges that abound in our day unprepared will have their own wicked selves, and not a faithless church, to blame. The church is not perfect; she comes far short of her duty; but whatever good has been done she has done; whatever souls have been saved she has brought to Christ. If she is to be publicly slandered, let her enemies do it, not the children she has brought forth unto God and to whom she has given all of good which is possessed.

As life in the natural world builds up and feeds organization, which in turn ministers to it, so spiritual life calls into being and sustains the various organizations of the church to which we have referred, which turn and minister to it. A revival not only saves individual souls, but breathes new life into old intellectual, social, moral, and religious institutions, and calls new ones into being, which in turn prepare the way for other revivals and become potential factors in the world's evangelization.

The great want of the world, of the church to-day is a baptism of the Holy Ghost in a powerful revival of religion. As periods of financial depression are usually attended by seasons of spiritual awakening, it is to be hoped that these depressing times may turn men's minds to a standard better than silver or gold, from the changing and the fading to the enduring. "O Lord, revive thy work."



It is the work of the church, of the revival, your work and mine, to bring this immortal spirit to God and prepare it for its everlasting destiny. When Time shall have sifted through his fingers the dust of oblivion upon the city of Chicago so thickly that the explorers in the dim centuries shall have to dig deep to find the ruins of the houses where the people now live and toil and worship; when he shall have dried up the great lake on whose shores we now meet; when the sun shall have grown old and cold as a huge ball of ice in the heavens; when the stars shall have fallen from their places in the firmament of blue, then beyond all decay and ruin shall appear the white city of God, whose walls are of jasper and whose gates are pearl, and faith, hope, love, shall abide, and God and the good shall endure forever.

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All our clergy constantly need a revival of genuine life; it would be felt in every home like the breath of spring, experienced beside every sick-bed like a touch of healing, and be heard in every sermon like a voice from heaven! Oh, what a heavenly gift to himself and others would this be, and what a time of refreshing from the Lord!—*Dr. Macleod.*

## AFTER THE REVIVAL—WHAT?

The most critical time in the history of a church is the period following a revival; and especially so if the awakening has been general. It has then on hand the most delicate work which ever engages its attention. Yet in one respect at least it is not in good condition for the task. The meeting has been protracted and has drawn heavily upon the physical and nervous energies of the people. The reaction which must follow such exertion has set in, and the church feels impelled to rest, just when there is the most imperative need for watchfulness and work. To avoid this danger it is necessary that the people of God shall be diligent and careful to do good, whether their hearts be free to it or not.

The crowning work at this period is the care of the converts. The very first qualification for this task is to understand that it is a work which must be done, and that we must do it. These young converts are babes in Christ, who have been born into the church, and whom the church must nourish and train. If they die, or if they become dwarfed, weak, worthless, for lack of these things, the church is responsible and guilty. It is an important and laborious work to bring young converts into the church, but it is a still more important and difficult one to train them successfully.

We often complain of the mistake made by those who come into the church in supposing, or seeming to suppose, that conversion is the end of all needed effort in the Chris-

tian life ; that henceforth they may settle down to a life of ease. But are we not largely responsible for the mistake? Do we not too often, if not generally, act toward them as if we thought that, now that they are converted and in the church, the great work is accomplished, and that henceforth they can easily care for themselves? This, alas! is too often true. By the very constancy and intensity of our desire for their growth and training we should impress upon the minds of the beginners in the way of life the necessity that they should "go on unto perfection." They are to be encouraged, directed, kept in good associations, warned against evil ways, and helped if they should stumble or fall. We are to remember their weakness and inexperience, and make allowance for them in our judgments. If they err from the truth, it is our duty to restore them, and not to find fault with and criticize them. We must give them love and patience, rather than censoriousness. Our hold on them will depend on our attitude toward them. To meet all these obligations toward the new members will require great wisdom and much grace ; yet the work is worthy of all the effort we can bestow upon it.

The church must be awake to the care of the converts, or the results of the revivals, however great, will be measurably, if not very largely, lost.—*The Christian Advocate*.

## GATHERING IN THE SHEAVES.\*

REV. J. M. CALDWELL, D.D.

I have no patent methods whereby I care for converts. The most marked success in this line I ever had was in a country appointment organized by my own efforts near Rockford. A two-weeks' revival service was accompanied by forty-seven seekers. Of these one went to California, the others joined the church and were active members until the close of my pastorate among them. Concerning the holding of converts, the best way to do this is to know them. The minister who does not care enough for his converts to know them by name, and to know their home life, and, to a certain extent, to gain a personal knowledge of each individual convert, is not going to hold them. It is not enough to take a deep interest in the man who presents himself at the altar, but one must know that man afterward. Writing the name down, one must associate the name of the man with the man himself in one's mind, so that one may be able to call the name wherever and whenever one meets him. The most remarkable revival of any in my ministry was that which occurred at Joliet. During that winter 517 came as seekers to the altar; over 368 came into probationary relations; nearly 300 were received into full connection. With all those converts I made myself familiar; I did not forget a man. After inviting people forward and having a season of prayer, I

\* From an address at the Chicago Preachers' Meeting,

have the people sing some well-known hymn while I personally ask the converts where they live and their names, at the same time saying a few religious words to each. As I write the name and look at the man, his face is inefaceably fixed on my memory. During the revival to which I referred a young man came to the altar of my church. When I spoke to him and asked his name, he told me, and said, "I came forward as the result of impulse, and I ought not to have come. I work down in one of the stone-quarries, where all the men are either Catholics or infidels, and as I cannot leave my place, and it would be impossible to live a Christian there, I ought not to have come forward." Failing in my attempt to persuade him, I saw nothing more of the young man until the following August (this occurred in January). Knowing the character of the place in which he was working, I knew it would be useless to visit him there, as it would only bring discomfort and ridicule upon the young man I wished to help. On the Sunday evening in question, as I was entering the church, I noticed and addressed the young fellow by name, to his intense surprise. He said, "How do you know my name?" I replied, "Oh, you are the young man who came forward in my church last winter;" and went on to recount what he had told me, adding, "And I have been praying for you ever since." Overcome by the thoughtful remembrance and touched by the Spirit, he was converted and became an earnest, faithful Christian. This simple illustration shows the value of personal recognition and remembrance. And, brethren, a man can make himself remember names and faces as easily as he can compel his memory to retain Greek roots in student life, and it will make him far more effective than he could possibly be otherwise.

While visiting the church of a brother pastor long ago I

received an idea which has been a great help to me ever since. On this charge there were fifty-one members, and the average attendance at prayer-meeting for the year previous to my visit had been fifty-seven. Brother White had the marvelous gift of looking after individuals. When in his study I noticed a little slip of paper on which were written a number of names, and upon inquiry he said, "This is my prayer-list." "Well, what about it?" "Whenever I become interested in a soul I put him on my prayer-list, and pray for him a year before I drop him." It was a new idea to me. When a man comes to my altar I put him on my prayer-list, and if I am praying for a man I am pretty sure not to forget him. Your forgetting a man may make you responsible for his soul.

Impress upon your converts from the first the importance of attending faithfully the means of grace. If our young people are converted from Christian homes there is no necessity for this; but in this gathering of the sheaves there are many who have never formed the habit of prayer, and do not know much about the obligation of regularly attending the services of the sanctuary. As soon as we can impress upon the people that they need the means of grace, and that the church can get along much, better without them than they can get along without the church in being Christians, we have made a strong point in holding them. Our converts need instruction on these lines. State that you expect to see them at the prayer-meeting on Wednesday, at the church on Sunday morning and evening, and impress upon them that if they do not they will lose the beauty and advantage of their religious experience. Get them into the habit of daily Bible-reading, and instruct them on the subject. They must form this habit as well as the habit of daily prayer. Briefly and concisely, there

are three things young converts and all Christians must remember—their Closet, their Class, and their Church—three “C’s.” The young convert must be faithful to every one. Thus urged, he will not miss the means of grace.

I once made a mistake that came near costing a young man his soul. He was the son of a Presbyterian minister, and had wrecked his life through drink. He was gloriously converted. Not only had he been intemperate, but he was addicted to the use of tobacco. In all my ministry I have never known a man who has been an inebriate but that when he was converted, if he did not give up the tobacco with the whisky, he slipped back into his sin. For a long time this was a mystery to me; but when I learned that the cabbage and burdock and other ingredients used in making plug tobacco are moistened and bound together with Jamaica rum, I realized fully the danger threatening an inebriate who indulges in tobacco. Six months after his conversion I met this young man on the street and noticed that he was chewing tobacco. He blushed when he saw me, for he knew I was acquainted with the fact that he had not given up the habit. Fearing to discourage him and make him feel I had lost faith in him, I said, “Well, my friend, it is a little better for a man not to chew tobacco; but there are thousands of better men than I that have done so.” A week later I met that young man on the street drunk. I took him to my study and laid him on the lounge. While he was too drunk to walk straight, he had a good deal of sense. I said to him, “How did this happen?” He replied, “You are to blame for it. I had supreme faith in you. I knew I was doing wrong when I took the tobacco, and if you had shaken me up the first day I met you, that would have been the end of it; but just as soon as I chewed the tobacco I wanted to

take the whisky." Then and there I realized I would far better have rebuked him on the spot. By the grace of God, though he fell, he was reclaimed.

Referring to dancing, card-playing, theater-going, and the like, Dr. Parkhurst once said to me, "You will find it utterly impossible to hold the young people of your congregations in this city within the same restrictions and limits that you could those of cities like Joliet and Rockford with regard to these things." But in the four churches of which I have been pastor in this city I have found no such difficulty. There is an intensity of life here in Chicago that manifests itself in the intensity of the religious life of our young people, which, if properly directed, not only forms a great power in the church, but so occupies their time and thoughts that other things of less importance are utterly crowded out. Get the young people so intensely and earnestly at work that they will have no time for such things. Throw upon them the responsibility of caring for the converts; throw upon them the responsibility of sustaining the means of grace; throw upon them the responsibility of setting a character and example before other young people, and they will be so absorbed in this that they will be kept free from all worldliness. It is unfortunate to let the young people feel they are not part and parcel of the whole church. Get them identified with the Wednesday evening prayer-meeting, and in every way make them feel and keep in sympathy with the whole church.



## THE CLOSING APPEAL.

BISHOP MATTHEW SIMPSON.

I have now finished, young gentlemen, the present course of lectures. I have invited your attention to the various departments of your great work ; I have presented you glimpses of my own experience ; I have set before you the duties of the sacred office, in some measure, as they arise before my mind. Before I bid you farewell, may I add a word personal to yourselves ? Your exit from this Institution and your entrance into the ministry will mark a great era in the period of your lives. You pass from the leisure of the school into the activity of the busy world ; from communion with kindred and cultured minds, to become servants of a lost and ruined humanity. You go to lift out of the pit of degradation the most depraved and vicious ; to draw the drunkard from his cups and the young man from haunts of revelry and crime. You need moral courage. You need Christian heroism. Above all, you need power from on high.

We are told that the Roman youth of noble family, approaching years of maturity, entered alone into a private apartment, amid the statues of the gods and of eminent men. In that august and solemn presence, he divested himself of the raiment of his boyhood and put on the manly toga. Then and there he made his vow to imitate the virtues of the great, to rival them in deeds of power,

and to make for himself a name worthy of his kindred and ancestry. So, as you go forth to enter on your life's duties, make a thorough consecration of all your powers to the service of God. Call around you the Unseen. Summon to your thoughts the great men of the pulpit who have shaken and moved the world ; and there, with a cloud of holy angels above you and in the immediate presence of the Son of God, whose eyes are like a flame of fire, pray to be clothed with divine power, to be encased in Christian armor, to have "your loins girt about with truth, to have on the breastplate of righteousness and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace ; above all take the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." There resolve that all you are and all you have shall be devoted to this one work ; that with all your energy and with all your power you will strive against the powers of darkness and to advance the Kingdom of Heaven, the Church of the Living God. Resolve, God helping you, that the Gospel spoken from your lips shall never be spoken in vain, and that you will realize the utmost possibilities of divine power and grace in your ministry among men.

My thoughts glance beyond this assembly, and would peer far into the future. I know not what is before you. God only knows whether you shall have years of labor and toil and danger and triumph, or whether you shall be called early into his own presence. As I look upon you, I seem to behold a halo above above your heads and rays of light to come down from on high, a tongue of fire that prophesies your mission. Who among you shall shine with the greatest radiance, who shall wear the brightest

crown, who shall be nearest the throne, I know not. It will be he who, according to his talents and opportunities, does the most for the blessed Master. There are degrees in glory; for as "star differeth from star in glory, so also is the resurrection." "The wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness forever and ever." In that great day, how insignificant shall appear the offices or honors, the wealth and the comfort of the earthly life, compared with the crown that shall be given to those who have conquered souls for Christ! Could I live a thousand years, I would proclaim the divine message; but almost as soon as we learn how to live we must die. Had I a thousand lives, they should all be spent in the ministry of the Word. If I could, I would inspire you with the noblest ambition; I would give you strength to bear away the gates of the enemy and to overcome my Master's foes; I would commission you to win triumph after triumph; I would strengthen you so that "one of you should chase a thousand and two of you put ten thousand to flight." I have not the strength; but there is One who has. He has all the power in heaven and earth, and he has promised to be with you wherever you may go. Into His hands and to His guiding providence I commit you every one, praying "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

