Practical talks on important themes to young converts, older Christians and the un-converted / by H.T. Crossley
Crossley, H. T. (Hugh Thomas), 1850-1934.
Toronto : W. Briggs, 1895.

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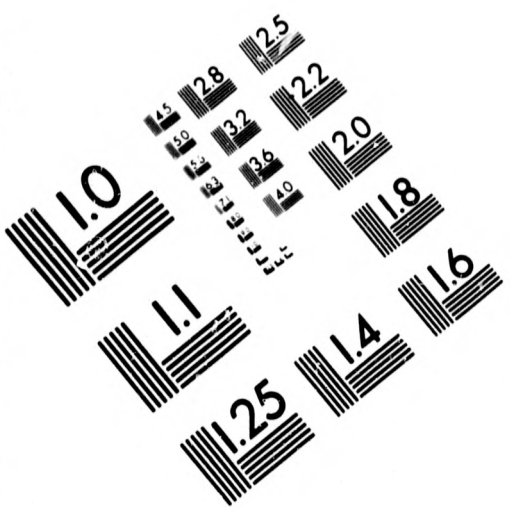

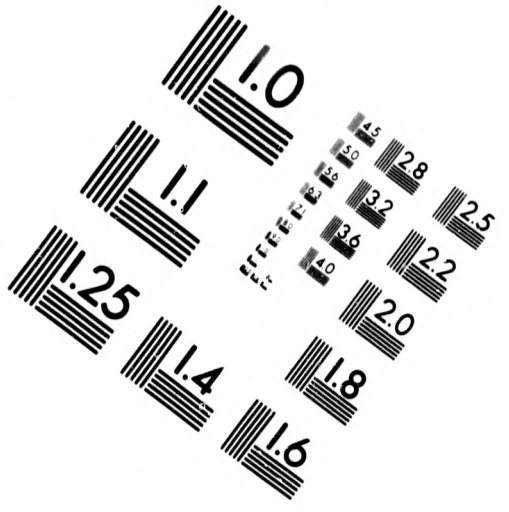

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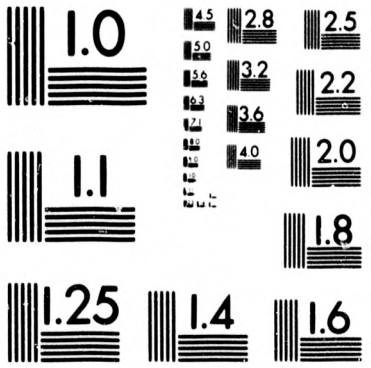

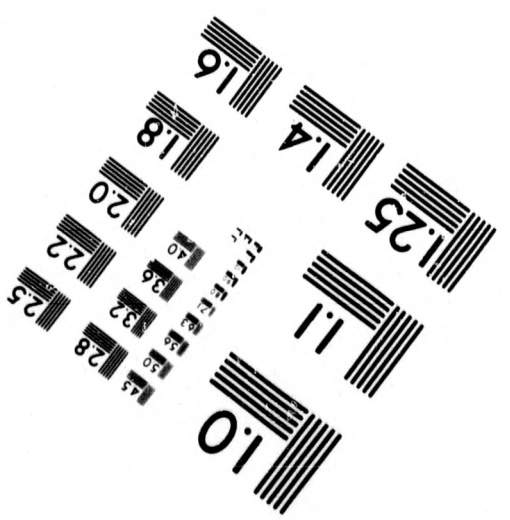

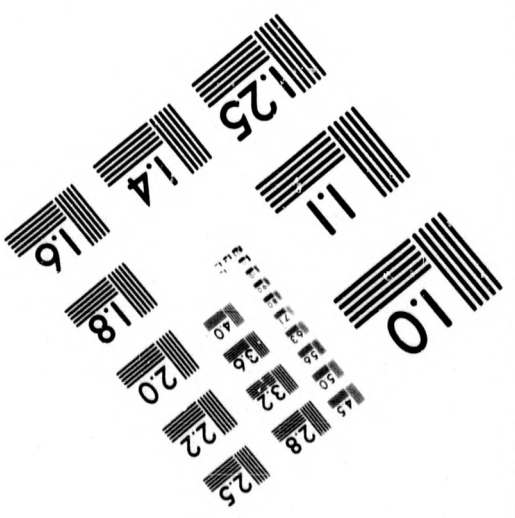

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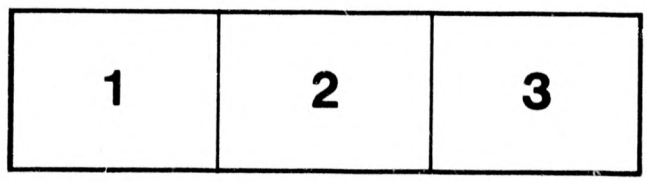

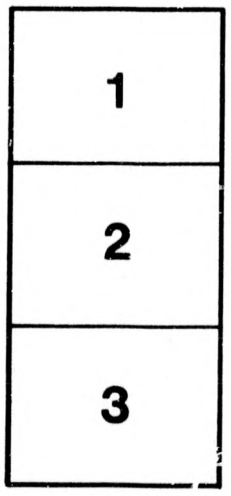

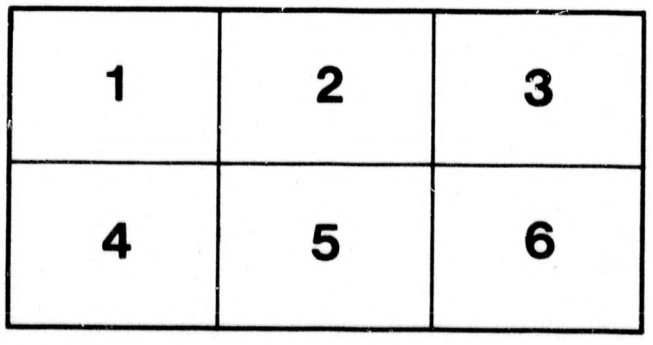

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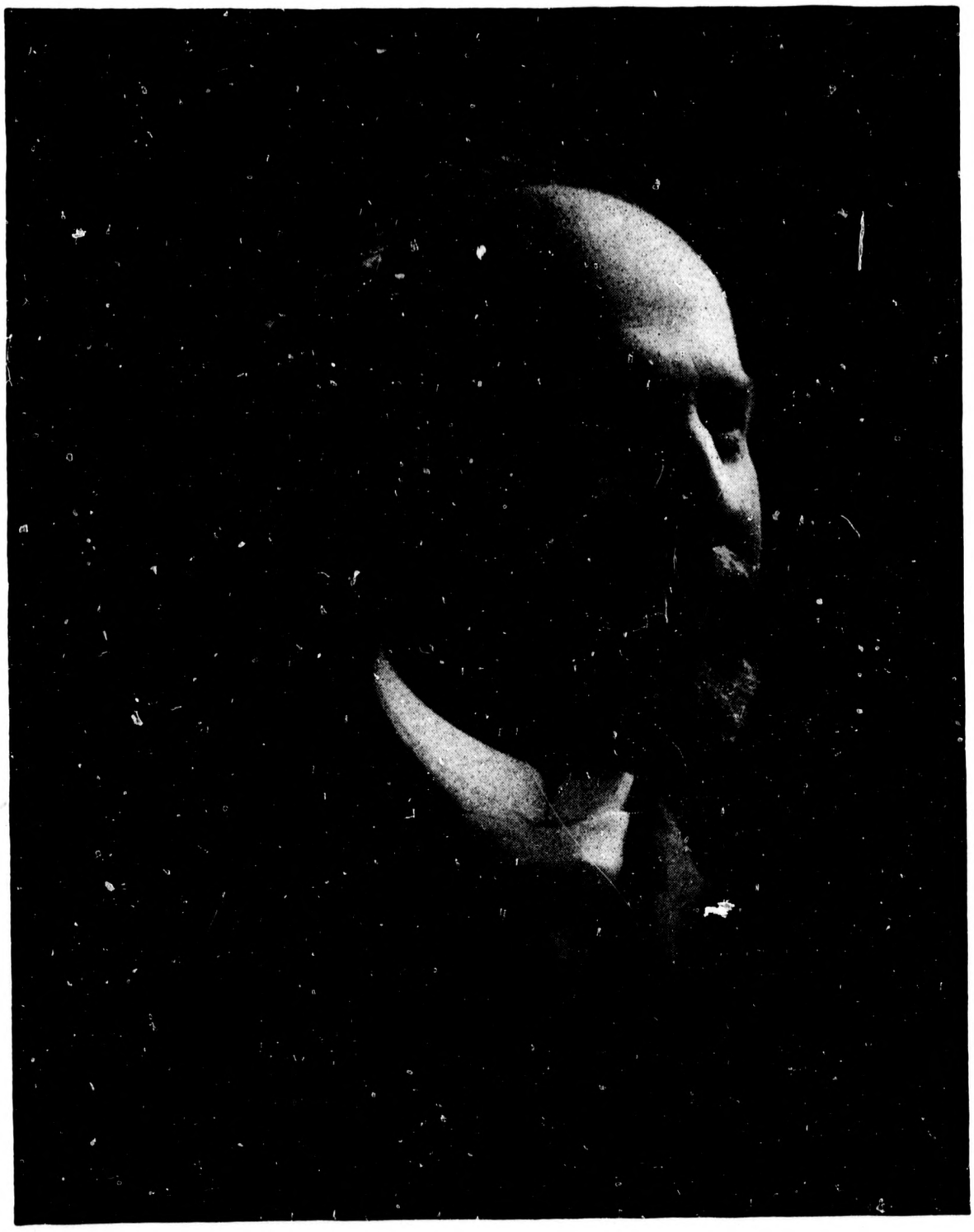

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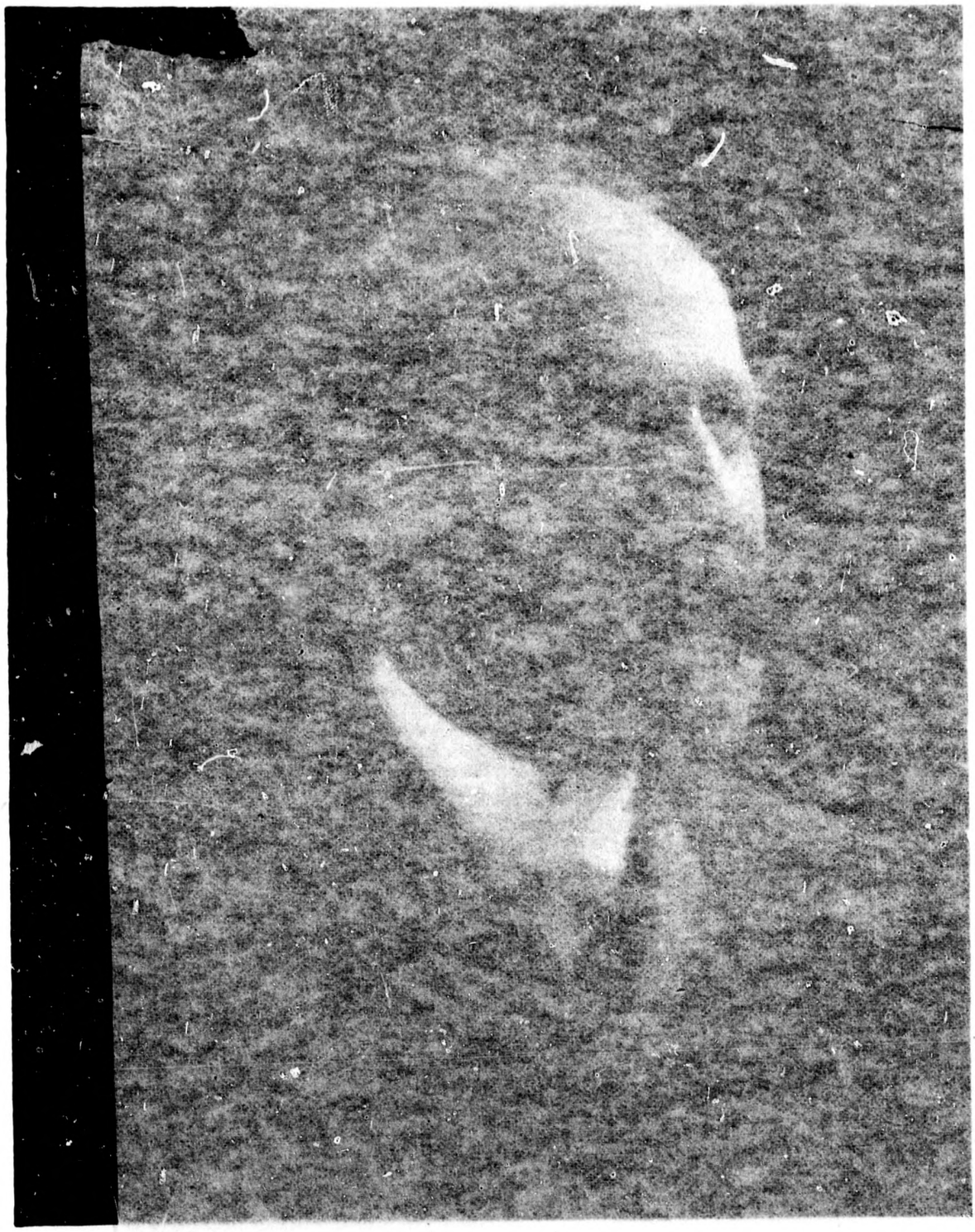

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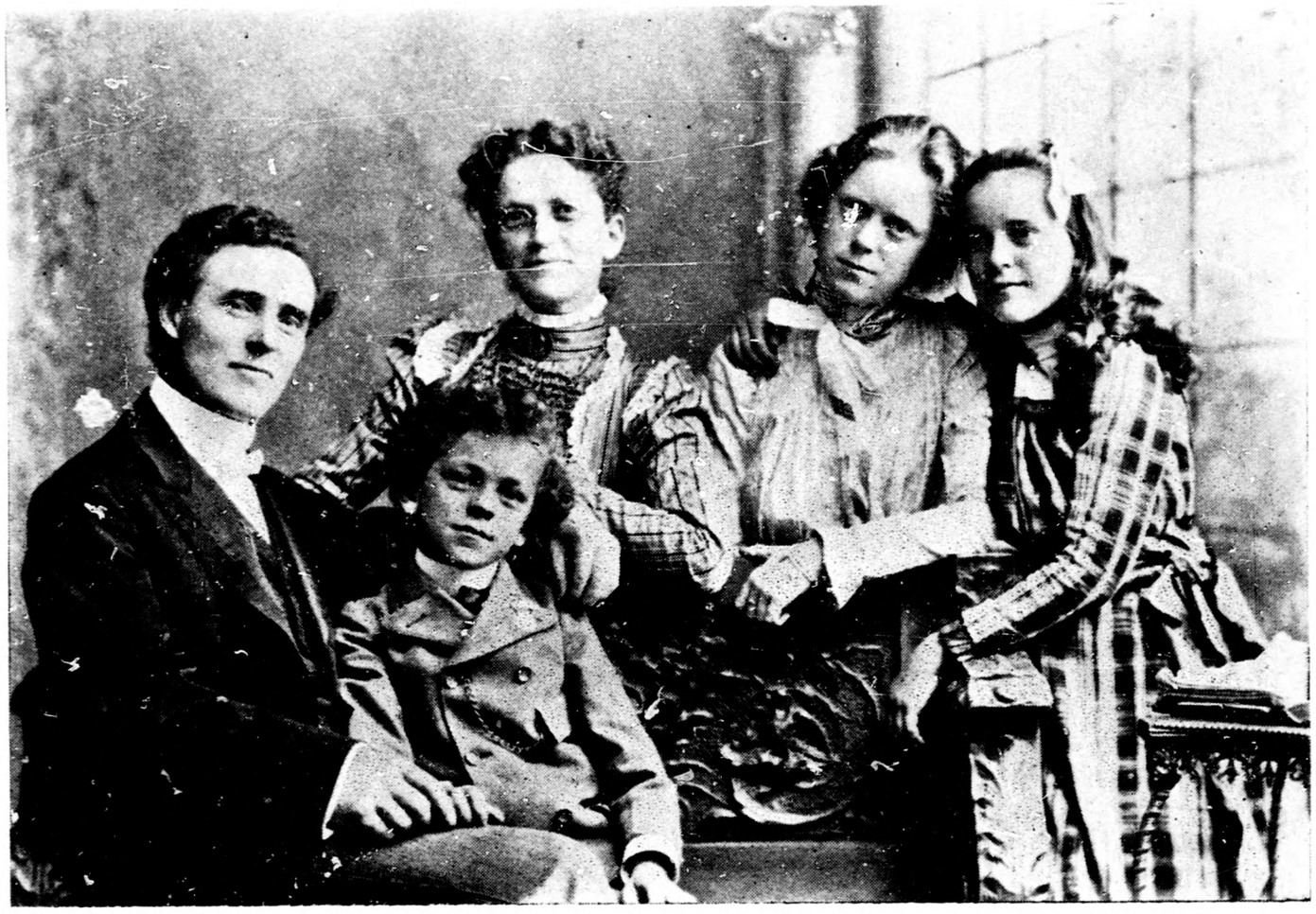

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PRACTICAL TALKS

ON

Important Themes

R 616

BY

REV. H. T. CROSSLEY

TO

YOUNG CONVERTS
OLDER CHRISTIANS AND
THE UN- CONVERTED

THIRTEENTH THOUSAND.

TORONTO:
WILLIAM BRIGGS, WESLEY BUILDINGS
MONTREAL: C. W. COATES | HALIFAX: S. F. HUESTIS

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Preface.

THIS book of *Practical Talks on Important Themes* may be regarded as a souvenir volume of our evangelistic work.

We publish it in response to many requests for such a volume, hoping to further instruct and confirm those who are new converts, and, at the same time, assist to clearer views of truth and privilege those who are more experienced Christians, and also to induce the unconverted to become Christians.

The addresses are not controversial, but *practical*; and, hence, they will be found to be in harmony with the fundamental doctrines and practical teachings of all evangelical denominations.

The style is familiar, almost colloquial. The author, that he might be the more personal and helpful, has endeavored to write as he would speak face to face.

"Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things." (2 Tim. ii. 7.)

H. T. CROSSLEY.

ST. THOMAS, ONT.

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THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO

Rev. Thos. Argue,

THROUGH WHOSE LIFE AND TEACHINGS I WAS LED TO ACCEPT CHRIST AS MY SAVIOUR;

AND TO

Mrs. Rev. J. E. Hunter,

THE WIFE OF MY COMPANION IN EVANGELISTIC WORK;

AS ALSO TO THE

CHRISTIANS AND NEW CONVERTS

IN PLACES WHERE IT HAS BEEN, OR SHALL BE, OUR PRIVILEGE TO CONDUCT EVANGELISTIC SERVICES.

H. T. CROSSLEY.

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Is Life Worth Living?

—:I:—

Promise: Titus ii. 11-14. Praise: 2 Tim. iv. 6-8.
Precept: Matt. xxii. 21. Prayer: Num. xxiii. 10.

THE first time I read the question, "Is life worth living?" I smiled and said, "Certainly it is." But, as I pondered, I became serious, and various scenes vividly appeared and passed before me as in panoramic view.

1. I saw those in high positions living only for the honors, display and applause of this world, and for a moment I almost envied them, when suddenly I heard Queen Elizabeth wail out the expiring cry, "*Millions of money* for an *inch* of time!" I said, "Such a life is not worth living."

2. The scene was changed. I viewed multitudes forgetting God, and living only to become rich. Many failed in the race, but others succeeded and lived in luxury, ease, and wealth, like those Asaph ignorantly envied. (Psa. lxxiii. 1-28.) Life seemed to some a struggle, to others a joy; but when I heard one of the richest, when dying, exclaim, "The harvest is past, and I am not saved," I pitied them all, and said, "Such lives are not worth living."

3. The scene was changed. Sceptics of all classes, from the polite agnostic to the blatant infidel and atheist, passed before me. I saw their smile at Christians, I heard their laughter and ridicule of the Bible and sacred things; and, appearing to be without a care, their life seemed pleasant; but, as I gazed, old "Father Time," with scythe in hand, drew near, and the laugh was turned on the other side of the face, as Voltaire in despair cried, "I am taking a leap in the dark." I sighed and said, "Life is not worth living, if a person is a sceptic."

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4. The scene was changed. I beheld a great host of noble-looking men and women, who claimed to be *moralists*. They frequently spoke about "hypocrites in the Church," and I heard their flippant remarks, "I will stand as good a chance as your professing Christians; I would not do what many of them do." As their characters seemed so admirable, and their minds so complacent, such a life appeared desirable, till the Holy Spirit whispered, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" A moment later I stood by the death-bed of one of the best of them, and heard his last expiring lament, "I have missed the salvation of my soul." As I bowed my head, I silently said, "If only a moralist, life is not worth living."

5. The scene was changed. Great throngs of persons, of all ages, fairly dazzled my eyes, as they glided along; but it was evident, though some were Church members, that they were "lovers of *pleasure* more than lovers of God." I saw them in the dance, at the theatre, around the card-table, reading exciting novels, sipping their wine; and so, with laughter and song, they glided on, saying, "Let us eat, drink, dress, and be merry." Siren voices rang out: "Magnificent!" "most delightful!" "brilliant!" "perfectly lovely!" and bade me join the throng. Just then, I heard the voice of one of the former happy number, as, while death was feeling for her heart-strings, and worldly pleasure appeared in the light of eternity, she breathed out her anguish of spirit, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." I said, "Deliver me from such a life, for it is not worth living."

6. The scene was changed. I saw a motley crowd: some were drinking and swearing, others were gambling and horse-racing, many were seeking to get money by liquor-selling, grinding the poor, and other means, caring not though it be the price of blood; while not a few were living for "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." My whole

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being loathed such a life, and yet I pitied the victims, and especially so as I heard one remorsefully cry, "Gather up my influence and bury it with me." I thought, "Better had they never been born."

7. The scene was changed. A mighty host of men, women, children, and youth appeared before me, and I said, "Who are these?" The answer came, "These are Christians; they are not without their faults, but yet they are 'accepted in the Beloved,' the children of the King." I found myself one of the joyous company. As we journeyed we sang, "O happy day," and "Beulah land," and I felt, "This life is worth living, even if earth were all." As I mused, I seemed to stand with a godly few beside the death-bed of John Wesley; and, while his face looked seraphic, he exclaimed, "*The best of all, God is with us.*" As he passed on before, to join the innumerable company, I said, "Let me *live* the life of a Christian, die his death, and dwell with the righteous and the Lord forever."

This world and the next are before us. God gives us life as a precious heritage. How will you use it? What is your ideal of life? Some have no ideal, others have an unworthy one. Let yours be "to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

So live that you shall be honored and beloved by your family, the Church, the poor, and all who know you. A man died, and a stranger at the grave, questioning the illiterate grave-digger, asked, "What was the *complaint?*" He intelligently replied, "There was no *complaint*—everybody is *satisfied.*"

Is life worth living? Not if, when we are gone, people are satisfied. Live so as to be remembered.

Live for time and eternity, for earth and heaven. Do your duty to God and man. Be ready to live or die. Be the best Christian you know how to be. Let us so carry out God's design in our creation and redemption, that, on earth and in heaven, we may know and rejoice that LIFE IS WORTH LIVING.

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How to Study the Bible.

——: II :——

Promise : John xx. 31. Praise : Prov. ii. 3-5.
Precept : Deut. vi. 6-9. Prayer : Psa. cxix. 18.

A ROMAN Catholic priest took one of his parishioners to task for reading the Bible. Pat replied, "Your reverence, I have a search warrant, for Jesus says, 'Search the Scriptures.'" Every Protestant and Roman Catholic has a God-given search warrant, which he should be careful to execute.

The unconverted woefully neglect the directions of the "search warrant," and too many Christians but very partially carry them out.

The following acrostic will direct how Christians and unconverted may read the Bible with pleasure and profit:

	SYSTEMATICALLY, Luke xxiv. 27.
SEARCH	CAREFULLY, Psa. i. 2.
	REVERENTLY, Psa. xix. 7, 11.
THE	INTENTLY, 2 Peter i. 19-21.
	PRAYERFULLY, Psa. cxix. 33-36.
	TRUSTINGLY, Acts xxiv. 14.
	UNDERSTANDINGLY, Heb. v. 12.
	RETENTIVELY, Jer. xx. 9.
	EVERY DAY, Acts xvii. 11, 12.
	SAVINGLY, 2 Tim. iii. 15-17.

1. *Search the Scriptures systematically;* that is, a book at a time. The Bible is a library of sixty-six books, written by thirty-six inspired authors.

Let me tell you the way most people read the Bible. They read a chapter in John one time, and next a chapter in Daniel, and again a chapter in Ephesians.

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and then a Psalm, if they can find one short enough for the occasion.

Imagine a person reading a library of novels or other books in this foolish way; that is, a page in this book, and again half a page in another book, and so on. Many true Christians, thus reading the Bible, and not finding interest, pleasure and profit, doubt their piety, when they might more appropriately doubt their common sense.

We would not bother our heads reading any other library as most people read the Bible. If the Bible were not more interesting than other libraries, no person, saint or sinner, would find pleasure or profit reading it in that nonsensical way.

Read the Bible, "the book of books," as you do any other library, namely, by selecting book by book. Do not necessarily begin at Genesis and Matthew, and read through to Malachi and the Revelation. That would be like reading the books in turn as they occur on the shelf. While you will read all the books of the Bible, you will desire to read the New Testament and certain parts of the Old, such as the Psalms, Daniel, Genesis, etc., oftener than other parts.

When sixteen, though unconverted, I began to read the Bible, book by book. My interest in the Scriptures, and my desire to become a Christian deepened, and I was soon converted. For more than twenty years I have adopted the following method of private daily Bible reading. I select a book out of the New Testament, and one out of the Old, and read the books simultaneously, just as persons find it well to study or read two other books, on different subjects, at the same time. I recommend this method to you. You might begin to-day with John and the Psalms.

2. *Search the Scriptures carefully.* So many read carelessly. Moody says, "Many read the Bible as I used to hoe turnips when a boy; if I did not mark the row I hoed last at night, I would not know where to begin next morning."

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It is not the amount eaten, but only the food digested that nourishes; so a few verses, well digested, will do you more good than many chapters carelessly read. (Heb. iv. 2.) So read that you will remember not only where but also what you read.

The fingers of a poor blind girl became so calloused with spinning that she was unable to make out the raised letters in her Bible. After making a futile attempt, she pressed her lips to the sacred page to kiss it good-by, when to her surprise, she found that with the delicate nerves of her lips she could make out the letters. With increasing joy she, day by day, ran her lips along the lines and thus read the Bible carefully. Shall we not, while thankful for our eyes, read the blessed book with equal carefulness?

3. *Search the Scriptures reverently.* As you read God's Word, say, as Eli directed Samuel, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." Reverence the Bible; do not make a music stool of it, or throw it about carelessly, or burn up a leaf, or turn down the leaves.

I like a pun or a joke, if it is not too stale or silly; but to joke or pun on Scripture passages is gross irreverence, and should be avoided by all. More and more as we experience the blessings of His Word, we will say with grateful and reverent hearts,

"Holy Bible, book divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine."

4. *Search the Scriptures intently.* Some read the Bible as a sort of task, or in a hap-hazard way, and search for nothing and find it. Others read to cavil or to try to prove some opinion or fad of their own. Come to the Scriptures *for* your opinions. Be honest; there is no advantage in deceiving yourself.

Search to know the truth about self and sin, Christ and salvation, heaven and hell, duty and privilege; and the promise is, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John viii. 32.)

5. *Search the Scriptures prayerfully.* Seven times in

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Psalm cxix. we read, "Teach me thy precepts." Let this be your prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you the text-book He has inspired.

After years of experience, I would recommend that you read the Bible, in connection with your daily private devotions, upon your knees, and meditate and pray as you read. Are you unconverted? I do not think you could thus prayerfully read the Book of John through, a chapter each morning and evening, and not become a Christian. Are you converted? Read the Bible prayerfully, so shall you be a stalwart Christian.

6. *Read the Scriptures trustingly.* The Word of God stands unrefuted; "The Scriptures cannot be broken." (John x. 35.) Infidels talk and chatter in a general way about, what they call, "the discrepancies of the Bible;" but they do not point out any discrepancy, for the simple reason that they cannot mention *even one*, that, to an unprejudiced and unbiassed mind, amounts to a row of pins.

Mr. George Muller says: "I have read the Bible through more than a hundred times, and I find no stumbling-block at all. This is because I am satisfied with God." Guard against doubting one portion of God's Word. The truth of the Bible is established. Get on promised ground, and there stand firmly as you sing:

> "Should all the forms that men devise,
> Assault my faith with treacherous art,
> I'd call them vanity and lies,
> And bind Thy Gospel to my heart."

7. *Search the Scriptures understandingly.* Study the meaning and lessons. Often ask yourself, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" (Acts viii. 30.)

You will find it helpful, as I do, to read the Bible in connection with a commentary. Do not read the notes on every verse, but only on such verses as you may deem necessary or desirable. Do not, however,

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use any man's thoughts as a substitute for your own thinking, or imagine that he is always right. There are few families, or persons, but can afford to buy Matthew Henry's Commentary, of six large volumes, at $8.00; or, "Whedon on the Gospels," etc.

Much of the Bible can be understood only by having a Christian experience. The love, joy, peace and hope that the Bible speaks about and the Christian enjoys and talks of, are all moonshine to those not Christians. (1 Cor. ii. 14.)

It is an evidence of the inspiration of the Bible, that man's finite mind cannot now understand it all. The Bible came from a greater mind than ours.

To a person who has always been blind, the world seems different when he gets his eye-sight, from what he had thought. So the Bible becomes a new book to those whose eyes are opened to discern spiritual things.

We should know the doctrines by which we are saved. (1) For our own comfort, stability and upbuilding. (2) For the sake of others. Could you point out to an enquirer the way of salvation? Have you ever done so? God designs that you shall teach others. (Heb. v. 12.)

8. *Search the Scriptures retentively.* That is, memorize many of the four P's: prayers, promises, precepts and praises. This is not an exercise for children merely, but for every youth and adult.

Great benefits will result from storing your mind with God's Word. (1) You will be led, like the Psalmist, to turn from sin. (2) You will be helped, as was Jesus, in resisting temptation. (3) You will be aided in prayer. (4) You will be taught how to train your family. (Deut. vi. 6-9.) (5) You will be stirred up, as was Jeremiah, to Christian work. (Jer. xx. 9.) If, as he, you have the Lord's word in your heart as a part of yourself, and have it on fire with love, you will speak and work for Christ.

I find it well to memorize a text for the day out of

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my morning Scripture reading, and to take a pillow verse for the night.

9. *Search the Scriptures every day.* Peter says: "Desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby." And Paul compares the Word of God to "meat" and "milk" adapted for our spiritual necessity and development. Our spirit needs spiritual food *daily*, just as much as our body requires material food. Many are starving themselves and they do not know what is the matter with them.

If you *feel* like it, read your Bible, and if you do not *feel* like it, cultivate a healthy spiritual appetite by reading it daily. God counts those who do so as His true nobility. (Acts xvii. 11, 12.)

As well think to get along without daily food for the body as for the spirit. Religious books, much less novels and secular papers, can not take the place of the Bible. If you allow business, professional or domestic duties to engross the mind and time, and so neglect *daily* spiritual food, no wonder that you do not feel all right. Imagine a merchant being so anxious to get to business that he does not take time to get his breakfast, and at noon his mind is so engrossed with customers that he neglects to go for his dinner or even a lunch. About four o'clock in the afternoon a physician drops into the store, and the man says: "Doctor, I don't know what is the matter with me, I fear I am going to have la grippe, I have such a *gone* feeling." The doctor looks at his tongue, feels his pulse, and then asks, "What have you been eating?" The merchant replies: "I have been so busy, that I have not taken time to eat my meals; in fact, I have not had a mouthful to-day." Do you think the physician would look serious, give him some medicine, and send him home to bed. He would certainly laugh at him, and direct him to get something to eat.

Do you wonder that you do not feel well, are weak, have spiritual dyspepsia, or are almost starved to

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death, if you neglect daily spiritual food as found in His Word.

Do you say, "I have no time for daily Bible reading"? How often in the year do you omit your breakfast, dinner or supper from want of time? Is bodily food more important than spiritual? Take or make time. Begin to-day.

Plan to have regular *set* times for daily Bible study, as for meals. You do not eat enough on Sunday to do you through the week.

For bodily food, I take a light breakfast, a hearty dinner, and a light supper; but for spiritual food I prefer a hearty breakfast, when my mind is clearest, a light lunch, and then such a supper as desirable. Let each form his own daily plan.

10. *Search the Scriptures savingly.* The Bible is God's message of salvation for the world. Are you not yet a Christian? "The Holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation." (2 Tim. iii. 15.) As a husband and wife, who had been sceptical, were searching the Scriptures to know the truth, the husband said: "Wife, we are wrong; we are lost." As they read on, the wife exclaimed: "Truly, we are lost, but we may be saved." Both of them yielded to Christ, and Jesus received and saved them. You also may be saved to-day if you will. "Now is the day of salvation."

Are you now a Christian? Study to know what your privileges in the Gospel are, and to be the kind of Christian God would have you. While you are thankful for what by grace you have received, do not rest short of "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of peace."

Walter Scott, when near to death requested, "Read me out of the Book." And being asked, "Which book?" replied, "There is but our book, the Bible." More and more let us prize this "one book, the Bible." Study it while living, and upon its promises we will pillow our heads when dying.

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Look on the Bright Side.

—: III :—

Precept: Dan. xii. 13. Praise: 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.
Promise: Heb. ix. 28. Prayer: Psa. v. 3.

DO not be a pessimist or an optimist either; but take a happy medium view of things, inclining to optimism.

We must all admit that in this life there is a dark side; but, thank the Lord, there is also a bright side. It is of very great importance that we look on the bright side, rather than on the dark, as we usually see that for which we look.

To look on the bright side is Scriptural, and hence right. Paul says, "Whatsoever things are *true, honest, just, pure, lovely,* of *good report,* of *virtue* and *praise,* think on *these things.*" (Phil. iv. 8.) To obey this divine rule will ennoble your character, for people become like what they think about. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Prov. xxiii. 7.)

If you would be pure, honest, true, virtuous, just and worthy of praise and good report, look for and think of these things, and not their opposites, as you may see them in the world, in the Church, and in individuals generally.

If we would most effectively help the erring, the despondent, and persons seeking Christ, we must not be dull or discouraged; but, having sympathy, think and speak on the bright side. When talking to the hundreds of men in Kingston Penitentiary, I said, "It must be hard for you to be separated from freedom, home and mother, or wife and children; but, let me advise you to act on the maxim, 'grin and bear it.'" They laughed heartily; and one afterwards said

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to me, "I am here justly, but God has forgiven all my sins, so I'll smile and bear it."

A man passing through an hospital, kindly spoke to a new patient, "How are you, my friend?" Weeping, he said: "I have lost my leg; I wish I was dead." The gentleman replied: "Oh, do not be discouraged; you have one leg yet, and also two hands, two eyes and an honest heart; so cheer up." Smiling, he answered: "Nineteen have spoken to me to-day, and they discouraged me by saying, 'How will you get along? it is too bad; I feel so sorry for you,' and such expressions. I am so glad you came. I'll get along all right; I don't want to die." Let us cheer people up, for there are plenty to discourage them.

Some people are to be pitied or blamed, for they usually look on the dark side. This results from one or more of the following causes:

First—From habit. One, who had formed this habit, was sadly complaining, when another asked: "What is the trouble now?" She replied: "There is trouble enough; for two clucking hens are setting on one nest." Persons who get into the habit of complaining, will always find clucking hens.

Second—It results from deranged physical organism. A prominent lawyer and temperance worker had poured out his complaint against church-members and preachers generally, when I quietly asked, "Is your liver out of order?" Keep your liver and nerves in good tune, and do not encourage an enlarged spleen. Moreover, do not mistake indigestion for piety.

Third—Small minds are frequently pessimistic. They cannot see far, or things magnanimous, but behold things small and mean.

Fourth—Discouragement causes it. Some, like Elijah at Carmel, and John in prison, not realizing their expectations, for a time see only the dark side, overlooking the bright, and so get discouraged. Christ would cheer such persons, as He did Elijah and John, by showing them the bright side.

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Fifth—Personal defects make things and persons look suspicious. When criticising others, people are often but looking at themselves in a glass. A woman, speaking to several ladies, said of another, "She is the most unladylike, selfish and uncultured woman I know." One of the company replied: "You are forgetting *yourself*." This was a two-edged sword.

Sixth—Egotism. A person may have such an exalted opinion of himself, his family, and what he is doing, that he will view everybody and their work, yea, everything else, with disparagement. Do not be an egotist, or a criticiser. Usually the poorest critic, and the one most open to criticism, is most critical.

Seventh—Moral depravity is a great source of it. Vultures, crows and other carrion birds fly over fields of wheat, clover in bloom, and gardens of flowers, and do not notice them; but they see and pounce upon a putrid carcass on the commons. So, persons with carrion or diseased moral appetites, do not see, think, or speak about the pure, good, honest, virtuous and praiseworthy, but gather up the carrion. I pity them.

Eighth—A morbid mind and lack of faith in God cause people to see the world, the church, individuals, business, society and everything, through jaundiced eyes or blue spectacles. Ever keep a cheerful mind and strong faith in God. Kill the spirit of faultfinding as you would a viper. True religion gives us a sunny view of things, and disposes us not to melancholy, doubt and complaint, but to gratitude, hope and praise. Turn your eyes from the dark side.

1. Look on the bright side of your *nation or country*, and seek to make it better still. I can heartily enjoy the spread-eagle fourth of July American orator; but deliver me from croakers and complainers in every land.

2. Look on the bright side of *human nature*. As Prof. Austin showed me his grapes last Summer he said, "Look at these clusters, are they not beauties?' They were only little bits of green, sour things, but

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he thought of what they would become by the effect of sunshine, dew, rain and care. So let us think of the possibilities in human nature, and by admiration, praise, sympathy, love and care, seek to keep off the blight and develop the good.

3. Look on the bright side of your *friends, relations, neighbors,* and especially those of your own *household.* Do not expect perfection in them. If they were absolutely perfect, they would be so unlike yourself that you would hardly feel at home with them. Do not magnify and multiply faults in others by brooding over them, and when you speak to persons about their defects, do it kindly, alone, and also parenthetically, as did the Lord in His letters to the Seven Churches.

When any person spoke ill of another in the presence of Peter the Great, he would interject the question, "Is there not a fair side also to his character? Come, tell us what good qualities you have remarked about him." Let us think and speak well of others. The way we speak of the fault or sin of another, and the spirit that prompts the utterance, may be a much greater fault or sin than the one spoken of.

Diogenes said, "I will trample Plato's pride beneath my feet." Plato replied: "Yes, and in the exercise of a greater pride."

4. Look on the bright side of *yourself* and your Christian experience. While some exalt themselves, others disparage their own dispositions, talents and piety, thinking themselves stupid and different from other mortals. This course injures many, as it tends to make them similar to what they *think* they are.

5. Look on the bright side of *the world.* This is a grand world; the best some people will ever be in. Some think and teach that the world is getting worse, and will continue to do so. Such premillennarian and pessimistic ideas dishearten, show lack of faith in the Gospel, paralyze effort and stifle prayer and hope. That "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and

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worse," is an evidence that the world is getting better; because the greater the light sinned against, the worse the sinner.

Some speak of the good old times, and forget the much better new times; and thus, according to the wise man, prove themselves to be unwise. "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this." (Eccl. vii. 10.) To think that the former days were better than these, shows an ignorance of both the past and the present.

The world is getting better. The moral standard of the world to-day, with respect to temperance and other questions, is as high as was that of the Church fifty years ago. The Church and the world are coming closer together; but it is the world that is advancing nearer to the Church, and not the Church retrograding toward the world.

Disputes between nations are now usually settled by arbitration, and not by wars, as in the past.

Slavery and persecution are almost gone from the world, and the millennium spirit is being manifested.

To say that the world will continue to get worse is contrary to the promises of God, as well as to fact. Joseph Cook says: "In the first *fifteen* hundred years of the Christian era, Christianity gained one hundred million adherents; in the next *three* hundred years, one hundred million more; but in the *last century* it has gained two hundred and ten millions. At the present rate of increase, there will be twelve hundred millions of nominal Christians in the year 2000."

Though some see only the dark side of the world, let us view the bright side, and pray, work, and hope for the ultimate triumph of the Gospel of Christ.

6. Look on the bright side of the *Church of Christ*, in all her denominations, and especially in your own denomination. When something that we deplore occurs in the Church, do not cry, "Whither are we drifting," and "What are we coming to;" as if such

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things, or worse, had never been before. We are not drifting, but *sailing* on; and, notwithstanding certain things we regret, we are advancing and will reach our desired haven by and by.

Do not disparage the piety of the Church of to-day, and say, "Where are your Luthers, Wesleys, Knoxes, and Fletchers." These were exceptional characters in those days, when few were devoted to God, or professed to know their sins forgiven; hence, they are especially recorded. People report as news that which is out of the ordinary. Now such piety, devotion, and confession, having become more general, they are not considered extraordinary, or matter of comment.

There never was as much deep, intelligent, practical piety in the Church as in the glorious day in which we live. They say there are spots on the sun; we do not see them, but rejoice in the light. Do not be looking for imperfections or black spots, but know that you are "light in the Lord," and so help to make the Church better and brighter.

Do not disparage the present by talking about the old-time religion and revivals. There may have been more noise and emotion in other days than there is now; just as an engine makes more noise blowing off steam, than when pulling cars or driving machinery. This is a practical age, and our religion now is applied to pulling or driving something.

The Church is advancing. The Gospel is now preached in every land, and is exerting its leavening power, while the facilities for spreading the Gospel are greater than in any other age.

Greater attention is being shown to children and youth than ever before, as evidenced by our Sabbath-school lessons and literature, Epworth Leagues, Christian Endeavor Societies, Bands of Hope, etc. This was promised *for advanced times*, in the last verse of the Old Testament.

The spirit of Christian unity between the various Churches is deeper and wider than ever before.

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The missionary spirit, which is the spirit of Christ, that prompts men and women to give their money to spread the glad tidings, and leads others to go themselves to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond, is growing every year.

Look then on the bright side of the Church; it is not perfect, but it is the agency God employed to save you and your children, and by which the world is to be won for Christ. Once when Fred Douglas, that great colored orator, was dispiirted, and hopelessly bewailing the cause of his race, an old black woman cried out, "Fred, is God dead?" New hope sprang up. Remember God lives and reigns.

7. Look on the bright side of the *events of life.* Every cloud has a silver lining. "Into each life some rain must fall." It is not work or trouble that kills people, but fret and worry.

Two sensible rules are: First—Do not worry and fret about what you can prevent, but simply prevent it. Second—Do not worry about what you cannot prevent; for it is bad enough in itself without worrying about it. That is, never worry or fret about what you can help, or what you cannot help.

"Things are not evenly divided in this world," said a laboring man to me, as he contrasted his position with that of his wealthy employer. I asked, "Would you give your health, your two sons and two daughters for his wealth, and with it be sickly and childless as he is?" He replied, "That makes things look different; money could not induce me to change positions."

Count your own mercies and blessings. If disposed to think your lot hard or unfortunate, recall to mind those whose condition is so much worse. Cheer up and be thankful. Do not worry about your losses. "All is gone," said a man dolefully, as he returned home after having made an assignment of his property. His little child artlessly spoke up, "I'm not gone, papa." A new hope came to him, and he clasped her to his bosom, saying, "I would not give

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you for a thousand times what I have lost." Rejoice in what you have.

Sail-boats go in different directions, with the same wind, their courses being determined by the way the sails and rudder are set. So it is with us. Things that drive one person to discouragement, complaining, away from the Church and God, drive another to his knees, and to greater loyalty to his Church and Saviour. Look on the bright side, and so set your sails, and tack when necessary, that every breeze, though some seem to be adverse, may waft you nearer to Christ, His Church, and heaven.

As we love God, and look on the bright side, God, with His infinite resources, will make even the ills, disappointments and misfortunes of life "work together for our good." Paul says to the Christian, "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's." Let your songs be in the major scale, and not in the minor, and in gladness sing with David, "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever."

8. Look on the bright side of *death*. Are you mourning the loss of loved ones? Even here there is a bright side. "Ye sorrow not as others," the heathens and infidels, "that have no hope" of a glad reunion. A heathen mother cremated the body of her dead child. One day in the field, as she was prostrating herself before its ashes, she beheld a snake, and, wailing and wringing her hands, she exclaimed, "My child has turned into a snake." Thank God for the hope Christianity inspires. The Christian can say, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." The song, "Safe in the arms of Jesus," has brought comfort to many a stricken heart.

A gentleman in Ottawa that is sceptical, of the agnostic type, dreamed that his wife had died, and that he saw her dead body before him. With inexpressible sorrow and anguish, he wakened; and it was some moments before he could be fully convinced that his loved one was still with him, and had not gone

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forever, with no hope of a reunion. As they told me the awful dream, I said to him and his sceptical wife, "Friends, that surely teaches you that if Christianity is not true, it ought to be."

Let me comfort you with the assurance that your loved ones gone to heaven still see you, are interested in you, and often are near you. There are three passages of Scripture that teach this doctrine:

First, Paul, in Hebrews xii. 1, using the Grecian races as a symbol, speaks of earth as our stadium or race-course, and heaven as the galleries where so great a crowd of witnesses inspire us with their gaze to run the Christian course.

Second, Stephen, when dying, with vision spiritualized, "saw the heavens opened, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." (Acts vii. 55, 56.) As he saw from earth to heaven, he can certainly now, with pure spiritual vision, see back from heaven to earth, and so can all our loved ones there.

Third, Jesus tells us that the redeemed in heaven are "as the angels of God." The angels see us, know about us, and are sent forth to minister to us on earth (Heb. i. 14). Then, as our loved ones are "as the angels," they have equal powers and privileges.

A Christian on one of my circuits, four years after the death of her husband, was still in untold grief. She would not attend church, or mingle in society, but shut herself up to her grief. As I visited her, she told me her sorrow. I sympathized with her, and thought, how shall I comfort her? Though I knew about her husband, I questioned her, and let her tell me of his beautiful Christian example, their happy married life, his peaceful death, and the certainty of his being in heaven. Then I said, "Sister, there is a bright side that should give you joy. What a comfort that he lived and died a Christian; that your whole married life together was so happy; that he is happy now, and you shall meet again." She said, "Yes, that is a comfort." I then asked, "Do

you know that your husband now sees you?" She questioned, "Do you think so?" I replied, "I *know* he does," and then spoke in detail about the three Bible evidences of this fact above given. I then asked, "Do you think it would give him the more joy to see you in great sadness, gloom, repining and inactivity, because of your bereavement, or to see you cherishing happy memories of him, and a bright hope of meeting again, while you also seek to make others good and happy?" She replied, while smiles and tears struggled for the mastery, "He always liked to see me joyous; I know he would now. I have only seen the dark side; I will in future view the other side, and by God's grace be different." She came to church, became active in Christian work, especially among the young, and her joyous piety was an inspiration to many.

Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher views things properly. As we visited her at her home in Brooklyn, she said not a word about her sorrow or loneliness, but revelled in pleasant memories of her husband, as she told us of so many happy, amusing and grateful remembrances of him, and ever spoke of him as "my husband." The visit was a great joy, example and blessing to us; and we will ever treasure as a souvenir the pictures of herself and Mr. Beecher, that she gave us ere we left.

After the death of Rev. Dr. George Douglas, Mrs. Douglas said: "I cannot feel that I am a widow, but the wife of a glorified man." Blessed thought.

Let those of us who have loved ones in heaven, though we naturally feel lonely without them, look at the bright side; and as they have "fulness of joy" in heaven, let us, though for a time separated, have as much of their joy on earth as possible, and do His will on earth as they do it in heaven.

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Blunders about Fasting.

——: IV :——

Promise : Psa. xxxvii. 3. **Precept : Isa. lviii. 5-7.**
Proverb : Prov. xxiii. 1-3. **Prayer : Prov. xxx. 8, 9.**

MANY persons have misconceptions about fasting. The Protestant Church, unlike the Roman Catholic, does not prescribe, or impose weekly or yearly fasts, but leaves the question to be settled by the individual.

After my conversion I was much exercised about fasting, and especially so when I read about Hester Ann Rogers and others who fasted so often. I wanted to do all that was right, and so, on certain Fridays, I imposed a fast; but, instead of being helped in my devotions by it, I was hindered, as a severe headache almost always ensued. I at length ceased to impose a fast; but my mind was not settled till years later.

By careful study of the Bible, and especially the New Testament, I have come to the following conclusions:

First, the most acceptable religious fast is not *imposed* by the Lord, the Church, or by the individual. Carefully consider the following Scriptures and suggestions:

1. The Pharisees imposed a fast on Monday and Thursday of each week, in remembrance of Moses' ascent to, and descent from the mount. (Luke xviii. 12.) But Moses' forty days' fast was not imposed. Moreover, Jesus does not commend, but would seem to have disapproved of this imposed fast. (Matt. vi. 16-18.)

2. The disciples of John and of the Pharisees complained to Jesus, that He did not impose a fast on His disciples. Christ vindicated His disciples in not fast-

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ing, and taught that it would be inappropriate for them to fast while He, the divine Bridegroom, was with them; but, when He would be taken from them, they, from sorrow of heart, would fast spontaneously. Read His words: "As long as they have the Bridegroom with them they cannot fast," etc. (Mark ii. 18-20.)

3. The primitive Church observed but one annual fast, for one or more days, in commemoration of the period between the death of Jesus on Friday and His resurrection on the Lord's day. The Bible, however, does not enjoin this fast.

4. The fast in Lent, in our day, is supposed to commemorate the forty days Christ fasted. Such an *imposed* fast is unwarranted, as Christ's fast was not imposed, but was spontaneous, as He was not hungry during the forty days. (Luke iv. 2.)

Second, I learned from the following passages that the religious fast of the Bible was spontaneous:

1. Jesus, at the well, was at first weary and hungry; but His mind became so engrossed in the conversion of the Samaritan women and others, that He forgot His weariness, and cared not for food. Hear Him as He said: "I have meat to eat that ye know not of. (John iv. 31-34.)

2. The forty days' fast of Jesus was spontaneous. So fierce was His mental conflict in that awful temptation, that He hungered not during the forty days. We read in Luke iv. 2: "When the forty days were ended He *afterward* hungered."

3. The forty days' fasts of Moses on the Mount and Elijah on his journey to Horeb were not imposed, but spontaneous. Their minds were so pre-occupied in communion with God and His service that bodily appetites were not considered. (Ex. xxxiv. 28; 1 Kings xix. 8.)

4. Paul's mind was so engaged when seeking Christ that for three days he cared not for food. (Acts ix. 9.)

5. Other instances of spontaneous fast, because of

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engrossment of mind, occur: When Cornelius was praying (Acts x. 30); when Barnabas and Saul were ordained to the work of the ministry (Acts xiii. 2, 3); and on the wreck with Paul, when death stared them in the face (Acts xxvii. 33).

6. Imposed fasts are not needed in the Church; but if we, as Christians, become so absorbed in communion with God, and anxiety for the conversion of others, we shall then understand the meaning of the words: "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." (Matt. xvii. 21.)

I am so thankful, that while few Protestants impose fasts, many practise spontaneous fasts that are most acceptable to God.

I believe many people eat too *often* and too *much*, and especially too much meat, and hence they are drowsy, their brains sluggish, their animal natures too strongly developed, their spiritual natures hindered in their growth, their communion with God impeded, and their Christian service lessened.

Abstinence from too much food, and especially from meat and rich viands, is good for body, brain and spirit, both for children and adults. Personally, I take each day one hearty meal with meat, and two light ones without animal food, and also discard entirely all cakes, rich puddings and pastry.

The idea of imposing a fast when you are hungry savors of penance, and gives a wrong view of our heavenly Father. Imagine a dutiful child saying, "Father, I am hungry, but I want to please you; so I shall go without my dinner to-day." The father would reply, "My child, I would rather you would eat your dinner."

God is our loving Father. He tells us in Isa. lviii. 5-7, that His chosen fast and acceptable day is not to "afflict, to bow down, to spread sack-cloth," but to "loose bands, undo burdens, break every yoke, deal thy bread to the hungry, and cover the naked." Let us in all things know that we have the favour of God.

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Blunders about the Lord's Supper.

———:v:———

Promise : Matt. xxvi. 28.	**Praise : Psa. ciii. 1-5.**
Precept : 1 Cor. xi. 24.	**Prayer : Matt. xxvi. 38, 39.**

MANY young converts and timid Christians are troubled, and fear to partake of the Lord's Supper, lest they eat and drink "unworthily."

After my conversion I partook of the sacrament twice, and then for a year I mournfully kept away from the Lord's table, because Satan quoted to me and misapplied the verse, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." (1 Cor. xi. 29.)

Let me explain this and the other much misunderstood verses found in 1 Cor. xi. 17-34.

1. These Corinthians had been heathens, and, consequently, accustomed to drunken debauches in their sacred feasts; hence, finding the Lord's Supper as a sacrament in the Church, they thought it similar to their heathen feasts, and so brought provisions with them, and turned it into a sort of basket picnic. Thus they lost sight of the sacred design of the Lord's Supper, and degraded it to an ordinary meal, yea, to a drunken feast. Paul tells us this in verses 20, 21: "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper; for in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken."

We thus see that to eat and drink unworthily, or unthinkingly, means to do as did the Corinthians, who ate and drank without any thought of Christ's love and atoning death. This is why they were condemned, as they did not discern "the Lord's body."

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(Verse 29.) This idea is even more manifest in the Revised Version: "He that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, *if he discern not the body.*" (1 Cor. xi. 29.)

2. The old words "damned" and "damnation," as used here and elsewhere in the Bible, mean "condemned" and "condemnation" or "judgment," as rendered in the Revised Version.

3. To feel your unworthiness, as you come to the Lord's Supper, is not eating and drinking unworthily.

He is unfit to come who does not feel unworthy.

The Lord's Supper is a memento, or remembrancer of the death of Jesus and of His unchanging love. (Verses 24-26.)

If your mother, when dying, were to leave you a small keepsake, the more you felt your unworthiness of such a mother, the more gratefully would you cherish the memento of her love. So, though you feel yourself unworthy, do not refuse the sacrament; but, with faith and thanksgiving, receive to your comfort the memento of Christ's wondrous love.

If you have faith in Christ as your Saviour, or if you are seeking salvation through Him, and see in the bread and wine a memento of Christ's love, when He died upon the cross for us, you do not eat and drink unworthily, or bring condemnation upon yourself.

4. The sacrament is the Lord's table; hence all the children of God, rich and poor, young and old, learned or illiterate, are alike welcome. We may all say, as did the Duke of Wellington to the poor private who hesitated to kneel by his side at the table, "We are all one here."

5. A child of from five to seven, that has ordinary intelligence, can be made to know what a memento is, as well as can the parents or the minister, and can receive it as lovingly and intelligently.

All Christian parents should tell their children what the Lord's Supper means, and have them by

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their side at the table, and Christ and heaven will delight to see them.

All children and young people who love Christ, should be welcomed to the Lord's Table, as Jesus welcomed the "little children" that were brought to Him for blessing. Christ's words are applicable here: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." (Matt. xviii. 10.)

6. If you are dishonest, profane, drunken, false or careless, or if you are willingly living in any open or secret sin, I beseech you to turn from sin to Christ before you receive the sacrament; so shall you not eat and drink to your own condemnation.

7. Peter fell into sin, as he swore and denied Christ, the day after receiving the sacrament; but he repented and was forgiven. If you should sin, do not despair, but, like Peter, at once repent, and then be true.

8. The sacrament takes the place of the Passover, and the elements used should, in every case, be unfermented. (Ex. xii. 17.)

Fermented wine, that, with other intoxicating liquors, sends tens of thousands to death and hell every year, cannot possibly typify Christ's atoning blood, by which we are to be saved from sin and brought to heaven. Moreover, the fermented wine found in liquor stores is usually made, not from grapes, but from poisonous drugs.

Fermented wine at the sacrament has been known to awaken the old appetite in reformed drunkards. We surely should not make the Lord's table a stumbling block or source of temptation to any person.

The word *wine* is not once used in the Bible accounts of the sacrament. We read of "the cup," and "this fruit of the vine." (Matt. xxvi. 27-29.)

Unfermented wine is readily made or easily secured, and every church should decide to use the unfermented juice of the grape.

9. Transubstantiation is an unreasonable, fallacious

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and unscriptural dogma. Consubstantiation is also erroneous and misleading. The bread and wine are consecrated for the sacrament, but they remain bread and wine as they were. When Jesus said, "This is my body," and, "This is my blood" (Matt. xxvi. 26-28), He meant, "This represents my body and blood," as when He represented Himself to be "The door," "The vine," and "The light."

10. Some churches administer the sacrament to persons kneeling at the communion rail, and other churches have the people receive it while sitting in their seats. There is no posture prescribed in the Bible.

At the close of our meetings, when there is a union sacramental service, and in other cases when hundreds commune, the people occupy every other seat in the church, and then, after receiving the bread and wine, bow their heads a moment in silent prayer. I like this method. I have seen eight or ten hundred people commune in about half an hour. In such cases every seat was occupied by communicants.

11. I believe, with Dr. Punshon, it is most appropriate to receive the bread and wine at the Lord's table with ungloved hand. It might be advisable for the minister to suggest that the glove be removed from the hand.

12. In my early Christian life, I endeavored to feel very solemn or sad, when receiving the sacrament; but now I come with thanksgiving, love and praise.

The sacrament should be received in a spirit of thoughtfulness (verses 25-27), self-examination (verse 28), love, faith, thanksgiving and consecration (verses 23-26).

The sacrament is intended to awaken, not sadness and sighing about self, but grateful memories of Christ and His wondrous love. May we ever thankfully receive it as a "token of His love and a pledge of glorious liberty."

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Blundering Self-Examination.

——: VI :——

Promise: John vi. 37. Prayer: Psa. cxxxix. 23, 24.
Precept: 1 Cor. xiii. 5. Praise: 1 John i. 3.

A SERIOUS blunder many persons make is in wrongly examining their feelings. In all the Bible we are told to examine ourselves concerning one thing only, and that is our faith: "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." (2 Cor. xiii. 5.)

Our feelings depend much upon the state of our health and our digestive organs, the way the wind blows and the state of the weather, as well as upon our faith and Christian experience; hence, though our faith never wavers, our feelings may be as variable as the wind. The condition of the liver has as much to do with our feelings as the state of the heart.

Our faith depends upon our estimate of the Lord and His promises, and not upon our feelings; hence, no matter what our feelings are, our faith need never decline or waver, but may grow stronger as we get to know God more perfectly.

Devout feelings perish where analysis begins. By analysing your feelings you burn the tender plant, and then are discouraged because, raking in the ashes, you find neither root, stem nor flower.

The mind wonderfully affects the body. Many persons, by examining their feelings so much, become hypochondriacs, and *die* of some disease they never would have had but for their morbid imaginations.

So there are spiritual hypochondriacs in all our congregations; some are church members, and others do not join the church because they think they are not fit.

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Prof. Hitchcock, of Amherst College, being a dyspeptic, lectured his students about this disease. The result was that, examining their stomachs so much, in less than a year more than half of them had dyspepsia. Had they not thought of their stomachs, but used common sense in eating, they would have been all right. So there are many spiritual dyspeptics as a result of examining their feelings. "Trust in the Lord and do good," and your spiritual health, as also your feelings, will be satisfactory.

When I was a boy, as I read in the almanac about consumption and other diseases that afflict men, I examined my feelings and thought I had symptoms of nearly all of these ills, and would certainly die at an early age of a complication of diseases. All the diseases I ever had were measles, mumps, whooping-cough and chicken-pox. Many blunder as I did.

Feelings do not constitute Christianity, but are an adjunct of it. See that your faith in Christ is right, whether you are ecstatic or depressed. Commit yourself by an ever-present faith to Christ, and your feelings will take care of themselves.

Feeling is little spoken of in the Bible; but the higher, better and more intelligent idea of *knowing* is often expressed. Knowing is not dependent upon our feelings, but upon our faith in God and His Word. Moreover, knowing includes feeling.

A bride does not say, "I *feel* that I am the wife of him whose name I bear;" but, "I *know* that I am." Neither does she daily examine her feelings to decide her relationship to him, but *knowing* she is his wife, because she received him, he said he received her, and the minister pronounced them husband and wife —she acts the part of a devoted bride, and then also feels satisfied.

Jesus says to the Christian, "Ye are the bride, I am the Bridegroom." *Know* that you receive Him, *believe* His promise to receive you to be true, and so, *knowing* that you are His, let your feelings alone,

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act loyally to Him, and your feelings will then be satisfactory.

Many have the feelings promised, and yet doubt their adoption. In a meeting in London, a gentleman said to me: "I have yielded to Christ, but I do not feel any different, and so cannot say I am saved." The following conversation ensued: "Do you *feel* that you yield to Christ?" "I did last night, and I *know* I do now." "Do you feel that you *trust* Christ to forgive you?" "Yes." "Paul says: 'Being justified (or forgiven) by faith, we have *peace* with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' (Rom. v. 1.) That is, those trusting the Lord for pardon are delivered from the consciousness of guilt and condemnation. Do you feel guilt and condemnation, or peace?" "There was a sense of guilt, but now that is gone, and I have peace." "You say that you feel and know that you yield, trust and have peace. Have your feelings changed; has the Lord promised any other feelings? Could you desire any other feelings?" He, smiling, said: "I had been looking for some great emotion and joy. I see it. I am the Lord's, and He is mine." Many, like this man, have all the scriptural and essential feelings; that is, they know that they yield to Christ, trust Him, and have peace; and yet, thinking of some imaginary or heard-of feelings, their minds are really diverted from the satisfactory feelings they have, and so they doubt that they are Christians, or do not claim the full assurance of faith. How is it with you?

The Bible speaks of three witnesses: (1) the witness of the Spirit in His Word (John iii. 33); (2) the self-evident witness of faith (1 John v. 10); (3) the witness of the Holy Spirit together with our consciousness (Rom. viii. 15, 16).

Some Christians speak only of the Spirit's assurance in the Word, while others speak only of the assurance of the Spirit in the heart of the believer. This three-fold assurance should never be separated. The promise in the Bible is the Spirit's assurance to our

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faith, and His work within us is His assurance to our consciousness: these two constitute the full assurance of faith.

Though you have the Scripture evidences of being a Christian, yet, if you yield to the temptation to doubt your adoption, it will interfere with your peace, happiness and usefulness, and hinder you seeking others, and will be a stumbling-block to the unconverted.

In Wallaceburg, a Christian said to me: "I do not feel the great happiness or ecstasy that others speak of, but I have committed myself trustingly to Christ, and I feel safe." Act thus wisely.

Too many keep examining their ever-changing emotions and feelings, and then judge their state by these instead of by the attitude of their will to God, their trust in Him, and the assurance of His Word. One, now a minister, said to me: "Last night I believed I was converted; but my feelings to-night are changed, and I am doubting." I asked: "Has Christ changed?" He answered: "No." "Then upon what are you going to build your faith and hope,—upon your changeable feelings or upon Christ and His Word, that never change?" With a new hope and intelligent faith, he said: "Upon Christ, the sure foundation; I trust Him now; He is my Saviour."

Do not make your changeable feelings, but the unchangeable God and His promises, the ground of your faith, if you would know the "rest of faith." (Heb. iv. 3.)

Be not, as a sail-boat, controlled by the winds of emotion, or the currents of feeling; but ever live by faith and do the right.

"Trust and obey, there is no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but trust and obey."

No wonder that some people do not get along in the Christian life, for they are almost daily pulling

themselves up by the roots and examining their feelings. Use a tree similarly, and you will surely kill it. If you want a tree to grow, you plant it in good ground, leave it there and water it from time to time. You should act similarly with reference to yourself: plant yourself in the promised ground of His Word, and there by faith abide, so shall the Spirit be unto you as the dew and rain, and you will grow and flourish. (Hosea xiv. 5, 6.)

Animals run on feelings, but human beings are to act on intelligence and principle. By doing duty, proper feelings follow. Do right from principle. Do not wait for emotions or feelings, but do what you see and know to be right, always and everywhere.

Sometimes *true Christians*, because of certain physical or mental conditions, have no religious emotion, do not feel like praying, reading the Bible, or going to church, have diabolical thoughts suggested, and are tempted to think and say, "I have no religion," Such should say, as did the Psalmist when in this state: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him." (Psa. xlii. 5.)

Should the way ever be dark as a result of physical causes, morbidness of mind, or the assaults of the enemy, hear and obey the blessed direction of God: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that *obeyeth* the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him *trust* in the Name of the Lord, and *stay* upon his God." (Isa. l. 10.)

Job, when in darkness and perplexity, exclaimed, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." (Job xiii. 15.)

Jesus, *as a man*, while upon the cross felt as if He were abandoned of God, and, in untold anguish, exclaimed: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Physical and mental causes largely account for this *seeming* desertion, such as stagnation and loss of blood, dizziness, inflammation, pain, exhaustion and

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shattered nerves, as also the seeming temporary triumph of Satan and the wicked, as He suffered for us, "the just for the unjust." Though He expressed the temporary feeling of being forsaken of God, yet He did not abandon His hope, but by faith said, "My God;" and after His triumphant words, "It is finished," He again by faith exclaimed, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

If darkness from physical, mental or unknown causes is ever yours, remember Jesus, know His sympathy and imitate His example of faith. Better than all other feelings is the *rest of faith in the eternal, unchangeable God.*

The pious Summerfield, who was run down in health, and the illustrious Hedley Vickers, when exhausted with caring for the sick and dying in the army hospital, walked in darkness, and, for a time, thought God had forsaken them. They, however, were not forsaken any more than was Christ; but the condition of the body so affected the mind that they thought God had left them.

Let me assure you that none of those who are troubled, because they think they are forsaken of God or that there is no pardon for them, are really abandoned; for, if they were, they would be utterly unconcerned. The thought results from physical or mental causes. If your friends are in this state, do not be alarmed or think them lost.

Many think they need more grace, when it is rest of body or mind, fresh air, sleep or medicine they need.

In the ancient day, when the sacrifice was laid upon the altar and left there, it was then accepted of the Lord and continued so, as much as if the fire had descended to consume it; because God said, "Whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy" (Ex. xxix. 37) that is, accepted by Him. So, when you yield yourself to Christ and continue to trust yourself to Him, you are *that moment* accepted of Him and remain His own as certainly as if an angel bore you to

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heaven; for Christ assures you, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.)

I blundered for years, after my conversion, in examining my feelings too much. Just after entering the ministry I was left without most of those feelings that Christians usually have; yet I was conscious of having yielded to Christ and of trusting Him, and no sense of guilt was mine. Many times a day came the temptation to doubt that I was a Christian, and as often did I say to Jesus, "Lord, Thou hast said, 'Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.' I *know* I come to Thee; I *know* that I believe Thy promise true, and so by faith, I claim, Thou dost not cast me out; Thou dost receive me." Another voice said, "But you do not *feel* as other Christians say they do, or even as you used to feel." I answered this oft-repeated charge, "I feel and know that I yield to Christ; that I believe His promise to receive true, and there by faith I stand."

I continued in this wilderness state for six weeks till the Lord got my mind off my feelings upon Him, the object of my faith; then, as when the forty days were over with Jesus, "Who was in all points tempted like as we are," the "angels came," and all the other feelings that I had craved were mine. (Matt. iv. 11.)

I shall never forget that experience, or cease to thank God for it. I want to say that, during the years I examined my feelings so much, they were not satisfactory one-third of the time; but since I let my feelings alone, stayed my mind on the Lord and knew I trusted Him, they have been satisfactory and scriptural almost every hour.

A similar experience is promised to all who fulfil the same conditions. Let your feelings alone, and ever know that you yield yourself willingly and trustingly to Christ; so may you ever gratefully say to the Lord, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." (Is. xxvi. 3.)

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Blundering Comparisons.

——: VII :——

Promise: John i. 12. Prayer: Phil. i. 9-11.
Precept: Heb. x. 23-35. Praise: Phil. iv. 20.

A GREAT blunder that thousands make is that of comparing themselves with others. Paul says, "They comparing themselves among themselves are not wise. (2 Cor. x. 12).

Some seek their own glorification or complacency, by thinking themselves above others, whom they disparage. Steer clear of this dangerous rock that Christ has so prominently marked on the chart, by the story of the Pharisee and Publican.

Many good people are led to disparage themselves and doubt that they are Christians, because they wrongly compare themselves with others who speak, act and seem to feel differently from what they do.

The faith and the real Christian experience of persons may be similar, but the feelings exhibited and ways of expressing themselves vastly different, according to their temperaments.

People differ in other things. One man, in politics, is all excitement, while another, equally loyal to his party, is perfectly cool. Some in great sorrow weep and wail, while others, of a different temperament, do not shed a tear; but the saddest eyes of all are the eyes that do not weep. People under the influence of liquor, the spirit of Satan, act differently, according to their temperaments; so do they when under the influence of the Spirit of God. Paul says, "Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph. v. 18.) Know this fulness of the Holy Spirit and be yourself, and let others be themselves, too.

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Imagine a calm and quiet man who has drunk so much liquor that he cannot walk straight, as he hears another boisterously sing, and sees him swing his hat, think, "If that is being drunk, I am not drunk yet."

As we do not judge the strength of a steam engine by the noise it makes or by the amount of steam it blows off, but by the load it pulls or the work it does, so do not think that piety is to be measured by shouting, tears, or by emotions, but by the works of faith.

Shouting, tears and sighs may be all right for some people; but they are, after all, very cheap.

A shallow stream often makes more noise than one that is deep. May your "peace flow as a river," ever deepening and widening.

Some people are like the river steamer that has such a big whistle that it takes so much steam to blow it that, when it whistles, the machinery stops.

Some people cry easily, but their tears are soon wiped away. The test of true religion is implicit faith and doing the will of God. (1 John ii. 4, 5.)

I greatly blundered for years in comparing myself with others. As I saw Christians in meetings, and heard them speak, I would think, "I do not feel like that one; I was not converted that way; I fear I am not right—perhaps I am not converted."

At a missionary meeting, when I was a school-teacher, I was led to disparage myself, and think I had not a proper missionary spirit, because I did not feel like the man who sat in front of me, that groaned, sighed or wiped his eyes almost every minute while a returned missionary was speaking of the darkness and sin of the heathen. This man was worth $20,000, was a member at that appointment; but after all his emotions, tears and groans, he only subscribed one-tenth of what I did.

As I read of Jeremiah, "the weeping prophet," saying: "O that my head were waters, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of

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my people," I thought in order to be right I should feel that way, but did not notice that no other prophet or apostle, though just as good as he, expressed any such feelings. I blundered thus for years.

Let me tell you how I was delivered from my mistake. I was at a camp-meeting, and a good man present was very joyous. During the sermon he responded heartily, and in each after-meeting was the first to pray or speak with great fervor. Then, while others were leading in prayer or speaking, he frequently clapped his hands and shouted, "Glory to God," "Hallelujah," "Amen," "Praise the Lord," "Send the power," etc. I said to myself: "Now, you are not right; for you do not feel like that man." I endeavored to work up my feelings, but this naturally caused them to subside the more, until I seemed stolid. Again and again I left the camp and went into the woods alone, and tried to pray and get happy; but only disappointment was mine, because I could not feel like that man. I continued in this state for days; when, after a forenoon service in which many had been converted, and nearly all seemed happy but myself, I was walking with bowed head, sorrowfully and alone, past the preaching stand, when strange words fell on my ears. Four men were standing together, while one of them was talking loudly and with great earnestness about sheep and calves, and how much he had made out of them. I thought, "Who can this be that is talking so loudly about such things on the very ground where, a few minutes before, Christians had been praying and sinners seeking the Lord?" I looked up and, to my great surprise, saw it was the very man who, less than ten minutes before, had been clapping his hands and shouting "Glory to God," and "Hallelujah." I want to tell you two things: First, I did not doubt his piety for a moment; and second, which was a more important fact to me, I did not doubt my own piety, because I did not feel

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as he; but as I stood, I thought, "Thank God, my temperament and mind are not such as his."

The next moment, as I thought not of that man or self, but of *Christ*, my trust rested in Him, and my mind was filled with perfect peace, and so continued You may profit by my experience.

You can hardly imagine two persons more unlike than Mr. Hunter and myself. This is one reason why God has put us together and has given us such success. I believe we are equally consecrated, and yet if Mr. Hunter would try to act as I do, he would be in a straight-jacket, while if I acted as he does, some would say, "It is too ridiculous for anything."

I desire in this chapter to speak to four classes of persons.

1. Are you a Christian, but, doubting, or tempted to doubt, your conversion, because you had not the conviction, wonderful deliverance and great joy others tell of experiencing, when they were converted, or because you have not now the same emotions, happiness and feelings they exhibit and speak about?

Some, in strangely-conducted meetings, seeing others, of a peculiar mind and temperament, "fall over," have sought to be similarly "prostrated," and failing, doubted their religion. Such fanaticism receives no encouragement in the New Testament. Do not seek to be hypnotized, but know Christ as your Saviour and the fulness of the Spirit. At Pentecost they did not fall over or become unconscious, though they received the Spirit and power.

Many persons talk too much about their deep conviction and great sorrow, their agony and sleepless nights, their struggles and prayers, and then their shouting and rapturous joy when saved, as if their experience were a pattern for others. It may be all right for them, but not for you and me.

Some, when they hear such persons tell about their conversion with great emotion and shouts, are tempted

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to think, "If that is conversion, I am not converted; perhaps I am not a Christian."

Let me suppose a case: A ship on the lake is on fire, and all are rescued, but with different experiences. One, with great earnestness and emotion, says, "I was aroused from my slumber by the crackling of flames and the shouting and screams of men and women. I rushed on deck in my night clothes, and, blinded and stifled with smoke, ran to the bow of the vessel. A few moments later I found the flames had cut off all possibility of retreat, and I stood alone. Nearer and nearer the flames approached me, till my clothes were on fire, and, sooner than burn to death, I sprang into the lake, and, not being able to swim, I sank many feet under water. The next minute I rose to the surface, and though I struggled for dear life and cried for help, I sank again, with no one near to save. Hope seemed gone, when a moment later, as I came up again, a strong hand seized me and lifted me into the life-boat, and I swooned away. I shall never forget till my dying day that awful hour and my wonderful rescue." Imagine another man saying, "I was sitting on the deck of that same boat, quietly chatting with a friend, when I saw the vessel was on fire at the front. The lake was as smooth as glass. Many were greatly excited and screaming, but I was perfectly cool. After helping many women and children into the boats, I calmly stepped from the rear gangway into the life-boat, and we pulled for the shore. I thought I was saved; but since I heard that other man tell of his rescue, I see I had no such experience as that, and, if that is being rescued, I am not sure that I am rescued yet."

I do not need to apply this illustration. Let people tell of their agony, struggle, tears, prayers and rescue, as they will, and rejoice with them; but be satisfied for yourself to know that you now willingly yield to Christ and fully trust in Him.

Conversions, while essentially the same, are inci

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dentally different, according to age, temperament, former education, character and intellect.

In the jailor's conviction and conversion, we see excitement and great fear before his trust. He was emotional, and had been a hard case. With Lydia it was different; the change was effected calmly and peacefully, as a rosebud opens or as the day dawns. (Acts xvi. 13-32.)

With some of those converted at Pentecost we see deep contrition, dismay, fear and anxious prayer; but Cornelius and his company, while quietly listening to Peter's sermon, trusted Christ and there and then united with the Church. (Acts x. 34-43.)

You could not be converted from drunkenness, profanity, lewdness and bitter enmity and hatred against God and his Church if those things were not previously in your character. You could not be converted as Paul and the jailor if you are not like them, but are like John and Lydia.

Paul, three times in Acts, gives his conversion in striking detail. It was all right for him, but it is exceptional and not a pattern for us, as he was an abnormal character.

Matthew's conversion was vastly different, but as real. Listen to him as he tells about it: "As Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He saith unto him, Follow Me. And he arose and followed Him." (Matt. ix. 9.) This is an example which business, professional and laboring men and women may act upon, yea, every youth and adult that is willing to follow Jesus.

The one thing to know is, not when, how and where you began to follow Jesus, but, that you are doing so now; that is, that you trust, love and obey Christ. Thousands upon thousands of the best Christians, among the children and adults, can no more tell when they began to love and trust Christ than they can tell when they began to love and trust their mothers.

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2. Are you seeking to know Christ as your Saviour? Avoid the common blunder of having the feelings, actions, and experiences of others, or your own crude notions as a pattern before your mind, which you expect the Lord to work out in your conviction and conversion; but come *as you are* to Christ, and He will, according to His own blessed promise and gracious will, receive and save you. The assurance, "I will in no wise cast out," meets your case.

A cool-headed business man in Morden said: "I have tried for years to become a Christian, but I never could feel the streak of glory I have heard others speak about." As we talked together, seeing his mistake in seeking some great convulsion of feeling, ecstacy or streak of glory, he calmly and consciously yielded himself to Christ, and knew he was "accepted in the Beloved."

A teacher, at Port Elgin, said to me, "I have given up everything I know to be wrong and have given myself to Jesus; but I do not feel any great excitement or emotion, such as some others tell about." I asked: "Did Jesus say, 'Come unto Me, and I will give you emotion or excitement.'" He intelligently answered: "No. He promised: 'I will give you rest.' It is clear now. He has taken away the sense of guilt I had, and gives me rest. I am saved."

When Abraham laid the sacrifice upon the altar in in the morning, it was accepted of God that moment, according to His word: "Whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy," as certainly as when, in the evenings, there was the visible appearance of "A smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces." Abraham recognized this fact, and so drove away the carrion birds that would have polluted or devoured the sacrifice. (Gen. xv. 6-18.)

When we willingly, trustingly yield ourselves to Christ, we are undoubtedly His, according to His promise: "I will in no wise cast out." Let us ever recognize this, and, if the foul birds of temptation to

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doubt or fear seek to pollute the sacrifice, let us drive them away, and sing our faith:

"I am trusting, Lord, in Thee:
Jesus saves me, saves me now."

3. Are you, as yet, undecided to be a Christian?

Do not make the fatal mistake, that many do, of thinking you must wait till you have deep conviction, great sorrow for sin, or intense feeling or emotion, before you can honestly yield to the Lord and become a Christian.

The Lord proclaims acceptance and salvation on the simple conditions: "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts xx. 21.)

Many mistake the meaning of repentance, and say, "It is godly sorrow." "Godly sorrow" and "repentance" are distinct; one is a *feeling*, and the other is an *act*. We read: "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation." (2 Cor. vii. 10.) Repentance is turning from sin to God, and that which prompts a person to do so is "Godly sorrow." We are not responsible for our feelings, but for our acts. Turn from sin to Christ, with the feelings you have, and that will be repentance.

Saving faith consists of three elements: (1) A belief that Christ is able and willing to save now. (2) A willingness to be saved from sin through Christ alone. (3) A present *trustful surrender* of self to Christ, or in other words: "The assent of the mind, the consent of the will, and the trust of the heart."

If you are unsaved, let your feelings alone, turn from every sin, and trust yourself to Christ; so shall you be saved.

Wendell Phillips, after hearing Lyman Beecher preach about Christ our Redeemer, went to his room and calmly said: "Lord, I belong to Thee. Thou hast redeemed me; take what is Thine own." That was the time of his conversion, and he carried out the consecration of that hour till he closed his illustrious life. Go thou and do likewise.

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Act on principle, and start now to do what you know to be right, and you shall soon know Christ. Jesus assures you, "If any man willeth to do His will, he *shall know* of the teaching." (John vii. 17.)

As you believe that God is your Heavenly Father, and, therefore, you know and admit that it is right to reverence, trust and live Him, and love a life of prayer and obedience, you do not need to wait for or seek any other feeling in order to yield to Christ and begin a Christian life.

The highest motive from which any person could yield to the Lord and begin a Christian life, is because it is right: this is acting on principle.

In a Western town, where there were many men, I had urged the people not to wait for any imaginary or heard-of feeling, emotion or conviction; but to start on principle, and yield to the Lord, because it is right. One morning a prominent business man and member of the Town Council wrote out the following: "I believe God is my Heavenly Father, that it is right and my duty to love and serve Him; I am therefore resolved *on principle* to yield to Christ and live a Christian, and I hereby promise to confess my decision to-night in the meeting." He signed his name to it, and during the day showed it to members of the Council and other business men, and asked them to sign it. A number did, and others said, "I will not sign it now, but do not be surprised if I go with you to-night in the meeting." That night, besides many women and youth, eleven strong men came forward into the centre seats, thus declaring their purpose to start and continue to act on principle. All of them, I believe, yielded to Christ that night, and their subsequent lives showed the genuineness of their conversion. Many others followed their example in the next two weeks. Let us act upon this principle ourselves, and press the idea upon others that they may do likewise.

Christ Jesus the Lord redeemed you, and loves you

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now with His great heart of infinite love. As you believe this true, know that you trust yourself to His love and mercy, and let your consecrated life express your love. The loving disciple says: "This is love, that we walk after His commandments." (2 John 6.)

4. Are you a Christian, and hence anxious to see others converted, and desirous to help them to yield to Christ?

Do not expect all to exhibit the same conviction and emotion, or to be converted as you were, or according to your preconceived pattern.

Conviction, in its character and intensity, largely depends upon the style of preaching or teaching that a person hears—whether God's law and justice or His grace and love are made more prominent.

The Holy Spirit and Word, in their operations upon human hearts, are compared to different things: The magnet, light, heat, dew, water, the hammer and the sword. It depends upon the character of the person which of these means is the most effective. Some, like John, are drawn by the magnet of love. Others, like Lydia, are melted as naturally as heat melts wax. Many, like Philip and Nathanael, are as gently but surely turned as light turns a flower. Others, like Paul and the jailor, are broken up or pierced as with the hammer or sword. Any conviction, or sorrow, or emotion, or feeling, or agony, or desire, more than that necessary to lead persons to decide to yield to Christ and His service is superfluous.

The genuineness of conversion is not to be determined by the depth of feeling, emotion, or conviction, but by the life and character. John affirms, "He that doeth righteousness is born of God." Neither is conversion to be determined by the length of time a person was seeking, or by the wonderful transition, or by the striking story he tells; but by the fact that he now yields to Christ, and his life confirms it.

Do not, in your thought or teaching, put conviction, or feelings, or sorrow, or tears, or prayers, instead of

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Christ; but urge to decision, and believe and teach, as we Scripturally sing:

> It is not thy tears of repentance and prayers,
> But the blood that atoned for the soul;
> On Him, then, Who shed it thou mayest at once
> Thy weight of iniquity roll.

Some are aroused by fears, and seek Christ. Very well. Others are broken up with deep conviction, and turn to Christ. All right. Many are drawn by the magnet of love to yield to the Saviour. Thank the Lord; that is best of all.

Remember that the most effective way of bringing men and women and boys and girls to Christ is by divine attraction. The passage I nearly always have in my mind when preaching, and particularly so when speaking to individuals personally, is where Christ said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me." (John xii. 32.)

When in the Metropolitan Church, Toronto, I heard a Christian man ask a young woman, "*Do you feel that you are lost?*" She mildly answered, "No." He then said, "You must first feel that you are lost," and so left her discouraged and bewildered. A moment later I asked her, "Do you *desire* to *yield* to Christ that you may love and serve Him?" She hopefully answered, "I do." As I spoke to her about Christ's words, "I will draw all unto Me," she consciously yielded, and said, "Jesus now receives me."

Age, character, temperament and disposition greatly determine the nature of the conviction and conversion. As well expect as large waves on an inland lake as on the ocean, as to expect as deep and pungent convictions in children and young people as in adults that have been confirmed in sin. Children, if properly instructed, will usually be drawn to Christ as naturally as a flower turns its petals to the light, or as gently as a rosebud opens. The same is true of many a youth and adult.

Some ministers and many others get a distorted and

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one-sided idea of conversion by thinking of the exceptional conversion of Paul, the Philippian jailor or themselves. Then these one-sided views are imparted to the unconverted, and they wait to be influenced like Paul, the jailer and others. Should we not the rather think and speak about the normal conversions of Moses, Samuel, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Matthew, Timothy, Cornelius, Lydia and a host of others? If these scriptural representations of conversion were lovingly, clearly and repeatedly presented and enforced in public and private, I believe that instead of having a few persons during protracted meetings converted, we would know many scores and hundreds in the regular services, as well as during special meetings, that would decide and confess "I will serve the Lord," as did the tens of thousands at Shechem, when Joshua, after speaking of the goodness of God, exclaimed, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." (Josh. xxiv. 15.)

At the wonderful meeting and test at Carmel, when there was such an outward display or demonstration, Elijah expected thousands to be converted, but was utterly disappointed. God then taught him that was not His way of speaking and converting people. We read about this lesson in 1 Kings xix. 9-13: "Behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still, small voice." Elijah knew God was in the voice, and listened and obeyed.

Many besides Elijah, that are ministers or Christians, as well as the unconverted, need to learn this lesson. Let us not expect and wait for God to come and sweep as with a wind, or shake as with an earthquake, or terrify as with a fire, but listen to His "still, small voice," and obey; so shall we be saved, and used of God in saving others.

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Blunders about Providences.

——: VIII :——

Proverb : Prov. xx. 24. Praise : Rom. viii. 28.
Promise : Rom. viii. 28. Prayer : Psa. xc. 12.

THERE are two great mistakes about Providences that people make, which we need to know and guard against: First, denying all special interpositions of Providence, and ascribing everything to an unalterable, fixed law. Second, thinking and speaking of every event as a providence, and attributing nothing to natural law or to the carelessness, indiscretion, blundering, or perversity of man.

The tendency of man is to go from one extreme to the other. As in other cases, so here, truth lies between the two extremes.

I have been shocked to hear persons speak of boat and train disasters, boiler and mine explosions, and the like, where precious lives were sacrificed, as mysterious providences. Most of such disasters result from man's carelessness, indiscretion, neglect, or greed; as in the case of the Johnstown flood, the wreck of the *Princess Alice*, in London, and the foundering of the steamer *Columbia*, by which my eldest brother was drowned.

When President Garfield was shot, many people exclaimed: "What an inscrutable providence." Strange that anybody should think of this murder as a providence. If we are going to call it a providence, then let Guiteau off; but if we think it right to condemn Guiteau, we should let the Lord off, and not speak of it as a "mysterious providence."

After Garfield was wickedly shot, God, by His gracious providence, interposed, and through the

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disaster brought about such a millennium spirit of peace and good will among the nations of the earth as had never existed before, and so accomplished more, by the death of Garfield, than could have been brought about by his life and administration.

Providence had nothing to do with the wrath of Guiteau or its dire work, but all glory to Him Who, by His overruling providence, made even the disaster work for the good of the nations and for His praise, thus giving an additional reason to trust God and gratefully exclaim, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Him." (Psa. lxxvi. 10.)

Many fall into the mistake of thinking that God ordered or willed an event, and so call it a providence, because He, by His *overruling providence*, brings good out of it. Thus a child, or a wife, or a mother dies, and the parent, or husband, or son, or daughter is converted, or drawn nearer to God by the bereavement, and then some will say that God removed the loved ones to bring about the result; whereas the lamented death may have occurred in accordance with the law of "the survival of the fittest," or by some disaster or indiscretion.

God in His providence does not appoint the evil; but brings good out of evil. Thus we read, "The Lord thy God turned the curse into a blessing." (Deut. xxiii. 5.)

It was not a providence that Adam sinned and brought a curse upon the world; but God, through the redemption of Christ, has promised and given, to those who will receive, more than what we lost in Adam.

It was not a providence of God that Jacob and his mother should plan to lie and deceive Isaac; yet God, while He punished them for their sins, by His providence brought about the fulfilment of His promise and purpose.

Stephen's martyrdom was not a providence; but God used it in preparing the way for Paul's conversion.

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The persecutions, incarcerations and martyrdoms of God's people were not providences; but God, in His providence, made them work for His glory, the good of man and the reward of those concerned, as in the case of Paul, Bunyan, Rutherford, Madam Guyon, Latimer, Ridley, and a host of God's saints.

It is utterly absurd to call sinful actions providences. God works by every possible means: but everything is not from Him.

People often say, "Well, God permitted this or that," and so they call it "a permissive providence." It would be more correct to say, "He did not prevent it." It is not right to call everything that God does not prevent a permissive providence, for God does not prevent men from committing sin, and going to ruin and perdition, though "it is not the will of your Father that one should perish." (Matt. xviii. 14.)

Being Christians, or even ministers, will not exempt us from suffering the penalty of violated law.

Many things are called providences that are but the result of people being improvident. Persons are crippled for life through their own or others' blundering; some have lost their property by the fraud of those they trusted; many are suffering because of a drunken husband, father, brother or son; many children and adults are sick, and others have been killed by bad sewerage, poor cooking, over-eating, want of exercise and fresh air, wearing thin shoes and slippers, while many public men and others die prematurely from over-work and wanton violation of the laws of life and health. Then many mistakingly call these results "mysterious providences," when there is no mystery or providence about them.

In *post-mortem* examinations, railroad and boat disasters, and courts of law, we look into the causes of events and use our judgment; but some think it religious to call all dire events "strange providences." Such talk is too much like sentiment, and is also dishonoring to God.

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Some people are too ready, like Job's friends, to speak of afflictions as "visitations of providence," or as "the hand of God."

It is well that God does not prevent the consequences of violating law, else we would become reckless. A Christian lawyer spoke of a certain boiler explosion as a providence. I said: "I see no providence in the explosion, but the necessary result of violating law." He questioned: "Who made the law?" I answered: "God has made certain laws for beneficent purposes, viz: the expansion of steam to drive machinery, not to explode boilers; fire to warm our hands, not to burn our fingers and consume our dwellings."

Disappointments are not necessarily God's appointments; but if we love Him and trust Him, He will, by His infinite resources, according to promise, make "All things," yea, even the ills and disappointments of life, "work together for good" in time and in eternity.

I often say to sick and afflicted ones in homes and hospitals: "I do not want you, necessarily, to think of God as sending this affliction, and ask, 'What have I done,' but think of it as incidental to human life and weakness, and trust God to give you the grace and comfort you need." This view has cheered so many, and they have said: "I can bear the affliction so much easier now."

Do not think, as most people do, that want of resignation to the death of dear ones, or to other events, is rebellion against God.

A woman said to me: "I feel so rebellious against God, that for two years I have not prayed or attended church, and I feel so hard." I asked: "What is the cause of this?" She answered: "God first took from me my favorite brother, then my mother and father, and a few months later, my dear husband, and I cannot be resigned to their death." I replied: "My friend, you are making a great mistake in thinking that God took your loved ones from you. Death is

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a cruel enemy, the result of the sin of the race. God has told us this: 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.' (Rom. v. 12.) You are not taught to be resigned to death any more than sin. I would be ashamed to think of you as a sister, daughter or wife if you were resigned to the death of your brother, parents or husband. When my brother was drowned, I was not resigned—nor am I now—neither do I want to be, any more than I do to sin. I simply submit to the disaster. But there never was any rebellion against God, as I did not think of Him as doing it. If I had slain your friends, and then came to comfort you, you would spurn me from your presence; but, as I had nothing to do with it, you receive me most kindly; so you, thinking that God has taken your loved ones from you, have turned against Him; but, if you now see that death, 'the last enemy' and cruel monster, and not God, has bereaved you, while sorrowing because of your great loss, you will receive the Lord as He lovingly comes to comfort you as He only can. It is natural, human and right, for you not to be resigned to the death of your loved ones; but you have made the mistake of thinking that your want of resignation to their death is rebellion against God. He loves you still, though you have wrong thoughts about Him. He wishes to comfort you in your great sorrow, caused by 'the last enemy, death,' and wants to save you now, and, *in spite of death*, save you forever in heaven." Seeing things in a new light, she came to Christ, received His mercy, pardon and comfort, and became a most beautiful Christian.

It would take a volume to tell you of all the mothers and fathers, wives and husbands, sons and daughters, whom I have found in perplexity, rebellion, bitterness or despair, because of the cruel work of death and wrong ideas concerning the relation of God to it, who have been enlightened, relieved, comforted, and saved by God, through this common-sense and Christian philosophy.

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In the funeral service of my brother, the minister, in praying, said, "Lord, help the bereaved one to draw near to the hand that holds the rod." Looking up, I whispered, "Lord, there is no rod in Thy hand. I want to draw near to Thy loving heart that beats in sympathy with me." I covet, for all bereaved ones, the comfort and nearness of God which I experienced at that hour, and the blessing of sympathy with others in sorrow which resulted.

I know those who, wrongly viewing death as a visitation of God, have, when bereaved, said, "What have I done?" or "I must be very wicked." Guard against this mistake.

Death is a disaster to which all must submit sooner or later, in accordance with the law of our being, or "the law of the survival of the fittest." Let us rejoice in hope of that world where there will be no sin, sorrow, separation and death.

A child dies from wearing thin slippers, eating green fruit or by exposure; a man loses his property by speculation, shiftlessness, endorsing or by fire; lives are cut short by over-work, recklessness, abuse or want of exercise; typhoid fever, resulting from bad sewerage or water, visits a locality, or cholera in three months sends 7,600 victims to the grave from the wretched quarters of Hamburg, where over a hundred souls lived in a single house; and then, *some people* will talk sentiment and wrong God, by trying to palm these things off as "visitations of Providence," or "mysterious providences," or "permissive providences."

We are divinely commanded, when death does its work, to "comfort one another;" not by the oft-repeated cant phrases: "It is the will of God," "God has some wise purpose in it," "It is a mysterious providence; you should be resigned;" but with words about faith in Christ, hope of heaven and blessed reunion. "Ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For them which sleep in Jesus

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will God bring with Him. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. iv. 13-18.)

One great reason why people call all deaths and disasters providences, is because we have so often heard at funerals the words of Job quoted: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away." (Job i. 21.) Did it ever occur to you that the Bible does not say that Job's children were killed, or that they were dead at the time Job uttered these words? The Scriptures merely state that the *messengers* said they were dead, and Job, believing them, spoke as he did. Then many, in consequence of Job's utterance, think and teach that all bereaved ones should feel and speak similarly.

These servants of Job, who reported disaster and death, were the messengers of Satan, the father of lies, and I believe were *lying messengers*, and that all Job's children were alive at the time they spoke. In the last chapter of Job we read that "Job had also seven sons and three daughters" (vr. 13). These are evidently the very same seven sons and three daughters mentioned in the first chapter (vr. 2) that the lying messengers made Job believe were killed. We have no reason to believe that Job married a young wife and raised a second family of ten; and we know that the first Mrs. Job had long before ceased to present to her husband a child. Moreover, while we often read in the Book of Job about his bodily afflictions, which were real, nothing more is said about the sore bereavement, either by Job, his friends or God. If you will read with care the dire reports of Satan's messengers in Job i. 13-19, it will be evident that the stories were diabolically worked up to deceive and overwhelm the faith of Job.

Do you hesitate to accept the above philosophy? Let me ask, would you rather believe that the Lord allowed Job's ten children to be slain by one dire stroke to please the devil's whim, than to *merely* believe that *Satan's messengers lied*, when there is

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nothing to confirm their testimony, but much to show it false.

Does anyone say, "I like to think, when my friends die or are killed, that God had directly done it, or ordered it?" If that thought gives you the greatest comfort in your bereavements, I would not wish to change *your* mind, neither have I written the foregoing for you; but many, like myself, can in times of bereavements and disasters, receive the comfort and grace of God so much more readily and blessedly when they know that God is not the author or cause.

Some people talk to others about "submitting to His will," or speak of "suffering His will," and of "being resigned to His will," as they dilate upon the sickness, losses, woes, bereavements and other ills incident to human life.

It is not our Heavenly Father's will for husbands to be drunkards, children to be hungry, families to live in squalor and wretchedness, men to be dishonest and cruel, persons to be careless and wicked, liquor to be licensed and sold, and that want, sickness and woe should abound as they do.

Goodness and mercy, grace and comfort, pardon and peace, purity and pleasure, power and paradise are God's will. While others may talk of "submitting to His will," let us rather speak about "rejoicing in His will."

Let us, however, remember that, though many things are mistakenly called "God's visitations," or "providences," the Scriptures and experience teach us that God, as a loving Father, does *betimes* chasten us for our profit. We read, "Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord." "Shall we not be under subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?" Heb. xii. 5-10.

While you accept as correct what I have already said, and may be helped by it; do not go to the extreme and deny that there are any personal visitations of Providence. We remember that God visited

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David for his great sin, so that the child died, and other penalties overtook him. Read his experience: "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." (Ps. cxix. 67.)

Moreover, nations have, in every age, been punished in this world for their sins, and nations always will be; because where there is sin there must be penalty, and, as nations do not appear as nations in the other world, penalty must come upon them for their sins in this world. This world is necessarily the world of retribution for nations. This causes many innocent persons to suffer when a guilty nation is punished; as in the case of those degenerate nations spoken of in the Bible, that were punished for their sin.

The inflicted sufferings and death of the innocent children and women in these nations, have given sceptics and wicked men an excuse to malign our God and the Bible, and have also confused many a sincere Christian and enquirer.

I was much perplexed for years as I read these accounts, until I saw that this is not the world of retribution for the individual, but necessarily for the nation, and that when an innocent person suffers in the deserved penalty sent upon a guilty nation, that innocent one will be more than repaid in the world to come, which is the place of retribution for the individual.

All persons will see in the next world, if they do not clearly see it here, that the Judge of all the earth did right. We may now and always confidently affirm, with faithful Abraham, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. xviii. 25.)

Do not presume upon Providence and neglect to do your part; but trust in God and do your duty. A man on the desert, before retiring for the night said to his friend, "I will turn my camel loose and trust in Providence." His companion answered, "Tie up your camel and trust in Providence." This same idea is expressed in the proverb of the illustrious Cromwell:

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"Trust in God and keep your powder dry." God helps those who help themselves.

Our daily benefits and known and unknown deliverances are examples of God's loving providences.

Sometimes God's promises and providences may appear, *for a time*, to conflict, as in the case of the trial of Abraham's faith, but to those who continue to trust and obey God as did Abraham, every promise and real providence will in time or eternity be seen to perfectly harmonize. Trust God where you cannot trace Him.

Many, like Asaph, get into untold perplexity, sorrow and doubt by mistakenly calling things providences, and by forgetting that this is not the world of retribution for the individual. Let us read and learn from his experience in Psa. lxxiii. 2-26, part of which I here quote: "Truly God is good to Israel, to such as are of a clean heart. But as for me, my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. They have more than heart could wish. They increase in riches. I have cleansed my heart in vain. Thus my heart was grieved. So foolish was I, and ignorant. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."

God's direct providences and over-ruling providences are working for our good, though often by the mistakes and the sins of omission and commission of ourselves and others we get things sadly tangled up; yet, as we think how God has lovingly and patiently borne with us and sought our good, we may sincerely obey the Scripture injunction: "*In* everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (1 Thess. 5-18).

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Pointers on Music.

——: IX :——

Promise: 2 Chron. v. 13, 14. Praise: Psa. xl. 3.
Precept: Eph. v. 18-20. Prayer: Psa. cxli. 3.

MUSIC is purely Christian. Outside of Christendom and Christian influences there is no harmonious singing. Being a Singing Pilgrim, I have written a chapter on music.

Music, as a means of doing good, is now being employed in our churches, schools and homes, as in no other day.

A choir and a reed or pipe *organ* should be in every church when possible. Members of the choir should be carefully selected so as to obviate trouble. They should be as a harmonious family rendering musical service for God in His Church.

Quartet chorus may perhaps be well enough in some churches, but, as I have known them, they are far from my notion. I like a good-sized chorus choir, and when convenient a mixed quartet in it for certain selections and occasions.

The orchestra should be behind the minister or at the side of the pulpit platform. It should, however, not be high up, as is often the case, but should, if at the side, be on a level with the pulpit platform, and if behind the minister, it should not be more than from one to three feet higher than the pulpit platform.

The choir is formed to *lead* the music and so aid congregational singing.

Complete arrangements of hymns, tunes and voluntaries should be made before the service begins, so as to obviate all whispering, writing notes and passing books during the time of worship. Some put the programme on a slate, others use slips. Do not let

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the *choir practice* degenerate into dissipation, or sing the sacred words in such a way as to produce irreverence or hardness of heart.

The organist may profitably play *suitable* voluntaries while the congregation is assembling, as also when dispersing; but let all music of the fantastic, jiggish and frivolous order be discarded as a desecration of God's house and Sabbath. The opening voluntary should be soothing or cheering, and the closing voluntary should fall like a benediction.

A short organ prelude of a *few* notes, or one or two lines at the most, may appropriately be played before each hymn in the regular service, that all may know the tune that is selected, and start to sing with the first word; but to play the tune through, as many organists do, is utterly absurd and impedes and injures the service.

Interludes by the organist had better be omitted, as they make a break in the hymn and keep people waiting with their mouths open and minds vacant till the innovation is ended.

An anthem, solo, duet, quartet or chorus rendered by the choir at the opening of service, immediately after the prayer, or while the offering is being taken is, in many a church, not only an attraction, but a source of blessing and Christian joy.

The reading of the verses by the minister or leader during the singing of a hymn is an old-time style that was adopted when people did not have hymn-books. There is now no necessity or excuse for continuing the practice. The first verse might possibly be read.

If the person is a very good reader and the hymn is an impressive one, it may occasionally serve a good purpose to read a few verses before beginning to sing, but I believe that, usually, the reading of the hymns and verses is so much lost time in the service, and also tends to let the interest in the service drop. In our meetings we have no prelude, interlude, lining of hymns or anything else to break the continuity of the service.

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As to the hymns selected for a preaching service, the one after the sermon should certainly be suitable to the thoughts expressed; but the hymns before the sermon had better, as a rule, have no special reference to the sermon. We like variety.

The service should generally open with hymns and tunes that are not depressing, sorrowful and sad, but with those that will inspire feelings of praise, hope, courage, joy, adoration, love, trust and triumph.

Congregational singing of a hearty kind can be had in every church. Do you ask, "How?"

1. By the minister often referring to it.

2. By having hymn-books in every pew.

3. By having a sensible choir leader, who desires to promote general singing, and hence will always choose a familiar tune for the first and last hymns, and any new tunes selected will be such as will soon become congregational.

4. By encouraging the Sabbath-school scholars to sing. In Hanson Place M. E. Church, Brooklyn, N.Y., where there are over two thousand members, the boys and girls sing a Sabbath-school hymn after prayer in every morning service.

5. By developing thoughts and feelings that are fraternal, sociable and genial among the members of the congregation and choir.

6. By personally appointing three or four or half-a-dozen men and women, in different parts of the church, who will sing every hymn in each service as if they were the choir. It would be well if these persons rehearsed with the choir. Reader, let me appoint you, if you are in the audience, to sing out the hymns as if you were in the choir.

These few directions being carried out will ensure congregational singing in every church. The minister, choir, and people are culpable where there is not congregational singing.

The minister, choir leader, and members of the choir and congregation should mutually endeavor, not to carry out their own opinions or to "run the

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music," but, to live in perfect harmony, to advance the interests of one another and the Church, and to best worship and glorify God.

In the other social means of grace, such as the prayer-meetings, fellowship, class and society meetings, we may and should make instrumental and vocal music an important feature. Few may be able to pray or speak in public, but nearly everyone can make an attempt at singing. The music in these services should be devotional, cheerful and inspiring, and not mechanical, drawling and stupid.

The Sunday-school music should be given much attention. We should discard all verses that are wishy-washy, cheap, heterodox or cant, as also those tunes that are of the hey-diddle-diddle kind. Children and boys and girls, as well as young men and women, have minds, hearts and voices to appreciate, feel and sing the choicest words and grandest tunes.

An *Orchestra* of several pieces, such as cornet, small and bass violins, flutes, organ and piano, is in many a school a wonderful aid towards increasing the attendance, interest, talent, enthusiasm and success. This is the young people's age.

Let me now give a few important pointers in vocal culture, which it would be well for those aspiring to be singers to carefully study and persistently practice.

The Mouth is as a bell. hence every note should strike in the same place; that is, just above the teeth, where the tongue properly strikes.

The Throat should be kept open at every note, exactly as when yawning; that is, have the larynx lowered and the uvula elevated. Practise before a looking-glass.

The Tongue should be kept depressed at the root, or even hollowed like a spoon, and the tip of it should touch the lower teeth. Practice will accomplish this.

Breathe from the abdomen, not from the chest, and always keep the upper part of the lungs full. *Breath* should never be taken between syllables of a word. *Breathe* seldom and avoid a breathy voice.

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The Faces of many, when singing, look sour, vacant, savage, sleepy, sad or painful. Did you ever look in a glass, when singing, and see yourself as others see you? Try it, but do not get frightened.

Pronounce the vowels, and especially every "a" and "i," as an Englishman, and trill every "r" as a Scotchman, and so avoid a thin, cheap tone. *Let every word be distinctly pronounced.*

The *Eyes* and *Thoughts* should certainly be above the people when *singing* or *reading* prayer and praise. For instance, so many sing or read "Nearer, my God, to Thee," looking at the audience.

Study to avoid the common practice of leaving off or unfinished the *consonants*, and especially d and t; as also the fault of closing the open vowel sounds, and so changing the sounds of i and o to those of e and u.

An excellent *vocal exercise* to use is ah (aw), la (law), ra (raw), as you run up and down ten notes, beginning at A, and then raising or lowering the pitch of the exercise half a tone at a time. "Concone's Exercise Book" is *very* good. Practise exercises daily.

People ask: "What do you do for your voice?" I bathe my neck and chest morning and night with *cold water*, never wear a scarf, rarely touch drugs of any kind, and always sing as above indicated.

Song sermons—I have found it both profitable and attractive, as pastor and evangelist, to frequently give what I call "song sermons," in which I sing from four to six *appropriate* solos, and frequently have the choir join me in the choruses. I strongly recommend pastors to give a song sermon once a quarter. Though few ministers may think themselves competent to sing the solos, they can do the next best thing, have the choir *sing* the Gospel, while they *preach* it.

We should always enter into the spirit and meaning of the verses we sing, if we would find personal profit or produce the greatest effect upon others.

Let your motto be, "*Singing for Jesus.*" May you on earth and in heaven sing the "*new song.*"

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Pointers against Evil-Speaking.

——: x :——

Promise: Matt. xii. 35-37. Proverb: Prov. xxi. 23.
Precept: Jas. iv. 11. Prayer: Psa. cxli. 3.

MANY misunderstand what evil-speaking is, and confound it with slander. I read Wesley's sermon on "Evil-Speaking" twenty years ago, and it opened my eyes to the sin, and has proven a lasting blessing to me. Have you read this sermon—No. 49?

Slander is maliciously telling a lie or an evil report not known to be true about another. *Evil speaking* is unnecessarily, and with a wrong motive, or no good motive, telling what is *true*, but *evil*, about a person.

Wesley says: "Suppose, having seen a man drunk, or heard him curse or swear, I tell this when he is absent, it is evil-speaking." Dr. Adam Clark defines evil-speaking as, "Words which tend to hurt those of whom or against whom they are spoken."

Defaming another by keeping back part of the truth, changing the words, misrepresenting the manner, tone and spirit, and expressing misleading insinuations or mean imaginations, is slander.

If a person *unnecessarily*, and with *no good motive*, indulges in detraction and disparagement, or speaks of others as mean, selfish, untruthful, wire-pullers, plagiarists, etc., even though true, it is evil-speaking; and, if not known to be true, it is slander.

Do you say, "I always speak my mind"? If you do, you will have many sins to answer for.

The Bible does not say, "Confess *other people's* faults," but "Confess *your* faults one to another." If *we* do a thing that is mean, wrong or evil, do we tell it to others? We should not tell other people's faults any more than our own.

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Evil-speaking is contrary to the Golden Rule, unless you enjoy others telling the faults or evil they know or *think* about you.

"Speak evil of no man," is as positive a command of God as "Thou shalt not steal." Evil-speaking is a sin against self, society, the one defamed, the one informed, and also against God and His Word.

It is sometimes not evil-speaking, but Christian, yea, obligatory, to speak of the evil that another has said or done, or of another's faults, foibles and failings. Let me mention several instances:

1. When the interests of the Gospel, the cause of God, righteousness or truth demand it.

2. When it is necessary to protect other people or the Church from being imposed upon, defamed or injured in reputation, character, mind or money.

3. When it is necessary to inform others so as to interest them, as also instruct them, in seeking the good of those whose faults or sins are spoken of.

4. As a warning and example to others.

5. When pure love to God and man prompts the words.

There are several causes of evil-speaking:

1. Many people, thinking that it is always allowable to tell about evil, if true, ignorantly commit the great fault. Who can cast the first stone at another?

2. Speaking evil often results from contagion, received from others who commit this sin, in the family, Church or society.

3. It also proceeds from a carrion appetite, fostered by reading in the papers or novels accounts of crime, fraud and indecency.

4. It is the natural outcome of harboring and indulging a critical disposition. Personal criticism spoken or put in the papers is usually evil-speaking.

5. The sin generally proceeds from depraved human dispositions, such as Pharisaism, jealousy, envy, anger, conceit, ill-will, resentment, spiritual pride, indignation not righteous, or lack of love.

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6. Some few *pious* people have a morbid and disordered conscience, and so mistakenly think that they are laid under obligation to expose every wrong-doer. The meanest and most deceptive kind of evil-speaking is when a person feigns it as a pious duty, and prefaces with the words, "I am sorry to have to tell you." Let such, yea all of us, read, memorize and practise the precept: "Be not a witness against thy neighbor without cause." (Prov. xxiv. 28.)

Evil-speaking is a low and mean business. It requires no talent, reputation, character, education, culture or brains, but only a diabolical spirit, to set up in the business. Satan was the first detractor. Do not resemble him in this, or some might take you for his child.

Mr. Hunter tells of a coloured preacher who gave a pointed sermon on "These Damnable *Hearsays*." One said to him: "Brudder, you made a mistake; de word in de Bible am not hearsays, but *heresies*." The preacher replied: "It am de *hearsays*, not heresies, dat trouble us." So heresies do not injure our white people and churches so much as "these *damnable hearsays*." Let us expel such hearsays from the Church and society.

There are instances where a minister's popularity and success have been destroyed by one man or woman starting the whisper, or sighing, "He is not getting on very well"; "his sermons are dry"; "he does not attract the young people."

No evil result may be intended, but it is none the less lamentable. How true the words: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." (Gal. v. 9.)

Think and speak well of your pastor, and others will do likewise, and *vice versa*.

Many sons and daughters, as also friends and neighbors, are hindered in their Christian life, prevented from becoming Christians, or turned against the Church and Christianity, by hearing their *parents* or others talking about that which is mean, selfish,

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wire-pulling, small, untrue or dishonest, which, *they say*, they discovered in certain ministers or church members. God holds us responsible for our words. In James iii. 5, 6, we read: "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: it setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell."

One said to me, "My father never allowed any detraction in our home." Adopt and carry out that Christian rule in your home.

A priest, to correct a tale-bearer, ordered her to scatter thistle seeds in a neighbor's garden. As she reported the seeds scattered, he then said, "Go and gather them *all* up again." When she returned with but a few seeds, he warned her against her awful sin; and told her that she had, by tale-bearing, scattered seeds that could not be gathered up, but would bring forth a harvest to her condemnation.

Let us carefully consider and adopt the following preventives and cures of evil-speaking:

1. Know what evil-speaking is.

2. Resolve, no matter what others do, to avoid the practice."

3. Hear evil of no man. The old proverb says, "The receiver is as bad as the thief." One said, "The tale-bearer and tale-hearer should be hanged over a pole with the same rope; one with it tied to his tongue, and the other with it to his ears." Remember, a person who tells you the faults of another, will tell others about your faults. "A dog that will bring a bone will carry one away."

4. Think, as Paul directs, of the "true, honest, just, pure, lovely, good report, virtue and praise," as you mingle with people; so shall evil about others be excluded from your thoughts and lips.

5. Obey Christ and Paul's directions, "Go tell *him* his fault between thee and him alone," and "Restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." A correction

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or reproof, to any youth or adult, should be given in love, and so irritation and harm will be avoided.

6. The great and sure cure of evil-thinking and evil-speaking is to have love to God and man *so filling* the heart, as to cast out all that is contrary to love. "Love covereth a multitude of sins." If we know an evil about another, and the thought comes to tell it, think—is it necessary?—will good result?—does love prompt the words? Carry out the principle laid down by Paul: "Speaking the *truth* in *love*;" so shall evil-speaking be expelled. (Eph. iv. 15.)

Fighting with fists, even though it be between professionals, is deprecated by every person of piety, morality or culture. What, then, should a person think of himself if he, in the public papers, or by word of mouth, indulges in personal abuse and tirade, or offensively hits and slaps others, and that without even using gloves? It may be more inhuman to hit with fist than by voice and pen, but the unchristian spirit that prompts the one is similar to that which prompts the other. As we do not propose to take part in fighting with fists, or find pleasure in witnessing such degrading spectacles, let us feel and act similarly with reference to fighting with pen or tongue.

In concluding, let me say, if others criticise, speak evil, or slander you, have sufficient common-sense and grace not to blow the sparks by retaliating or in any way referring to it; so shall they the sooner die out. In 1 Peter iii. 8, 9, we read: "Finally, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."

So live that evil about you will not be believed.

Wesley, when slandered, said, "I have left my character and reputation with God." Adrian said, "When they charge us *falsely*, we may laugh; when *truly*, we must amend."

Let each resolve: I shall endeavor, by grace, to obey God, and "speak evil of no man." (Titus iii. 2.)

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Pointers about Dress.

——: XI :——

Proverb : Prov. xxxi. 22. **Promise : Matt. vi. 28-30.**
Precept : 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4. **Praise : Isa. lxi. 10.**

THERE are no fashion plates in the Bible; but there are two passages which lay down general rules, by the spirit of which all fashion plates should be formed. You may read these scriptures in 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10, and 1 Pet. iii. 3-6.

Some, misunderstanding the spirit of these verses, think that gold, whether in rings, brooch, chain or watch, is here forbidden, as also all ornamentation or adornment in dress.

To hold and teach this view would make the Bible seem inconsistent with itself. Consider the following facts:

1. Jesus sanctions ornamentation of dress by His reference to "the lilies of the field." (Matt. vi. 28-30.)

2. God directed ornaments of gold and precious stones to be put in Aaron's dress. (Ex. xxviii.)

3. Peter, in the very verses referred to, cites Sarah as an example of his idea; yet we know that Abraham and Sarah sent golden ornaments to the prospective wife of Isaac. (Gen. xxiv.)

4. The outward adornment of a bride is employed to illustrate the spiritual adornment of the Church, the bride of Christ. (Rev. xxi. 2; Isa. lxi. 10.)

There are three similar passages where material and spiritual things are put in contrast. (1) "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning, . . but let it be the hidden man of the heart." (1 Pet. iii. 2-4.) (2) "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, . . . but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." (Matt. vi. 19, 20.) (3) "Labor

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not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." (John vi. 27.)

The first two passages do not mean, as some ignorantly think, that we should disregard and abandon bodily adornment and earthly riches, any more than the third passage teaches that we should not work for bread and butter for ourselves and families, but beg or starve.

The clear teaching of these three passages, to any intelligent, *unprejudiced* mind, is evident in the very letter as well as in the spirit of the Word, when the entire sentences are read. They teach that while we pay due regard to outward adornment, earthly riches and material food, we should not make, as some do, these things *primary*, but only *secondary*; while we more especially exhibit spiritual adornment, seek first to "lay up treasures in heaven," and labor primarily for food that endureth.

Let me suggest a few rules about dress:

1. *Dress with modesty and decency.* This rule will score out kilts for men and low-necked dresses for women.

An old man said, "The styles have greatly changed since I was a boy. Women then used to button their dresses up to the neck, and have one button on their gloves; but now they button their gloves up to the neck, and have one button on their dresses."

In our day and country such an attire is exceedingly immodest. In New York, at a fashionable gathering, a policeman ordered a lady (?) to put a covering about her shoulders, or he would arrest her for indecent exposure.

Among the Orientals, while the faces of ladies were veiled in public, the bosom was uncovered; hence there was no indelicacy in this exposure, as it was the common everyday custom with which people were familiar from childhood, and so no evil imaginations were awakened by it. This general custom accounts for the seemingly familiar language of the Bible.

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As this Eastern custom is not the common practice in our day and country, to make it an occasional custom is exceedingly immodest and indecent.

If virtuous women knew how this style of *undress* appealed to the lustful eye and imaginations, causing adultery in heart, they would be ashamed to practise it. Let every modest woman of every age, by precept and practice, frown down such a fashion, as did many of the best ladies of Ottawa, when Princess Louise ordered low-necked dresses to be worn at her reception.

2. *Dress with intelligence.* You can generally tell the character of mind and amount of intellect a person has by the dress. Indians, and some white men and women, having little mind to shine, and wanting to shine some way, by excessive jewellery or flashing colors, make a loud, outward display. Others show equal lack of intelligence by conspicuous plainness. Let intelligence and goodness be your chief adornments.

The foppish son of a slave-holder said, "Sambo, how do I look?" The slave replied, "You looks just like a lion." "How do you know? You never saw a lion." "Yes, I did, massa, I works with him every day." "That is not a lion, but a jackass we call Lion." "Well, you looks just like him, anyway." I shall not apply this to women, but some men who think they look fine, only appear to others as Sambo's lion.

The wearing of ear-rings can hardly be said to be intelligent. It does not appear so absurd as wearing a ring in the nose, as we are more accustomed to the practice, but both are relics of barbarism. Christian civilization has so advanced that the most intelligent women have tabooed ear-rings as men have discarded hair oil.

3. *Dress with expediency.* This will be largely determined by your position as to finances, society and the Church.

The Quakers, Salvation Army, Mennonites, and

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Free Methodists, dress as much, if not more, in the fashion as other people; the difference being that their fashions are more peculiar, conservative, sectarian and old, as also less tasteful and artistic.

Though some people are too gay and dressy, and others are too plain and guylike, adopt the happy medium, and do not be conspicuous for either gaudiness or plainness, so as to have an influence only for good in your family, the Church and society.

4. *Be tasteful in your dress.* My idea of good taste is to appear so that your dress will not be noticed as rich, loud or gaudy on the one hand, or coarse, plain or peculiar on the other.

Miss Display, Miss Produce-effect, Miss Fantastical, Miss Out-of-the-Fashion, Miss Dowdy and Miss Slattern all expose their lack of culture and good taste.

What in color and style would become one person would show poor taste if worn by another. The frame should be adapted to the picture, and should not be such as to attract attention to itself. *You* are the picture, and your dress is but the frame. Do not show such very poor taste, and also disrespect for yourself, as to dress so that people will notice and speak about your clothes instead of about you. If a person, however, is very homely, there may be some excuse for trying to divert attention from self.

To show either vanity and pride, or carelessness and lack of neatness in dress, indicates lack of cultivation or refinement. We should think of the holiness of beauty, as well as of "the beauty of holiness."

To wear loud colors or a great amount of jewellery, or to dress with conspicuous plainness, is offensive to the good taste and intelligence of the people of our day, and is considered vulgar. I have often noticed that persons who show good taste, by dressing with simplicity, little jewellery, and neatness, are most admired.

5. *Be Christian in your dress.* If we dress, as previously mentioned, with modesty, decency, intelli-

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gence, discretion and taste, we need no additional rule; our dress will certainly be Christian.

Do not, as some I know, make a hobby of the dress question, and so be considered a crank, and thus weaken or destroy your influence for good.

Do you object to a gold watch and chain, or a neat brooch, and ask, "Does not the Bible say that we are not to wear gold and costly apparel?" No. You misquote as well as misapply the Scriptures. Peter does not mention costly apparel, but speaks of "gold or apparel." Now, if you isolate the word gold, and insist that others take off their gold watches and chains; to be consistent with yourself, as the Bible says "gold or apparel," you must lay aside your raiment, and go as our first parents, or as certain Africans. Would you not cut a pretty figure? You had better keep on your raiment, or you will be put in the asylum, and have enough common sense to let others keep on their watches and modest gold chains, too, as also their brooches, without you prating about them.

Those who talk so much against dress, and set themselves up as patterns of plainness, break the spirit of the passage as much as those who are votaries of fashion. They do this by thinking and speaking of the outward more than the inward, and by showing a lack of the "meek and quiet spirit," as also by exhibiting a censorious spirit, which Jesus warns against, when He says: "Judge not. Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye? Behold, a beam is in thine own eye." (Matt. vii. 1-5.)

In your dress be modest, decent, intelligent, tasteful and discreet, and cultivate the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of "great price," and adorn yourself with "good works"; so shall you obey the Scriptures, and you and your life will be *beautiful, happy* and *useful.*

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Pointers about Health.

——— : XII. :———

Precept : Heb. xii. 1.	**Praise : Psa. xlii. 11.**
Proverb : Prov. xvi. 24.	**Prayer : 3 John i. 2.**

MAN is a trinity in unity, having three natures, the physical, the intellectual and the spiritual. Shall we not have the worthy ambition to endeavor to make the most out of ourselves in every respect, and so be perfect men and women, and not weaklings or monstrosities?

That "man is immortal till his work is done," is not a truism. Some think that the Almighty has secretly set a limit to the life of every human being, and that each person must die when his appointed time comes. Not so. The passage, "Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth," does not refer to each individual, but to the race. We are told in Scripture what is man's appointed time. "His days shall be one hundred and twenty years." Later on man's days are set down in the Bible as "Three score years and ten," or "Four score years," the length of life being determined "by reason of strength." (Psa. xc. 11.)

Few people are as healthy as they might be, and many die long before God designed that they should.

I. We should make it part of our religion to look after our physical health. There are certain simple laws of health which, if all knew and practised, it would be well for the individual and the race.

These laws come under nine heads :

1. Pure air.
2. Suitable diet.
3. Proper and sufficient exercise.

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4. Cleanliness.
5. Proper clothing.
6. Stated rest.
7. Suitable recreation.
8. A little medicine when necessary, wisely prescribed.
9. A contented and peaceful mind.

1. *Pure air.*—All persons should keep their bedroom windows open at night, Summer and Winter, and thus constantly sleep in fresh air, and so avoid breathing again and again their poisoned breath.

How few observe this law of health. Of course, we should avoid sleeping in a draft.

Most church sextons, many teachers, preachers, and not a few house-keepers, keep the windows and doors closed, as if pure air were very expensive. Our meetings would be killed or injured more than half the time if we did not personally look after the ventilation. Bad ventilation hinders people from being converted.

Some sick rooms are kept close enough to almost kill a person in good health.

Many keep their houses too hot in cold weather, and so render themselves the more liable to take cold when they go out. Every house, church and school should have a thermometer, and the temperature of the room should not be kept higher than from sixty-five to seventy degrees.

To oxygenate the blood is of *even more* importance than physical exercise. Many men and women, of sedentary habits seldom get every part of their lungs filled with air from one year's end to another, and to run half a minute would put them out of breath. Exercise in the open air should be taken daily. I find that to run five to ten minutes is of greater benefit than to walk half an hour. Slow walking often enervates, but, unless one is delicate or weak, rapid walking, running, or riding a bicycle, splitting or sawing wood, or other lively exercise, invigorates, as

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it brings the lungs and heart into vigorous action, and so oxygenates and purifies the blood. Persons should not run too fast, as that might injure the heart.

2. *Suitable diet.*—Persons should avoid eating too much, too little, too fast, or too often. Many, and especially business and professional men, get indigestion by *bolting* their food, instead of, like Gladstone, chewing each mouthful from twenty-five to forty times. Hard mental or physical exercise should not be indulged in for twenty or thirty minutes before or after each meal.

Drinking while eating is an unnecessary and injurious habit, which every one should avoid. The drink should be taken before or at the close of the meal; and if during the meal, not when food is in the mouth. Many, as I do, find it beneficial to nerves and an aid to sleep to entirely discard tea and coffee, and use hot water instead. This is the coming drink.

There is a great deal of Christianity in good cooking and proper eating. Three meals a day, at set times, with about five hours between the meals, are as much as any person needs. We should eat to live, and not live to eat.

There is a strange inconsistency in some people; for instance, we have known persons to ask God to sanctify the food to their good, and then eat green cucumbers, rich pastry, or something else that could not do them good unless God performed a miracle.

I have personally known men, and even ministers, that have died of stomach troubles; having been killed by poor cooking and indiscreet eating. Every housekeeper should have a first-class cook-book, and carefully study how to cook steaks, roasts, etc., and by reading and practice become as good a cook as possible. I have seen many children before ten years of age dyspeptic and sickly, as a result of poor cooking, eating pickles, poisoned candies, and *piecing* between meals.

The celebrated Dr. Scofield said, "Four out of every

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five babies that die are simply poisoned by improper feeding," and adds, "I would, as a crier, go continually through the streets and shout, 'Nothing but milk for a child under six months old.'"

People are living longer now than in any other age. I believe this largely results from the fact that we use a more healthy diet. Porridge is now found in almost every well-regulated house, while rich cakes and preserves, that used to so abound, are now almost entirely displaced by plain food and fruit.

Dr. Stotzer-Buetzer writes: "Apples eaten immediately before bedtime promote the health generally. Apples (1) are good brain food; (2) excite the functions of the liver; (3) promote a sound and quiet sleep; (4) disinfect the mouth; and (5) help the secretions of the kidneys and prevent calculus concretion.

Liquor and tobacco should be avoided. They are great causes of disease and death. Let me give the following startling quotations: "In 1866 the yellow fever in New Orleans took over 5,000 drinking men before it touched a total abstainer.' "In the British Isles one visit of cholera swept away 10,000 persons, and not half a dozen teetotalers were in the number." "In Montreal 360 total abstainers had the cholera, and but one of them died, while 1,500 drinking persons died of the disease."

3. *Exercise.*—Work is a primary law of health. Indolence makes people weak, sick, lack appetite and die prematurely, who, had they been energetic and industrious, would have been healthy, had a good appetite and lived for many years more.

Daily systematic gymnastic exercises are enjoyable and healthful. They, however, should not be so violent and long continued, as to cause exhaustion or stiffness.

People who have cold hands and feet often say, "A cold hand and a warm heart." Not so, as the action of the lungs and heart, and circulation of the blood are defective, usually from want of physical exercise.

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I have known half an hour's riding on a bicycle or ten minute's running to make feet that had been cold to tingle.

I know those who have been cured of rheumatism and many other ills by merely taking lively systematic exercises. I usually manage, *every day*, to get some vigorous exercise, such as running, rapid walking, riding a bicycle, splitting wood or rowing, that will start the perspiration and cause me to breathe heavily and fast. Daily outdoor exercise is better than tonics, appetizers and other drugs.

Girls and women should take one or two hours' exercise daily in the open air. Too long have they been restrained by the oft-repeated cry, "You mustn't do this, and you mustn't do that." I am glad so many ladies are bicycle riders. The dress, however, should be suitable for a lady.

4. "*Cleanliness* is next to godliness." Three-fourths of the earth's surface is water, hence, as it is so cheap and abundant, let us use plenty of it. Paul enjoins, "Cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the flesh."

The pores of the skin should be kept open by bathing and perspiring. If a man's body were varnished all over, thus closing the pores or sewers, he would die in a short time. Everyone should bathe daily; not only face and hands, but neck, chest and *other parts of the body*, while an all-over bath should be enjoyed at least once a week, by having a swim, using a bath-tub, or taking a hand or sponge bath in a room.

Will you permit me, in a couple of paragraphs, to express a few thoughts, not as an evangelist, but as a physician might address you.

A great cause of disease and death in towns and cities is bad sewerage. Your body is a city; hence, if the sewers are clogged, the health will be greatly interfered with and life endangered. Costiveness is the clogging of the colon, or lower bowel, which is the main sewer of the body. This is a fruitful source

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of headaches, indigestion, dyspepsia, catarrh, jaundice, piles, liver and kidney troubles, sore eyes, skin eruptions and a host of other ills, physical, mental and moral. Bad sewerage of the body is abominable uncleanness. Costiveness should be obviated, not by cathartic pills or purgative medicines—as the more of such are taken the more is required—but by diet, such as porridge, fruit at meals and at night, drinking water before retiring and after rising, and, *when other means are necessary*, by using an enema of from one pint to two quarts of pure water, about blood heat, retaining the water for a few minutes. A fountain syringe that holds two quarts is preferable to one with a bulb. An enema of two quarts will usually cure summer complaint, a few applications will in most cases cure chronic diarrhœa, or cholera morbus.

The so-called "Dr. A. Wilford Hall treatment without medicine," for which hundreds of thousands paid from two to four dollars, and derived untold benefit from it, is simply to remove the main cause of disease, namely, bad sewerage of the body—the city in which we live—by taking an enema of from one to two quarts of water, as above described. Dr. Kellogg, many years before Dr. Hall, prescribed the same treatment of water cure, but it was not so generally adopted till people had to pay Dr. Hall for the supposed secret discovery. *Wisely* employed, the enema will prove a great benefit to youth and adults. It should not be used, however, except when necessary.

5. *Proper clothing.*—Wool should be worn next the skin in Winter and Summer, by young and old. An Irishman, speaking of a woollen shirt, said, "Be it ever so wet and cold, it is always warm and dry."

One reason why boys and men are more healthy than girls and women is the difference in their clothing. A father, on a bleak December day, wearing an overcoat and thick-soled boots, will, in loving tones, tell us that his darling daughter by his side is not strong and does not get good health. If he would

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dress as lightly as she does he very soon would be broken down in health, or dead. See! she wears thin-soled shoes, cotton stockings, short sleeves, and a dress cut low in the neck.

A suitable epitaph over many a grave would be, "Died from wearing thin-soled shoes and low-necked dresses."

Many are troubled with colds, sore throats and lung difficulties as a result of overheating the neck, and making it tender by wearing closely-fitting mufflers, etc., on certain cold days, and then leaving them off on warmer days. Bathe your neck and chest every morning with cold water, and put away your scarfs, etc.

I shall not speak of corsets; suffice it to say that they prevent abdominal breathing, deform the body, lessen beauty, injure health, and prepare the way for *unmentioned* troubles. Many of the best and wisest families are abandoning corsets, while other people who laugh at and pity the Chinese for deforming their feet still adhere to cramping the waist, which is much worse.

6. Sleep is nature's benediction. Sleep all you can, but do not lounge in bed. The amount of sleep generally required by adults is from seven to nine hours. Every one, as far as possible, should have a regular time for retiring and rising, as we have for our meals.

The best way I know to prevent insomnia, or put yourself to sleep, is not to allow your mind to revolve, even occasionally after retiring, upon your business, plans, cares, imaginations, or other things; but lay them all aside with your clothes, put your mind in repose, and listen to the ticking of the clock, fix your eye on some object, or stay your thoughts on your breathing.

A nap after dinner, from fifteen minutes to an hour, as possible and necessary, would be very beneficial to most people. This gives the brain a rest, calls the blood to the stomach, aids digestion, helps the nerves,

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and generally restores and recuperates professional, business and laboring men and women. Persons would benefit the health, lengthen the life, and do more work daily, to lie down or sleep a few minutes after the mid-day meal. It is like oiling up machinery, taking a tonic, or unstringing the bow. Sleep is nature's sweet restorer.

7. Recreation is a good thing. According to political economy there are three departments in life: business, culture and recreation. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Every man and woman, as well as every boy and girl, should unstring the bow, so to speak, and *every day* take some pure and healthy recreation.

If a minister, instead of being in his study all day Saturday and until ten or twelve o'clock on Saturday night, will be so prepared for his Sabbath work, that every Saturday afternoon and evening may be given to such work or recreation that the mind may have relaxation and rest, he will find himself in body, intellect and spirit the better fitted to most effectively do the work of God in His church on the Sabbath.

Many ministers having adopted this practice, would regard themselves culpable to depart from it.

A holiday and change of air are very beneficial to health, if wisdom is used. Many Summer resorts, however, are sources of dissipation and weariness, instead of recreation and rest. Give me Muskoka, Parry Sound, or some quiet place in preference to the weariness of crowds, lectures, late hours and dissipation at popular resorts.

8. Medicine is sometimes necessary to help nature, but do not make a drug-store of yourself by continually swallowing medicine. "Do thyself no harm." Thank God for good physicians. Next to a minister, every physician, in order to be fully qualified for his important profession, should be a Christian, as was "Luke, the beloved physician."

9. A contented and peaceful mind may be possessed

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by everyone. Paul said, "Godliness with contentment is great gain," and affirmed, "I have learned, in whatever state I am, therewith to be content." Grace and resolution will develop the same experience and habit in each of us.

Paul had a repeating rifle: "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." We may practise with Paul s gun. "This buoyancy, this cheerfulness, this hopefulness, this holy confidence, this radiant gladness," will strengthen any person physically, mentally and spiritually, and fit us most successfully to influence others for good.

Worry results from doubt, and will wear a person out quicker than anything else. Many good people, and even ministers, oppress themselves with the feeling of *awful reponsibility*, or overwhelm and exhaust themselves with over-anxiety and cares, instead of being, as directed, strong and of a good courage (Josh. i. 9), as they think of and experience the presence of the Lord, and realize the truth of the promise, "The joy of the Lord is your strength." (Neh. viii. 10.)

Never get old, but ever keep youthful in spirit. Dr. Newton said, "I am on the sunny side of seventy." One remarked to Dr. Guthrie, "You are getting very old." He answered with vigor, "I beg your pardon, I am not getting old. The body or house in which I live is getting a little old and shaky, but I am as young as when a boy." That is the way to live.

God did not design that sickness and ills should abound as they do; but most of these things result from violation of the laws of health by our ancestors or by ourselves. Though I have often suffered the consequences of violating nature's laws, and have asked God's forgiveness for my folly; I am very thankful to say that I have never been forty hours at a time in bed in over forty years.

We should study, know and observe the laws of nature, for if these laws are transgressed the day of reckoning will come sooner or later. Being a Chris-

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tian, or minister, *sincere* or ignorant, will not exempt any one.

If many who are now sickly, have no appetite, and are taking tonics and other medicines, would get their minds off themselves, go to work, exercise in open air, eat healthful food, keep good-natured and trust in God, they would soon be well.

We should seek to live on earth as long as possible, neither wearing or rusting out before our time. Beecher, after speaking of the laws of health and how they are violated, said, "A person ought to be ashamed to think of dying before he is seventy."

II. Let me now add a few thoughts about our mental health. Our mental or intellectual nature is higher than our physical; hence we should be even more particular to develop and culture it, and so keep it in health, vigor and purity.

We should make good use of our opportunities for acquiring knowledge, not only in youth, but all our lives. Read not only the newspapers, but study and read the best books of the day. Every home should have a library of good books. Make the most of yourself, and do not be an ignoramus or illiterate.

Avoid all trashy novels, blood and thunder stories, police court and other horrible records, impure literature, immoral imaginations, and sceptical writings and thoughts. Many of the so-called exposures of sin, vice, crime and impurity by voice and pen, instead of hindering the wrongs, advertise them, and foster in many a carrion appetite, an impure imagination, a morbid curiosity, a lower ideal of humanity, and so help to further the wrongs spoken or written against.

We should remember Paul's words, "It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." (Eph. v. 12.) It is also a shame to willingly hear or read such things. Let us guard the gates of our lips, our eyes and our ears.

III. Our spiritual and moral nature is the real *ego*, or self, and is immortal, hence we should "give all

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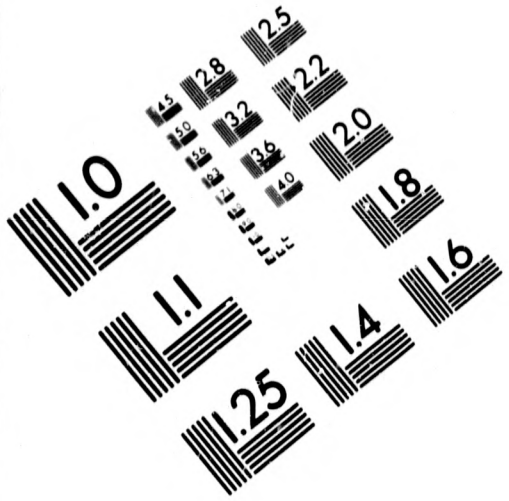

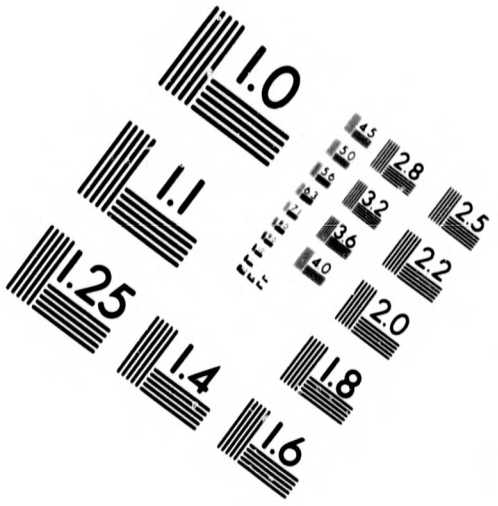

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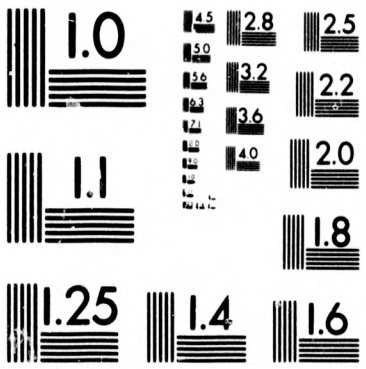

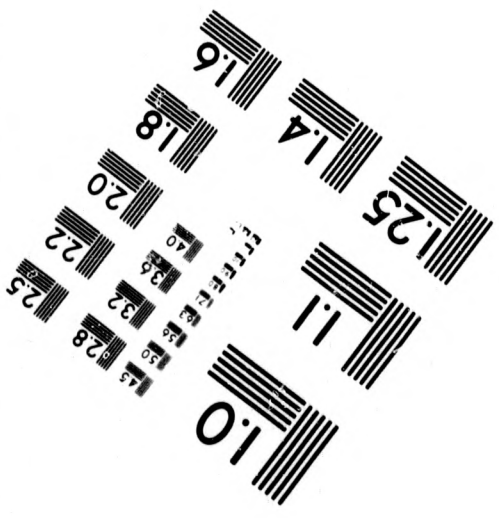

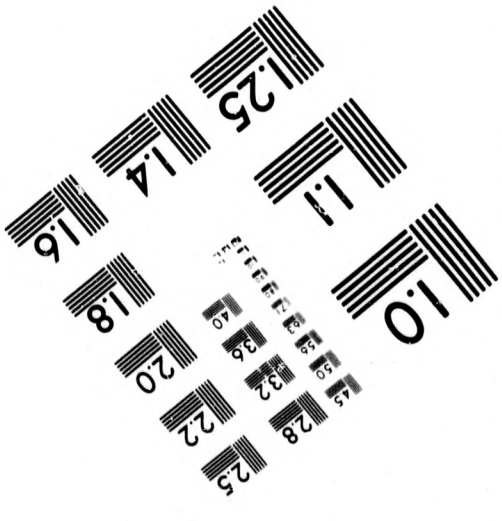

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diligence to make our calling and election sure," and so be whole-hearted, out-and-out Christians.

Some think it clever to call themselves sceptics and agnostics, or to say, "I don't believe."

A noted minister said, "When I was crossing the Atlantic our ship was caught in a cyclone; we all expected to be wrecked and go to the bottom. There were seven hundred on board, and all prayed but two; one of these was *drunk*, and the other was a *fool*. If these so-called sceptics or agnostics were in a cyclone at sea, they, too, would pray, if they were not drunk or fools.

Do not be so foolish as to think yourself sceptical, but be imitators of the best intelligence and morals of the world. Stand by the old book, the Bible, and be a witness for Christ.

As we have three natures, the animal, intellectual and spiritual, each should be kept in its proper place. To live in the lowest and animal nature is unintelligent and brutish; while to live in the highest and spiritual nature is intelligent and Christian. Resist all temptations by controlling the lower nature, as did Paul, who said, "I keep my body under and bring it into subjection," and so continually live in the higher spiritual nature. The higher will then dominate the lower. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." Avoid the impure atmosphere of evil associates; feed daily upon the spiritual food of His Word, exercise yourself by Christian endeavor, and live in constant companionship with Christ our Saviour, so shall your life be a benediction to others, a rapture to yourself, and will bring glory to God.

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The Question of Women Speaking.

—: XIII :—

Promise : Acts ii. 16-18.	**Praise : Gal. iii. 28.**
Precept : Phil. iv. 3.	**Prayer : 3 John i. 3.**

SHOULD women speak or pray in public meetings? No evangelical Church that I know forbids them; but a few men and women would silence them if they could.

The sources of the idea that women should not speak and pray in public are: (1) Ignorance, (2) Prejudice (3) Heathenism, (4) Judaism, (5) Popery, (6) Satan, (7) Misunderstanding and misapplying two passages of Scripture.

The Scriptures referred to read as follows:

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." (1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35.)

"Let the women learn in silence with all subjection But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." (1 Tim. ii. 11, 12.)

Let me give you the explanation of these verses, that some people like to quote. Both these passages are similar, and have *special* reference to the Corinthian women, as the letter to Timothy was written when he was minister at Corinth.

In Corinth, hundreds of lewd women ministered in the heathen worship of Venus, and licentious rites existed; hence, had Christian women been so indecorous as to ask questions, dispute, dictate, harangue and debate in the Church, as did the men, they would

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have been considered similar to the heathen temple women as prostitutes.

Paul, in these passages to Corinth, shows himself to be a Christian and a gentleman in guarding the reputation of Christianity, as also of women. Consider the following points:

1. The Scriptures harmonize. To interpret these verses so as to silence all women in religious meetings, would conflict with several other Scriptures.

2. The Lord revealed that women should "afterward" speak in public. (Joel ii. 28.)

3. Peter, by the Spirit, declared that Joel's prophecy began to be fulfilled at Pentecost. (Acts ii. 16-18.)

4. Paul instructed the Corinthian women how to pray and preach in public, that is, with covered head. (1 Cor. xi. 5, 6.) Modesty required this rule, as only lewd women in the East appear without a veil. Customs in our land are different. The spirit of the passage is, that Christian women should always dress modestly, and especially in church, according to what is recognized as propriety.

5. Paul's other directions to the Corinthians, that we have already quoted, and that perplex some people (1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35; 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12), do not forbid even their women praying and speaking in the synagogue or church, but only prohibit women indulging in the practice of asking questions, objecting, arguing, finding fault, debating, and arrogantly usurping authority over the men. These passages being intelligently understood, perfectly harmonize with 1 Cor. xi. 5, 6.

6. Paul teaches that to prophesy is to speak to men to edification, that is, to preach. "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." (1 Cor. xiv. 3.)

7. Paul informs us that the *four daughters* of Philip the evangelist prophesied or preached. (Acts xxi. 9.)

8. This same inspired Paul teaches that women and men have equal blessings and privileges. (Gal. iii. 28.)

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9. Paul gratefully spoke of Phœbe, Priscilla, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Persis, and "those women" as his faithful Gospel-helpers. (Rom. xvi. 1, 3. 12; Phil. iv. 3.)

10. Christ especially honored women. He used the Samaritan woman to arouse a city. (John iv. 28-30.) He also appointed women to first announce to men His resurrection. (Matt. xxviii. 10.)

11. The Saviour shows that He has not since withdrawn this commission, and silenced women, as He so greatly blesses their labors in His Church. Dr. Talmage said, that Mrs. Phœbe Palmer won for Christ, by her direct influence, one hundred thousand persons. Who would presume to endeavor to silence Mrs. Lathrap, Miss Willard, or one of the thousands of modest Christian women, who in homes, or church, or school, or W. C. T. U., or W. M. S., are being blest of Christ in using their voices in His service and worship?

Women have done more to advance temperance in the last twenty-five years than the men had done in a hundred years previous. When our country is sufficiently advanced in thought to give women the ballot, prohibition will soon be a settled question.

12. To say that the Bible forbids women to speak and pray in public is a *misrepresentation* of Paul, a *libel* on Christianity and society, a *slander* on God and His Church, and an *outrage* on women and our homes, which intelligent men of spirit must resent.

Follow the example of Jesus and, if Satan or any ignorant or prejudiced person misapplies Scripture, seeking to silence the pure, modest, cultured women of our day, answer, "It is written, 'Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.'"

Let every Christian woman who reads this chapter say with Mrs. Phœbe Palmer, "When I consecrated myself to God, my lips and voice were included." Then so live that you may carry out the motto of Miss Havergal:

"KEPT FOR THE MASTER'S USE."

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Questions about Reading.

—: XIV :—

Precept: 1 Tim. iv. 13. **Praise:** Psa. cxix. 24.
Proverb: Prov. ii. 9. **Prayer:** Psa. cxix. 36.

I AM sometimes asked, "What do you think of such books as E. P. Roe's works?" Such writings are not impure; but they are wishy-washy, and spread out so thin that they would not repay you for reading them. Moreover, they give too worldly an idea of Christianity. A book now and then, like those by "Pansy," might be a sort of mental recreation and, at the same time, a spiritual stimulus to be an earnest, working Christian.

Do you ask what I think about novels in general? Well, there are novels, and there are novels. While it may be proper to read *certain* books of fiction, the great majority of novels are injurious for the following reasons:

1. They vitiate and destroy the taste for the Bible and other more substantial reading.

2. They give a wrong idea of life. Many, by reading novels, have imbibed false ideals of heroism, love, matrimony, sociality, courage, success and life generally.

3. They pervert the sympathies, harden the heart and destroy the fine sensibilities of our nature.

4. They are often sceptical and anti-religious in their tendencies, or misrepresent the religion of Jesus Christ. In them the persons professing to be religious are often represented as dull, cranky, small, mean and even hypocritical, and the unconverted are spoken of as bright, broad, large and generous. Such false and misleading writings are pernicious.

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5. They tend to weaken and intoxicate the mind. I have met those who were as much intoxicated and bound by novel reading as any old toper ever was with whiskey. Let me mention but one: The young lady had read exciting novels for years, till almost every day and night found her reading one. At length, seeing the sinfulness of the habit, she tried to abandon it; but found herself enslaved. The mind had become weakened, the moral sense blunted, her health impaired, the will had lost its power and she felt herself the slave of the awful habit. As she told me of her sin and asked me to pray for her, she said, "I had been reading a novel after retiring the other night. As I fell asleep I had an awful dream. I thought I had passed from time to eternity and was striving to enter heaven; but something held me back. As I turned to discover what it was, I saw a chain of the many novels that I had read. The one that I had placed under my pillow ere I fell asleep, that my parents might not see it, was firmly attached to me, and the other end of the chain was held by demons. As I strove to get free and enter heaven, they, with the chain of novels, drew me back. As I seemed sinking to hell, I, in great fear and excitement, awakened. I thanked God that I was yet alive and resolved never to read another novel; but in less than forty-eight hours I was again reading the unfinished novel. I want to be free and yet I am enslaved. What shall I do?"

Many other fine intellects and noble characters have been irreparably injured, and others utterly ruined, by yielding to the fascination and intoxication of novel reading. Beware!

As you would avoid becoming enslaved by strong drink, so guard against becoming intoxicated and enslaved by novel reading. Many do not know that they are now slaves of the habit, who would find themselves victims if they would but try to abandon the practice. "Do thyself no harm."

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6. The worst effect, of all, is the impairment of the moral sensibilities, and the spiritual apathy fostered by such reading. Sacred and divine things cease to be relished. The Holy Spirit's voice is silenced. The story of the Saviour's love makes less impression upon the heart than the worked-up stories of the novels. Life becomes a kind of dream, and its true ideal is lost. The Bible is discarded or little read. The mental taste becomes depraved by the "onions of Egypt," and the appetite is rendered morbid, vitiated and unnatural by such reading. Hence, the relish and love for truth and spiritual food are destroyed, and the intoxicated victim lives on "without God in the world." (Eph. ii. 12.)

If you read novels, do not make them, as many do, the staple of your reading. Read them only as a temporary recreation, or relaxation from mental labor or more substantial reading. Read only the very best: those that might be considered standard or classical books. The moment you find that your reading interferes with your mental or moral duties, with your health or advancement, stop.

Boys and girls should never read novels. Walter Scott would not allow his own daughter to read even the novels he had written himself. I began to read novels and continued stories as a boy, and soon found that such reading was creating a mental intoxication, and diverting my mind from study and work. Hence, I at once made a change, and began to read the Bible and good books, as I had previously been reading novels and continued stories. The change was most beneficial, and soon I experienced the "new nature," and learned the "new song." I was converted.

What about Sunday papers? The Sunday secular paper is an abomination, and a great curse to any country where it may be published and circulated. Most persons who read the Sunday papers soon have a carrion appetite created, so as to lose relish for the Word of God and the services of the sanctuary, and

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are seldom found in God's house, while those who do go, after perusing the thirty or forty pages of worldly, wicked, exciting or degrading matter, cannot be effectively reached by the *pure word of truth.*

Some moral and even professedly religious people mistakenly buy the Sunday paper, and read the little that they think is Sunday reading, *and a little more besides.*

I am glad that I know of no paper that is published or circulated in any part of Ontario on the Sabbath.

I appeal to every Church member, moralist, and lover of his country and the Sabbath, to discourage by example and precept the Sunday secular newspaper that degrades the Sabbath, hinders the Church, vitiates society and dishonors God.

In every home all political and secular papers should be put away on Saturday night, and not opened or read on God's holy day. The old-school Presbyterians adhere strictly to this rule. Some few, that call themselves Christians, read or allow secular papers to be read in their homes on the Sabbath. Let me ask you who read this chapter to put from you on the Sabbath all secular papers and books, and read only those publications that are religious. The Sabbath is too good a day for secular reading. God says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Do not forget this divine precept.

Do you ask, "*What shall we read?*" As the publications are so multitudinous that we must leave unread so many books, we should carefully select and read only the best books and periodicals.

Half a generation ago, Mr. Allibone said: "It has been computed that of the 650,000 volumes in the English language, about 50,000 would repay a perusal. Now, suppose a person to read one hundred pages a day, or one hundred volumes a year, it would require five hundred years to read the books worth reading."

The books you read are your companions, and will influence you for either good or evil. The reading of

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one book has moulded the character and determined the life and career of many a youth and adult.

Let me give you a chain of striking incidents, starting from the reading of one book. An old Puritan doctor wrote a book called "The Bruised Reed," over two hundred years ago, the reading of which led Richard Baxter to saving faith in Christ.

Richard Baxter wrote a work entitled, "A Call to the Unconverted," which book was used in the conversion of Philip Doddridge.

Philip Doddridge wrote "Rise and Progress," which, being read by William Wilberforce, led him to become an avowed Christian.

William Wilberforce wrote a book called "A Practical View of Christianity," which inspired Legh Richmond, an English Church clergyman, to higher faith and greater zeal. He, in his turn, wrote the wonderful and beautiful story of a Methodist girl, called "The Dairyman's Daughter."

A Scottish minister, who knew not personally the power of the Gospel he was preaching, was led by reading this wonderful book to experience *the full assurance of faith*, and, as a result, all the world has been blessed by the fervent piety, burning eloquence and faithful labors of Thomas Chalmers.

The story of "The Dairyman's Daughter" has been printed in many languages, read in many lands, and has resulted in the conversion of tens of thousands, of rich and poor, to Christ.

Does not this chain impress us with the importance of using great care and judgment in selecting the books we read.

"The Dairyman's Daughter" caused me when a boy to desire to know Christ as my personal Saviour; and I learned much from "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress" about the Christian life and how to live it. It has been said that, excepting the Bible, no book has done as much good as "Pilgrim's Progress."

What books have influenced you for good? Which

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ones for evil? What effect will the kind of books you are now reading and planning to read have upon your mind, morals and life? Books make or mar many a youth and adult.

Some make the great blunder of not reading anything. I have been in homes where there was not a religious or secular paper taken, unless the children received one gratis from the Sabbath-school, and few books were seen on shelf or table.

Many people eat, work and sleep, utterly neglecting to feed or clothe the mind. Others spend so much time reading the daily papers that they have little time or disposition to read anything else. This is a great mistake. We should certainly keep posted on the news and questions of the day, but at the same time not neglect to advance ourselves mentally and morally by other suitable reading.

In perusing the daily paper, I scan the headings, and read what I think desirable. From five to fifteen minutes usually suffice for a single paper.

Some seem to think that they must read most of the paper to get their money's worth. Time and morals are of more value than money.

I would advise persons of all ages, but especially the young, to refrain from reading continued stories in papers and magazines. Each paper leaves some of the characters in a situation that keeps the reader's mind in suspense until the next paper arrives; and then the mind is relieved on that point, only to be left in as great suspense about some other character, and so an unhealthy excitement or intoxication is kept up week after week, and month after month, until the story is ended. If you wish to read a story get it in book form, that you may read it in a few days and have done with it; but turn away from every continued story. Feeling the intoxicating effect of continued stories upon my own mind as a boy, I renounced them even before I was converted. I would advise all to give up such reading *before they begin.*

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Religious papers and periodicals are a great boon to any home. Every family, as far as possible, should subscribe for their church paper, so as to know what their church is doing, and so keep up the connexional interest. The Methodists should take the *Christian Guardian*, the Presbyterians should have *The Presbyterian*, and the Baptists should read *The Baptist*.

It will also be well to take an undenominational paper. The best one that I know is *Zion's Watchman*, published by John Lemley, Albany, N.Y., at $1.25 a year. We have taken this paper for years, and have introduced it into many homes as a weekly visitor. Send for a sample copy.

Suitable biographies are to many a great source of good. I personally received great help from reading the lives of "The Dairyman's Daughter," Collins, "Hester Ann Rogers," Wesley, "Frances Ridley Havergal," Alfred Cookman, and others. In reading biographies of good men and women, get all the instruction and inspiration possible; but do not imagine that you must think, act and feel as those you read about. The good are not necessarily infallible; moreover our temperament, education and work are different. Have the Spirit of Christ, and be all that the Lord can make out of you.

Such societies and organizations as the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle (C. L. S. C.) have done much good to tens of thousands by leading them to adopt a course of useful reading. Many will not read anything worth reading unless they adopt a course prescribed by some society, such as the C. L. S. C., just as most people will not make a special study of music, or practise what they do know, unless when they are taking lessons. Let all of us study and practise to make the most possible out of ourselves. Each one should, to a great extent, be his or her own teacher.

No reading, however good, will take the place of the Bible. Peter says, "Desire the sincere milk of

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the Word." Have a cow of your own. Some ecclesiastical dairies dispense very thin milk. The Word is not all milk, however; it is called meat, honey, light, dew, hammer, sword, magnet, law and Gospel. Cultivate your taste for the Word, instead of perverting it. Read and act upon the chapters in this book on, "How to read the Scriptures," and "Be a Bible Christian."

What shall we avoid reading?

The following general rules will commend themselves to our enlightened judgments:

1. Avoid all reading that will have an injurious effect upon the mind, weakening or intoxicating it.

2. Avoid all reading that will injure the morals. Shun, as you would the small-pox, all impure, immoral and sceptical literature.

3. Do not read anything that seeks to turn sin into a joke. The writer of "Peck's Bad Boy" has done much harm by his impious writings; in which he, in a way to provoke laughter, fosters disrespect to parents, and distrust even in the purity of mothers and ministers, and generally makes badness seem smartness. Turn from all such poisonous writings as you would from a venomous serpent.

4. Avoid reading those books, however good the author or popular the work, in which drinking, profanity, gambling, fighting, scepticism or other wickedness is indulged in by the characters. We should not associate familiarly with characters in books that would be contaminating and unprofitable in real life. Even Dickens, Henty and Lever speak so familiarly and amusingly of sinful practices by their principal characters as to interest their readers in that which is sinful, instead of turning them against it.

5. Do not read even a single novel or book that might be described as trashy, blood and thunder, or low in its character. Such books are the curse of the age, and especially to young people.

6. Do not foster a carrion appetite, a morbid curi-

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osity or an impure imagination by reading in papers or books the details of scandals, murders, divorces, adulteries, debauches, thefts, lewdness and other sins. Some writers profess a desire to expose and denounce the wickedness and lewdness of Chicago and other cities; whereas, by their naming and picturing of certain streets, and giving disgusting details, they help to advertise the sins, pollute minds and increase the evils exposed.

7. Do not read that which you would be ashamed to let your mother know about, or that which you think is unfit for your sister or wife. Boys and men should be as pure, good and moral, as girls and women.

8. Avoid all reading that lessens the love and relish for the Bible, the house of God and religious truth.

9. Avoid all reading that directly or indirectly tends to wean your thoughts and affections away from Christ and His blessed service.

Read that only which will improve you intellectually, socially, æsthetically, morally or spiritually.

In closing, let me say that you may do much good by wisely presenting and loaning good books.

Two books that I give away in large numbers every year are, "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life" and "Kept for the Master's Use." I would advise you to read these books, and loan or give them to others.

May you take as your motto, "Kept for the Master's Use," so shall you know "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life."

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Questions about Death and Dying Grace.

—: xv :—

Precept : Eccl. ix. 10. Praise : 1 Cor. xv. 55-57.
Promise : Psa. cxvi. 15. Prayer : Psa. xc. 12.

IS it a sign of superior grace or piety for a Christian to desire to now leave earth and go to heaven? Some think that they should feel thus, and try to get into that state. I suppose they got the idea from misunderstanding the Scriptures, and especially from certain hymns, that were written when persons were in an abnormal, gloomy or sentimental state of mind, that speak of "longing for that day," etc. I never sing such hymns without changing the words, so as to leave out the idea of desiring to leave earth.

I used to doubt my piety because I was not then willing to leave this world, and I thought it an evidence of superior piety for persons to want to die and go to heaven. Are you similarly troubled? Read your Bible, and see who wished to die, and why.

Jonah, after the gourd was withered, "wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live. And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death." (Jonah iv. 8, 9.) It was not piety, but anger and sulkiness that made him desire to die. He was no more pious than I was when a boy, and my father flogged me severely; I, in anger, said to myself, "I wish he had killed me, and then he would be sorry."

Elijah had a wonderful meeting at Carmel. He expected that Israel would, as a result of the test, turn

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from Baal to God, but apparently no one was converted. Jezebel then threatened to kill him. "He arose and went for his life a day's journey into the wilderness, and sat down under a juniper tree." Physical, mental and spiritual reaction now overwhelmed him, "And he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life." Elijah did not lack piety, yet it was not piety that made him desire to die, but it resulted from his being thoroughly *tired out, hungry, discouraged* and *lonesome.* The Lord did not upbraid him for his desire, but as a mother deals with a tired child so He soothed him to sleep, strengthened him with food, instructed him, and then cheered him by telling him he was not alone, but that 7,000 in Israel were true. Elijah now, with a new desire for life and enthusiasm for labor, went forth to do valiantly. Sometimes persons speak of longing to be away, or being willing any moment to die. This is no evidence of piety, for, like Elijah, they may be discouraged, tired out or lonesome, or perhaps they are only talking sentiment.

Simeon, when he saw the infant Christ, in rapture exclaimed, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." (Luke ii. 26-32.) He was an old man. His expectation and desire of seeing the Christ were now realized, God's promise to him was fulfilled, and so it was natural for him to feel as he did. Persons in great ecstasy may, for the time being, feel as he did, and others who are aged or infirm, leaning upon their staff, and whose ideals are reached, may speak as old Simeon, or say, as my aged father said to me a few months ago, "I am just waiting for the Saviour's summons." I admire that spirit in my father, who is leaning upon his staff; but for me and others, in vigor, it would be unnatural and wrong.

Paul, when a prisoner, knew not whether he most desired to live or die, as he said, "I am in a strait betwixt two." This state continued for a time, till he

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added, "To abide in the flesh is more needful for you." This view settled what he most desired, and he said, "I know that I shall abide for your furtherance and joy of faith." (Phil. i. 21-26.) Hear him again, as he exclaims, "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain." Is it not a much higher ambition and evidence of piety to want to live for Christ than to desire to die for gain?

God has put us in this world to glorify Him. To us He says, "Go work to-day in my vineyard." While life, health, vigor and opportunity are ours, to wish to leave this world is wrong. It is as if a father sent his sons into the harvest field to cut and shock up the golden grain; but at two o'clock one of the boys, though well, says: "I wish it were night, I long to go home." Such feelings and expressions are not evidences of loyalty to father, but of laziness and a disposition to shirk.

Many people die long before they should because they do not take care of themselves. How often people say, when advised to ease up, rest, or take a holiday: "I have no time," or, "I can't." A good rule is: "Better take time to get better and live, than to be compelled to take time to sicken and die."

We should prize life. Dr. Punshon, when nearing death, though ready to go, yet desired to live, and, as he saw the work necessary to be done, he exclaimed: "Oh, the rapture of living!" So let us feel, and seek to make earth as much like heaven as possible.

The best thought and desire, for every Christian to possess, is not to wish to die and get to heaven, but to have Christ's ideal of life, and say, with Him: "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." (John ix. 4.)

2. Should a Christian be willing to die? A dear friend of mine was dying of consumption, but clung to life. Her friends ignorantly tried to persuade her to be willing to die. She, though a

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Christian, became greatly distressed in mind, as she wrongly reasoned: "I am going to die, but I am not willing to go, therefore I am not ready." Her brother told me of the great and continued anxiety of all, because she was unwilling to die. Taking the train I was soon at her home. After she told me her distress of mind, I asked, "Should you build your hopes of salvation on being willing to die or upon a personal trust in Christ?" She answered, "Upon a personal trust in Christ." I replied, "Then a willingness or an *unwillingness* to die has nothing at all to do with your salvation; hence Satan has been evading the question, and has disturbed your mind by diverting your thoughts from Christ. Let me ask you, do you now trust Christ as your personal Saviour?" She answered so calmly, "*I know I do.*" I then said, "If we were going to die next week, or to-morrow, it is not for us to be willing to die to-day, for God does not will it so. I am not dying now, nor am I willing to die any more than you are. Now, let me tell you what to do. Leave the question of life and death with God, and don't think anything about being willing to die. Think of Christ, and ever trust Him as your Saviour, and, when the moment of death does come, He who has been with you in health and sickness, will then give you grace to triumph over the last enemy."

She replied, "I see the mistake I have been making. I will do as you say."

She lived for three months with her mind in perfect peace, and, when she passed away, her chamber seemed to all present like the vestibule of heaven.

How absurd it is for people to think that sick persons should be willing to die, for days, or even months, before they come to death. We should not confuse sick people by talking to them about death and being willing to die; but we should speak about Christ our Saviour, and His all-sufficient grace.

3. What about the thought that sometimes comes

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to persons, "Would you be resigned, if God thus willed that your husband, or children, or parents, or friends, should now be taken from you; or are you willing, if God so ordered it, to be removed by death from your husband, or family, or parents, or friends?"

I have known this question to trouble many when seeking purity of heart or a higher Christian life, as also when their health was run down, their minds morbid, or the near approach of death seemed probable.

Are you troubled with such temptations? Let me say, the thought is utterly absurd, for the very fact that your loved ones or yourself are alive is an assurance that God does not now will that death should separate you.

Moreover, to want to stay to minister to your loved ones, or to have them abide as a source of joy and comfort, is not reprehensible selfishness, as some are tempted to think, but is a natural and divinely-implanted instinct, which the love of Christ intensifies.

Let me also add, that the thought is Satan's device to divert people's minds from Christ and keep them from promised blessing and peace, and should not be entertained for a moment, but should be cast out and spurned as ridiculous nonsense.

4. Should a Christian, before death, have dying grace? God gives grace when we need it, but not before. If you had dying grace, you would want to die, and so could not have grace to do the duties devolving upon you in life. Living grace is what we need now.

I used to be much troubled because I clung to life and had not grace to die. As I read about Latimer, Ridley and other martyrs rejoicing in the flames as they burned at the stake, and heard of Christians dying in such peace or triumph, the thought came, Now, could you go to the stake thus, or bid good-bye to earthly friends? As I recoiled from the thought of the stake and of dying, the accusation came, "Now, you are not right, or you would not feel thus."

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I was also frequently troubled as I thought, when Christ returns to earth the saints will welcome Him, saying: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him; we will rejoice." Now, if Christ were to appear this moment, could you thus welcome Him? As I did not feel that I had grace to do so, I was taunted with the temptation, "A pretty Christian you are!" These thoughts troubled me for years, until I saw that I did not at present need dying grace or grace for Christ's glorious second advent; but grace to now trust Christ and do His will.

Moody was asked: "Have you grace to go to the stake as a martyr?" He replied: "No. What do I want grace to go to the stake for? I am not going to the stake; I am going to preach, and I want grace to preach rightly." That sounds intelligent. You do not now need grace to die or go to the stake, and if you had such grace you could not use it.

I never knew any person to dread even the thought of death more than my friend, Mrs. H———. I often wondered how she would meet the last enemy. Two years ago she crossed the river. For days she knew the end was near, yet not a fear was hers, but great peace and joy. I have rarely heard of a death so triumphant as was hers.

Many who feared to go through a dark room alone have met death most peacefully.

Christians of every age and land die well. How different from the death of the ungodly. Beaufort said, "And must I die? Will not all my riches save me? I could purchase a kingdom if that could save my life. What! Is there no bribing death?" Our rock is not as their rock. No wonder that so many say, "Let me die the death of the righteous." Let us live the life of the righteous: so shall we insure to die his death. Tell me how a man lives and I will tell you how he will die. God says of the righteous, "Their end is peace." (Psa. xxxvii. 37.)

Do not be fearing about death or even thinking

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about it, much less brooding over it. True, it is the last enemy, and we should not be friendly toward it; but, if we trust Christ as our Saviour as the days are going by, we may be sure that at the last we shall have grace to say "I have the victory," and to be "more than conquerors." In prospect of that victory, we may even now, by faith in Christ, say in triumph with Paul, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 55, 57.)

5. Should a person feel that if he died *now* he would go to heaven? It is not a matter of feeling as to where we are going when we die; but a matter of reason, logical deduction, or knowledge. If you can say, "I love Jesus, my sins are all forgiven, I am now a child of God;" then, with Paul, you may add: "If children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. viii. 17), or with John: "Now are we the children of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John iii. 2.) Moreover, Jesus assures us, "It is your Father's *good pleasure* to *give* you the kingdom."

Do not think of your merit, or demerit, or ask do I *feel* I would go to heaven if I were now to die; but *know* you are the child of God, and then be assured that through the good pleasure of your heavenly Father, as sure as Jesus Christ is now in heaven, you shall be there too.

6. Is death painful, as some suppose? The Bible usually speaks of death as a sleep. As a rule there is no more agony or pain in dying than in going to sleep. People who have been resuscitated from drowning, say that, after a few minutes of suffocation, a state of ease, tranquility, and delight followed. The movements of the face and limbs that sometimes accompany death are generally unconscious. We usually say of our friends who have died: "He

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passed away quietly," or "He was conscious and peaceful to the end." I have seen children and adults die, and, in every case, they fell asleep as gently or gloriously as the sun sinks behind the horizon. Life is the important thing. Live a true life and dismiss all fears of death.

7. What about the "dark valley," and "Jordan's waves," or "death's cold flood," that so many speak and even sing about? Many are frightened all their lives by these unscriptural misrepresentations.

In Psalm xxiii. we read of "The valley of the shadow of death," but nothing is said in the Bible about the "*dark* valley." Did you ever see a shadow where there was no light? Valleys are the most delightful spots on earth. Did you ever know a Christian, when dying, speak of the valley being dark? There will be light in the valley for thee.

In Joshua 3rd and 4th chapters, we are told of the passage through Jordan by the Israelites, which is the type of death. They, however, did not ford the stream or cross in a ferry; but the waters divided and all Israel passed over on dry ground, and then set up twelve stones as a memorial of their triumphant march. Christians, when they come to die, experience, and are able to say with good Bishop Haven: "There is no river here." Thank God,

> "The waters divide as our feet touch the shore,
> And exulting in Jesus, our spirits pass o'er;
> The waves to some may run fiercely and wild,
> But they are not so to the undefiled."

Think not of the open grave, black plumes, and bitter weeping; but of the opened heaven, white robes, and heavenly music. Look not at death from the standpoint of the living; but from the standpoint of the dying Christian, and in Christ anticipate a peaceful or triumphant end.

8. Is becoming a Christian getting ready to die and fitted for heaven? Many thus mistakingly think

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of it as like taking out a life insurance policy payable at death. Let me say, he that is not fit to die is not fit to live, and he that is not fit for heaven is not fit for earth. *Becoming* a Christian is getting ready for *life* on earth or in heaven; and *living* a Christian is acting out the ideal: "We labor that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him." (2 Cor. v. 9.)

Sometimes people say, "Live each day as if you knew it would be your last." That is absurd. Rather let us say, "Live each day, knowing that you are going to live forever."

We must begin our heaven here if we would ever know heaven beyond. There is even more said in the Bible about heaven in this world than heaven in the next. Over and over again Jesus gives us descriptions of heaven on earth, as He tells us so often what "the Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto." To be converted, to be a Christian, to belong to the kingdom of heaven, is to act out the prayer our Saviour and Example taught us, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. vi. 10.)

9. Does not too much of our preaching, teaching, exhortation and talking in church, home and school convey the idea that being a Christian is getting ready for death and existence in another world, instead of being ready for life, knowing God in Christ as our Saviour and King, doing our duty to God and man, following the example of Christ, and so living as to have the favor of God in this or any other world?

The primary reason why we should now and always be Christians is because *it is right*, as God is our loving Father and Redeemer. Let us ever act on principle, that is, do the right because it is right, and appeal to others to do likewise. This is the great motive to move unconverted men, women and youth to decision for Christ and a Christian life, as also to ensure a peaceful death and an eternity of bliss with Jesus and our loved ones in *glory*.

10. "What do you think of wearing crape and deep

mourning?" That is a question I would answer very kindly, tenderly and yet plainly. If there is real sorrow at heart, as there usually is, there is no need of putting on the habiliments of mourning; while, if there is no sorrow, to do so would be a shame and a mockery.

When mourning the loss of loved ones, it is not necessary to go to the expense and inconvenience of procuring mourning; wear the clothes you now have, and your actions will be generally commended. You might, if you desire, put a little crape on your hat or bonnet, but do not be a slave to the custom of wearing heavy crape and deep mourning.

I knew an excellent Christian lady who, after her aged father's death, wore the heaviest mourning when she went to church, visiting, or marketing; but immediately on returning home removed the black and put on a furniture print dress. Mourning apparel is heathenish rather than Christian.

When our friends die, instead of putting crape on the door, let us, as many do, hang a bunch or wreath of flowers.

Though we so sadly miss our departed friends, yet, when we think of the white robes, the harps and the new song of our loved ones in heaven, it certainly seems incongruous and unfitting for us to wear deep mourning, keep the piano or organ closed and neglect to sing the songs of Zion.

11. What do you think about flowers and eulogistic words at funerals? I believe in them; but better still is it to gladden the hearts of our friends and loved ones with flowers, kind words and loving deeds while they are living.

When Mary broke the alabaster box of precious ointment upon the Saviour's head, He called it "a good work" and declared that "it shall be spoken of for a memorial of her" throughout the world in every age. (Matt. xxvi. 13.) Let us follow her example and break our alabaster boxes of sympathy, affection

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and kindness by word and act, and thus do our part to fill the lives of others with fragrance and joy, amid this world's care and sorrow.

There is a pathetic piece of poetry that speaks of the kind words and acts that would be indulged in, "If I should die to-night." We had better say the kind things now, and also scatter flowers and seeds of kindness before the eyes are closed in death. Give us the flowers, kind words and deeds while we are living, and we will not demur however plain our casket may be.

12. What about costly monuments and expensive funerals? It is right and Christian to show proper respect to the departed by having a suitable casket and even a stone, if not too costly; but to make the funeral of our loved ones an occasion for the display of personal *pride* and *vanity* is, to say the least, incongruous and vulgar. Moreover, I have noticed, in Greenwood cemetery and other places of interment, that the most costly monuments usually stand over the graves of those least deserving of honor. An expensive funeral and monument are poor substitutes for a useful life.

I know those who, by the erection of hospitals, poor-houses, children's homes, churches, Y.M.C.A.'s, drinking fountains, and by noble deeds and kind words, built their own monument while they were living. To do this is a worthy ambition. Each of us may erect suitable monuments while living, and then it will matter little whether any monument marks the grave. "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." Let us live and labor, remembering the truth of the great Dr. Bonar's words: "I am only remembered by what I have done."

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The Importance of Sympathy.

——: XVI :——

Proverb: Prov. xii. 10. Promise: Phil. iv. 16, 17.
Precept: Rom. xii. 15, 16. Praise: 2 Cor. i. 3, 4.

SYMPATHY is natural; he is inhuman who lacks it. "Diamond cut diamond," is a poor maxim.

All need sympathy, and every one should show it. Let your life and words be as sunshine and medicine.

Do not complain of not receiving sympathy or you will certainly make it less, but show sympathy with others and you will seldom, if ever, have any reason to complain.

Love always begets love and sympathy. Let us not parade our own griefs, sorrows, bereavements and troubles, and so become mendicants or paupers, passing our hats, or begging for sympathy; but, receiving comfort from God, seek to comfort others "that are in any trouble," so shall we get all the human sympathy we deserve and need. (2 Cor. i. 3, 4.) Those who talk and make the most ado about their troubles have often the fewest, just as an empty wagon makes more noise than a loaded one.

Guard against getting sour, fretful, cross or complaining. You may do this by keeping sweet, contented, kind and courteous. Your life will then be a benediction to others and a rapture to yourself.

Sympathy should be expressed *intelligently.*

A man on board a tossing ship, gazing sympathetically at one that was casting up his accounts into the deep, dolefully said, "Are you sick?" The other replied, "Confound you; do you think I am doing this for fun."

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Have you never as senselessly said to children or adults, "I fear you are sick," or "How *bad* you do look." Many are made sick, or worse, if not killed, by such kindly-*meant* expressions.

A woman, on a long journey in a railroad coach, was trying to soothe three tired children as they were coughing and crying. A gentleman, feeling that he must express to her his sympathy, pathetically said, "My dear sister, I fear your children have got the croup; the children where I came from have got the croup, and they are dying like anything." He resumed his seat, feeling satisfied that he had done his duty, and so left her with the comforting reflection that perhaps her children had the croup and soon would be dying like anything.

Many act similarly. When visiting the sick they look as solemn as owls, and tell of funerals, deaths, diseases and sick people. Did you never do this? Many of the well-meant expressions of sympathy with bereaved and afflicted ones, burden and dishearten, rather than help and cheer.

2. Do not suppress, but cultivate your sympathetic nature.

Sorrows and bereavements usually develop and draw out our sympathies with others in sorrow or trouble.

Show your sympathy with those bereaved; not by the cant expressions: "I sympathize with you," "don't grieve," "God knows best," etc., but by kind acts and wise and few words of comfort.

3. Never lose sympathy with *children* and *boys* and *girls*. If you do, the sooner you are dead the better for the world and yourself, too.

4. Do not forget to show your sympathy with your *parents*, and especially with *mother*. Some sons pay no more respect to their mother's prayers and tears for them than they do to the whistling wind or the rain-drops from the eaves. Others are always thoughtful.

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A father, dying, said to his little son, "Harry, be a good boy and be kind to mamma." I know that son well, and I want to say he continually acts towards his mother like a lover.

While at home, be always *kind* and *loving* in words and acts; and when away, do not forget to *write* home often and send little tokens of love.

5. *Sons* and *daughters* need sympathy. Many children at home and school are soured, disheartened and ruined by unsympathetic words and treatment. They say at length, "I don't care; if I have the name, I may as well have the game."

Boys and girls of all ages enjoy being made the *companions* of their parents. This method ensures respect, confidence, obedience, love and goodness.

6. *The poor* have a large claim upon our sympathies Remember that what we do to those in needy circumstances Christ regards as done to Himself. (Matt. xxv. 34-40.) Christianity broadens our sympathies. Infidelity builds no hospitals or benevolent institutions.

As a company of men were loud in their expressions of sympathy with a poor man, whose horse had been killed, a good Quaker said, "I sympathize $5, what dost thou sympathize?" Let our sympathies with the poor, and with benevolent and religious objects be tangible, and not mere sentiment or cant.

7. *Wives* especially need sympathy. "Husbands, love your wives!" A wife said, "I can live weeks on one loving word." As a husband, do not be sparing in your *expressions* of love and appreciation, but let them be of daily occurrence. Keep up the appearance of love, so shall the reality be fostered.

Many a wife, whose husband has shown a lack of sympathy by spending his evenings away from home or by not being as kind, attentive, patient and outspoken in his feelings of attachment as when they were lovers, has, in consequence, pined away and died prematurely. He will then speak of his "*beloved*

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wife," whereas he *murdered* her as certainly as if he had starved her or given her slow poison. Tokens of appreciation and words of love in life are better than a monument in the graveyard.

8. *Husbands* also need sympathy. I have noticed that a husband is hard to drive, but easily lapped round the wife's finger; and it is nice to be lapped.

Many husbands are largely what their wives make them. We read, "Her husband shall be known in the gates." (Prov. xxxi. 23.)

Let wives be as neat in dress and kind in word and temper as when they were "sweethearts"

9. Inspire the confidence and esteem of *servants* by proper sympathy. (Col. iv. 1.) The Count of Toulouse had two hundred servants, and scarcely one but was true and loving. If your servant is not good, perhaps you are most to blame. A few words of praise or commendation are better than censure or scolding.

10. Manifest strong sympathy with your *minister* by high esteem, attendance upon Sabbath and week-night services, cordial sociability, and by willing co-operation in "every good work;" so will he have grateful thoughts of you and speak of you as "My joy and crown." (Phil. iv. 1.)

11. A minister, to be most successful, must have a Christ-like love and sympathy with saved and unsaved: so will he get their sympathy.

There would be more sympathy felt between a minister and his audience, and he could preach much better, if he would stand nearer to his audience than most preachers do. Personally I want to be within ten feet of my audience and have no pulpit desk or table between them and me.

Rev. Sam Jones says, "If a person knows you love him and mean his good, you can skin him and take his hide to the tannery, and he will go all the way with you asking for his hide."

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There is more in the spirit and tone in which a thing is said, to do good or harm, than in the words uttered.

A *young* minister, after returning from preaching, said, "I tell you I gave it to them to-night!" A Christian lady asked, "Did you give it to them tenderly?"

Words spoken without love and sympathy have no more effect for good than "Sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." (1 Cor. xiii. 1.) We should all remember this fact.

To him who is disposed to hit, and cut, and slash, and drive, Jesus says as to Peter, "Put up thy sword, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matt. xxvi. 52.)

One great secret of Moody's power over men is his great, loving heart, evidenced in his face, tone and address.

Jesus directs us, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." That is, be wise as Satan and harmless as the Lord.

Let our motto ever be, "Speaking the truth in love." (Eph. iv. 15.)

He or she is a wise person that can rebuke so as to do good.

Most *public* rebukes and many private ones are unsympathetic expressions of personal feeling, and hence do injury.

Never say, "Do this, or that, or *get out.*" Always leave off the harsh "*get out.*"

Abusing infidels, drunkards, liquor-sellers, criticisers, disturbers, politicians or anybody else, never did good, but injury. (James i. 19, 20.)

All rebukes should command the respect of Christ, of our higher self, and of the better nature of the one rebuked.

More depends upon the way in which a thing is said than on what is said. Let the heart be loving, and the voice and words will not seem harsh.

A fond father sent his son to college. A few weeks

after he received a letter from him, and, not being able to read, he took it over to a gruff butcher, who read in harsh tones: "Dear father, I am very sick; send me some money. Your son John."

The father angrily said, "I'll not send him a cent, when he writes to me in that way." He went home in a rage, when his good wife persuaded him to have the baker read the letter. The baker was a kind man, so with sympathetic tones he read, "*Dear father*, I am *very sick;* send me some money. Your *son John.*"

The father's emotions overcame him, as he said, "My dear boy; he shall have all the money he wants, when he writes to his father in that way."

12. Let your sympathies be given to every minister, evangelist, person, church, organization and method that God employs to elevate mankind and save men.

Do not be so stupid as to think that *your church* or *your method* is the only correct one. As Mr. Hunter says, "If other people would act as you do they would be as useless as you are."

Have sympathy even for bigots, for they are to be pitied. The feeling we may entertain against a bigot may be as bad as his bigotry.

Avoid a critical spirit. "Live and let live," is a good maxim.

I want to announce that the committee on criticism is disbanded. Do not dare reorganize it.

Remember Jesus' words to criticisers, "They that are not against us are for us."

13. Be kind to all animals, and especially to horses, dogs and birds. The wise man says, "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." (Prov. xii. 10.)

Rowland Hill said, "If a man is religious, his cat and dog will know it, and be the better for it."

Do not kill birds, or anything else, merely for fun.

Avoid cruelty to horses with whip, bit, or overcheck, or by placing them in dark or cold stables.

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Queen Victoria will not allow an overcheck to be used on any of her horses.

You should read "Black Beauty," the "Uncle Tom's Cabin" of the horse. I have given away scores of copies. It is a charming book of 250 pages, and costs but 25 cents.

I was greatly influenced as a boy to be kind to God's creatures, by reading the stories where the robins with leaves covered up the babes in the wood, and where the frogs said to the boys that were stoning them: "It may be sport to you, but it is death to us."

14. Have special sympathy with all the erring. Never seem to be so unlike Christ as to say about any person, "I have no *sympathy* with him." Jesus wept over Jerusalem, though they had rejected Him and were reprobate. (Luke xix. 41, 42.) Persons may sink so low that we cannot admire them, but no one can be so mean, low, cruel, or wicked as to be undeserving of Christ-like sympathy.

If *you* had been born in a drunken home, tempted as others, surrounded only by wicked people, brought up in idleness and sin, where and what would you be to-day?

Thank God for what you are, but do not despise others.

We cannot afford to lose sympathy with any one, as we believe in "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man."

The *sympathy* and *love* of *God* and *man* win the hardest cases, yea, all classes.

We never saw and felt this as when holding services in the penitentiary, when hundreds wept and scores professed to be converted.

Do you say of some, "Love would be lost on them." Then it is no use trying any other means.

The worse persons are, the more do they need sympathy, and the less will they be affected for good by any unsympathetic or harsh words.

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A fallen girl, an outcast from society, at her mother's funeral, stood weeping as she gazed upon the face now silent in death. A kind man hopefully said to her, "Do you not desire to become a Christian and live to meet your godly mother in heaven?" She answered, sobbing, "I do, and, God helping me, I will." Fervently he said, "God bless you, my friend, and help you to keep your vow." Looking up through her tears, she exclaimed, "You bless me. Those are the first kind words I have received for ten years, except from mother."

Those kind words were the means of her salvation, and a subsequent Christian life.

There are persons all about us, of all ages and character, that by loving words, and acts of kindness and sympathy, we may win from lives of sin, sullenness and despondency, for Christ and the Church, usefulness and heaven.

15. Sympathy is especially Christian. It is enjoined as the law of Christ, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. vi. 2.) To do this is a luxury that we should not deny ourselves.

Christ, our Exemplar, was most sympathetic. "He was moved with compassion." He is still the same, and His precious promise is true, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you."

"Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He will sustain thee," and you will then know how to comfort and help others.

Practical expressions of love and sympathy are the true test of character and the basis of final reward. Jesus Christ has declared that to those who show Christian sympathy with others, He will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom." "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. xxv. 40.)

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Questions Answered about Temptations.

—: XVII :—

Promise: 1 Cor. x. 13. Prayer: Psa. li. 10.
Precept: Eph. vi. 10-18. Praise: Jude i. 24, 25.

WHAT IS TEMPTATION? Temptation has two meanings in the Bible: (1) Solicitation to sin; (2) Trial or test of faith.

2. *What are the sources of temptation?* The *world*, with its riches, honors, cares, sinful and questionable amusements; *Satan*, with his thousand devices (Eph. vi. 12); the *body*, with its infirmities, sickness, appetites and passions; the *depraved mind*, with its pride, curiosity and deceit, and the envy, selfishness, tyranny, thoughtlessness, mistakes and sophistry of others.

3. *Does God ever tempt man?* He never solicits to evil (Jas. i. 13), though sometimes He *tests* our faith (Gen. xxii. 1).

4. *Is there any sin in being tempted?* None whatever; for no one was ever tempted more diabolically than was Jesus. He was even tempted to worship the devil and to give up His Messianic mission for worldly ambition and dominion. (Matt. iv. 9.) No matter how base, vile and devilish the temptation, there is no sin in merely being tempted. Luther said, "We cannot hinder the birds flying over our heads, but we can keep them from building nests in our hair." So we cannot prevent evil thoughts and temptations to sin passing through our minds, but we can refuse to entertain them.

5. *When does sin begin?* Sin begins only when

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the will consents. Augustine gives the four steps leading to sin: "A thought, an imagination, a delight, an assent." The genesis of sin is stated in Jas. i. 14, 15: (1) Object of desire or bait; (2) Incitement of natural propensities, here called "lust"; (3) "Conception," or consent; (4) Sin; (5) Death. The original propensities are not sin; but when uncontrolled they lead to sin and death.

6. *Are all Christians tempted?* They are. Temptation "is common to man." (1 Cor. x. 13.) Do not think you have temptations greater or different than other mortals. Spurgeon said, "God had one Son without sin; but he has no son without temptation."

7. *When may we expect the greatest temptations?* Persons are often the most sorely tempted soon after being converted, after receiving special blessings, after success or failure in Christian work, after the sacrament, or at the beginning of their intended life-work, as with Christ and Peter. (Matt. iii. 16, 17; iv. 1. Luke xxii. 31.)

Do not be surprised or give up when fierce temptations assail; but, like Christ, persevere and you shall be victorious.

8. *What about those who boast that they are not tempted?* Many sinners yield so readily and constantly to temptation that they do not feel its power. Let them resolve to resist and see how it will be. Formalists, Pharisees and presumptuous moralists are rocked to a deeper slumber by Satan, rather than assailed by him.

A man boastingly asked his colored servant, "Sambo, how is it that Satan so tempts you, when he does not bother me?" A few days later when out shooting, they fired into a flock of ducks on the water, killing some and wounding others. Sambo started for the dead ducks, when his master called out, "Go after the wounded ducks that are trying to escape; we are sure of the dead ones." Soon after the colored servant said, "I can answer your question now. You be the

dead duck, and Satan knows he's sure of you; but I am trying to escape and he tries to catch me."

9. *Need we expect to ever be freed from the liability to temptation in this world?* Jesus was tempted to the last and we may be satisfied to be as our Master. (Matt. xxvi. 38; xxvii. 40-44.) Satan may leave us for a season as he did Christ (Luke iv. 13), but we must not, because of this, become spiritually proud or get off our guard.

10. *Do temptations serve any good purpose?* Temptations are overruled by God: (1) To reveal our own weakness, imperfections and impotency. (2) To strengthen and deepen our faith and purpose, just as the roots take the deeper hold as the tree is swayed with the wind. (3) To send us to our knees and keep us near to Christ, our refuge and strength. (4) To test our character and make us watchful. (5) To prove the sufficiency of the grace of God and give us the opportunity of showing ourselves Christian heroes and heroines. (6) To prepare us for still greater blessings and victories. It was after Christ's temptation that the "angels came." (Matt. iv. 11.)

11. *How far may we be saved from susceptibility to temptation's power?* The one that is totally depraved and corrupt in heart has a whole menagerie within him: The peacock of pride, the swine of greed and sensuality, the mule of stubbornness, the goat of impurity, the serpent of malice and subtlety, the wolf of rapacity, the tiger of temper and revenge, the sloth of laziness, the dog of growling and the panther of deception.

Every unregenerate heart contains one or more of these animals.

Many who are converted retain, though caged, some of these animals, thinking it impossible to be freed. (1 Cor. iii. 3; Luke ix. 45-46.)

It is the privilege of every Christian, by faith, to have Christ "destroy the works of the devil" (1 John

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iii. 8); or, in other words, to kill, turn out or tame the whole menagerie.

12. *How may we distinguish temptation from depravity of heart?* When a temptation to anger, envy, pride, selfishness, lust or other sin is presented, if there is a disposition to turn away from or reject the temptation, as did Christ (Matt. iv. 10), the temptation is then evidently only from without ourselves; but when disposed to cherish, entertain or trifle with the temptation, it is high time to pray, like David, after his grievous sin, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." (Psa. li. 10.)

13. *Is it possible to always be victorious against temptation?* Yes. Christ overcame and we have the assurance that "He is able to succor them that are tempted." (Heb. ii. 18.) No sin is necessitated. Guilt implies freedom and power to resist. We may resist unto death. Christ does better for us than to exempt us from temptation: He gives grace to overcome it. (1 Cor. x. 13.)

14. *If a person yields to temptation, who is mainly to blame?* Himself. If you ever do wrong, do not, Adam and Eve like, try to excuse yourself by mentioning wherein another or Satan enticed you. Such an excuse is too common and unworthy. Confess the wrong, be forgiven and take a fresh start. God holds us individually responsible.

15. *How should we treat one who yields to temptation?* "Restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." (Gal. vi. 1.)

The way we feel and act towards a wrong-doer may be a much worse sin or fault than his.

See how Jesus treated Peter and Thomas, and act accordingly; so may you rescue some of the best, noblest and most useful of earth.

16. *How may all temptation be effectually resisted?* Let me call your prayerful attention to many ways of resisting temptation that have proven successful.

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Jesus directs: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." (Matt. xxvi. 41.)

Paul gives a sure way to victory: As you think of those who are crowned victors, "Lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us." Consider the reward that awaits you, and take as your motto: "Looking unto Jesus." (Heb. xii. 1-4.)

When tempted to wrong, think of home and mother, wife and children, reputation and character; so that you may firmly resist, as others have done.

Peter's example teaches us that presuming on self ensures failure; but to trust in Christ means victory.

Isaiah assures us that the secret of strength, exaltation and progress is to "wait upon the Lord." (Isa. xl. 31.)

Daniel resolved to act on principle, prayed three times a day, and was strong in God—a good example.

Cultivate a high moral and religious sentiment: "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil." (Psa. xcvii. 10.)

Samson, by his sad fate, teaches us not to trifle or parley with temptation for a moment, but to keep our heads off Delilah's lap, and our hands and eyes under the control of a sanctified will.

Make no compromise with sin, but resist promptly and continually. Remember the Scotch proverb: "Better *keep* the devil out than to turn him out."

Do not *harbor* for a moment thoughts you would be ashamed of if your mind were transparent so that others could see them. Be as pure and good as you wish others to think you are.

When tempted to wrong, think, "Thou God seest me."

Shun the company of either sex that would tempt you to wrong, as you would a cholera or small-pox patient. Keep good company. I asked a young man: "How is it that, though not converted till twenty-three years old, you were kept pure?" He answered: "I made my sisters my companions, and other people's sisters that were as pure as mine."

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Avoid idleness, the parent of other sins. Keep employed.

Avoid the first departure: "Sow a thought, and you reap an act; sow an act, and you reap a habit; sow a habit, and you reap a character; sow a character, and you reap a destiny."

James also tells us how to succeed: "Submit yourselves therefore to God; resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (Jas. iv. 7.) Do not seek to resist by merely sparring, arguing, parleying, or wrestling with Satan, but rather take refuge in Christ by prayer and faith.

When a thought of sin is presented to you, do not harbor it, but turn away the mind to something good and pure. "Overcome evil with good."

When you are tempted, or you feel a disposition to wrong, sing, "Yield not to temptation," or some song of prayer or trust; or like a friend of mine, when he was tempted to anger, look up and say, "Jesus saves me now."

Like Joseph, consider all sin as against God, and when solicited, or disposed to wrong of any kind, like him turn quickly away and ask: "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. xxxix. 9.)

Paul again, as a general in this good warfare, commands: "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand." (Eph. vi. 11-18.) There is righteousness for a breastplate, hope for a helmet, truth for a girdle, peace for sandals, faith for a shield, the Bible for a sword. With this complete and invincible armor, and prayer added, we may securely stand like the brave with our face to the foe.

Daily read and treasure God's Word in your heart. The Psalmist said: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Psa. cxix. 11.) Only two or three meals a week for the spirit, and three meals a day for body seem out of proportion. You may vanquish Satan by faith in God and

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His Word, as did Jesus, Who thrice met him with the sword, "It is written," etc. Your feelings may be unsatisfactory, but the Word of God standeth sure.

John tells us of three secret powers by which temptation is resisted and Satan is overcome: (1) The Word of God abiding in you (1 John ii. 14); (2) The seed of God remaining in you (1 John iii. 8, 9); (3) The Lord Jesus Christ abiding in you (1 John iii. 24; iv. 4.) You may always know these secrets of power and victory.

The Greek legend tells us that Ulysses, in order to resist the sweet songs of siren mermaids that had allured many mariners to destruction on the rocks, filled his sailors' ears with wax, so that they could not hear, and had himself bound hand and foot; and so, though the sirens sang as the ship passed by, the sailors heard not, and he being bound, they escaped the danger,

Another legend tells about the Argonauts, who had on their ship Orpheus, the sweet singer, who daily charmed them with his enchanting music. As they passed the dangerous coast the sirens came forth with *their* sweetest songs; but the Argonauts only laughed at them and sailed on, because they had superior music of their own on board.

Thus we may, like Ulysses, keep ourselves from sin by force, restraint, or by closing our ears; or, better still, we may have Christ, our Divine Orpheus, so enshrined in the heart, *filling* us with His love and putting a new song in our mouth, that temptation will lose its power; yea, we will laugh at and despise the siren songs of temptation, because we experience the expulsive power of a new affection.

Put your mind so under the domination of the mind of Christ that you may be divinely psychologized: so shall you know what is meant by "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. x. 5.)

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17. *Why do Christians in general not live a higher, better, happier, more exemplary and victorious life?*

Many make provision in their creeds for doing wrong, and have a low ideal of what Christ by His grace can do for them, thinking that the seventh chapter of Romans represents a standard Christian experience.

This chapter does not contain Paul's experience as a Christian, but it gives the experience of an awakened penitent Jew under legal bondage, without the Gospel of Christ. The eighth chapter of Romans, not the seventh, states the ideal Christian experience, which experience Paul's life exemplified. Study and know the experience of Rom. viii. 1-17.

Many easily give way to temptation thinking it is their nature, and so to be expected. Though we may be ever so weak, and the enemy ever so strong, we may, by the grace of Christ, be more than conquerors. God can, according to His word, destroy the body of sin, that "henceforth we should not serve sin." (Rom. vi. 6.)

Rev. A. T. Pierson thus speaks of the secret of victory: "Do not reckon yourselves as sinners, but saints; and make no provision for committing sin. May God help you and me to think of ourselves as the sanctuary of God in whom the Holy Spirit dwells. Would that I could command the trump of Gabriel to declare this truth!"

Years ago, when teaching school, after a desperate and prolonged struggle with a base temptation, I saw the secret of victory in Rom. vi. 11, "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." By faith in Christ I consciously acted on His word, and was that moment delivered from the sinful proclivity. Ever since, if the temptation to sin is suggested, I hear and think again, "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." Many others have thus got the victory, and so may you.

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When temptations to any sin assail, if you feel any disposition to yield, think of Jesus Christ, and by faith "reckon" or think "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God," so shall you have the victory and be able to sing:

I rise to walk in heaven's own light,
Above the world and sin;
With heart made pure and garments white,
And Christ enthroned within.

18. *What lessons not already mentioned are taught us by Christ's temptation in the wilderness?* (Matt. iv. 1-11.)

From the first temptation we learn:

1. Satan tempts through our bodily appetites or animal natures. (Vr. 3.)

2. He takes advantage and meanly assails us at our weakest points. (Vr. 2.)

3. His temptations often seem plausible. (Vr. 3.)

4. He tempts us to doubt our sonship and our Heavenly Father's care. (Vr. 3.)

5. Where God by His spirit leads, he will certainly give grace to sustain, so that we may always trust, and obey, and get the victory. (Vr. 4.)

From the second temptation we learn:

1. Satan goes from one extreme to the other. First, he tempted to doubt, and then again to presume.

2. The Bible may be so perverted and misapplied as to *seem* to encourage wrong. (Vr. 6.)

3. Do not presume to be kept if you unnecessarily expose yourself to temptation, but ever trust the Lord to keep you wherever He may lead. (Vr. 7.)

From the third temptation we learn:

1. Satan tempts to misdirect our ambition. (Vrs. 8, 9.)

2. Satan makes large and flattering promises of things that are not his and that he is unable to fulfil.

3. The highest ambition is to worship God and serve Him only. (Vr. 10.)

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4. Persevering and steadfast resistance ensures ultimate triumph. No temptation is irresistible. (Vr. 11.)

Let me now make a few general observations upon Christ's temptation.

1. Christ being man as well as God, He was, as a man, subject to temptations as we are. (Heb. iv. 15.)

2. He met temptations and overcame them purely as a man. This largely accounts for His oft retiring to pray.

3. He can now sympathize with us in all our temptations.

4. As He, our Exemplar, by the Spirit and Word overcame temptation, so may we by His grace. "He is able to succor." (Heb. ii. 18.)

5. After *blessing* comes *temptation*, after temptation comes *victory*, after victory follows *comfort*. This order is oft repeated in life: Blessing, temptation, victory, comfort.

6. Do not fear that you, as a Christian, will be overcome. If you are not a Christian, do not hesitate to become one, because you fear that you will fall.

See your source of strength. "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. xii. 9.)

He who can give you the victory one day, can and will do so moment by moment and day by day to the end, as you trust Him.

7. By and by the last battle will be fought, the "good warfare" ended, the "last enemy" destroyed, and the victor's throne and crown obtained. Hear the promise of Christ. "Him that overcometh will I give to sit with me in my throne."

"There we shall see His face,
And never, never sin,
There from the rivers of His grace
Drink endless pleasure in."

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The Unpardonable Sin.

——: XVIII :——

Promise : 1 Cor. i. 9. Praise : 1 Cor. xiii. 12.
Precept : Isa. l. 10. Prayer : Psa. li. 11.

MANY ask, "What is the unpardonable sin, and what the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost?" I shall endeavor in this chapter to answer these anxious questions.

It is very important that we know what these sins are, for persons have, without reason, been filled with untold gloom and remorse, fearing that they had committed them. Many have become insane, and others, some of whom I know well, have been driven to despair and suicide, thinking they had committed the unpardonable sin, and yet they had no more done so than we have.

You should certainly know what the unpardonable sin is so as to ever resist the temptation to despair and avert consequent disaster, as also to be able to instruct and deliver from possible gloom, lunacy and suicide, others who may fear that they have committed the sin unpardonable.

What is the sin? Some say, "It is this, that and the other specific sin." But persons that have committed the specified sins have been converted, showing that the sins mentioned are not unpardonable.

Others say, "Nobody can tell what the sin is, as it is not explained or defined by Christ or His apostles." Such persons unintentionally misrepresent the truth, and so give infidels and wicked men an excuse to malign Christ and the Bible.

Jesus Christ had performed several miracles, thus

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attesting His divine mission and authority; but certain scribes, having reached such a state of moral perversity and death of spiritual perception, thought Him to be diabolical, and said: "He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth He out devils."

Jesus showed the absurdity of the statement, and then declared: "Whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin: because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." (Mark iii. 29, 30—Revised Version.)

Thus we learn that the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the ascribing to satanic agency works performed by the Spirit of God; and the *unpardonable sin* is such a *state of heart and mind* as renders this thought and saying possible.

We are not, as some suppose, left in ignorance as to what the unpardonable sin is, for Jesus and His apostles, over and over again, describe this sin and warn us against this state.

Thus Jesus tells us of those whose "heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and understand, and should be converted." (Matt. xiii. 15.)

This state is also described in the Bible, where we read of those that are "seared with a hot iron"; "given over to a reprobate mind" and "*past feeling.*"

We are thus taught that the unpardonable sin is not some particular *act*, but it is a *state* of mind and heart into which people may come by resisting the Spirit and sinning against light and knowledge, until their spiritual perceptions are dead, a permanency of character is reached, they are "guilty of an eternal sin," and are "*past feeling.*"

Some, in distress, say, "It was when I did this, or neglected to do that." Not at all. It is not an *act*, but a *state* of mind. This state is produced not by one sin, but by continuing to sin against light and knowledge, and so perverting the mind; just as men

become dissipated in body, not by taking one glass, but by continuing to drink from time to time.

Do you ask, "If such a one would come to the Lord would He refuse him pardon?" That is not a supposable case. Christ has never refused anyone that came to Him for mercy and pardon, and never will. He says, "I will in no wise cast out." But such a one is unpardonable because he will not come to Christ; hence all the responsibility for being unpardonable rests not with God, but with himself.

I shall speak concerning two classes of persons:

First, those who fear they have committed the unpardonable sin, and yet have no occasion to despair. There are several reasons why people get this idea.

1. Persons whose minds have become morbid, because of ill-health, shattered nerves, loss of friends or property, certain physical or mental derangements, or too severe self-examination, are often tempted to think that they have committed the unpardonable sin.

How may it be known that this state has not been reached? If a person *fears* he has committed this sin, it is an evidence he has not; for if he had, he would be "past feeling," and have no fear or anxiety about it. Again, if a person has any *desire* to be a Christian it is an infallible evidence that God, the Author of all good desires, *gave this desire*, that He is *willing* and *able* to satisfy it, that the possessor of this God-given desire *has not committed* the unpardonable sin, and that there are mercy, pardon, grace and heaven for such a one.

Those who have reached the state unpardonable have neither *fear* about it, nor *thought* nor *desire* for salvation. Many, as I have thus explained the question, have been led to dismiss their fears, and have been saved by trusting themselves to Christ. Let each doubting one say, "I will trust and not be afraid."

2. Some of the best Christian people I have ever known or read about have, *for a time*, from certain physical and mental causes, lost the feelings and con-

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scious communion with God they once had, and their way seemed without a ray of light; hence, they became troubled, despondent, or melancholy, or gave way to utter despair. The physical and mental causes subsiding, these same persons have become joyous Christians again. Let us all know for ourselves and others, that any person that has any thought or concern about being given up of God, or has any desire to be saved, however faint that desire may be, that one is either now accepted of the Lord or may be.

3. Certain young people and others, by secret sin, or brooding over some particular sin, or thinking too much about their feelings, are led to entertain the fear that there is no mercy for them. Let all such see that the *fear* that is theirs, and the *desire* to know Christ as their Saviour, are *double* evidences that they may be pardoned. "Now is the day of salvation."

4. Backsliders, when they think of returning to Christ, are frequently tempted to believe that Heb. vi. 4-8 applies to them. Let such know that this passage refers only to total apostasy, and not to backsliding. The Bible is full of promises and instances of welcome and pardon to returning backsliders. Let no one add to his great sin of backsliding, the greater sin of despairing of God's mercy; but, like David, Peter, the prodigal, and hosts of others, return to God, Who will restore unto you "the joy of His salvation."

5. Others, who see how great has been their sin of blasphemy, scepticism, impurity, self-righteousness or other sins, are sometimes led to fear that there is no hope for them. God has saved and kept those who had been the greatest drunkards, infidels, swearers, and outcasts; thus showing His ability and willingness to save all who will come to Him. (1 Tim. i. 15, 16.) He would save Colonel Ingersoll, and make a mighty evangelist out of him, if he would but come to Him. Persons may so pervert themselves that they *will not* come (Matt. xiii. 15); but God is willing and "*able to save to the uttermost*" all that come. (Heb. vii. 25.)

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Let the worst take hope and come to Christ now. Let Christians seek the most abandoned.

6. Some *think* their heart is hard, that they have no feeling, and so fear that they have sinned away their day of grace. If you feel that your heart is hard, or cold, or impenitent, or stolid, it is a sure evidence that you are not past feeling, or you would not feel that way, or even think anything about it. No one is past feeling who fears the lack of feeling. Such persons often have a superabundance of feeling. Let me illustrate this:

My eldest brother was drowned in Lake Michigan when the steamer *Columbia* was wrecked. As I received the sad news by telegram, I became stoical, and for six days after, while waiting for the body, there was not a tear in my eyes, though my brothers, parents and sisters wept again and again. I *seemed* utterly devoid of feeling. I did not understand it, and my friends thought me hard. On the day of the memorial service, as the choir was singing, "Cast thy burden on the Lord," the fountain of feeling was broken up, and the tears streamed down my cheeks. Then I understood myself, and saw that the *eyes that had not wept* were the *saddest eyes of all.* Had I lacked feeling? Nay, mine was a superabundance of feeling that made me seem stolid.

Let me say to that one who, from superabundance of feeling, seems to lack feeling, or who thinks the heart is hard, "Cast thy burden, yea, thyself, upon the Lord, and He will surely receive and comfort thee."

Let me now speak about a second class of persons. Many have no fear of being guilty of this unpardonable sin, and yet have great occasion to be alarmed, and at once turn to Christ, lest they reach that awful state. This is a more alarming side of the question.

1. That unconverted one, past twenty-five or thirty, who, if he would think, would say, "I don't feel as I used to," is on very dangerous ground, and should become aroused at once.

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2. That youth that takes little interest in sacred things, and upon whose mind the Gospel has no more effect than water upon oiled feathers, has great occasion for alarm.

3. That one that is unconverted and yet without concern, while going on engrossed in worldly business, pleasures, riches, honors and society, has cause to fear, lest the mind or spiritual perceptions become totally blinded, and so the Gospel be hid. Let such an one read Paul's startling words: "If our gospel be hid, it is hid in them that are lost." (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.)

4. Those moralists, who trust in their own righteousness, generous impulses and kind acts, who attend church, and perhaps are members, but "at ease in Zion," or who boast that they are better than many Church members, and try to make themselves believe that they are all right, while yet they have not accepted Christ as their personal Saviour, are especially in danger, and should hear and quickly obey the alarm: "Awake thou that sleepest." (Eph. v. 14.)

5. Those persons, who are living in open or secret sin, wilfully doing for gain or supposed pleasure what they know would have to be given up if they were Christians, should speedily repent, lest they become reprobate.

6. The egotist, who thinks he knows it all, is wise above what is written, and opposes his opinion to the Word of God, is on dangerous ground. "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool than of him." (Prov. xxvi. 12.)

7. Those who yield to sceptical thoughts, or jest and cavil about the Bible, Christianity and other sacred things, are trifling with their moral sense. What would you think of a man tampering with the valves of his own heart, if such a thing were possible? Do not tamper with and so destroy your moral sense, or spiritual perception; it is your life.

8. Those who are waiting again to feel as they once

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did, before they seek the Lord, are in a very dangerous position.

Let me tell you those feelings are likely gone forever, and *the longer you delay* the less moral feeling will you be likely to have. But you do not require the feelings you once had. Thank the Lord, you may come as you are, and He will undoubtedly receive you. If you cannot come to Him with a tender, contrite or broken heart, then come to Him with a hard, unfeeling and stony heart, and you will find the promises true: "I will in no wise cast out," and, "I will take away the stony heart."

9. Those who think or say, I do not feel enough to seek Christ, and are waiting for some heard-of or imaginary feeling, are in a lamentable position. The nearer persons approach this state of past feeling, the less likely are they ever to become Christians, as they become more careless, or think they should wait for more feeling. The less feeling and anxiety an unconverted person has, the greater his danger, and the more cause for him to be alarmed and hasten to seek the Lord.

When a man is freezing, his danger is not so imminent and alarming when he feels uncomfortable and hopes to get to a fire, as when a strange drowsiness and ease pass over him, and he thinks not *nor cares* for fire, but says, "I am comfortable—I feel just like going to sleep." He had better not, for if he goes to sleep he will never waken in this world—he is a dead man. So, when an unconverted person is anxious or afraid about himself, or is interested in sacred things, or has desires or thoughts of personal salvation, his danger is not so great and alarming as when a strange insensibility to danger and indifference to spiritual things settles down upon him, and he thinks little of Christ and His salvation, and perhaps can even smile and make flippant remarks about those who are anxious. He had better arouse himself at once, lest he soon reach the hopeless state of "past feeling."

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A friend said to me: "One bitter cold night, in Winnipeg, while walking home leisurely, I instinctively stopped and leaned against a wall. The thought came, Why don't you move on? I said, I don't feel like it; I am all right. Then the thought came, What does this mean? In a moment I saw my danger, and cried, '*My Lord, I am freezing!*' Arousing myself, I started to run for dear life. Urging myself on, my blood began to course freely, and with a glad heart I exclaimed, 'Thank God, I am saved!'" He was *almost lost*, but *saved*. That unsaved one who has little thought, or care, or feeling about it, if he will think, "What does this mean?" will see that sin is having its congealing effect, and that, morally speaking, he is *freezing*. Lamentable state! If such a one, like my friend, will use his intelligence, he will know his danger to be greater because he does not *feel* it, will be *alarmed* because he is not *anxious*, and will promptly arouse himself, pray to God for mercy, and surrender to Him, that he may be able to say, "Thank God, I am saved!"

I have no fear about those who have fear or anxiety about having committed the unpardonable sin; for if they had committed it they would be perfectly unconcerned about it; but I am afraid for those who have not yielded to Christ, and yet are careless and unconcerned about their own salvation.

Each day a person delays to yield to Christ and become a Christian, the likelihood of ever being converted grows less.

Some are farther on towards this awful state than they have any idea of, and should at once see their danger and arouse themselves.

Others are awakened, seek the Lord and are converted, and then tell of Christ's power to save and to keep; but are you still unmoved, and even disposed to smile and make flippant remarks about it? Why is this? *So near "past feeling!"*

Do you disregard the Sabbath, the Bible, the

preaching of the Gospel, and also mother's or wife's tears and prayers? Why? *So near "past feeling!"*

You hear of heaven with all its glories, and the loved ones there; but does it sound to you as a fairy or idle tale, and are you little attracted? Why? *So near "past feeling!"*

You hear and read about hell, of the sighs, weeping and remorse of the lost, and listen to the warnings tenderly spoken, "Be ye also ready," "Flee from the wrath to come;" but do you treat the matter with a jest, saying, "You don't scare me," or turn a deaf ear, and thus go on without a serious thought or purpose to be a Christian?" Why? *So near "past feeling!"*

The love of Christ as manifested in His incarnation, in His death upon the Cross and in His intercession before the throne, is earnestly portrayed, so that we would think a heart of adamant would be melted and subdued; but does it not affect you, unconverted one, as much as one of the novels of the period? Why is this? *So near "past feeling!"*

I fear for many that are unsaved and unconcerned.

Are you a Christian? Then see the danger of your friends, neighbors and loved ones still unsaved, and by prayer, holy living, and earnest words endeavor to arouse them while yet there is hope, before they reach the state of "past feeling," after which all prayers and endeavors will be in vain.

Are you still without hope in Christ? Then see your danger, and turn to the Lord.

Nearly everybody dreads death. Physical death is not so much to be dreaded as the *death* of *moral feeling* or *spiritual perception.*

Are you thirty, forty, or fifty years old, and not yet a Christian? You have great reason to fear that you will likely go on as you are, and Satan will get you at last, for very few are converted after they are forty years old, and not many after they are thirty. Come to Christ to-day, and abide in Him, and so avert the possibility of being lost.

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Are you a young man or woman and still unconverted? Consider that you have neglected so long to yield to the claims of Christ that you are now more likely to continue to do so, unless you see your danger of doing this, and *arouse yourself.*

Are you a boy or girl, but not yet yielded to the loving Christ? Now is your best and most likely time. Come to Him, and you will find the promise true: "They that seek me early shall find me."

Have you strong desires and deep conviction? Then seek the Lord this very day, lest by delay you harden the heart. (Hebrews iv. 7.)

Are you thoughtless, or do you seem to have little or no convictions or desires? Then be anxious, because you are not anxious; be alarmed, because you are not alarmed; feel, because you do not feel, and at once seek Christ as you are, and begin a Christian life.

To every unsaved one of every age and character I would say, "There is danger in delay." I do not mean the danger of death so much as the danger of decline of moral feeling and spiritual perception.

If I wrote down on a sheet of paper, "There is danger in delay, but I will risk it," would you sign your name to it? You answer, "No! not for the world. Palsied be my hand before I would do so." I am glad you thus speak.

Let me then earnestly ask you to sign or resolve: "I will risk it no longer, but will now seek the Lord?"

Name .....

Do you hesitate to do so? Do you say, "Not to-day; not just now," or do you refuse to consider the question, and still neglect to choose Christ and a Christian life? Then be assured that you are virtually repeating or signing the resolution, "I will risk it," though *there is danger in delay.*

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Doubt and Scepticism, Their Causes and Remedies.

——: XIX :——

Precept: Prov. i. 20-23. **Promise**: John iii. 18-21.
Praise: 2 Sam. xxii. 2. **Prayer**: Psa. xxxi. 2.

THERE are two great reefs that all Christians should steer clear of. The first is confounding doubts of themselves with doubts of God; and the second is confounding *temptations* to doubt with doubt. That you may guard against these sunken reefs, enter in your chart the following two points:

First. *Do not confound doubts* about *self, with doubts* with regard to God. Let me illustrate: In conversation with a lady in Ingersoll, she said, "It seems to me I have less faith than I have had for some time." I answered, "If you were to say I have less faith in you, Mr. Crossley, than I have had, I would naturally ask, 'What have I been doing to lessen your faith?' N[illegible] fill up your sentence, and see how it sounds: 'I [illegible]ess faith in God than I have had for som[illegible] What has the Lord been doing to lessen y[illegible]aith?" Her eyes filled with tears, as she replied, "God has been blessing me; I have not less faith in Him, but I have been doubting myself."

Do you say, "I have so little faith," or "I am troubled with doubts"? Finish the sentence: "I have so little faith in God," or "I am so troubled with doubts about Christ," and you will start back at the thought, and see it is not Christ, but self you are doubting.

Second. *Do not confound temptations to doubt with doubt.* Everybody is tempted to doubt. Resist

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such temptations by doubting your doubts, and believing your beliefs, and by resting in the *sure Word of God.*

The more a tree is swayed by the wind, the deeper the roots strike down. So let your faith in God and His promises become stronger and deeper as the winds of temptation to doubt assail.

You may be tempted to doubt even the existence of God, the truth of the Bible and Christianity, and everything else divine; but do not therefore think that you doubt, or that you sin in being thus tempted; but have enough sense and grace to resist the temptation.

Let me speak about a few of the reasons why persons doubt themselves, or are tempted to doubt:

1. Some doubt because they have not certain heard-of or expected emotions or feelings. Jesus did not promise great rapture, ecstasy or emotion, but pardon and peace, which are better.

Grace in the heart of some Christians is represented by Jesus as a small grain of mustard seed, that afterwards grows to a tree that lodges birds in the branches. Do not doubt your conversion because at the start you have not the whole tree and the birds singing in the branches; but thank God for the grace you have. "Grow in grace," and you will soon know what is meant by "music in the soul."

2. Sometimes peace, one of the evidences of pardon, is so misunderstood as to cause doubt. Even evangelist Finney, after his conversion, was much perplexed for a time, because he could not feel anxious and pray earnestly. Seeing his mistake, he began to *praise* the Lord for the grace bestowed. How can you feel guilt, anxiety and strong desire when Christ has granted you His pardon and peace? Begin to praise Him.

3. Some doubt because of the ease and suddenness with which they were saved. Dr. W. said to me, "I have been a swearer and drinker, but feeling con-

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demned for my sins, after the meeting last night while walking home, I said, 'Lord, forgive me, and I will serve thee.' In a moment my mind was at peace, and all day to-day I haven't sworn or taken a glass of liquor, or wanted to do so. Some have told me I am converted; but it seems *too easy*, after having been such a sinner." I replied, "Too easy for whom? Not for Christ, for it cost Him His precious life that He might save you; but for you *it is easy:* Confess your sins, receive pardon, and be at peace." He replied, "That makes it clear." A few moments later he stood up and confessed Christ as his Saviour.

4. Some are tempted to doubt because they did not at conversion have the transition others speak of, or that they had imagined, or because they cannot point to the time and place, when and where they were converted. The only essential question is, "Do you trust yourself to Christ, and love Him now?" If so, dismiss your doubts and fears about yourself, and be assured that you are His.

5. Others doubt that they are Christians, because they do not continue to feel as they did when converted. As well might a person doubt that an estate of which he is the legal heir is his own, because he does not continue to feel the same elation or emotion as when he was first apprised that he had fallen heir to it. As you continue to accept the Saviour rest assured that you are a "joint-heir with Jesus Christ."

6. Many seem disposed to doubt, and imagine faith to be difficult, if not impossible, because they think of their faith and *try* to trust. Let me illustrate this. Mr. Monod said: "In a meeting I heard two Christian workers ask an inquirer the very same question, but with different emphasis and different results. One said: 'Cannot you *trust* Jesus?' 'No, I *cannot trust*,' was the answer. The other asked: 'Cannot you trust *Jesus?*' He at once answered: 'Why, yes, I can trust *Jesus*.'" Think of Christ and stay your mind upon Him, and not upon your feelings, or your

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faith; so shall doubt be gone and trust become easy and natural.

7. I often meet Christians who doubt their adoption, because they think it would be too much to claim, or presumption to say that they were Christians. I usually ask such persons, "Do you belong to Satan?" They at once say, "No." "Then, if not to Satan, to whom?" "Why, I must belong to Christ." How is it with you? Do not, like some, think it to be humility or a necessity to doubt your own salvation, but know that you now yield to Christ, and that as you do not belong to Satan it is not presumption to say, "I am the Lord's and He is mine."

8. The inconsistencies of professing Christians, and the wickedness of the wicked, are often great sources of temptation to doubt. Do you not know that the counterfeit is an evidence of the genuine coin? There may be a Judas found now and then, but that is no reason for doubting the true disciples. Think of the good. We have solid ground to rest our faith upon, even the solid rock of God's immutable character and promises. Look not to others, but take as your motto, "Looking unto Jesus."

9. Some doubt themselves because they so often fail, have such a sense of unworthiness, and think their love is so cold. Think not so much of self, but of God, and say with John, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us." (1 John iv. 16.)

10. Inactivity, or doing no Christian work, is a great cause of doubt. As stagnant ponds develop miasma, so doubts spring up from inactive lives. No wonder that you are troubled with temptations to doubt, if you are doing nothing. God designs that we should be "laborers together with Him." Many a chronic, unhappy doubter has been lifted into strong faith and joy by becoming a Christian worker. Be a Christian; then hear and cheerfully obey His commission, "Go work to-day in My vineyard." Do this on Sabbath

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and week-days, during vacation as well as other times, and you will find no time or disposition to doubt.

11. Others doubt themselves because, thinking of themselves, they make their feelings the ground of trust, instead of the *sure Word of God.* Suppose that two girls, having disobeyed their mother, come to her, and each says, "Mother, forgive me, and I will try not to do so again." The mother kindly speaks, "I forgive you." The two go away feeling better. But imagine, next day, while one is happy, she sees her sister crying, and asks, "What is the matter?" The other replies, "I *don't feel* as if mother had forgiven me." Were they not both forgiven? Why, then, is one happy and the other sad? One remembered what her mother had said, and believed it, hence she was joyous, and also *felt* that she was forgiven. But the other, overlooking mother's words, thought only of her feelings, doubted she was forgiven, and so was sad and at unrest. Are you like the first or second girl? This illustration has caused so many, who have turned from sin to Christ, to look away from their feelings, believe His testimony, and be at peace, through believing. As mother's words should have been enough for them, so God's words should satisfy us. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." (1 John v. 9.)

12. Peter, "when he saw the wind boisterous, was afraid," and doubted. The disciples in "the ship covered with the waves," cried, "Lord save us, we perish." (Matt. xiv. 30, 31; viii. 25, 26.) Many, like them, get their mind's eye diverted from Christ to themselves, to their environment, to the winds and waves, so to speak. To each of such persons Jesus says, as He did to Peter, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

13. Physical weakness and sickness cause many to doubt. Remember that the state of the body affects the mind and spirit, but it does not change Christ

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and His promises. Stay your mind on Him and ever trust Him.

14. Half-heartedness, worldliness, neglect of the Bible, and a lack of a deep conscious Christian experience is a great source of temptation to doubt. Have the causes removed and the effect will cease.

15. John the Baptist, when in prison for Christ, was tempted to doubt if Jesus were really the Messiah; and so sent to enquire, "Art thou He that should come?" So, others in adversity and perplexing circumstances are often tempted to ask questions that indicate doubt. Christ did not denounce John, but sent him a loving and assuring message. (Luke vii. 19-23.)

Do not spend time pondering over doubts or temptations to doubt, but, like John the Baptist, take them to Christ and hearken to His gracious promises.

Under His wings of promise and providence ever trust, though sometimes it seems dark, and circumstances are perplexing. God can, if you are faithful, bring good out of seeming evil. Bunyan wrote "Pilgrim's Progress" during his twelve years in Bedford jail, Rutherford wrote his immortal letters in a dungeon in Aberdeen Castle, and Madame Guyon penned her sweetest poems while ten years a prisoner in the Bastile.

Bunyan, in "Pilgrim's Progress," tells us of Doubting Castle, where heavenward pilgrims were imprisoned for a time. I warn you to keep far from that old dismal castle and Giant Despair. The Christian has solid ground upon which to rest his faith. "Their rock is not as our rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." (Deut. xxxii. 31.) It has stood the test of the ages, and *evermore will stand.*

The great and sure antidotes for doubt are, first, take God's infallible Word as the ground of your unfaltering faith; and, second, know Christ dwelling in your heart as the all-sufficient Saviour and hope of glory; and third, be a Christian worker.

I shall now speak of sceptical thoughts and doubts

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There are honest doubters as well as dishonest doubters. The Bereans were honest doubters, "in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed." (Acts xvii. 11, 12.)

An honest doubter, like the Bereans, desires and wills to know and believe the truth, and studies and asks "whether these things *are so.*"

A dishonest doubter desires and *wills* to disbelieve, and receives the word with all *prejudice*, while, if he thinks and searches, it is to try to show that these things are *not so.*

Every honest doubter will surely come to saving faith, as did the Bereans, while dishonest doubters, as long as they remain such, will continue in unbelief; hence man is responsible for his faith or unbelief.

Sceptical thoughts may be suggested to the purest minds and best Christians, but they cannot find permanent root in an honest heart.

When honest doubters become converted, they usually make the strongest and best Christians, as did Nicodemus, Philip, Thomas, Paul, and others.

I shall now refer to some of the causes for sceptical thought and doubt, that honest doubters may become Christians, and all classes of persons may steer clear of the rocks.

1. Sceptical thoughts are often engendered by associating with those who call themselves sceptics, or agnostics, and also by listening to sceptical talk or lectures. We should avoid evil companions and turn away our ears from hearing the wrong. We should also be careful not to influence others to imbibe any sceptical thoughts. Goethe said, "Pray keep your doubts to yourself. I have plenty of my own."

2. People often become doubters or agnostics by reading sceptical literature before their minds are sufficiently informed to see and refute the falsehood, blasphemy or sophistry of the statements and reason-

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ings. Again and again have I, by exposing the fallacies and *seeming difficulties* expressed by sceptical writers, caused persons to give up their foolish doubts and embrace the Christian faith. Reading the effusions of those who talk about spiritualism, Christian Science, and other fads and delusions, has led some astray and muddled others.

Do not trifle with your faith by reading sceptical works, however scholarly the writers, or by harboring infidel thoughts, any more than you would trifle with your purity by reading impure writings, or by indulging in impure imaginations.

3. Some doubt, because they ignorantly think Christianity and faith are against reason. They are not contrary to reason, but above reason, yet no more so than the question why water satisfies thirst. God does not stifle reason and enquiry about religion, but says, "Come now, and let us reason together," and again He says, "Prove all things."

4. Others absurdly confound Christianity with what its professors have done and taught, though contrary to the teaching of the Bible and the spirit of Christ. Colonel Ingersoll and other infidels illogically confound the persecutions in the name of religion with Christianity, though Christianity is the light that exposes this and all other forms of wrongdoing in the Church and the world.

Think of those in whom you have confidence. If you admit that your mother, father, wife, minister, or any other person, is not a hypocrite, or deceived or inconsistent, but a real Christian, then you admit the reality of Christianity, and you are not a sceptic, but should, if consistent with your faith, be a Christian.

5. Some think it clever to say, "I don't believe." and jest about sacred things; and thus they go from *jest* to *earnest*. Most so-called scepticism is very cheap, and might appropriately be called "big head."

The brightest intellects of earth are Christian. Gladstone said: "During the forty-six years I have

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been in the British Cabinet, I have been associated with sixty of the greatest minds in Great Britain, and all but five of the sixty were professors of religion."

6. Many are sceptically inclined from lack of honest investigation. An avowed sceptic, in conversation with a bishop, said, "I am an infidel." The bishop asked, "Have you ever read the Bible to seek to know if you are right or wrong?" "No; I am an infidel." "Have you ever read any book on Christian evidences, or investigated the question?" "No; I am an infidel." "Have you ever, by thought and prayer, honestly sought to test the question?" "No; I am an infidel." "Why, my friend," said the bishop, "you are not an infidel." "Yes, I am," emphatically replied the man. "Oh, no, you are certainly not an infidel, you are an *ass*." I regret that there are so many, as evidenced by their *braying*, to whom the bishop's words might truthfully be addressed. Do not belong to that species.

Investigation by an honest doubter or sceptic will assuredly result in saving faith. Lord Lyttleton and Gilbert West were infidels and hated Christianity. Lyttleton chose Paul's conversion, and West, Christ's resurrection, to criticise and disprove. To their surprise, both were convinced of their mistake, were converted, and wrote two strong defences of Christianity.

7. Persons, I believe, are often made sceptical by others talking about them as infidels, merely because they had expressed some thought different from what seemed orthodox. We should be slow to think a person a sceptic, and slower still to speak of anyone as such. We should rather say to one who thinks himself sceptical, "You are too sensible a person to be a sceptic."

8. A potent cause of scepticism is a sinful life. When persons refuse to adapt their lives to their belief, they often try to lower their belief to their lives. Let such put away from them all secret and open sin, and continue to follow their faith in what they do believe to be right towards God and man, and

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they will soon become Christians. Faith is natural, while doubt has to be learned. People learn to doubt by having been deceived or being themselves deceivers. God never deceived us. His promises are sure.

9. Very many blunder in thinking they are sceptical because they are tempted to doubt. A man in Brantford said, "I am an infidel." I replied, "Let me ask you, Are you a real sceptic or doubter, or are you merely tempted to doubt?" He answered, "I had not thought of that distinction before, but now I see it is more a *temptation to doubt* than doubt."

Have enough sense not to think you are sceptical, though you are tempted to doubt.

A school teacher said to me, "I doubt the truth and reality of Christianity." I answered, "Do you ever doubt the truth and reality of your doubts, and think Christianity may be true?" "Yes, often." "Which is the stronger?" "The latter." "Then which will you act upon? Test and know for yourself." Three days after this conversation the teacher arose in meeting and said, "Jesus saves even me."

10. Great sources of doubt and scepticism are false creeds, religious cant, harsh and unreasonable theology, and wrong views of God. Nearly all the attacks of scepticism are against misrepresentations and misconceptions of God, the Bible and Christianity. See the chapter in this book on wrong views of God.

11. Many are confirmed in their doubts and scepticism by the scathing, branding and denouncing they receive from persons who call themselves Christians. We should have sympathy with all honest doubters; yes, and also with dishonest doubters, and should treat them respectfully if we wish to do them good.

We should not despise or denounce them, but treat all such as Jesus did. He says to us, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." We should learn to be "meek and lowly," if we would most effectively teach others. See how lovingly, tenderly and kindly Jesus treated the sceptically inclined Nicodemus and

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doubting Thomas. He did not use denunciation, sarcasm, tirade or jest, but *admitted* the mystery, spoke of love, the possibility of faith, and invited to examine the evidences. Hear Him as He speaks to sceptical Nicodemus about the mystery of the blowing of the wind, and then adds, "So is every one that is born of the spirit." (John iii. 8.) Listen to His loving words inviting doubting Thomas to prove that He is the risen Saviour, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and be not faithless but believing." (John xx. 27.) The result of such treatment was that both believed and were converted. Similar treatment by us will often lead sceptics to saving faith in Christ.

We should never forget that many of those who became the most devoted and active Christians were at one time the greatest doubters and most pronounced sceptics.

12. Some in their very nature are, more than others, disposed to doubt. This tendency should not be yielded to but resisted. Doubts are like weeds—they need no cultivation. When we read of the doubts of the first disciples, and see how incredulous they were, and yet that they were constrained by the power of evidence and by the Spirit of God to such faith in Jesus that they died as martyrs in defence of their faith, our temptations to doubts should be dispelled and our faith confirmed.

We have not to beg the question, for even the external evidences that Christ is the Saviour are unanswerable. A subordinate officer of Napoleon said to him while in exile, "Christ was only a man." Napoleon replied, "While generals have been in life and power, men have been willing to die for them; but after they were dead or had lost their power as I have, who could be found to die for them? How different with Christ. Men followed Him while living on earth, but since His death tens of thousands have died for Him. How is this? Other generals are *men*, but Christ is *God*."

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13. The chief source of doubt is an unwillingness to believe. Jesus said, "He that believeth not," that is, will not believe, "shall be condemned." (Mark xvi. 16.) God does not condemn people for not believing, but for not being willing to believe. If a person honestly wills to believe, no matter how sceptical, doubtful or perplexed he may be, Christ takes the responsibility of bringing him to the knowledge of the truth and saving faith. Hear His own Word, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself." Willingness to believe is an *absolute clue* to faith and salvation to "any man."

14. Two great mistakes which tend to doubt and scepticism that all should avoid are, first, asking explanations of spiritual phenomena; and, second, attempting to explain these divine mysteries.

When Nicodemus asked, "How can these things be?" Jesus did not attempt to explain, but said, "The wind bloweth . . . but thou canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit." (John iii. 8.) Thus He taught him that as we cannot explain the mysteries in the material world, no more can we those in the spiritual world. No good, but usually evil, results from arguing with persons. There is not a single thing, in either the material or spiritual world, that any person can understand and explain. Light, electricity, gravitation, wind and life, the incarnation of Jesus, the atonement, regeneration, and life beyond, yea, everything in the universe is wrapped in mystery, and is incapable of being understood and explained. We cannot explain how and why, but we can prove by experience and know that the wind blows and water satisfies thirst; so also we know and may prove that the Holy Spirit strives, and Jesus saves. Agnosticism is illogical and contrary to experience.

15. Let me warn against three great blunders that

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those who are sceptically inclined are apt to make, which foster doubt and scepticism.

First, *thinking* that they are sceptics. I doubt if there are many, if *any*, real sceptics in the world. There are many like the father who thought himself a sceptic, and even taught his sceptical ideas to his children. His daughter, now a young woman, took sick, and as she drew near to death, she said to her sorrowing father: "Mother is a Christian, and has often told me that Christ is the Saviour; but you have said she was mistaken. Now, as my dying request, I ask you, 'Shall I die in *your faith*, or shall I seek to die in the *faith of mother?*'" With tears and great emotion, he said, "Seek to die in the faith of your Christian mother."

Would not you, would not even Colonel Ingersoll, answer a similar question of a dying daughter, or loved friend, as did that father? You know that *you* would. Then do not be so foolish as to think or say that you are sceptical or an agnostic, and do not be so wicked or suicidal as to try to become a sceptic. Scepticism is an absurdity, and almost an impossibility. So-called sceptics rarely settle down and die calmly, believing their doubts. Did you ever hear of a Christian recanting on a death-bed? It takes a million times more faith to be a sceptic than to be a Christian.

A second blunder tending to scepticism is cavilling, jesting and carping about the Bible and other sacred things, and critically asking sceptical questions.

As no person can explain *how* and *why* electricity propels the trolley, or the voice is transmitted by telephone, or water runs down hill, or the *how* and *why* of even one phenomenon in the material world, how utterly foolish and vain for sceptics, or any person else, to ask as to the *how* and *why* of facts in the spiritual world. He is equally simple who attempts to explain divine mysteries.

Lay all insolvable questions aside. Dr. Talmage,

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when a young man, was sceptical. One day, asking an old minister, "*Why* this, and *how* that," the aged man said, "Talmage, you must let God Almighty know some things you don't know." He wisely acted on the advice, got out of his sceptical questions, became a Christian, and soon after a minister. Have as much sense as he had. You will have eternity, with more intelligence and better environment, to solve the questions that now are insolvable.

The third blunder that those, who think themselves sceptical, make, is to refuse or neglect to honestly test by experience. As in the material world, so in the spiritual, the phenomena cannot be understood and explained, but they can be proven by experience to be facts. Beloved, honestly resolve, if Christ is the Saviour, and Christianity is a divine reality, that you are going to know it: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John viii. 32.)

The true Church of Christ may appropriately be called, "The Divine Secret Society." The Bible is the constitution. In it we read, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." (Psa. xxv. 14.) "His secret is with the righteous." (Prov. iii. 32.)

All real Christians are members of "The Divine Secret Society." To us the secrets of pardon, peace, hope and communion are made known.

The words of Jesus affirm, "It is given unto you to know the *mysteries* of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." (Matt. xiii. 11.) We, through grace, know by experience that which is a secret or mystery to the unconverted. To us Paul speaks in Col. i. 27: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this *mystery;* which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach."

We now and then find unconverted persons, who, by laughing at, and speaking against, the spiritual mysteries in "The Divine Secret Society," only show their own blindness, ignorance and folly, and make

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themselves objects of pity. Paul teaches us this when he says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he *know* them, because they are *spiritually discerned.*"

In this "divine society" there are different degrees, such as, Pardon and Peace (Rom. v. 11), Purity and Power (Acts xv. 8, 9), "Fulness of God" (Eph. iii. 19), and "Perfect Peace" (Isa. xxvi. 3). Some receive these several degrees at the time of their conversion or initiation, as did Cornelius and his company. (Acts xi. 2, 15-18.) But usually some of these degrees are received subsequent to conversion. Persons receive according as their minds apprehend their privilege, and according to their faith.

I, by grace, became a member of "The Divine Secret Society" twenty-five years ago, when but a youth, and have since received degree after degree, and still am going on. I also rejoice that I have been privileged to take a part in the initiation of tens of thousands of others, of all ages and characters.

The Lord Jesus Christ has provided salvation for everyone, and willeth that all should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. His loving message is, "Whosoever will." (Rev. xxii. 17.) Christ will never black-ball any person who is willing to know and obey, no matter what the previous life, character and thoughts have been.

When one asked, "Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" Jesus answered him, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." (John xiv. 22, 23.) Thus, to every honest enquirer after truth, however perplexed he may be, Jesus gives the same assurance, that willing obedience will certainly result in the conscious manifestation and abiding presence of the Lord.

Jesus teaches us that there is only one condition

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necessary to ensure admission into the fellowship of Christ, and an experimental knowledge of spiritual things that are mysterious and secret to the unconverted. That one condition is an honest mind that wills to know the truth; for Jesus declares, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself." (John vii. 17.) No sceptic, or any person else, from experience, can contradict the truth of those words of Christ, while untold millions on earth and in heaven attest to their infallibility.

Let me give you one instance that is of special importance to me, and that has led to the conversion of many. We were holding meetings in a western town, and had preached on Sabbath evening about "Mysteries." At the close of the service, a leading physician of the town asked to speak to me.

As we sat together, he said, "I have been sceptical for years, particularly about Christ's divinity, but as you in your sermon showed from Scripture and experience that the question can be personally proven, I cannot, as an honest doubter, refuse to test, and yet hope to be free from responsibility. Now, I want you to tell me how I am to go about to prove it."

The Lord gave me an illustration that I had never thought of before. I said: "Doctor, suppose that tomorrow morning your wife enters the parlor in which is a flower with its petals toward the centre of the room, while the heavy blinds are down, and shutters closed. She merely lifts the blinds and throws open the shutters. As you enter the parlor in the afternoon, you notice that the flower is partially turned to the window, and the day following you see that the flower is completely turned towards the light. Who turned it? Nobody. What turned it? The light. How could the light turn it? That is a mystery. Had you sought to turn it without moving the box, you would have broken the stem, but the light, by its magic power, has drawn the flower, and

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not even a twist is noticed in the stem. Doctor, your mind is away from Christ, and you disbelieve in Him and the Christian religion because the blinds of prejudice are down, and the shutters of opposition are closed. You are now resolved to honestly test the question. Let me say, do not *try* to believe, or *try* to doubt; but simply put up the blinds of prejudice, and throw open the shutters of opposition, and think, if there is anything in the Christian religion, if Christ is indeed God the Saviour of the world, I will to know it. Leave your mind and will in this attitude toward Christ, who has said, 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me.' (John xii. 32.) If He is not the Christ, then your mind will be no more affected than would the flower if there were no light outside the window; but if He, as revealed, is the Light, the Saviour of the world, then as surely as the flower is drawn towards the light, so surely will your *unprejudiced* mind and *honest* heart be naturally drawn to believe that He is the Christ, and you will soon find that you fully trust yourself to Him, and may call yourself a Christian."

He replied, "That is fair; I will honestly act on your advice, whatever the result may be."

I answered, "I can now tell you the result. You will soon know Christ as your personal Saviour; for Christ assures us, 'If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine,' and there are no exceptions to this rule."

That same week, as he was giving me a drive, he said: "Last Sabbath evening, after conversing with you, on returning home I tried to pray, but it seemed like speaking to nothing. However, I said, 'I will honestly test the question, for if I am wrong, I will to know it.' I thought a good deal about the question through the night. Next morning I drove out twelve miles to see some of my patients. On the way out I conversed with my brother-in-law, who

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also was in the same boat with myself, being sceptical. I told him what you had said to me about the flower, and my resolve to test the matter, and he said, 'That is reasonable; I also will test the question.'" (I might just say that the next Sabbath evening his brother-in-law accepted Christ.)

He proceeded: "On the way back I was alone. I continued to think, 'If Jesus is the Christ, I will to know it.' As I thus thought, light began to dawn upon my mind, and I became convinced that I had been wrong, that Christ was indeed the Saviour. So conscious was I that I needed Him to be my Saviour, I audibly said, 'Lord, I believe Thou art the Saviour of sinners, and I trust myself to Thee for pardon and acceptance.' That moment my mind was at peace, and my heart went out in love towards God and man. I knew my sins were forgiven, and ever since my mind has been as tranquil as a summer stream."

Many have since, through this illustration, decided to thus honestly test the question, and all with similar results.

Beloved, are you a Christian, knowing by experience that Christ is the Saviour? Then, by grace, so speak and act that your life may be a testimony to the truth of Christianity.

Are you not yet a Christian, but you believe that Christ is the Saviour, and you hope to receive him as your Saviour some time before you die? Wisely act upon your faith to-day. "Behold, now is the day of salvation."

Are you sceptically inclined or troubled with doubts? I sympathize with you. Now resolve to be honest, and test the question without delay, and you shall undoubtedly know the truth.

Every one, however sceptical, who will honestly test, as did the doctor, by throwing up the blinds of prejudice and opening the shutters of opposition, will soon believe that Christ is the world's Redeemer, and be able consciously to say, "He is my Saviour too."

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The Parlor Dance.

——: XX :——

Precept: Isa. xlvii. 7. Proverb: Prov. xxviii. 13.
Promise: Psa. xcvii. 11. Prayer: Col. i. 9, 10.

IN speaking about the parlor dance, I will, at the start, confess that I danced for years; hence I claim that I know what I am talking about. I began when I was so small that the ladies, in swinging, used to lift me off my feet. They enjoyed it, and I thought it was fun. I gave up dancing years later, at the same time that I gave up those sickish kissing plays.

Let me say that I shall not speak a word about *public* hops, charity balls, and assemblies, as no person should hesitate for a moment to score these out; but I shall refer only to the parlor dance, that many fine people, and even certain church members, in this late day, still defend, or say they see no objection to.

I need hardly say that I shall indulge in no extravagant utterances, neither shall I say a word that would cause the most modest and refined to blush. As a gentleman, I speak to ladies and gentlemen.

I believe that most people, who read this chapter, will admit that I treat the question logically, kindly and fairly; and so, in their better judgment, will agree with me, whether they intend to dance or not.

The Scripture text that expresses my desire and prayer is, "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things." (2 Tim. ii. 7.)

There are several *excuses*—I will not say reasons—assigned for the parlor dance.

First excuse: "People must have amusement and recreation." Certainly, but look at the dancers next

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morning, and you will conclude dancing is not *recreation*, but *dissipation*. Dancing is a physical, mental, moral and spiritual dissipation. There are many unobjectionable amusements that give true recreation.

Second excuse: "People might better dance than do worse. They might better dance than slander others, or have kissing plays." Yes, but if you stop dancing, you do not have to do worse. Can you not keep from slandering your neighbor in some other way? Kissing plays among adults are things of the past, or are only found among the most illiterate and uncultured. Let us also taboo the dance.

Third excuse: "Dancing is an accomplishment." Indeed! Webster says, "An accomplishment is an elegance of mind or manners." Does dancing develop mind? Nay, it prevents many from seeing how little mind they have, and the necessity of acquiring true accomplishments. Stop your ears so that you cannot hear the music, and people dancing look like lunatics. By the way, lunatics in asylums, and out of them too, are especially fond of dancing. Cicero declared, "No man in his senses will dance." Dancing is a sort of subterfuge for those who lack mind.

Fourth excuse: "If I don't dance, I cannot pass in society." What society? There is society, and there is *society*. The best society does not dance. Instead of demeaning yourself by running after a certain worldly "upper ten" society, that is at the top for a similar reason that froth is, show yourself to be of such intellectual, social and moral worth, that even the so-called "upper ten" will *rise* in their ideal of life, and *aspire* to pass in your society.

The best society consists of the earnest, active Christian men and women in our several churches.

I know a mother who said, "If I do not have my daughters dance and go out in society that dances, they will not get married." Let me say, she had seven daughters, and at my last information she had five of them on her hands yet. When a man wants a wife,

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though a dancer himself, he does not prefer the partners with whom he has danced; but he is apt to have sense enough to seek to get a partner for life at the church prayer-meeting, or young people's society.

Fifth excuse: "All my associates, and the people I visit, dance." Then let me assure you that you have a grand opportunity, instead of being led by others, to show your independence of mind and strength of character; and, by so doing you will rise even in their esteem, and certainly will have the favor of God.

Sixth excuse: "When I hear music my feet begin to move." That is all right, so do mine. Let your feet move, keeping time, that is natural; but that has nothing to do with encircling a lady's waist with your arm, or having a gentleman's arm encircling your waist.

Seventh excuse: "I dance, and my conscience does not condemn me." So much the worse for you, when the spirit of Christ and His Word show that you are wrong. Your perverted conscience is not your guide. Paul says, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (Rom. viii. 9.)

Eighth excuse: "If we do not dance or play cards, what shall we do when spending an evening?" That is a serious question with some persons, for they do not appear to know enough to do much else. I would answer them seriously and most respectfully—get more brains. A vacant mind leads to the ruin of many. Those who have the fewest brains are most enamored with the "light fantastic."

Let me say, that in social gatherings, one of the important things is to disperse not later than ten or eleven o'clock. Not to do so is unreasonable, absurd and dissipating. Let the host or hostess invite the guests from eight to ten or eleven, as desired; and, in any case, you, as a guest, should have sense enough to start for home not later than eleven o'clock.

What with instrumental and vocal music, animated conversation, games of skill, if desired, and suitable

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readings, if convenient, the evening may be intelligently and profitably spent, if people have even ordinary accomplishments. I have often seen this done.

Ninth excuse: "Our church and clergymen are not opposed to dancing." You are certainly mistaken. Your church is not a congregation, but a great body or association. The particular congregation where you attend church, and your misinformed, worldly or patronizing clergyman may disgrace your Church and its ministry by sanctioning the dance; but let me ask you to follow the teaching and example of the many great and good, who are worthy representatives of your Church, who are most pronounced against the dance.

Tenth excuse: Some say, "The modern dance has the sanction of Scripture." Let us see. We will first read of the religious dances of the Bible:

1. Exodus xv. 20, 21: "And *Miriam*, the prophetess, and all the *women*, went out with timbrels and dances."

2. Judges xi. 34: "And Jephthah came to Mizpeh, and his *daughter* came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances."

3. 1 Samuel xviii. 6: "The *women* came out singing and dancing, to meet King Saul."

4. 2 Samuel vi. 14: "And *David* danced before the Lord." "Modern dancers dance before the devil."

5. Psalms cxlix. 3: "Praise his name in the dance."

Do you notice that this religious dancing is altogether unlike our modern dances? It was (1) outdoors; (2) in the daytime; (3) spontaneous; not prescribed; (4) skipping or tripping, as children, expressive of religious joy; (5) women and men separate, and not men and women in each others' arms, as in the modern dance. (6) The religious dance of the Bible was a natural expression of religious joy and praise to God, to celebrate the victories of the Lord and of Israel—the modern dance is but a means of personal carnal amusement and worldly pleasure. (7) The religious dance of the Bible is no more like our modern

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dance, than the sacrament in church is like a drunken carousal in a bar-room.

Let us now refer to the Bible accounts of dancing by the irreligious:

1. Idolatrous Israel: Exodus xxxii. 19: "And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing." These were church members that either never had been godly, or had backslidden.

2. Degenerate Amalekites: 1 Samuel xxx. 16: "Behold, they were spread abroad upon all the earth, eating and drinking and dancing." These were adults that were wicked and reprobate, and who were opposed to the Church, and enemies of God.

3. Short-lived worldlings: Job xxi. 11-14: "They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. . . . They spend their days in wealth. . . . Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways." These were careless young people, of worldly parents, who turned away from God, desiring neither to know Him nor His ways.

4. Herodias, the lewd daughter of an adulterous mother: Matthew xiv. 6-11: "The daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod," etc. This is a sample of the ballet dance by low girls, to please base and depraved men.

It is evident that the characters referred to in these four passages strikingly represent the several classes of persons who dance in our day. This consideration should certainly turn every Christian moralist and respectable person from even the thought of dancing.

But I think I hear one ask, "Does not the Bible speak about 'A time to dance'?" This phrase simply means a time when people dance; but gives no sanction to dancing, any more than to hate or to kill, for Solomon adds, "A time to kill, a time to hate." (Eccl. iii. 3-8.) Moreover, the dancing here referred to is not a set promiscuous dance, but it is

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simply a spontaneous skipping, frisking and leaping, such as joyous children and young people innocently indulge in. Those who quote this passage to try to uphold modern dancing, are related to the hotel-keeper who took Mr. Hunter to task for denouncing the liquor traffic, and sought to vindicate his ruinous business by loudly and confidently asking, "*Does not the Bible say that we are to try the spirits?*"

Does one seriously suggest, "When the prodigal returned there was music and dancing?" (Luke xv. 25.) The prodigal's return and reception illustrate the conversion of a sinner. Can any person, not insane, imagine such folly and wickedness, as for parents to get up a modern parlor dance to celebrate the conversion to Christ of their wayward son, for whom they had long prayed? The idea is preposterous.

Eleventh excuse: If the Church opposes dancing, the young people and others will be kept from becoming members. Not so. If they are converted, this restriction will be no barrier; and if they are not Christians, honorable persons would not be hypocrites and come in though the fence were thrown down.

Moreover, it is evident that the churches that are most opposed to the dance are the most aggressive, and have the largest numbers of youth and adults join their membership. Let us, as Churches, ministers and Christians, be true to Christ, and success will be ours. God honors those who honor Him.

We thus see that all the excuses assigned for dancing are paltry, frivolous, illogical and unchristian.

I shall now discuss five questions, and leave the responsibility with you of deciding and adopting the wisest and best course. "Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."

First question: What effect will it have upon your influence if you dance? This is an important question to saint and sinner, as each is equally responsible for his or her influence.

Are you a professing Christian? Then, if you

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dance, your influence for evil will be twofold. First, your religious profession will seem *ridiculous* to many. If you danced with a person this week, and next week spoke to that one about becoming a Christian, you would be laughed at, and ironically asked, "*When did you get good?*" Dancing professors, however, do not speak to others about becoming Christians. Will you dance, and so seal your lips? This one reason should be sufficient to induce every sincere Christian to say, "I will never dance."

Second, your practice will give an excuse to others to dance. They will try to silence their consciences by saying, "If it is no harm for So-and-so to dance, it is no harm for me." And the higher you stand in society or the Church, the greater and more widespread for evil will be your influence. No dancer can *truthfully* say, "The dance never injured me," because it at least injured his or her influence for good. Will you, by your example or teaching, encourage others to do that about which they have conscientious scruples? If so, Paul declares, "You become a stumbling-block," "Ye sin against the brethren," "Ye sin against Christ." (1 Cor. viii. 9-12.)

Even though you could, with good conscience, dance, yet knowing the thought and conscience of so many others about it, you should say concerning the dance as Paul did about meat offered to idols: "If to dance make my brother to offend, or stumble, I will not dance while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to stumble." (1 Cor. viii. 13.)

Are you not a Church member, and still unconverted? Let me say, you have no license to dance that a Christian has not. You are personally responsible for your influence for evil or good. If you dance, will you not, by your social influence, hinder others from yielding to Christ, and also induce some weak or half-hearted Christians to dance, and thus violate their consciences, stumble and backslide, as many others have done?

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The sin of causing one weak believer to stumble is so great that Christ teaches that you might better be "drowned in the depths of the sea," with a millstone about your neck, than be guilty of such a crime. (Mark ix. 42.) In view of your influence, you may well vow not to dance, and pray, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God." (Psa. li. 14.)

Second question: Will a true-hearted Christian want to dance? The best and most spiritually-minded members in the English, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and other Churches say that they have no desire whatever to dance.

The votaries of the dance, when converted to Christ, not only abandon dancing, but lose all their love for it.

Many unconverted and worldly professors cannot understand this. Have you not heard of "the expulsive power of a new affection?" This is the secret of the change. Beloved, know by experience this new affection, "the love of Christ shed abroad in the heart," and the desire for dancing will be gone.

Though you may not be a Christian, you may partly understand how this can be. Suppose that Queen Victoria were to adopt a bootblack as her son, would he, after wearing royal apparel, eating at her table, riding in her carriage, enjoying her company and that of princes, seriously ask, "Would it be any harm for me to blacken boots on the street a little?" Such work would be beneath his dignity. So, when a person becomes "a true Christian, a child of the King," there is a much greater change than for a bootblack to be adopted by Queen Victoria, and shall he ask, "Would it be any harm for me to dance?" or "Will I have to give up dancing?"

Think what it is to be a Christian: knowing the pardon of God, His adoption, fellowship, love and grace, and will you ask, "Would it be wrong for me to dance?" Nay, rather you will feel it beneath your dignity to dance, as you sing,

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"I'm a child of the King,
New songs do now my lips employ,
And dances my glad heart for joy."

The Lord takes the dance out of our *heels* and puts it in our *hearts*.

Do you say, "I know Church members that dance"? Yes, but let me ask, "Would you desire such to pray for and comfort you when dying, or to point out the way of salvation if you were seeking the Lord?"

I think I hear one say, "Well, I *profess* to be a Christian, and I dance, and, I confess, I like it." Let me ask, "Can you truthfully look up into the face of Christ and like Peter affirm: 'Lord, *Thou knowest that I love thee.*'" (John xxi. 17.)

Worldly professors may, like backslidden Israel, have a perverted taste, and so turn from the heavenly manna and ask for "the *leeks*, the *onions* and *garlick*" of Egypt (Num. xi. 4-6), while some may even try to mix the leeks and onions with the heavenly manna.

Do you think such worldly professors would feel at home and content in heaven with no dancing, cards, or theatre? The out-and-out Christian has a purer appetite, which loathes leeks and delights in manna.

The question is not, "Will a *church member* or *professing Christian* want to dance?" but, "Will a *true* CHRISTIAN want to dance?" Know that you are a consecrated Christian, for then only can you answer the proposed question from experience.

If your heart is filled with love to Christ, I would be willing to give you a written license to dance all you want to, and stand responsible for you at the judgment bar of God.

The meaning of "Christian" is, one like Christ. Your feelings would recoil from even imagining Christ to have taken part in a parlor dance in the home of Martha and Mary. If you, then, are like Christ, and so deserving the name of Christian, should you not recoil from the practice of dancing?

Let us know the superior joys of a Christian experi-

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ence and life, so shall we "for joy" give up the dance as good riddance, and not think it to be a sacrifice; and we will also feel pity for those who still seek in vain for satisfaction at this broken cistern.

Third question: Is it in accordance with true propriety for a lady and gentleman to dance together? Do you tritely say, "To the pure all things are pure"? Let me say, this passage is often quoted by Satan, and also by the impure and ignorant to seek to defend sinful practices; but, I assure you, it is not applicable to the question of dancing. Moreover, I shall not speak or even think of *purity* or *impurity*, but only of *propriety* and *impropriety*.

Consider what I say: Suppose I am at a parlor dance with the most *élite*, and, while others are waltzing—allow the supposition—I in a *promenade* or *standing at the window*, put my arm around a fair lady's waist, just as other gentlemen *in the dance* have their arms encircling other ladies; you know that any lady would indignantly resent such an ungentlemanly liberty as an insult, and her big brother husband or father, if present, would feel like firing me out of the window. How is this? If it is in accordance with propriety to take such a liberty in the dance, it is equally so in a promenade or standing at the window, under the same gaslight, and before the same company; but, if it is an impropriety in a promenade or standing at the window, it is *much more* so in the dance, when you consider the fascination of the music, the motion of the body, the clasp of hands, and the more intimate and prolonged embrace. Is not that putting the matter fairly?

Every lady will say, "You would not as a gentleman take such a liberty in a promenade, and I would not be considered a lady if I permitted it." Then can any gentleman or lady consistently take or permit similar liberties in the dance? Persons try to excuse this impropriety in the dance by saying the liberty is necessary in the dance but not in the promenade.

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That confession should cause us to consider the dance itself to be unnecessary and wrong.

Ladies of fine maidenly modesty and sensitive womanly delicacy, *that have never danced*, instinctively recoil from the intimate attitude assumed in the "waltz" or "ripple."

A gentleman, seeing the round dance for the first time, said: "If I should see a man offering to dance with my wife in that way, I would horsewhip him."

Consider the attitude of the "ripple." The man places his hand upon the lady's waist, her left hand rests upon his right shoulder or arm, the man's left hand holds the woman's right hand as both their arms are extended, and in this position they dart and circle through the room. A few years ago, I looked for some moments at a so-called fashionable dance. There were nineteen couples on the floor dancing the "ripple," and seventeen couples out of the nineteen had their breasts literally throbbing against each other. What *lady* but would be ashamed to have her *picture* taken with a gentleman in the attitude of the ripple or waltz? Why then not be ashamed of the attitude?

There is no impropriety for a gentleman to put his arm around a lady's waist, providing he has the right to do so; but the right should only be allowed to a husband with his wife, a brother with his sister, a son with his mother, a father with his daughter, a gentleman with his affianced, and other near and intimate *relations;* but, beyond this, no matter if ladies and gentlemen are as pure as angels, they cannot without *impropriety* allow or take such a liberty in the dance any more than they can out of it. Remember, I am not speaking about impurity, but only about impropriety.

Do you ask, "Have you any objections to the square dances, or ladies dancing together, or husband dancing with his wife, or a brother with his sister?" Such a question is unnecessary, as people care little for that kind of dancing.

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One has said: "As alcohol is the spirit of beverages, so sex is the spirit of the dance; take it away, and let the sexes dance separately, and dancing would go out of fashion very soon and become *nil*."

There is no impropriety or objection in the peculiar step, or keeping time to music, or in the dance itself, any more than in walking; but the impropriety is in the liberty allowed and taken in the dance.

The pleasure, attraction and fascination are not in the dance itself, or men would enjoy dancing together, women would enjoy a dance with women, and the square dance would be as popular as the round dance. We all know such is not the case. Why? There is but one reason you can assign.

Most men would as soon eat an egg without salt as dance with a man. Few ladies find pleasure in dancing with ladies. The square dance is seldom danced and little enjoyed. There are really no square dances now; they all have the corners rounded off. The round dance is all the rage. Why all this?

If the pleasure were in the dance, a man would as soon waltz with one lady as another, providing she were a good dancer. But we know that this is not the case. Why? Some men say, "I would as soon dance with a broom-stick as with Miss So-and-so; there is no magnetism in her."

If the fascination were in the dance itself, sisters, as a rule, would enjoy dancing with their brothers, and wives with their husbands, as with other gentlemen. Such, we know, is not the case. Why? A refined and fashionable lady, with all innocence, said to me in presence of her husband: "Sisters and wives do not enjoy dancing with their brothers and husbands as with other gentlemen, because there is not the same affinity between them." I asked, "Should that affinity be enjoyed?" The next day this excellent lady apologized to me, and said, "I am ashamed of the admission I made yesterday, as to why wives

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and sisters, as a rule, prefer to dance with other men rather than with their own husbands and brothers."

I do not imagine that the many refined, virtuous and artless wives and young ladies that dance, are aware of the real secret of the fascination and pleasure of the promiscuous dance. If they would carefully analyze and think over this question, they too would be ashamed that they had been dancers, and would not permit such an impropriety again.

If ladies knew the coarse remarks sometimes made about them by young men with whom they had danced, they would blush. A prominent gentleman in London, after attending a dance in one of the best homes, with the select of so-called fashionable society, said to his sister, "No more dancing for us." She, in surprise, asked, "Why?" He answered, "When so-called gentlemen make such low remarks about other pure ladies, they will speak similarly about my sister." That was their last dance.

No wonder that so many husbands and brothers object to their wives and sisters dancing with other gentlemen; though others, being yet blinded by a slavish custom, allow liberties in the dance that they would be enraged at if allowed by their wives or sisters sitting on the sofa or standing in the parlor.

When you consider the subject, do you not wonder that the dance, *as it exists*, is tolerated by respectable people? Will you not discountenance it?

Score out all the round dances for men and women where liberties are prescribed, that, *out of the dance*, no woman dare allow, or man take, without forfeiting the title lady or gentleman, and dancing will soon be abandoned by all classes.

The only *excuse* assigned for allowing such liberties in the dance, is that "it is customary." That is an excuse, but it is no *reason*. Some are glad that it is customary, while many ladies simply permit the liberty because it is customary lest they would be considered prudes. I appeal to you not to be blinded

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or influenced by the trite and ignorant excuse, "it is customary." That chestnut is too old for use.

Where and how did the custom originate? Who first dared to prescribe such liberties in the dance? The popular round dances of the present day have been invented by lewd dancing-masters in Germany, Paris, Vienna and Toronto.

What right has any man or set of men to introduce into decent society a custom in the dance that would *outrage* our sense of propriety out of the dance?

Let me give a quotation from Rev. Dr. Pierson's book: "The waltz was born December 20th, 1787—first seen in a Vienna theatre, the progeny of a licentious stage and its consort, the ballet. This amorous, gyratory hugging was, for a time, thought to be too shockingly indecent to be tolerated anywhere else. It found its way into houses of doubtful repute, and more slowly into German society. Even Paris, for a time, resisted its licentious libertinism, and not till the present century did it get sanction in Paris; then, of course, it became the fashion everywhere, for Paris sets fashion's clock in all lands." Will you be a blind slave to such a gross fashion or custom?

As I have thus presented the subject, many dancers have said to me, "I had not considered the subject that way, but you are right, and I will never dance again."

I appeal to every true lady and gentleman, Christian and unconverted, that would not allow or take similar liberties out of the dance, to forever turn away from the amusement that prescribes such improprieties. I think I hear you say, "I will." Adopt President Edwards' rule: "I am fully resolved, with God's help, never again to do that of which I doubt the propriety, unless I equally doubt the propriety or expediency of *not* doing it."

Fourth question: Is there any harm or sin in dancing? Consider what I say.

1. Suppose that Mr. Hunter and myself, with the

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Presbyterian, Anglican, Baptist and Methodist ministers, and the leading members of the various Churches, were to have a very select parlor dance, at the manse, rectory or parsonage, what would you think and say? I know you would condemn us as ministers, and we might as well give up our work as pastors and evangelists, unless we confessed and repented of the wrong. Do you answer, "But you are ministers"? Yes, but God has one law of *right* for ministers and laymen, Christians and unconverted; hence, in condemning us as ministers for dancing, you condemn the dance as wrong for everybody, saved and unsaved, yourself included.

2. The most devoted and intelligent Christians *in all the Churches* consider the dance to be wrong. Are they mistaken? Who are the professing Christians that favor the dance? They are the namby-pamby, goody-goody Christians; the lukewarm and backslidden; those who desire to be thought broad and liberal-minded; those who act on worldly policy, hoping to get a certain class into the Church; those who lack moral backbone, and those who are ignorant about even the attitude permitted in the dance, but think it must be proper because their children and certain respectable people dance.

3. The unconverted do not respect *as Christians* the Church members that dance. At a dance one asked another, "Are you a Christian?" He answered, "No, are you?" "Yes." With sarcasm he said, "What then are you doing here?" If you, as a Church member, were at a dancing party, and one asked another about you, "Does not So-and-so profess to be a Christian?" the sarcastic reply would be given, "*O yes.*" Do you want to be an "*O yes*" Christian?

4. The rules of every evangelical Church, *in their spirit*, forbid dancing. This is true of the Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and other Churches, but especially so of the English or Protestant Episcopal Church.

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When confirmed each one is required to promise: "To renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of this wicked world, and all the deceitful lusts of the flesh." Therefore, any person that has been confirmed and dances, breaks his or her *solemn confirmation vow?* Will you do this?

5. I consider dancing to be wrong, as it prevents so very many from becoming Christians. Very often people ask us, "Will I have to give up dancing?" Thus they trifle with their salvation, and barter Christ as certainly as did Judas.

6. Dancing must be wrong, as it has destroyed the religious fervor of Christians formerly devoted, and has led many to a backslidden life. Dancing and devotion no more mix than water and oil.

7. Dancing is evidently wrong, as it tends to drown and destroy serious and religious convictions. How often have I seen this true with the unconverted. Do not dance away your Christ-implanted impressions.

8. Those most enamored with the dance, when truly converted to Christ, abandon the dance as evil.

9. The dance is contrary to the spirit of Christ and Christianity. Could you imagine Christ dancing, or sanctioning the dance, if He were in your place? Should you then, as His representative, do so? Will we want to dance if we can truthfully say, "We have the mind of Christ"? (1 Cor. ii. 16.)

10. The Gospel and Bible precepts, *in spirit*, are opposed to the modern dance. "Abstain from all appearance of evil." (1 Thess. v. 22.)

11. The most devoted, intelligent and successful ministers, in all the Churches, have been and are very pronounced against dancing:

Rev. C. H. Spurgeon said: "When I hear of a modern dance, I have an uncomfortable feeling about the throat, as I recall that a dance cost the head of the preacher, John the Baptist."

Rev. Dr. Albert Barnes forcibly said: "No child dances into heaven, but many a one dances into hell."

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Rev. Dr. A. T. Pierson affirms: "The modern round dance is to me specially abhorrent. It is an iniquity and a snare."

Rev. Dr. Talmage says: "The round dance is administrative of evil, and ought to be driven out of all respectable circles."

Rev. Dr. Howard Crosby declared: "Three-fourths of the abandoned girls of New York were ruined by dancing."

12. The most noted evangelists in the churches speak out against the social dance.

Rev. D. L. Moody, in the city of London, declared in my hearing: "I would as leave go out into the street and eat mud as to dance."

Rev. E. P. Hammond said, in St. Catharines: "As Christians, we must draw the line somewhere; we should certainly draw it so as to exclude dancing."

Rev. S. P. Jones, with more truth than poetry, says: "Dancing is hugging set to music."

Rev. J. E. Hunter, my companion, says: "God have mercy on the mother that has no more sense than to send her pure daughter to a dancing school."

Rev. Dr. Geo. F. Pentecost affirms: "I do not hesitate to say that the modern society dance is essentially immodest. No woman, married or single, can participate in the dance and retain the firm, keen, clear, pure edge of her modesty—I do not say chastity but modesty. That you dance, shows that the keen, sensitive edge of maidenly modesty and womanly delicacy has already gone. That you blush when I speak of it, only shows that there is a resurrection of the blushes that the modern dance has killed, and sent long ago to their graves."

Rev. B. Fay Mills, the noted Presbyterian evangelist, thus clearly puts it: "You would not allow any minister to sit by the side of your wife or daughter in the attitude men assume in the round dance. If a minister would do such a thing you would stop him in a rage."

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13. The social dance is evidently wrong, as the various representative Churches unite in condemning it.

The Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops, in council assembled, wrote: "We consider it our duty to warn our people against those amusements which may easily become to them an occasion to sin, and especially against the fashionable dances at present carried on, which are so revolting to every feeling of delicacy and propriety, and are fraught with the greatest danger to morals."

The Presbyterian Church gives no uncertain sound. Some of her members and a few of her ministers may be found, who ignorantly or presumptuously disgrace this conservative Church, by speaking favorably of the parlor dance; but hear the unanimous decision of a Presbyterian Synod, which is given as a sample of the action of many other Synods of this honored Church: "There is a line of distinction between harmless and sinful amusements, and it is sometimes difficult to draw that line; but, in regard to dancing, there is no such difficulty. It is the most giddy and thoughtless practice the world has to offer her votaries. Therefore, resolved, that the practice of dancing, and of giving or attending private or public parties, or of educating children in the art of dancing by Christians, is clearly forbidden in the spirit of the Gospel, condemned by our confession of faith, and by the decisions of our highest church councils, and in violation of the covenant relations entered into by everyone who connects himself with the Church of Christ."

The great and historic Protestant Episcopal, or English Church, is very pronounced against the dance. Bishop Hopkins, of Vermont, wrote: "Dancing is chargeable with indulgence of personal vanity and display, and the premature incitement of the passions, and endangers health, while its incongruity with Christian principles is so manifest that no ingenuity can make it consistent with the covenant of baptism."

Bishop Coxe, of Western New York, in a pastora

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letter, said: "The dances, too commonly tolerated in our times, are so disgraceful and so irreconcilable with the Gospel of Christ, that I feel it my duty to warn my flock that those who run with the world in these things presume not to come to the holy table. Classes preparing for confirmation are informed that I will not lay hands knowingly on anyone who is not prepared to renounce such things, with other abominations of the world, the flesh and the devil."

Bishop Cobb, of Alabama: "The idea that the Episcopal Church favors dancing has floated much trash down upon her."

The Methodist Church, which is the largest and most rapidly increasing Protestant Church on this continent, by her General and Annual Conferences, pastoral addresses and pulpit utterances, is outspoken against the promiscuous dance. If a Methodist minister could be found who favored the dance, even the most worldly would think he needed to be converted.

The Baptist Church is also so well known to be pronounced against the dance, that we do not need to cite utterances from that large and spiritually minded Church. No wonder that all true Baptists renounce the dance, when John the Baptist, after whom their denomination is named, was beheaded through a dance.

Let us, as Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Methodists and Baptists, be true to Christ and His Word, so shall we be loyal to our respective Churches.

14. It is wrong to dance, as it lessens a person's influence for good. A young lady, standing high in society, was invited and urged to attend a dance. She replied, "Senator, I cannot do it, I am a Christian; I never do anything that will lessen my influence over my Sunday School class." The senator answered, "I honor you; if there were more Christians like you, more men like myself would become Christians."

Though dancing, with all its adjuncts, were no

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more harm to you than for Paul to eat meat offered to idols, yet if you, by your practice or precept, encourage dancing, and so embolden one to sin by doing that about which he or she has a doubt, according to Paul's logic, "you sin against Christ." (1 Cor. viii. 12.)

15. Many have regretted, while living and dying, that they had encouraged the dance by their example. No Christians ever expressed a regret that they had not danced. View the dance in the light of eternity.

16. The modern dance licenses liberties that, out of the dance, are considered insulting and immoral.

17. The social dance is evidently wrong, as it is the secret of much home infelicity, and many divorces.

18. I believe the dance to be wrong, because it was born in shame, and though it seeks hard to be introduced into our parlors, and tries to pass in society that is intelligent, pure and good, it is evidently most at home in ball rooms, beer gardens and dance houses, among the ignorant, degraded and impious. We should certainly seek things whose origin, character, history and associations are more respectable and reputable.

19. The dance is undoubtedly wrong, as it has led to the moral and eternal ruin of so many.

The chief of police of New York testifies that "three-fourths of the abandoned girls of that city say that they were led to ruin by dancing."

Let me give you the appalling statement that I have often seen quoted, made by the leading Roman Catholic Bishop of New York: "It is ascertained in the confessional that nineteen out of twenty who confess to have fallen from virtue, ascribe their first and subsequent downward steps to the dance." He is not speaking of lewd women, as these do not go to the confessional, but he refers to the wives, mothers and sisters from respectable homes, whose fall, in the majority of cases, no one knew about except the guilty parties, God and their father confessors.

No one can doubt the truth of the Bishop's start-

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ling statement, for priests do not lie about the confessional, and people do not dare to tell what is false in the confessional. Any person that reads this noted Bishop's utterance, and therefore must believe it, whether he wants to or not, and yet says there is no harm in the modern dance, must either be a fool or a villain; a fool, that he knows not the value of virtue, or a villain that he cares not that it be outraged.

Fifth question: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" I want each one to ask this question for himself or herself, with reference to the dance.

Paul asked this question on the way to Damascus. He had been conscientious before, yet in great error, but now his eyes were opened.

Have you, as a professing Christian, been hitherto sincere, and yet favored the parlor dance? Have you asked the Lord about it? Will you do so now? Those who dance seldom if ever pray about it.

Can you participate in a dance and then, when you think of your Saviour, yourself and your influence, say, like Peter, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." If you cannot, then keep away from such places. Do not think that you have been a hypocrite, or give up your hope in Christ; but thank God for the additional light you have received, give up the dance, and, like Paul, get the scales off your eyes, obtain forgiveness for the past, consecrate yourself to Christ and become a useful Christian.

Are you still unconverted? Remember that the Lord has not only your highest good, but also your greatest pleasure at heart. Do you ask, "Can't we have any fun?" Yes, lots of it. "He giveth us all things richly to enjoy." Christianity endorses every pure, intelligent amusement. The true Christian has superior pleasures to the worldling.

Some persons try to stipulate with the Lord, and so make certain reservations. Do not thus trifle with your salvation, but say, "Lord, I want to become a Christian on Thine own conditions, and then live as Thou shalt direct. Thy will be done."

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I have often urged those who have tried to defend and cling to the dance, to lay the question of the dance aside for the time being, yield to Christ, and afterwards ask, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" This has been done, and the dance has then been gladly given up without a sacrifice, as their desires were changed. Give yourself to Christ *first*, and then settle the dance.

Many refuse Christ and His salvation for the expected pleasures of the dance. I pity them. It will not give the dancer much consolation in the lost world to reflect, "I'm in hell, but I enjoyed the dance for twenty years." Do not think it a sacrifice to give up the dance or anything that Christ requires.

One, just converted, asked: "Should I give up the dance?" I replied: "Ask the Lord Jesus about it; and if He direct you to give it up, He will give you, according to His promise, one hundred-fold more pleasure in its abandonment than you have ever had in its participation." The Lord's counsel was obeyed, the dance was given up as good riddance, the hundred-fold was received and a bright hope of "life everlasting." Christ only asks us to give up that which will detract from our real good and highest pleasure.

Who would not be a whole-hearted Christian? The Lord Jesus needs you. Hark, He calls you. Cheerfully accept Him to be your Saviour, Exemplar, Teacher and Lord for all the future. Let your chief ambition be "To glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

I appeal to Christians in every Church not to dance or do anything else that may injure your own spiritual life, and will certainly be a stumbling-block to some, or lessen your influence over others for good.

I appeal to every lady and *gentleman,* notwithstanding that many who should know better are blinded and carried away by the custom, to discountenance the dance, because it prescribes and permits liberties and improprieties that, out of the dance, would not be tolerated by respectable people.

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I appeal to the unconverted, that you do not allow the dance or anything else to keep you for another day from Christ, lest you be like the lady who, in the dance, swooned in her partner's arms, and, being carried to the window, regained consciousness only long enough to wail out the words, "*I have danced my body into the grave and my soul into hell,*" when with a gasp she expired. One hour in perdition will make the dance look very small.

I appeal to you who are wealthy, and to you who are leaders in so-called fashionable society, to stop and think that there is something much better and more satisfying for you than dancing and other worldly pleasures. Will you not aspire to give your influence to create a higher and nobler ideal of life in fashionable circles?

I appeal to all young Christians, and especially to those converted in our meetings, and those who are members of the Epworth League, King's Sons and Daughters, and Christian Endeavor Societies, to firmly and cheerfully renounce the dance, as also kindly denounce it, and show that you have a source of joy that is more satisfying, and an ideal in life that is worthy of your high calling as the children of God. An English Church young lady was dressing to go to a dance. As she held the emblem of the King's Daughters in her hand, thinking which would be the the most suitable place to fasten it, new and unexpected thoughts began to course through her mind, and she said to herself, "Is it suitable for me to wear this at a dance; can I dance in His name? I certainly should not attend a dance. I will not go." Beloved, wear your emblems, and put aside the dance.

I appeal to every minister of the glorious gospel of Christ, for the honor of your Church, for the good of the young people and parents committed to your charge, and for the glory of our Saviour and King, that you utter no uncertain sound as to this social and fashionable vice that is so persistently endeavoring to find sanction among the members of our Churches.

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I appeal to you as parents and adults generally not to allow dancing in your homes, or countenance it in your children or friends: and so avoid regrets. In a revival meeting conducted by my brother, a young lady became anxious, and returning home, told her mother she desired to become a Christian and join the Church. Her mother said: "You are young yet, and have just begun to pass in society. If you became a Christian and joined the Church, you could not attend the dancing and card parties this winter. There is time enough for you to think of these things. You had better not go to the meetings any more."

The fatal advice was taken. Only a few weeks passed away, when typhoid fever arrested the daughter. My brother was sent for, but found her delirious, and thus unconscious of her state, she lingered in delirium for weeks, and then died, leaving her mother in inexpressible anguish.

At the funeral the mother wrung her hands and tore her hair, as she cried out again and again: "*Is there any hope for my darling? If she is lost, it is my fault. O my sin, my sin.*"

Years have passed, yet that mother has never since known a happy day, but lives in inexpressible sadness and remorse.

Beloved, learn from her sad and bitter experience not to countenance the dance or that which may keep your own children, friends and others from becoming Christians, lest, if not in this world, yet in the world to come, you may see yourself responsible for the eternal loss of others, and find eternity too short to breathe out your anguish of spirit and remorse of soul.

I appeal to every worldling by the shortness of time, the importance of life, the certainty of death, and the momentousness of eternity, to forever turn away from the dance.

When Napoleon with his troops invaded Moscow in 1812, the inhabitants deserted the city. The French officers and soldiers decided to have a grand festive

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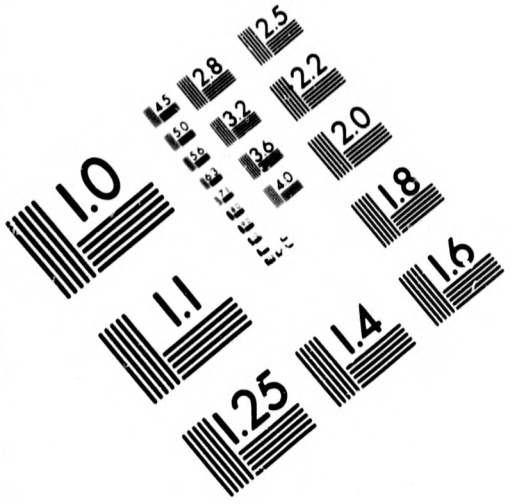

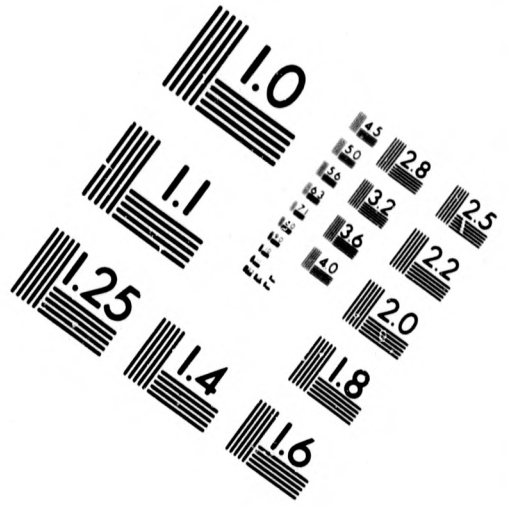

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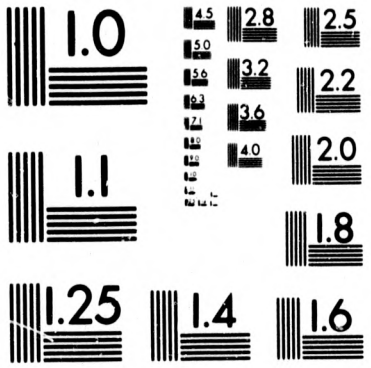

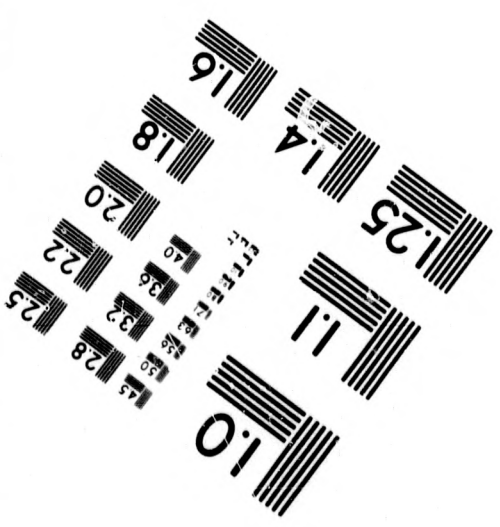

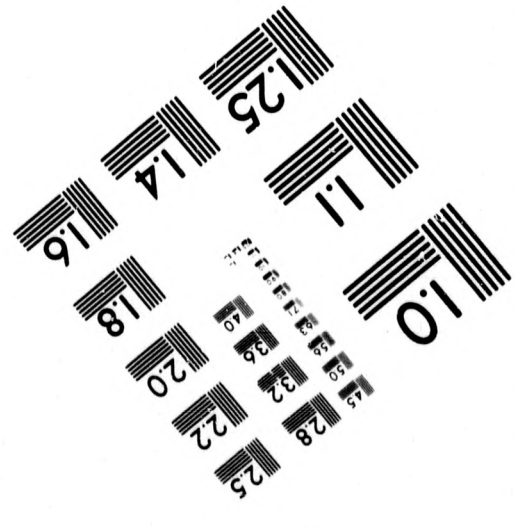

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evening and dances in the upper-room of a magnificent palace that had been deserted. The *elite* of France were there, both men and women. The dance began. That night the city was set on fire. As the flames swept from street to street, the excited dancers viewed the grand sight with great delight. By-and-by the building next to the palace was on fire, and they, thinking it time to escape, were preparing to do so, when Carnot, a young officer, in his foolhardiness, cried, as he waved his jewelled hand above his head, "One dance more, and defiance to the flames!" His words seemed to electrify the company, and many gleefully reiterated, "One dance more, and defiance to the flames!" With a fresh inspiration another dance began; and, as the music and the dance proceeded, the enthusiasm increased. But hark! What is that voice they hear? "Fly, fly, for your life. The fire has reached the magazine." For a moment they all stood transfixed with horror, and wildly stared at one another, but the next moment, before one of the company had time to escape, the powder magazine exploded, the palace fell in ruins, and all of those dancing men and women were suddenly ushered into eternity. We are surprised at their criminal folly and neglect, but remember that they knew not of the existence of the magazine which caused their death.

Beloved, *you know* that *life* is short, that *eternity* will soon dawn upon you; that *heaven* and *hell* are realities, and that *voices* divine and human warn and invite you. Will you be more foolhardy than were the victims of the Moscow disaster, and bid *defiance* to God and eternal disaster, as you go on with the dance and other carnal pleasures, while you neglect to seek the salvation of yourself and others till death unexpectedly overtakes you, and you are lost eternally?

I appeal to one and all by the Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for you, and now lives to love you with His great heart of infinite love, to so yield yourself to Him without reserve, that you can truly say with Paul, "*For me to live is Christ.*"

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The Theatre.

——: XXI :——

Precept : 1 Cor. xv. 33, 34. **Praise : Ps. xvi. 11.**
Promise : 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. **Prayer : Ps. li. 12, 13.**

MANY excuses are made to justify attending the theatre. Thus we hear people say :

(1) "I only go for a treat occasionally." One said this to Rowland Hill, and he replied, "What would you think of the taste of a person who excused himself for eating *carrion* on the ground that he did it only occasionally for a treat?"

(2) "I discriminate, and go to none but the best." Yes, but remember, as most people do not discriminate between a low play and a "high opera," if you go to *any* you will be called a theatre-goer, and considered as favoring the theatre in general. Total abstinence is the only safe rule for each of us.

(3) "I am not a Church member, and do not *profess* to be a Christian." Our obligations are divine, and do not grow out of our professions or Church membership. It is wrong for any one to do that which is not right. What is not right is wrong. It is never right for anybody to do wrong.

(4) "My conscience does not condemn me." I am sorry for you. Your conscience, like a clock or watch, is not your guide unless properly set and regulated. Ask yourself: "Does the spirit of the Bible condemn me?" The Bible is our rule.

The greatest men in all ages denounced the theatre:

Tertullian says, "Stage plays are pomps of the devil, which we renounced at baptism."

Augustine called theatres "cages of uncleanness and public schools of debauchery."

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Solon prohibited plays as pernicious to morals.

Plato said, "Plays raise the passions and are dangerous to morality."

Macaulay said, "The theatre is the seminary of vice." Shall we sanction or patronize such an academy?

Wilberforce declared, "Decorum and modesty retire and riot and lewdness are invited."

A committee of the British Parliament, after investigating the theatre question, reported, "The only way to reform the theatre is to burn it down."

The leading ministers in all denominations are opposed to the theatre:

Dr. Cuyler says, "If you patronize the theatre you become morally responsible for it. A converted actor once pointed me to a playhouse in which he used to perform, and said, 'Behind those curtains lies Sodom.'"

Spurgeon said, "Pass by the theatre with averted gaze; the house of the strange woman is there."

Beecher, whom men have ever regarded as liberal, forcibly said: "If you would pervert the taste, go to the theatre. If you would imbibe false views, go to the theatre. If you would efface as speedily as possible all qualms of conscience, go to the theatre. If you would put yourself irreconcilably against the *spirit* of virtue and religion, go to the theatre."

Joseph Cook says, "When it is converted, I will go to the theatre, and not till then."

Bishop Vincent, in speaking about going to the theatre, says, "*Better not.*"

Let us endorse all these views, and act upon them, though some may set their own ideas or the opinions of some preacher that is inferior in intellect and piety against them.

Actors and theatre managers speak against the stage:

Macready said, "None of my children will ever, with my consent, enter a theatre, or have visiting connections with actors or actresses."

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Booth declared, "I never permit my wife or daughter to attend the theatre without first ascertaining the character of the play."

Mr. Palmer, the Madison Square manager, says, "The bulk of the performances on the stage are degrading and pernicious."

Let me assign a few reasons why you, even if unconverted, should renounce the theatre.

1. You should live up to the same standard that you prescribe for ministers and other consistent Christians, though you yourself are not a Christian, for God enjoins you to be a Christian and act as one.

2. If you handle dead coals, though they may not burn, they will *smut* your hands. If you attend the theatre, it will at least *smut* you.

3. The theatre is a dissipation. There is in it a fascination and intoxication to the carnal mind and depraved nature, which fosters a carrion appetite and leads downward.

4. It is a school that induces carelessness, irreligion, irreverence and immorality. The theatre is responsible, by its bills and plays, for leading people to lewdness, adultery and murders.

5. The life behind the stage is usually low and immoral. Gough said, "I, as a young man, became so enamored with the play that I joined a theatre company, but was so disappointed and disgusted by the tinsel and immorality behind the stage that I abandoned the profession."

6. Hardly one troupe in a year that visits a town or city of less than ten thousand inhabitants presents anything worth seeing, even to lovers of the theatre. Those who go to such plays clearly show that they never witnessed any first-class acting, or they would be *disgusted* with such shows.

7. If a person were applying for a situation, and the testimonials from his former employers contained the statement, "He is a regular attendant upon the theatre, an excellent card-player and an accomplished dancer,"

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such testimony, instead of being a recommendation, would prove an effectual barrier to any position of trust and responsibility. Why is this?

8. The pleasure afforded by the theatre is unhealthy and short-lived. A lady said: "The theatre affords me a threefold pleasure—anticipating the play, witnessing it, and then recalling it." A Quaker replied, "What pleasure will it afford thee when thee comes to die?"

9. It may keep you from becoming a Christian. Many think more of the theatre than they do of Christ. How is it with you? Instead of asking, "Will I have to give up the theatre?" ask and *know* by experience the answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

10. Your Heavenly Father has superior pleasures and something better for you. Leave the husks that satisfy not, and act on the resolve: "I will arise and go to my Father;" so shall you find a gracious welcome, pardon, satisfaction and joy.

Consider a few additional reasons why Christians especially should not attend or favor the theatre.

11. Because its spirit and tendency are directly opposed to Christianity, and because it greatly retards the spread and power of the Gospel. The theatre is Satan's church, and so is no place for a member of the Church of Christ.

12. Because of the general character of the plays. The show-bills should disgust any decent or high-minded person. As the bills are so suggestive of blood and thunder, immorality, crime, rubbish, twaddle and nudity, what must the plays be? Do not go to see.

13. Because of the character required in the actors and actresses generally. If a lawyer, doctor, teacher or minister is immoral, or if a woman, in other walks of life, is known to be other than chaste, that one is less popular, if not disqualified. This rule fails in its application to the stage. Immorality in an **actor or actress is no disqualification.**

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You cannot imagine actors and actresses as devoted Christians, though *some of them* are pure men and women.

14. Because of the character of the *regular* attendants. While *many* who are highly moral, and a *few* professing Christians, go to certain theatres occasionally, the *frequent, regular* attendants are the riff-raff, immoral, profane, gamblers, till-tappers, sporting characters, spendthrifts, careless, sceptics, "cod-fish aristocracy," and "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." Where morals are the lowest, theatres thrive best; as, for instance, in Paris and Chicago.

15. Because when actors and theatre-goers are converted they receive a new and spiritual appetite, and so lose relish for, and turn away from, the stage. How often have we seen this the case. A lady, just converted, said to Mr. Moody: "The Lord has saved me; but, though you disapprove of the theatre, I do not see any harm in it, and I purpose going to certain plays." Weeks after, she said: "Mr. Moody, I went to the theatre with my husband, but everything seemed so changed I did not enjoy it, but felt out of place and uncomfortable, and so left after the first act."

16. It looks very inconsistent. I can partly understand how those, who are not Christians, and so know nothing of spiritual life and joy, may become interested, fascinated and enamored with the glitter and glare of the theatre, and so many things that appeal to the eye and fleshly nature; but a devoted Christian turns away from such husks, and feeds upon bread others know not of. (Rom. viii. 5.)

17. Because many people are so anxious to find an excuse by which to silence their consciences, so that they may go to the theatre. This is evident from the weight and importance they attach to the utterances or practice of *one* minister or church member who favors the theatre, though a hundred others, equally good and intelligent, to say the least, renounce and denounce it.

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Are you a professed Christian? Allow me, as your friend, to kindly ask you a number of questions, and then let me answer them as I might suppose you as a Christian to do.

1. Are all plays and operas alike bad? No, they may be compared as bad, worse, worst. I could *imagine* a good play, but to find one, not objectionable in itself or its adjuncts, I would not know where to go.

2. Is there any good in attending the theatre? The one who thinks to find good at the theatre is a near relation to him who seeks for a needle in a haystack.

3. How would you like to see your sister, daughter or wife a theatre performer? Will you, then, encourage the stage for other women? In China or Japan women are not allowed to appear on the stage.

4. What is the general fruit of the theatre? If good, let us patronize and preach it; but if evil, let us entirely abandon and denounce it.

5. Cannot Christians purify the character of the theatre by attending it? As well think to purify the effluvium of a sewer or cesspool by pouring rose-water into it.

6. "Cannot the theatre be elevated or converted?" It is 2,500 years of age now, and so is too old. Its character is fixed, and is getting worse and worse. It would die if elevated. Certain actors and theatre managers have proven this to be true. The only way to convert the theatre is to kill it.

7. Is not the attitude of the various Churches and best Christian people *generally* against the theatre? Most assuredly yes. Let us side with them.

8. If you entirely renounce the theatre, will you lose anything in morals, spiritual life, Christian influence or real pleasure? Most certainly not. Then at once and forever turn away from the theatre, and do not think it a sacrifice to do so, but good riddance.

9. Do you ask, "Is it right or wrong to go to see *this* play or hear *that* opera?" You should take a broader view, and ask, "What is the influence of the

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theatre in general, and shall I lend my example to any degree to perpetuate and extend the power of that which is recognized as one of Satan's churches?" This one question carefully and prayerfully considered will cause every intelligent and consecrated Christian to forever turn away from the theatre.

10. Have you any doubt about it being right to attend the theatre? If so, and you go, you commit sin by yielding to a disposition to disobey God. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Rom. xiv. 23.)

11. Can you imagine Christ, your Exemplar, going to the theatre? Then what business have you there, as His representative?

12. Could you imagine a theatre opened with prayer by your pastor, and closed by the benediction? You say, "Such a thing would seem sacrilege." This should settle the question for you.

13. Would you be *ashamed* to die at a theatre? An acquaintance of mine fell dead on the street, and his friends were very anxious to keep it a secret that he was returning from a theatre. If Jesus were to come to claim His own, you would hardly want Him to find you at a theatre. "Watch, therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (Matt. xxiv. 42.)

14. As we think of eternity, had we not better entirely keep from the theatre? Apelles, the great Grecian artist, while painting an important picture, was asked, "Why are you so very careful of every stroke?" He replied, "I paint for eternity." Beloved, we are artists too. We are not only forming our own characters, but influencing by our actions and words the character, life and eternal destiny of others.

In view of our individual responsibility, let us be careful that all our opinions, words and acts are right in the sight of God, as each one feels and says: "*I am painting for eternity.*"

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The Cards.

——: XXII :——

Promise: 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. **Prayer**: Gal. i. 3, 4.
Precept: Matt. v. 29, 30. **Praise**, Isa. lxi. 10.

MANY blunders are made with reference to games. Some ignorantly confound or jumble together cards, dice and other games of chance with chess, checkers, curling, croquet, cricket, carpet balls, baseball, football, lawn tennis and similar games of skill and dexterity, and condemn them all.

Under proper environment and for a limited time games of skill and dexterity are innocent recreations, and are as pure and healthy to mind and body as study and business, because recreation is a regular and legitimate department of life. All games of chance should, however, be scored out and discarded by saint and sinner, young and old, always and everywhere.

Others artlessly blunder in contrasting "cards" and "nations." The games are similar, the only difference being in the pictures on the cards. Do not be deceived.

Consider the *excuses made* for card-playing:

1. One says, "There is no harm in a game of cards, if you stop at that, and especially if played at home." Yes, there is. Why does it not stop there? Because it is evil. Can you pray, even at home, for God to bless you in the game? Romaine, being asked by a lady to play cards, proposed to pray for God's blessing upon them while playing. The lady looked surprised, and put the cards aside. Remember that is doubtful, and consequently sinful for *you*, upon which you cannot ask God's blessing. (1 Thess. v. 18.)

2. Another says, "If you oppose card-playing, you will keep people out of the Church." You will not

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keep anyone out that is worthy to be a church-member. Think on the other side. If we favor card-playing we will certainly keep people out of the kingdom of Christ and heaven.

3. Some think it necessary to have cards or dancing, in order to spend the evening when guests are present. It is a reflection upon the intelligence of your guests and yourself to say this.

Evening parties are often too long. Let me say it is an absurd and stupid custom for guests to stay till twelve, one or two o'clock. Let the host invite guests from eight to ten o'clock, or from nine to eleven, and all will enjoy the evening better. If no time is mentioned by the host, let the guests have enough sense to say good-night not later than eleven o'clock. You set the example.

4. Many blunder in simply asking: "What is the harm?" Have more sense and ask: "What is the good?" and follow only after the good and the excellent.

5. Do you say: "Our church and minister do not forbid card-playing." Unless you can say the spirit of the Bible and Christ do not forbid it, do not thus try to soothe or pervert your conscience, but say: "I must obey God rather than man."

A lady said, "Give me one passage from the Bible that is plainly against card-playing and dancing, and I will turn from them." "Do all to the glory of God" was given, and the practices were forever abandoned.

6. Many say, "I make no profession, and am not a church member." That is no excuse, for God has but one law of right and wrong for saint and sinner.

7. Persons sometimes try to defend card-playing as a means of keeping their sons, brothers or husbands at home. I know a prominent church member who did this, and now his son is a confirmed gambler on a river steamer. If you play cards at home, you educate yourself and others to play away from home, and thus become more liable victims of temptation.

In a court of law a witness was called, when one

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answered, "There are fourteen reasons why he cannot be present: First, he is dead; second, he—." The judge interrupted him, "Never mind the other reasons, as that one is sufficient." So, I will mention several reasons why we should consider card-playing to be wrong, any one of which is a sufficient reason to induce a person that wants to do right, to let cards alone.

1. Card-playing, being a game of chance, gives a wrong ideal of how to succeed in life, and tends to make persons depend upon so-called "*luck*," rather than upon ability and honest work.

2. Cards have a bad name, being *gamblers' tools*, and cannot consistently be publicly defended by any pastor, evangelist, Sunday-school teacher or superintendent, or by you or myself.

3. It is, to say the least, a questionable amusement. Very few, if any, ask seriously, "Is there any harm in curling, checkers, bicycling, skating or croquet; but so many Christians, as also the unconverted, and especially serious inquirers, ask, "Is there any harm in card-playing?" thus showing that it is a doubtful game. Give yourself "the benefit of the doubt," and keep from cards and other questionable things; for Jesus teaches, "He that doubteth is condemned;" and Paul declares, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

4. Card-playing leads many to ruin for time and eternity. As Jesus teaches us to judge things "by their fruit," we must certainly judge card-playing to be wrong Dr. Talmage says, "When I consider that cards have led to the eternal ruin of so many young men and others, I would as soon go out to the graveyard and say, 'Come and let us have a game of skulls,' as to say, 'Let us have a game of cards.'"

5. The perfect love of God expels not only the purpose but also the desire to play cards. Half-hearted Christians, who play cards, are like the Israelites in the wilderness, who wished for the "leeks and the onions of Egypt."

6. You cannot play cards without gambling. What

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is gambling? One says, "Gambling is playing for money or other stakes." That is too crude a definition. Gambling is seeking to win by *chance* without earning. The *spirit of gambling* is as much in seeking to win the game by chance without earning it as if money were at stake.

Card-playing is a game of chance. Though skill is required in playing certain games of cards, the element of chance comes in to such a large degree that players depend more upon their chances of getting "good hands" than upon skill. How often card-players say, "I can't do anything this time." Why? They did not chance to get a good hand. When beaten in playing cards a person does not say, as with games of pure skill, "I played poorly," or "You are a better player than I am;" but he says "I had bad luck," or, "I did not get half a dozen good hands during the evening." As card-players depend so largely upon chance, the game is properly called a game of chance; therefore, when a person plays cards, either for the *game* or for *money*, he is seeking to win by chance without earning, and so gambles for the *game* or for the *stake*. Such is not the case with chess, checkers, curling, quoits, and other games of skill and dexterity. Those who win in those games do so, not by chance, but by skilful playing. Why is it that persons, when playing for money and other stakes, usually do so with cards? It is because the transition, from gambling for the game to gambling for money, is quite easily and naturally made. Persons seldom play chess, checkers, curling and the like for money; and, when they do so, it is an outrage on these games, as they are games of skill; but it is no outrage on *cards* to play for money or other stakes, but only an additional disgrace to the players.

Let each one, whether a Christian or not, believing that gambling is wrong, reason thus:

First premise: Persons in playing cards seek to win the game by chance without earning it.

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Second premise: Seeking to win by chance without earning has in it the spirit of gambling, though it be only for the game.

Conclusion: Card-playing, though it be but for the game, has in it the spirit of gambling, and therefore is wrong. I am therefore resolved to discard and discountenance card-playing.

In adopting this resolution, do not feel that you are making any sacrifice, but that to do otherwise would be to sacrifice principle and personal worth.

7. Card-playing stands in the way of so many becoming Christians. How often do people ask: "Will I have to give up cards to become a Christian?" At the Cross soldiers gambled for Christ's *coat;* but now persons trifle with salvation and barter Christ for the cards. Let each one say: "Cards or no cards, *Christ for me.*"

8. Card-playing leads many to become backsliders. A backslidden Methodist local preacher from the old land was playing cards with others in New York, when Barbara Heck seized the cards, threw them into the fire, and said: "Philip Embury, you must preach to us, or we shall all go to hell together, and God will require our blood at your hands." The Holy Spirit used her words to lead him to repentance and renewed consecration. He preached the first Methodist sermon in America. He also built the first Methodist church on this continent in 1776, and became its successful pastor. I have frequently been in old John Street Church, New York, that now stands on the original site. A suitable tablet to the memory of Philip Embury and Barbara Heck is placed to the right of the pulpit. From the events narrated, Methodism took root on this continent, and now thousands of ministers and millions of members delight to be called Methodists.

Let all the card-playing backslidden Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Episcopalians and Congregationalists, burn their cards, repent of all sin, and like

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Philip Embury and Barbara Heck become workers together with Christ to spread His Gospel, and millions more as a result will soon know the joyful sound. Winning others to Christ is better than card-playing.

Let me kindly ask you a few questions:

1. Are you ever bothered about playing or selling cards? A bookseller in Belleville, a few weeks after his conversion, told us: "I was bothered about the cards I had in stock, and so burned them, about twenty dollars' worth. In less than a week I sold more Bibles than I had done for months before." It pays better to sell Bibles than cards.

2. Do you ask: "What about billiards?" I may say, the game is purely one of skill, and, in itself, is as innocent as croquet or cricket; but as a billiard table is too expensive for private homes, it is usually found in connection with hotels or public billiard rooms; hence, while it might be lawful to play billiards if the environment were always healthy; yet, knowing that the associations are *usually* not so, I would strongly advise all to consider billiards as "*not expedient*," and let them entirely alone even in private houses. Moreover, when persons play in billiard rooms, they pay a certain amount for the use of the table, and then, usually, play as to which one will pay this amount; hence they gamble for this small stake at the first, if not for the drinks or a larger sum. A billiard room is a curse in any community. Sad stories have been told us, by converted billiard players or sorrowful fathers of wayward sons, of the loss of money, character and reputation, and the spirit of idleness, gambling and dissipation resulting from playing billiards.

In view of what I have said, though billiards come under the head of games of skill, yet certainly, whether we are Christians or not, we should keep from the game because it is injurious, if not to ourselves, undoubtedly to our influence over others.

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3. Are those who play cards noted for their spirituality and active Christian work? Assuredly not. I would recommend, instead of whist and progressive euchre, a game which is easily learned and is most fascinating. It may be popularly called *Progressive Christian Work.* You can play it at home or at church, on the street or in the shop, on Sunday or week-day. Pray, plan and practise to be faithful.

4. Will you be the loser in any way if you do not play cards? Will you if you do? You are perfectly aware that games of chance have a peculiar and dangerous fascination for those who indulge in them; hence, let me urge you not to trifle with cards, lest, like so many others, the habit may absorb you, and injure you physically, mentally and spiritually.

One said to me, "When I was converted I put up every bar, and put a peg in, and so have been kept, but my brother fell away, as he left one of the bars down." Fasten up every bar and be faithful.

5. Is card-playing a suitable game for men and women of culture, refinement and morality. Did you know that in three States of the American Union it has been decided in the courts of law that all persons known to play progressive euchre, under any circumstances, are liable to be arraigned before the courts and punished for gambling? Such is the case. Can persons, therefore, who wish to be considered respectable ladies and gentlemen play progressive euchre in their parlors and other places? If you do so you are, even according to law, a *gambler.* Such is not a very comforting or edifying thought.

6. If you play cards, what effect will it have upon your influence for good? If Mr. Hunter and myself played cards, and it were known, we might close our evangelistic work. So, if it is known that you play cards, you may keep your lips closed from witnessing for Christ and doing direct personal work.

Ask, "What may be the effect of my example upon the unconverted, the Christians, the Church, and those

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of my own household—my husband, brother or children?" and in view of your responsibility say, "I will in no way favor card-playing."

7. Can you, in playing cards, carry out the following precept, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him?" (Col. iii. 17.) Do not evade this question, but be honest with God and yourself.

A pronounced sceptic, being for a few days in a town where we were, attended our meetings, was genuinely converted, and subsequently became a member of "The King's Sons." Some months later, while at a friend's house with others, spending an evening, cards were introduced. Having been a card-player, he sat down and took a hand with the rest. During the game, while waiting his turn to play, his eyes fell upon the small silver cross attached to his watch-chain bearing the initials "I.H.N.," and the thought came, "Can I play cards in His Name?" Laying down his cards, he said, "Excuse me, friends, I cannot play any more." They answered, "What is the matter?" He replied, "I have not played before since my conversion, and had not thought anything about it being right or wrong till the sight of this emblem of 'The King's Sons' suggested the question, 'Can I play cards in His Name?' I do not wish to give you any lecture, but must ask you to excuse me from playing."

While *one* smiled, the others said, "We honor you as a Christian for your decision." The game ceased, and a delightful evening was spent *intelligently*.

Have similar courage, in every place and society, to decline to play cards, and kindly and firmly stick to your resolution, so will you be commended and honored by the best Christians in all the Churches, by the men and women of highest moral principle, by your own heart, and by Him of Whom you can say, "*Whose I am and Whom I serve.*"

8. As cards have injured or wrecked so many, is it not wise and safe to renounce them? Dr. Holland said, "I have this moment ringing in my ears the

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dying injunction of my father's early friend, 'Keep your son from cards. Over them I have murdered time and lost heaven.'"

A young man, whose name I need not mention, just through college, was invited to a social evening gathering. Here for the first time he learned to handle cards. This was in 1884. He played in private parlors for a few weeks, and then began to visit public gambling houses. Here he won. His parents felt disgraced. The intoxication of gambling was so upon him that he sailed for Europe, and there operated as a professional gambler in the various large cities. For nine years he heard no word from home.

One day in 1893 a young fellow challenged him to play till one was "broke." From morning till evening the game went on. The young man lost $14,000. It was all he had. Rising from the table, without a word, he walked out. A moment later the report of a revolver startled them. In telling the sad story, the professional gambler said, "I with an attendant rushed out. There lay my young opponent, a pistol beside him. As I bent over him to loosen his collar, some letters and a photograph fell from his pocket. As I picked up the picture, I saw looking into my face *the eyes of my own mother.* Then I recognized in the features of the dead *my younger brother*, whom I had not seen since I left home. The letters bore his name. I was my brother's murderer."

The awful sorrow dethroned the mother's reason, and she is to-day in an insane asylum. No wonder that the remorseful son and brother renounced his sinful life, and is now seeking to make restitution by acting as a Christian missionary among victims of card-playing and the gaming habit.

Are you a card-player? Burn your "deck" to-day, and forever give up the game. Have you never played cards? Thank God, and continue to live in blissful ignorance of gamblers' tools.

I appeal to every Christian and unconverted per-

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son to say, "I will forever renounce cards, lest I be injured by them, or lest I start or encourage some one else, perhaps my own brother or loved one, on the way that leads to ruin."

I would also strongly suggest that among your circle of friends, you form what is called a Round-robin, scoring out dancing, theatre-going, card-playing and liquor-drinking. To make the form, take a large sheet of unruled paper, and upon it draw two concentric circles, with diameters of about three inches and seven and a half inches respectively. Then draw lines from one circle to the other, making thirty-two or sixty-four equal spaces for the autographs. In the inner circle write the following:

"Believing it to be conducive to personal piety, Christian influence, and the glory of God, to abstain from the dance, the theatre, the cards, and intoxicating drinks, we, by signing this circle, promise, by God's grace, to renounce these things ourselves, and to encourage others to do likewise." You might also write around the outer circle suitable Scripture passages.

The form being thus made, talk the question over with your acquaintances, and sign the circle with them.

Let the members of each Christian Endeavor Society, Epworth League, and Society of King's Sons and Daughters, form a circle.

The consecrated Christian ladies, married and single, of the various churches in a village, town or community, may unite to form one great and influential circle.

It would be well also for the intelligent young men and women to form a separate circle.

In closing, let me ask everyone who reads these pages to say, "In the name of Christ, and trusting in His grace, I shall henceforth renounce the dance, the theatre, the cards, and intoxicating drink."

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The Weed.

——: XXIII :——

Proverb: Prov. xxi. 2. Promise: Ez. xxxvi. 25.
Precept: James i. 21. Prayer: Ps. li. 10.

CHRISTIANS, seekers and others often ask us what we think of the tobacco habit. We believe that:

1. The tobacco habit is unmanly. This is evident, as few men form the habit after they are twenty. Persons usually learn when they are boys or hobbledehoys.

2. It is a senseless and foolish habit. See a *man* filling his mouth with smoke, puffing it out again and *watching* the clouds. It hardly looks wise. Blind men do not smoke. If a *boy* is seen smoking, people speak of the combination as "a little *fire* at one end, and a little *fool* at the other." What shall we say about men-smokers?

I have promised each of my ten nephews a gold watch if he will not use profane language, liquor or tobacco before he is twenty-one. Three watches have already been given, and I expect to be called on for six more. I think this plan, or one similar, is worthy of adoption by parents and friends. Let me ask every youth to say, "Watch or no watch, I will not use tobacco or liquor before I am twenty-one." You will then have acquired sense enough not to begin either practice.

If you use tobacco, do not *try* to quit, but *quit* it.

In conversation with a Methodist, I asked, "When did you begin to use tobacco?" He replied, "When I was fifteen." "You remember Paul said, 'When I became a man, I put away childish things.' Having

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been so childish as to begin to use tobacco when a boy, why don't you now, as a man, put away the habit?" He answered, "I have often *tried* to do so, but failed every time." I remarked, "Certainly, persons who only *try* to stop fail, but those who firmly resolve, 'I'll quit,' have success." Grasping my hand, he said, "I'll quit now, and never chew or smoke again."

Two weeks later I asked him, "How goes the battle?" He replied, "There has been no battle. That night I renewed my vow to God, and asked Him to help me; and from then till now I have had no desire to smoke or chew. Christ gave me the victory without a struggle."

I know scores of persons who have thus pledged themselves to God and have at once been saved, and ever kept from all appetite or craving for the weed.

Resolution is more than half the battle. Put down your foot and say, "So help me, God, I will *never* again use tobacco," and the Lord will either save you then and there from the use and appetite of tobacco, or give you grace to fight it out and get the victory.

3. Tobacco is rank poison. Nicotine, the principal element in it, stands second among the deadly poisons. Prussic acid stands first. A drop of the oil of tobacco will kill a dog or cat in a few moments if merely put upon the tongue. In a single cigar there is enough nicotine, if administered pure, to kill two strong men. If a person will fill his mouth with tobacco smoke, and then blow it through a white handkerchief, a quantity of nicotine will adhere to the fabric. Yet people will smoke. Is it not strange?

To smoke cigarettes is slow but certain suicide. Cigarettes contain not only nicotine but they are infused with opium, and the paper contains arsenic. Boys and men, beware.

4. Tobacco, being such a rank poison, cannot be used without injury to health. A poultice of tobacco

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placed over the stomach of one who does not use the weed will cause convulsions.

Persons who think to disprove that tobacco is a poison, by citing isolated cases of tobacco-users living long and being in health, are like the Russians, who try to defend uncleanness by their proverb: "The bear and wolf are dirty, and they are healthy."

The use of tobacco tends to cause dyspepsia, apoplexy, cancer, epilepsy, heart-weakness and other ills.

Using tobacco injures youth especially, as it dwarfs the body, affects the heart, injures the brain and nervous system, and creates a thirst for liquor. No wonder its sale to youths is prohibited. Let every boy and young man abstain from tobacco.

Breathing tobacco smoke is very injurious. Instances are recorded where a husband and father has, by his smoking in the house, ruined the health of his wife and *poisoned his children.*

The use of tobacco also affects a man's posterity.

5. It is an unladylike, and so an *ungentlemanly* habit. A man holding a cigar said to a lady, "Is it offensive to you for a gentleman to smoke in your presence?" She answered, "No *gentleman* ever does so."

No *gentleman* will attempt to smoke in the company of a lady, and no *lady* should consent to any person not a gentleman doing so.

Will you use that for which you have to apologize in polite society?

A tobacco-user usually asks a lady, before presuming to light a cigar or pipe in her presence, if she dislikes tobacco smoke; but too frequently, if the lady be his wife or sister, she may *like it* or she may *lump it,* but it makes no difference to him. Shame on such a husband or brother!

Queen Victoria has prohibited the use of tobacco in Windsor Castle. Every wife and mother, as queen of her castle, should have the right to exclude the

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weed. If a man uses tobacco, he should do so outdoors or in the wood-shed. Even a smoker would not tolerate a smoking stove in the house.

6. It is a degrading habit. We would feel humiliated if our sister, wife or mother smoked or chewed tobacco, and would *hardly* marry a young woman that used it.

7. It is a selfish and offensive habit, as tobacco-users disregard the comfort of others at *home* and abroad. Joseph Cook says: "If I had a dog that had the habit of chewing and expectorating tobacco, or even smoking it here, there and everywhere, I should shoot him." Dogs have better taste and manners than to use tobacco.

8. Tobacco tends to create, foster and keep up the appetite for strong drink. You rarely see a heavy drinker that does not use tobacco, and few reformed drinkers long *continue* to give up drink that do not also abandon the weed. A college graduate asked me, "What had I better do about smoking? God has saved me and taken away the desire for drink. Now I will follow your advice about tobacco too." I said, "You know tobacco is a narcotic, and so would tend to bring back the appetite for liquor; hence, to make yourself doubly sure, I would say give up tobacco also, and ask God to help you." He replied firmly: "*I see the point; I will give it up.*" All admit his wisdom.

9. A person that uses tobacco is a slave. So many say, "I wish I had never learned," or, "I wish I could give it up," while others joke about it, or try to defend the habit; but they are nevertheless its willing and abject slaves, lacking the ambition to be free. It takes a child to learn to use tobacco, but it takes a man to quit it. If you use the weed, and have enough manhood left to stop, assert it, and strike for liberty.

A man resolved to stop, and yet carried the plug in his pocket. As he felt the craving for it, he held the tobacco in his hand and said, "You are only a weed, but *I am a man;* which is going to conquer? I shall." This was repeated for a few days, and the

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man conquered. If you can truthfully call yourself a man, do not be a slave to a weed.

10. It is a most filthy and disgusting habit. There are only three animals that will use tobacco: a foul *worm*, a loathsome African *goat*, and a species of *man*. Even a *hog* or a *dog* draws the line at tobacco.

Paul counsels: "Cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit."

11. The habit tends to immorality. Nearly all base and immoral men use tobacco. It impairs and blunts the moral perceptions. This accounts for many persons not seeing the harm in using it.

Do you ask, "Cannot a man be a Christian and use tobacco?" I would answer, as did Moody, "Oh, yes, I suppose he can, but he will be a *nasty* one." A person can be a better man and Christian, and not use tobacco, than he can be and use it.

A man who had been a sceptic told me, "I was a great tobacco-user, but the night of my conversion in your meetings I said, on returning home, if it is worth while being a Christian at all, I want to be the best Christian possible, so I will give up tobacco." I like that idea, don't you?

12. It is at least a questionable indulgence. A minister or prominent Christian worker, who uses tobacco, usually tries to keep it a secret. He is to be commended for doing so, as it shows he does not glory in his shame; but it would be still more honorable and consistent to give it up.

13. It is an absurd and unjustifiable waste of money to spend it on tobacco. I shall not speak of the $600,000,000 spent yearly in tobacco in the United States, or of the $40,000 Chaplain McCabe tells us the Methodist Episcopal Church members spend *daily* for the weed; but let me come down and be more personal: What do *you* spend for tobacco? Do you say, five cents a day? That means $18.25 a year, and, at six per cent. compound interest, $688.88 in twenty years. Ten cents a day means $36.50 per year, or

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$1,377.76 in twenty years. Three cigars, or twenty-five cents a day, amount to $91.25 in a year, or $3,444.40 in twenty years.

Would it not be better to lay that money by for a rainy day, or use it for your family, or spend it in life insurance, or throw it into the lake? Would it not be more pleasing to God to give it to the poor and needy, or to use it in the cause of missions or education?

If I took a $5.00 bill and deliberately put a match to it and burned it, would you think that right? You say, "Certainly not." Now, which is the worse—for me to thus simply burn up the $5.00 bill or for you to burn it up in cigars or a pipe; and, in addition, spend time, taint your breath, and pollute the air for others? I reasoned thus with a man in Cobourg. A few weeks after he told me, "I settled that question on my knees, and have not used a cigar or wanted one since." Go thou and do likewise.

14. It is a bad example. Where is there a father, a Sunday-school teacher or a minister that would recommend his sons, scholars or parishioners to use tobacco? Is it not inconsistent to teach by practice what we dare not teach by precept? Some Churches will not receive candidates for their ministry who use the weed. Would that all ministers and church members would freely abandon it!

15. It is an unseemly practice. We would all recoil from even imagining Christ to use it, if He again trod this earth. As He is our Exemplar, we should do as we believe He would if He were in our place.

Captain T. said to me, "A week ago, two days after my conversion, I was smoking my cigar as usual when the thoughts came, 'I wonder if Christ approves of smoking; really I would not now like to meet the evangelists; I believe I had better give it up; I will. I threw away my cigar, and since then I have had no desire to smoke." I wish every tobacco-user, converted in our meetings, and every other new convert, would thus forever abandon tobacco. I am not a

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crank; but I must say, I do not like to see a convert smoking, much less chewing tobacco.

16. The practice seems to conflict with an intelligent idea of entire consecration. It sounds rather incongruous for a person to sing or say with rapture:

> "Were the whole realm of nature mine,
> That were a present far too small;
> Love so amazing, so divine,
> Demands my soul, my life, my all,"

and yet cling to his pipe or cigar.

The consciences of many tobacco-users are troubled about it. Many gave it up when they were converted, or soon afterwards. Many others, like Alfred Cookman, have been hindered from receiving the blessing of "full salvation" or "purity of heart" until they gave up the unclean habit.

The Christian's divinely-appointed coat of arms, in these latter days, is, "*Holiness unto the Lord.*" (Zech. xiv. 20, 21.) The context shows that this is not merely for the sanctuary, but for business, and domestic and secular life. Would it not seem sacrilege to employ this motto as a label on a plug of tobacco, or as a cigar brand, or have it inscribed on a pipe, much less on the head of a whiskey barrel, beer keg or over a bar-room?

In conclusion, let me ask, "Can you use tobacco to the glory of God?" Do not try to evade this question; but ponder it, as you read prayerfully, "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. x. 31.) If you can use tobacco to the glory of God, do so; but if you cannot, then forever abstain from it "In His name."

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The Licensed Liquor Traffic.

——: XXIV :——

Promise: Matt. x. 42. Precept: Eph. v. 18.
Proverb: Prov. xxiii. 31, 32. Prayer: Psa. li. 14.

THERE are many evils in the world, but the licensed liquor traffic on our continent is the greatest evil, and the mightiest enemy of God and man.

It is entrenched behind five strongholds: (1) License, (2) Supposed Financial Interest, (3) Social Custom, (4) Appetite, and (5) Human Depravity.

The first stronghold is the license system. To license the sale of liquor is contrary to the function of law, which is to suppress evil. If liquor is not an evil, its sale should not be restricted as it is; but as it is an evil, it should not be licensed. We all know strong drink to be a great evil, as ten thousand times ten thousand have been worse than murdered by it; hence, no person can favor licensing it without acting contrary to reason and outraging the very idea of law.

Drinking is an evil, whether at the sideboard, club, saloon, or hotel bar, or whether the liquor is sold under high or low license.

Some people say that a prohibitory law cannot be enforced. It can be enforced as well as other laws. Shall we license theft and murder, because some people will steal and kill?

Some few say, "Prohibition is unconstitutional and contrary to British freedom." Are such persons blind or lunatic? We prohibit stealing, murder, cruelty to animals, shooting game out of season, slaughter-houses in town, and many other things.

We have now five prohibitory liquor laws. Strong

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drink is prohibited to be sold: (1) To Indians, (2) on election days, (3) near to public works, (4) on Saturday nights and Sundays, and (5) to minors. Moreover, the restrictions in the license system prohibit nine hundred and ninety-nine out of the thousand from manufacturing and selling liquor; surely then we have the right to prohibit the other fellow, and so have total prohibition.

Every reform passes through three stages: (1) Derision, (2) Opposition, and (3) Victory. Prohibition has passed through the two stages, and the third is dawning. Help to bring this glad day of victory.

Another says, "The liquor traffic is necessary." Is it necessary to kill sons and fathers? "Oh," you say, "no." Well, the traffic must have victims. You can no more run bar-rooms without sons and husbands, than you can saw-mills without logs.

Houses where the public shall be entertained are necessary, but the bar-room is not necessary. It is a disgrace and curse to our country and humanity. Think of what a liquor license means, and shudder at the thought of your responsibility if you favor it:

Licensed to make the strong man weak,
  Licensed to lay the strong man low,
Licensed the wife's fond heart to break,
  And make the children's tears to flow.

Licensed to do thy neighbor harm,
  Licensed to kindle hate and strife,
Licensed to nerve the robber's arm,
  Licensed to whet the assassin's knife.

Licensed like spider for a fly
  To set his net for man his prey;
To mock his efforts, drain him dry,
  Then cast the shattered hulk away.

Licensed, where peace and quiet dwell,
  To spread disease and want and woe;
Licensed to make this world a hell,
  And fit a man for hell below.

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Second stronghold: Supposed financial interest. Some people think that they will get more for their grain, or save on their taxes; politicians and others talk of the revenue, and liquor-sellers think to make money out of the traffic.

The curse of God rests upon the traffic. Money received from the liquor traffic is blood-money.

Our country is poorer every day because of the traffic. A country is enriched, not by liquor revenue, but by the muscle and mind of the inhabitants. Anything that weakens or destroys muscle and mind robs our country.

Do you speak of *revenue* to the country, and *compensation* to liquor-sellers, and such twaddle? Give back to mothers, wives and sisters, their sons, husbands and brothers that have been worse than murdered by the legalized liquor traffic, before speaking of revenue and compensation. Hearts are broken that no money can heal.

The liquor traffic is worse than the abolished American negro slave trade, for it sells men, women and children of every color, both soul and body, and destroys them for time and eternity.

You can now hardly find a man, even in the South, that does not think he was always opposed to slavery, and we think of the former slave trade as inhuman in the extreme. So persons now favoring the liquor traffic will soon be prohibitionists; and one hundred years hence people will think of the "licensed liquor traffic" as having existed in a barbaric age. Let us look forward hopefully, and be among the many who live ahead of their times.

While some talk of revenue, let me assure you that the licensed liquor traffic is an unjust and unnecessary *financial burden* imposed upon our country and people. Who pays the revenue? Certainly not the liquor dealers. While they pay the licenses imposed, the people pay them for what Wesley called "distilled damnation" many times the amounts they pay for

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licenses, and then there is imposed upon us the expense and shame of looking after the criminals and poor caused by their infamous business.

We should on principle be opposed to licensing liquor or any other evil, no matter what the price paid for license. No amount of money can compensate for one immortal man destroyed eternally by drink

The third stronghold is social custom. People have been educated wrongly. Many drink merely because others do. We may, however, greatly rejoice that custom is rapidly changing, as in many of the principal homes, among the first people socially of our land, and generally among the middle classes, the custom now is total abstinence. Still there are some who are slaves to a base custom, and do not use their brains to think for themselves, and others lack courage to carry out the convictions of their better nature.

The common custom of treating appeals to our social natures, and is largely responsible for extending the practice of drinking. Few, until they become topers, care to drink alone. I call upon everyone to discountenance every bar-room and saloon by keeping out of it, and by refusing to treat or be treated to even a cigar, ginger ale or any other soft drink over any bar where liquor is sold.

Lincoln gave water, and not wine, to those who officially informed him of his election as President. Though many thought it a great breach of etiquette, he would not be enslaved by custom.

Mrs. President Hayes banished liquor from the White House; and many, following her noble example, excluded it from their homes. Like Lincoln, Mrs. Hayes and a host of the noblest men and women that have ever lived, and are living to-day, take your stand on the side of temperance, and use your influence to turn the tide and create the custom of total abstinence, which is worthy of us all.

The fourth stronghold is appetite. People may

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assign many reasons for drinking, but the greatest reason of all is *they like it.*

Total abstinence is not for drunkards only, but for universal practice. Temperance is the natural gratification of a natural appetite. Appetite for liquor is not natural, but acquired; hence, to use it as a beverage to *any* extent is intemperance.

Appetite gradually grows on a person who drinks, and, like a serpent, coils tighter and tighter, until its victim is bound, crushed and dead.

Many are the victims of appetite who do not know it, like the man who said, "I can stop drinking when I like;" and another answered, "I challenge you to stop for a week." He said, "All right; I'll do it." Before the week was over this man told him, "I have had the fight of my life; I knew not that I was enslaved by drink; but now, God helping me, I will never drink again."

Many are completely enslaved by the appetite for drink. We may see them in every town and neighborhood. Many are like the great English poet, who said, "You ask and entreat me to give up drink. I cannot. I would that I could; but, if I stood here, and hell were before me, and the cup were on the other side, I would wade through the flames in order to get it."

The love of drink is a mighty passion; but let the love of liberty and the love of home be its master.

The fifth fortress is human depravity. The wickedness or "cussedness" in humanity seeks exhilaration or lower degradation in strong drink.

The grace of God is the only certain and permanent cure for drinking and drunkenness. Ten thousand times ten thousand have given up their so-called social glass when they were converted to Christ. I have known the worst drunkards to be saved from the appetite of strong drink, instantly, and until the end of life. What God can do for one He can do for every one that yields to be saved by Him.

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Are you a total abstainer? Ever remain such.

Are you a drinker? Quit at once, if *you can.* If, however, you find that you have an appetite that is overmastering, then, at once accept Christ's "Infallible Grace Cure," and be a sober man and a Christian.

There are many forces in operation to advance the temperance cause and overthrow the strongholds of the liquor traffic.

1. The Women's Christian Temperance Union is a mighty power. These noble Christian women have done a great work in rescuing drunkards, restoring the abandoned, lessening the number of licenses, helping the poor, educating the young and creating a more advanced temperance sentiment. They have also fostered and extended the idea that women have a right to vote, at least on all moral questions. Noble army of ladies, march on to still greater victory!

I appeal to every woman not to countenance the drinking custom by giving wine on New Year's Day, or any other day. Let me also press upon you the importance of being a member of the W.C.T.U. Let us all help this organization by giving it our sympathy, and personal and financial aid.

2. Temperance organizations, such as "The Good Templars," "The Sons of Temperance," "The Royal Templars" and temperance conventions, have done, and are doing, a mighty work.

3. Every total abstainer and advocate of temperance and prohibition is helping to turn the tide. As temperance people, do not buy groceries or dry goods from a man that runs a liquor store. Encourage people to do right.

4. Those whose politics harmonize with their temperance and Christian principles are turning the tide.

I do not believe in establishing a third party, but believe that we, as Christians and temperance people, should make our influence so felt on nomination day and at the polls, that both political parties will bow

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to us, and politely ask, "What do you want? We are your servants." Let every Christian and temperance man put temperance higher than party politics, and vote and work for temperance men.

5. The many moral and Christian homes, where temperance principles are practised and inculcated, and where the parents and sons and daughters are companions, are raising up a temperance generation.

6. Sabbath Schools and Bands of Hope are doing a good work that cannot be estimated. Every Sabbath School should have a Band of Hope organized, or have pledge cards and pledge book, and thus help to train the children and young people as total abstainers. Youth is the time to promise to do right. Boys and girls hold the pledge sacred. A brewer's son I know was offered beer by his father. He said, "I belong to the Band of Hope; give me water."

I appeal to every youth to act on the boy's first speech: "If you never drink liquor, you will never be drunk."

7. The day schools also are, in many places, doing important temperance work; and they may, by textbook and teaching, be made a still more potent factor.

8. The young people's societies in all our churches are doing a great work, and are destined to do still more towards the abolition of the liquor slavery.

There is no danger of those that are converted and brought into the Church in youth becoming tippling church members.

We should educate the young in our homes, schools and churches to total abstinence. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was one of the principal agents God employed in abolishing negro slavery, as it educated the youth against that inhuman traffic. So, the way to abolish the liquor traffic that is enslaving so many of all colors is to educate the young.

9. The Church of Christ is the great power to abolish the liquor evil. While the Church has done

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much, we with our advanced light must arouse more and more, or be recreant to duty.

The great Presbyterian, Dr. Cuyler, says, "What a burlesque it is to style that church organization a salt of the earth which has a trimmer in its pulpit and tipplers in its pews."

Let every church member count himself or herself a member of Christ's total abstinence society, and, by example and precept, teach that the world needs prohibition. Every church member should be a total abstainer, and then there should be a total abstinence society in connection with every congregation, that those not now church members may belong to this society. I have known such a society to be a great help towards getting persons to become Christians and church members.

The Church of Christ can overthrow Satan's strongholds and impede the diabolic work of the liquor men, and by her moral influence, votes and prayers eventually close the legalized bar-room, saloon, brewery and distillery. Every member of the Church of Christ is guilty of neglect or complicity who does not earnestly seek to do so.

Let me now say a few words about the manufactured excuses that some people assign for favoring the liquor traffic and the drinking customs.

1. Many liquor-sellers make the excuse, "I keep a respectable house." No bar-room can be respectable. A tavern-keeper said to me, "I never give a man drink that is intoxicated, nor do I allow any drunkard around my bar; I keep a respectable house." I asked, "Do you sell to men that are sober?" He answered, "Oh, yes." Again I asked, "Which is worse to sell to young men and husbands that are sober until they become drunkards, and then turn them over to other liquor-sellers to finish the work, or to sell to those who have already become drunkards?" He answered, "Candidly, I believe that the first is the

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worse, though I have not viewed it that way before."

It is affirmed that 8,000 out of the 12,000 saloon-keepers in New York have served terms in prison. No man can sell liquor and not be a criminal before God, and should be considered such by man.

2. A common excuse of boys and young men who drink is, "I can take a glass or let it alone." What clever persons! There are none of those who now fill drunkards' graves or reel our streets, but *once* could say as they; yet, not using the power when they had it, they became the slaves of drink. Stop now when you can, or you also, *when too late*, may find yourself enslaved, and be known as a drunkard.

3. Another arrogantly exclaims, "What one man can do, another can." How ridiculous! Blondin walked a single rope across the Niagara Falls. Had you said, "What one man can do, another can," and attempted to cross the rope, you would have been stopped as a lunatic; or, if they had let you go on, you would have become a suicide. Those who are cold-blooded, hard-hearted or skin-flints, may possibly drink if they are not too stingy to buy it, and not become drunkards; but if you are warm-hearted, social and generous, do not touch the drink, unless you want to become a drunkard.

4. Some say, "It is necessary in my business that I should treat." So said a bank manager to us, and in less than three months, he lost his position through drunkenness, and is now living in want.

5. A common remark is, "I will stop when I feel it hurting me." This is as if a man would take hold of a yellow-jacket's nest, and then say: "I will let go when I feel the first sting." Dr. Parker says, "Liquor means exhilaration, excitement, violence, extermination." Don't go near the bar-room, brother.

6. Some remark, "Those who become drunkards are weak-minded." Any person who says this shows that he is lacking observation and common sense.

Whether a person shall become a drunkard, if he

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drink, does not depend upon the strength of character or will. He who has the largest brains and finest nervous organization is the one who most readily becomes a victim. He who boasts how much he can drink and not get drunk, is ignorantly boasting that he is lacking in brains or fine physical organism.

The greatest minds have been overcome by this giant foe. I would sadly mention Philip the Great, Alexander the Great and Frederick the Great as kings; Pitt, Burke and Sheridan as great statesmen; and Burns, Poe and Prince as brilliant poets, that have been laid low by this spoiler of humanity.

If I were a Scotchman, I would hate whiskey if for no other reason, yet for this one, that it blighted the brilliant intellect of Robbie Burns, the Scottish bard, and brought him prematurely to his grave.

7. Another says: "To sign the pledge shows a weak mind, and signs away a man's liberty." What foolish talk! In a court of justice, the judge, jury and witnesses take the oath or pledge. In the marriage ceremony there is a mutual pledge. The temperance pledge, as other pledges, puts a person on his or her honor. God has pledged himself to us. He says, "I will make an everlasting covenant with you." (Isa. lv. 3.) Let us all be true to self and God, and so be pledged total abstainers and Christians.

8. One confidently asks, "Do not doctors prescribe liquor in some cases?" The physicians who do so are becoming fewer year by year. A few, however, still prescribe liquor. They remind me of the doctor who, when making up pills, powders or cordials, and having any superfluous ingredients, always put them in a certain black bottle, and, being asked what he did that for, replied, "When I come across a case for which I do not know what to prescribe, I give a few doses out of the black bottle." The best physicians have largely discarded liquor in their practice, as they have bleeding, that used to be so commonly adopted.

9. One subterfuge that some few try to hide behind

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consists of misconception or misrepresentation of Scripture. They ask, "Did not Christ make the best wine at the wedding?" Yes, but it was not intoxicating wine; because, according to Rabbi Isaac, the marriage feast, being one of their sacred feasts, everything fermented was prohibited. Christ certainly did not violate the law.

But do you seriously ask, "Did not Paul say to Timothy, 'Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.'" (1 Tim. v. 23.) Yes, but best writers show that the wine here recommended was not fermented. Let me explain this passage. In the East the water is wretched. A noted traveller said, "When we were at Hebron, the only water-supply for sixteen thousand people was an open pool covered with a green scum. We saw the same at Jerusalem and in Asia Minor. We were very thirsty, but could not drink the water." This accounts for the direction to Timothy, who, because of his weak stomach and often infirmities, was suffering from the effects of this horrid water. Let no one thus seek an excuse for taking intoxicating wine in our favored land of springs, wells and reservoirs of healthy water.

It is also important to remember that distilled liquors were not known until many centuries after the founding of Christianity. The Eastern wines are even now so different to ours. A distinguished American says, "A Syrian friend of mine told me that the Bethlehem wines, the Jerusalem wines and the Hebron wines are to-day so light and unintoxicating that you must ordinarily drink twenty-four cups to produce the slightest effect even upon a person of nervous organization."

I shall not speak about the eleven different Hebrew and Greek words that are in the Bible translated wine; suffice it to say that, as the Holy Spirit certainly knows the proper use of these various words, different substances are certainly referred to by these words.

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The Bible speaks approvingly of unfermented wine, but in a condemnatory way of fermented wine.

But does some wiseacre say, "According to Webster, the juice of the grape is not wine till fermented, but is called must." The juice of the grape, as pressed by the butler's hand into the goblet of the king, is called wine by God Almighty. Moreover, the Bible speaks of "wine in the presses" and "wine in the cluster." I will leave it for you to answer whether Webster or the all-wise God understood the best use of words.

10. Do you make the excuse, "Christians in the past have drunk liquor." Good people no doubt drank in the days of less enlightenment; but you cannot, in this day of advanced light, plead ignorance, or in any way excuse yourself for drinking. "The times of such ignorance God winked at."

It would be blasphemy to assert that Jesus countenances the manufacture, sale and use of our wines and liquors. You should act as you believe Christ would do if He were in your place.

11. Do you think to excuse yourself for not being a total abstainer and prohibitionist by saying, "I do not profess to be a Christian"? Beloved, do not thus try to deceive yourself. What would be wrong for you if you were a Christian, cannot be right for you as you are. The divine moral standard, "Abstain from all appearance of evil," applies to saint and sinner. Let me ask you to begin to-day to do as you believe you would do if you were a Christian; and you will not only be a thorough temperance and moral person, but soon you will also be a real Christian. God's promise declares, "To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God."

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Prohibition.

——: XXV :——

Precept: Gal. vi. 7-9. Praise: Psa. cxvi. 17, 18.
Promise: Isa. xii. 3. Prayer: 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17.

IT is sometimes said, "A prohibitory liquor law cannot be enforced." I can bear personal testimony in refutation of that assertion. I passed a prohibitory law against all kinds of liquor more than twenty-five years ago, and that law has been carried out to this day without a single violation. I call upon you to pass a similar prohibitory law for yourself, and personally prove that prohibition can be enforced. If every person would pass such a prohibitory law, we would have general prohibition.

In this chapter I shall mention a few important reasons why every Christian and lover of self and humanity should be a staunch total abstainer and ardent prohibitionist.

1. For your own safety and good. By abstinence you will be benefited bodily, mentally and morally. It is safe for everyone to abstain, but safe for none to tamper with strong drink. You never heard one say, "I never drank, and am sorry for it. What might I have been if I had used liquor?" But who has not heard the drunkard's remorseful regret?

At sixteen years of age I said, "I will not taste liquor again, or I may in a few years be drunk like other young men I see around me." I shuddered at the thought of getting drunk.

I would put a red light, the danger-signal, before every bar-room, saloon, beer-garden, and wherever liquor is sold or used. Beware, there is danger.

Dr. Guthrie said: "I have four good reasons for

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being an abstainer: my head is clearer, my health is better, my heart is lighter, my purse is heavier."

2. For the protection of your family and friends.

Can you teach your boy not to drink, and then vote to license a place where he may be taught to drink?

A drunkard saw an inscription, "Wife or whiskey; the babes or the bottle; heaven or hell." He nailed it up, looked at it, ceased to drink, and forever after was sober, and lived for wife, babes and home.

I heard John B. Gough say, "My father drank all his life and never got drunk; but I, his son, thinking to follow in his footsteps, became a drunkard." Will you, in view of time and eternity, set an example even to your own family and friends that may lead to their utter ruin? You cannot do so and be guiltless.

A gentleman being asked to give his influence on the temperance side, lightly answered, "Liquor can do me no harm, or my family either, for I have no boys." In less than two weeks he had sad reason to change his mind, as his wife and daughter were both killed in a railroad disaster caused by the blunder of an engineer that was drunk. So live that your principles cannot possibly bring disgrace or disaster to your loved ones.

3. That you may not be chargeable with being foolish. All admit that liquor makes men fools.

As two men were returning home after a night's debauch, the orb of day appeared. One said, "What a beautiful sun!" The other replied, "That's not the sun; that's the moon." After parleying, as they met another man they said to him, "Friend, there's a 'spute here. Is that the sun or the moon?" With a hand on each, he tried to steady himself, for he was as drunk as they, and after a moment's reflection said, "Excuse me, friends, I'm a stranger in this place." Learn to hate that which makes such fools of men.

The Bible says that anybody that tampers with strong drink is a fool. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is

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not wise." (Prov. xx. 1.) In Proverbs the wise and the fool are put in contrast, so that not to be wise is to be a fool. Be wise and let drink alone.

4. That your example may be safe for everybody. A moderate drinker, so-called, does more harm by his example than half a dozen drunkards. Few people of respectability will drink with topers, but they will with tipplers and those regarded as moderate drinkers.

The Catawba Indians used to poison arrow tips with rattlesnake venom, and place these point upward in the path to destroy their enemies as they, barefooted, pursued them. If you drink liquor, however moderately, you go in a path that others, following your example, will certainly be destroyed for time and eternity.

An old countryman who was a church member, after coming to our country, on being informed that his having beer brought to his house was injuring his influence for Christ, made answer, "I have hitherto been in the habit of drinking beer as other people drink water, but no more beer for me or my family; my influence for Christ is of more importance to me than my beer." We honor such a man. Dare any professing Christian, or even moralist, do otherwise?

5. That your principles, practices and prayers may harmonize.

All tavern-keepers, saloonatics, brewers, distillers, bartenders and liquor-store men PREY as they vote. Let every Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Episcopalian, Congregationalist, yea, every Christian vote as you PRAY.

6. That your life may be consistent with a Christian profession.

The professing Christian who feels at home in a bar-room would feel very much out of place in heaven. How would the inscription, "Holiness unto the Lord," look on a beer-keg, whiskey flask, wine decanter, or over a bar? When the world is converted every bar will be closed. Show that you are

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now converted by seeking to close every bar you can. God has promised a blessing to those who give "a cup of cold water in His Name;" but says, "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink."

7. That you may exhibit the spirit of the gospel of Christ. Paul said, "If meat (offered to idols) maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh forevermore. that I make not my brother to stumble." (1 Cor. viii. 13.) Listen again to the words of Scripture: "It is good not to drink wine whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is made weak." (Rom. xiv. 21.) Those principles are safe and Christian.

8. For the sake of our country and the brotherhood of man. Drink is the disgrace of the nations, and causes three-fourths of the poverty, profligacy, murder and crime.

One case of hydrophobia will arouse us to kill every unmuzzled dog found in the streets. Shall we not bestir ourselves to muzzle the liquor traffic that is killing so many in our country?

Timour or Tamerlane, on July 9th, 1401, by his army, piled in the public places of the city of Bagdad 90,000 slaughtered human beings, and viewed his dire work with great delight. We cry, "The wretch!" But let us remember that those who have been slaughtered by strong drink year by year would make a vaster pile; yet some look on the ravages which liquor is yearly making with complacency or indifference. Can anyone of us in this 19th century sanction the liquor traffic by our silence or practice, or by participating in the business, without being as bad or worse than Tamerlane? Are you free?

9. That you may show that you are for Christ and His Church, and not for Satan and his kingdom.

The legalized liquor traffic is the greatest hindrance that the Church of Christ has. It is certainly Satan's organized church. Alcohol may be called the spirit of the devil. Every bar-room, gin-palace, saloon and liquor store is a church of Satan. Everyone that sells

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liquor or advocates the granting of the liquor licenses is a minister of the devil. There are few villages, towns or cities where Satan has not more churches and ministers than Christ. As we build churches to save men, shall we favor licensing houses to destroy them? Satan's churches hold protracted meetings the whole year round, day and night, and many converts are made, and old sinners confirmed. No wonder the world is not saved with such an opposing church. Let me ask as did Moses: "Who is on the Lord's side?"

10. That you may be in harmony with the Lord's prayer. Apply this model prayer to the liquor traffic:

"Our Father Who art in heaven." Here we recognize the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, which strong drink ignores and tends to destroy.

"Hallowed be Thy Name." The liquor traffic causes the sacred Name of God to be blasphemed.

"Thy kingdom come." Nothing hinders the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth as does strong drink.

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We know that evil is not licensed or practised in heaven; then, everyone who means this prayer will give his vote and influence to prohibit the liquor evil, and encourage total abstinence.

"Give us this day our daily bread." Strong drink robs wives and children of bread; for while the husband is out at the saloon the wife is out of bread and fuel.

"Forgive us our trespasses." When we consider our past apathy, or complicity, with reference to the legalized liquor traffic and drinking customs, that are breaking hearts, despoiling homes, and sending tens of thousands to death and hell every year, we should promise amendment, and earnestly pray, "Father, forgive us."

"Lead us not into temptation." It is mockery to pray thus and then tamper with strong drink, that is

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such a temptation to millions, and so, by example, become a tempter to others.

"But deliver us from evil." To offer this prayer and yet sanction the liquor traffic, or do nothing, by voice or vote, in favor of prohibiting the manufacture and sale of that gigantic evil, strong drink, is worse than mockery. Let us join with every true Churchman in praying, "From all such inconsistency, wickedness, hypocrisy and profanity, good Lord, deliver us."

"For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever." As Christians, we belong to His kingdom, and we are the channel through which His power is shown in putting down sin, and by which His glory is made manifest in bringing about righteousness.

"Amen." Let each of us intelligently, heartily and practically pray, "Amen." So shall we, in the home and church, in political campaigns, council chambers and Houses of Parliament, always and everywhere stand up for total abstinence and prohibition.

11. In view of your responsibility now and at the judgment, do what you can, by vote and influence, to stop the manufacture, sale and use of liquor.

The liquor traffic makes men suicides and murderers. In Canada and the United States one dies every eight minutes, as the result of the drink traffic; hence, they who sell or countenance the liquor traffic are aiding Satan in dragging one immortal spirit to death and hell every six minutes, year in and year out. This is appalling.

There is no neutral position that we can take, as this is a moral question. God said: "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty." (Judges v. 23.) What had Meroz done? They had done nothing, when they should have been helpers together with God. If any of us think to take a neutral position when prohibition or temperance is

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before us, we put ourselves in the same position as Meroz, and shall we hope to escape the curse of God?

Nine-tenths of the murders are committed by persons when under the influence of liquor. Booth could not shoot Lincoln until he got another glass at a licensed saloon. Liquor sold lawfully means Abraham Lincoln lawfully murdered.

John Lewis Payne, by persuasion and force, gave his wife whiskey, gin and brandy, for two and one-half months, and thus kept her drunk continually until she died. The English court decided it a case of slow poisoning, found Payne guilty of manslaughter, and sentenced him to imprisonment for life. Therefore, to license the liquor traffic is virtually to license wholesale and retail manslaughter.

There will be an inquest at the judgment for those killed and eternally destroyed by drink. Can any person hope to be acquitted that, by example, voice, vote or silence, has sanctioned drinking or the license system? I fear the blood of souls will be found upon the skirts of not only many so-called moralists and church members, but even some of the appointed ministers of Christ. Let us each pray, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God," and arouse to duty.

I call upon every boy and man to stand up for total abstinence and prohibition.

I appeal to every woman and girl to be out and out for temperance, in view of your influence over your husband, or son, or brother, or gentleman friend. Let me give you a striking incident.

A wealthy and educated young man, whom Gough tells about, who had been a drunkard, but had for years been reformed, became engaged to a young lady of one of the first families in the town.

A few days before the one appointed for the marriage, when at an evening party, the young man had again and again declined to take wine.

As other young ladies mentioned that he had refused to drink with them, his affianced confidently

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said, "He will not refuse me." She proffered him a glass of wine, but he politely declined it, and requested, "Do not ask me to drink." Instead of desisting, thinking to show her superior powers of persuasion, she again urged him, as she, holding the wine in her delicate hand, and, with a fascinating smile, said, "Why, Harry, you surely will not refuse to drink with me; take just a little anyway."

The little was taken. The old appetite was aroused. A few minutes later he left the house and next morning was found drunk in a low bar-room.

Weeks passed away, but every day found him intoxicated, till soon he was known in the town as a common drunkard.

The intended bride put away the bridal attire and shut herself up to her remorse and shame. The parents, keenly feeling the humiliation and disgrace, and hoping to help their daughter forget her grief, sold out and removed to another town many miles away. A few years after, as they were seated in the parlor of their new home, a strange noise was heard on the verandah. The father opened the front door, when a drunken man, reeling into the hall, fell upon the floor. The wife and daughter, rushing to the scene, exclaimed, "What is the matter? Who can it be?" A moment later, as the young woman gazed into the upturned face of the expiring man, she wailed out the heart-piercing cry, "It is Harry, and he is dying. O God, forgive me for my sin."

Her words proved but too true. The drunken man was Harry, and in a few moments *he was dead.*

No person can describe or even imagine her grief and remorse as she thought, "I murdered him with a glass of wine."

Will you not now say, "God helping me, I will by my practice, voice and vote oppose drinking and the liquor traffic?"

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A Talk to Church Members.

——: XXVI :——

Promise : Isa. xl. 11. Praise : 1 Thess. ii. 19.
Precept : Phil. i. 27. Prayer : Matt. vi. 11.

I DESIRE to give a few pointers to *Church members*, especially with reference to their relation to revivals and new converts.

1. Possess and retain the spirit that is yours during a revival. Let not your fervor subside. Paul says: "Stir up the gift of God in thee." That is, as you stir up the fire when it is ceasing to burn briskly, so keep the fire of love and devotion ever burning.

Do not be a mere revival-meeting Christian, but be a Christian six days in the week besides Sundays, including election times. Do not think you must lose your present fervor any more than Paul or John did.

2. Take a fresh start as a Christian. More will be expected of you now than formerly. Lay aside everything that is small, mean, tricky, selfish, wicked or inconsistent.

Whatever your life has been, if in the future you prove that you mean in all things to do right, you will find the Church and the world, as well as Christ, ready to give you a fresh start. Keep out of old ruts.

3. Do not be a babe or dwarf in Christian experience, requiring to be fed with a silver spoon, pampered and cared for, but be strong, and so help others. (Heb. v. 12-14.)

4. Set a proper example to the new converts. They will naturally expect you to be consistent. Great is your responsibility and privilege. Be like John, "a *burning* and a *shining* light."

5. Pray for the new converts. I was greatly helped in my early Christian life, and drawn to love the

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Church, by hearing our minister and the older members so frequently pray for the "lambs of the flock."

6. Stand by your minister and the work of God in your church and community, as the ministers and Christians stand by us and the work in the special services. I have been a pastor, and so know how to sympathize with the ministers and appreciate their work.

Some mistakenly ascribe all the success of certain revival meetings to evangelists, who are but as the generals. No wonder that with an army of Christian ministers as captains, and with their several companies all united, God gives us victory in every place.

You may by words of criticism, disparagement or faint praise, unintentionally hinder the minister and others in their work. Be careful and help one another. They may, like yourself, not be perfect or up to your ideal, but so much the greater reason is there for your sympathy and help.

7. Do not disparage or misrepresent the work of revival preachers, evangelists or anybody else. Be thou faithful and *true*.

As some are color-blind, so others are convert-blind. A returned missionary from India, having told of the hundreds of converts to Christianity in that land, a wicked man denied his statement and said, "I have been in India for ten years, and I never saw one convert." The missionary asked him, "Did you ever see a lion in India?" He answered, "Yes, many of them." "Well," said the missionary, "I have been in India for twenty years, and I never saw a lion; but I have seen many converts. You have been looking for lions, but I was looking for converts."

A year after a gracious revival, a prominent public man stated in the papers that not *five* of all the converts could now be found in all the Churches. A few weeks later, at a large religious gathering, the leader of the meeting asked all who had been converted in the late revival, and were *now church members*, to

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stand up. Literally, hundreds rose, and so the untruth was exposed. New converts soon become full-fledged Christians, and leading members of the Churches, and so are not recognized as recent converts.

8. Sympathize with the new converts. Show by your face, hand-shake, voice and general conduct that you love them, and have confidence in them. You might better slap them in the face than say, in a doubtful way, "I hope you will stick to it." Talk not of backsliding, but of persevering. Do not expect them to be much better than the older members. Keep the Church warm, lest the "babes in Christ" be chilled. Do not put the brakes on new converts, but be pleased with their zeal.

9. Keep and care for the converts. We should be careful to deal with them, not as so many cattle or sheep, but as those who are immortal, the dear-bought purchase of the Saviour's blood. Do not expect the pastor alone to look after all the converts. He has his part of the work to do, and you have yours. As in the family and flock, the babes, lambs and weak ones absorb most thought and care, so let it be in the Church.

When the pastor and his helpers look after the flock, the "sheep" and "lambs" usually remain in safety, grow strong and increase. If the members of the flock go astray there is responsibility somewhere.

Some wickedly and complacently say, "If twenty-five per cent. stand firm, it will be cause for rejoicing." If *only* twenty-five or even fifty per cent. stand true, it will be cause for humiliation and repentance on the part of the Church, as it will show sinful neglect and infanticide.

Persons should be received into church membership *as soon as possible* after they profess to be converted. "The Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved." (Acts ii. 47.) This is an example for us to follow.

As babes not only need food, but proper food, so

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it is all important that at the beginning of a Christian life not only food, but suitable spiritual food, shall be given. Pastors should not only preach *one sermon* after a revival to the new converts, but should from week to week make particular reference to them and have his addresses specially adapted to their needs. Jesus says, "Feed my lambs."

I trust this book may be the means of prompting many to nourish and develop the young converts.

Let me give you a striking and instructive incident bearing on this point. In a gathering of ministers in Boston, a certain minister said, "I do not believe in evangelistic meetings, for when Mr. Moody was here some years ago I received 103 names of inquirers whose names were taken as preferring my church, and now they are all missing from my church *except two.*" One of the other pastors replied, "I have a singular coincidence to relate. I received from that same union evangelistic meeting 103 cards, giving names and addresses of inquirers, and *all of them* are now faithful members of my church, *except two.*"

In a town where we witnessed a great revival, one pastor got wrangling with his people about old difficulties, and so they never fed or cared for the lambs, and then some *few* said of the evangelists, "Their converts do not stand." Three other churches in the same town not only kept, with very few exceptions, the hundreds brought into their churches at the same time, but the work of conversion continued.

In a city in Ontario three hundred and fifty united with one church at the close of our union meetings. After five years they reported that, while many had removed to other parts of earth and some to heaven, seventy-five per cent. were there still as accredited members. Thank God, similar care will produce similar results. Be faithful to the flock of Christ.

10. Restore "in the spirit of meekness" any that may err or fall away. (Gal. vi. 1.)

Every church should carry an ambulance for the

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sick and wounded, and have a hospital ward with skilled nurses. Let none die of neglect. The Great Physician can cure every one.

The Church is as a mother, and so should nourish, teach and train every babe in Christ. Does a mother, whose child is learning to walk, complain when it stumbles, "*I knew you would fall.*" No, she picks it up, and encourages and helps it by her winsome voice and loving hand. As you will answer at the judgment, do not lightly say, "Just as I expected," or "I knew he would not stick to it." Many have been disheartened by such remarks, that might have, like others, been restored by *prompt*, Christ-like treatment.

Many would have let Peter go to ruin when he so sadly sinned; but Christ, by His loving look, personal message, and confiding words, restored him to renewed faith and love, made him the leading disciple, and for over thirty years, yea, till he died as a martyr to the faith, he remained true to Christ.

Those restored, like Peter, often make the truest and best Christians. Jesus says, "Learn of me." If we follow His example, the erring disciples may be restored, kept and made useful.

11. Encourage every dispirited one. A brave fireman scaling a ladder to rescue a child, faltered, as the flames were bursting out around him, when the captain shouted, "Cheer him, boys." The hearty cheer that followed inspired him afresh, and soon the child was rescued and presented to its mother. So let us cheer every faltering, erring or discouraged one, and we "shall save many a soul from death."

12. Get the converts speaking, praying and working. This is a great safeguard. A regular weekly converts' meeting is helpful.

13. Continue every week to pray for and seek the conversion of those still unsaved, as we do in special meetings, so shall a true revival be perennial in your church, and you shall win many a star for your crown of rejoicing.

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A Talk About Joining the Church.

——: XXVII :——

Promise : Heb. xii. 22, 23.	Praise · Psa. xxvii. 4.
Precept : Phil. i. 27.	Prayer : Matt. vi. 10.

AS "birds of a feather flock together," so it is natural for Christians to unite in flocks or Churches.

That one who says, "I have no preference for any Church," has not much love for all of them. We rightly have preferences for our home, country, government and Church.

Every Christian, adult and youth, should be a recognized member of some branch of Christ's Church.

1. Do you say, "I fear the responsibility of joining the Church?" Rather fear the responsibility of not doing so.

2. Do you say, "I will do as much good out of the Church as in it?" You will do harm by setting a bad example, and some will consider you a crank.

3. Are you afraid that you might disgrace the Church? No danger of such as you. Those who do this have no fear about it. You will honor Christ.

4. Do you think that you are not good enough? You may not be as good as Paul, or some you know. The Church is Christ's school. Join with others, and, as you see those farther advanced than you are, think what, by the teaching of Christ, you may yet become. (Matt. xi. 29.)

5. Do you object, "There are so many in the Church who are inconsistent?" Will you, therefore, stay outside?

There are many chartered steamship lines crossing to Liverpool, so there are different evangelical

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Churches. You had better take passage by any one of them, though there may be cattle on board, than attempt to cross in your own little skiff.

6. Do you imagine the rules of the Church to be too binding? The Church rules should not be read or thought of as harsh and exacting, but as loving, Scriptural safeguards. The rules serve a similar purpose to the locks and bolts on your house: they are not designed to interfere with your liberty as a true Christian, but to *protect* you and yours from sin and the encroachments of improper persons.

7. Do you say, "I will wait till I see how I shall hold out?" Joining the Church is like starting housekeeping. Imagine a young bride saying, "I will wait till I see how I will hold out before I consent to set up housekeeping."

I united with the Church the very morning I was converted, though tempted to wait to see how I would hold out. Do not start with a *doubt*, or you will, like others thus blundering, be sure to fail.

Having accepted Christ, like the Romans when they invaded Britain, burn every ship behind you, and, thinking not of defeat but of victory in His name, commit yourself to His Church, and then sooner die than prove untrue, so shall you succeed.

8. Do you object, "There are so many Churches?" In *name* there are many, but in the great essential doctrines they are one. The creed of Christendom is (1) Ruin by sin (Rom. iii. 23); (2) Redemption by Christ (Eph. i. 7); (3) Regeneration by the Spirit (John iii. 5); (4) Rewards (Matt. xvi. 27).

Christians are all one "family in heaven and earth." (Eph. iii. 15.) As, however, in the one family we have different branches, and for convenience several given names, such as John, Mary, Thomas and Annie, but the one surname, so in the one Church of Christ we have several branches, and for convenience, different given names, such as Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist,

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Episcopalian, but the one surname, in which we all glory, is Christian. (Acts xi. 26.)

9. Do you say, "I hope to see the day when the denominations shall be organically united?" We now see the union of which Paul spoke, which is more important: "The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and "the unity of the faith" (Eph. iv. 3-13); and the prayer of Jesus is being realized more and more: "That they all may be one." (John xvii. 21.)

The various Churches are like so many regiments in the same army. Christ is our mighty Captain, and we are commissioned to conquer this world.

The Churches are like several lights, but, while the lamps are a little different in form, the light is one; and, though the rays cross and recross one another, they combine to expel from the world the darkness of ignorance, superstition, bigotry and sin.

10. Do not think and speak of the Church rather than Christ. A man, coming from service, said, "The minister preached about the Church, and said, '*She* enjoins this, and *she* enjoins that,' etc. I heard much about what *she* enjoins; but I thought I would like to hear what *He* had to say." Hear and obey His voice.

11. Do not depend upon the Church and its sacraments for salvation, instead of upon Christ? (1 John v. 12.) Rev. Mr. Haslem, that noted Episcopalian clergyman and evangelist, in his book, "From Death unto Life," shows that many do this. Do not you be one to make this fatal mistake.

12. Do not underestimate the Church. The organized Church, with all its defects, is God's appointed means of saving the world.

Some so-called "Plymouth Brethren" speak against the denominations, and thus unsettle, proselyte, and turn away from the churches weak, ignorant or soured church members. Many of them are good people, but their zeal is worthy of a better cause. They are

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divided and subdivided again and again among themselves. Their doctrines are largely antinomian.

Do not argue with them, but pity them. Turn a deaf ear to such; else, being a novice, or not well posted, you may be for a time drawn away by them, and then, not being able to become as narrow, bigoted and censorious as they, you will, as many others have, find yourself adrift at sea.

13. Remember that the Church does not belong to *you*, or the *minister*, or the *session*, or the *board*, or the *deacons*, but it belongs to *Christ;* therefore, do not seek to "run" the Church, but let Christ use you to help His Church.

Do not show such little appreciation of your church membership as to even *say*, "I'll leave the Church," because you believe the minister, or some of the members, did not treat you rightly, or act in a Christian way. I know one who calmly said, "The Church is the Lord's house, and I am His son; hence, I will not leave my Father's house though the hired man does not treat me properly."

It is not a good practice for sons and daughters to *run away* from home. I could give sad instances of those who have thus left the Church, and have forever regretted it, and also weakened or destroyed their influence for good, even though they returned.

14. If you ever change your membership from one Church to another, never do so in haste, or from un-Christlike motives; but let it be done in the spirit of Christ, and so under His direction. Talmage said, "If the Presbyterian Church ever turns me out, I will apply to join the Methodists forthwith."

Though the Church is not perfect, do not speak against your own church, or other churches either. The unconverted and bigots will do enough of that work.

15. When you go from one place to another, do not fail to take a certificate of membership, and present it the first Sabbath to the minister, not waiting to be asked

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for it. A sea captain said, "I fasten to a wharf in every port."

As a little girl was rummaging in her mother's trunk, she found an old church letter, and holding it up she called out, "O, mamma, mamma, I have found your religion in your trunk." There are many who might be similarly addressed. Have you a church letter? Hunt it up and present it without delay.

Some make the great blunder of neglecting to ask the minister for a certificate of membership when they are removing from one place to another, and so they drift away, not only from the Church, but also from Christ.

It would be well for every pastor, when a member is removing from his charge, to not only give a certificate of membership, but also, by letter, request the minister where he is going, to look after him.

Have Christ enshrined in the heart, your name inscribed on the church register, and let your life be devoted to the Saviour, so shall you insure that your name shall be found "in the Lamb's Book of Life." (Rev. xxi. 27.)

16. The opportunity to unite with the Church is not often enough extended. Instead of it merely being done after special services, and before the quarterly or half-yearly communion, it should be done, as in churches I know, weekly or monthly the year round.

A good time to invite persons who wish to unite with the Church, by letter, or on confession of faith, to come to the front, is while the hymn preceding the sermon is being sung. If persons come, *well*, and, if not, no harm is done, but good, as it keeps the true object of the Church before the minds of the minister, the members and outsiders.

A successful Presbyterian minister said to me, "Whenever I, in my pastoral work, or in church services, find a person who wishes to unite with the church, I forthwith arrange to have that one meet

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with the pastor and elders prior to his or her public reception on the Sabbath." I commend this plan to other pastors.

I know a Methodist minister who, though a comparative failure in special meetings, is so faithful in his daily pastoral work, that, by judiciously speaking to men, women and youth about becoming Christians and joining the Church, he has a large increase of faithful members every year.

A candidate for church membership should not be examined as a theological student, or as a witness in the box.

The only essential questions are: (1) Do you trust and love Jesus Christ as your Saviour? (2) Do you purpose, by His grace, to obey Him? (John xiv. 21-23.)

Dare any minister, or church court, assume the awful responsibility of rejecting one that is believed to be the child of God because of *youth* or lack of *theoretical* knowledge of doctrine. (Matt. xviii. 5, 6.) Had those at Pentecost been subjected to such questions as are sometimes asked, not many of the three thousand would have been received.

17. Are you not yet converted? Do not wait for a special revival meeting, or for a more "convenient season," but without delay "cease to do evil; learn to do well;" accept Christ as your Saviour, and unite with the Church.

18. Are you now a Christian? Then, be a member of some branch of the Church of Christ, and so live and abide in the Church on earth that you may live forever in the Church triumphant in heaven.

19. Are you a parent? Then, as you desire to have all your children with you in heaven, be sure to have every one of them with you in the Church now. Do not make the fatal mistake of leaving them out of the Church till they are grown up; but have the lambs folded early. I wish for you and yours that you may be an unbroken family in Christ's kingdom on earth and in heaven.

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How the World may be Converted.

——: XXVIII :——

Precept : Mark xvi. 15. Praise : 1 Thess. ii. 19.
Promise : Psa. cxxvi. 6. Prayer : Psa. li. 12, 13.

IF I could say something in this chapter by which one hundred would be led to accept Christ as their Saviour, I would greatly rejoice; but if I could say something that would be used of God to induce one hundred Christians to consecrate themselves to seek to win others for Christ, I would rejoice much more, for the result would be the conversion of many hundreds. If, however, I could say that which, by God's blessing, shall decide many to accept Christ, and many more to personally endeavor to win others for Christ, my joy shall be full.

If those who read this chapter will carry out the teaching of the Scripture referred to, the result will be the conversion of many. If Christians generally, in all the Churches, will practise the lessons here taught, the entire world will soon be converted to Christ.

Do you ask, "What is the Scripture referred to?" It is the miracle of the loaves and fishes. It is a significant fact that this is the only one of Christ's miracles that is recorded in all four of the gospels. By this miracle five thousand men, beside women and children, were fed. The whole number of men, women and children may be computed to have been about eight thousand persons.

Christ designed by this wonderful miracle not only to feed the multitudes then on the mountain, but also to teach and illustrate how His Gospel is to be extended, and the Bread of life distributed to the world. I trust that the reading of this chapter may stimulate many to do personal Christian work.

Let us consider the incidents in connection with the miracle, and learn and put the lessons into practice.

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1. The disciples request Jesus to "*send the multitude away, that they may go and get victuals.*" From this, we learn that the first thing necessary to the conversion of others is that we *think* of the sad spiritual condition of the unconverted till we become *impressed* with their needs, and are led to *pray* to Jesus for them, and *plan* as to how their spiritual wants may be supplied. Surely, as they thought of the temporal supply for the body, we should much more think of the spiritual and eternal needs of our friends and neighbors.

2. Jesus directed, "*Give ye them to eat.*" These words impress us, that Jesus designs to employ human agents to carry out His great purposes of grace. I would rather be a man than an angel, for I am more highly favored than even Gabriel. No angel is privileged to direct any child or adult how to be saved; but that honor is offered to you and me. Shall we not appreciate our exalted work, and be as diligent in doing it as we know angels would be if they were honored with the privilege that is ours?

3. The disciples said, "*We have here but five loaves and two fishes.*" That excuse seems plausible, and especially so when we consider how small the loaves were in those days. They were very little larger than our tea biscuits. In Luke xi. 5, 6, one is represented as asking a friend to borrow three loaves for a visitor's supper. So you see the five loaves and two fishes would only be a square meal for two men, or an ordinary lunch for a boy. We can, therefore, hardly wonder at the disciples' reply.

How like them we are with reference to spiritual work. We look at the littleness of our supply, and so excuse ourselves. So many say: "I am not good enough;" "I feel my weakness;" "I am so diffident;" or, "I haven't enough religion for myself." Do you ever think or speak thus?

When the Master says, Do this or that, do not excuse yourself. "God hath chosen the weak things

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of the world to confound the things which are mighty." Your weakness gives the Lord the greater opportunity to display His power. A promise of necessary help to the obedient is always included in Christ's command.

4. Jesus said to the disciples, "*Bring them hither to Me.*" These words teach the necessity of consecrating what we have and are, be it little or much, to Him and His service. Success in Christian work depends much more upon our consecration than upon mere intellectual and literary talent. Experience and observation confirm this truth.

Sometimes persons who *think* they have superior talent *imagine* that they can of themselves preach, teach, and do other spiritual and Christian work; and signally fail, because they neglect to obey Christ's injunction, "*Tarry ye, until ye be endued with power from on high.*" Many others, feeling their own insufficiency, and yet recognizing Christ's commission to them to seek the lost, *consecrate* the little they have and are to the service of Christ, and, *depending on Him*, have success in their work.

When Mr. Moody was in England, before any great success in Christian work had been his, a friend said to him, "Mr. Moody, it remains to be proven what God can do with a person who is fully consecrated to His service." This sentence lingered with Mr. Moody, until he resolved: "I, by the grace of God, will prove what God can do with me." The world has seen the result of this consecration.

What is your resolution? The Lord asks, "Who is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?" And again: "Who will go for us?" Let each of us know the baptism of the Spirit, as did Isaiah, so shall we be empowered and disposed for service, and say with Isaiah, "Here am I; send me." (Isaiah vi. 8.)

5. Jesus then said to His disciples: "*Make them sit down by fifties in a company.*" He had the people

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arranged in systematic order—twenty-five in this row, and twenty-five facing them, then twenty-five with their backs to these and twenty-five facing them, and so on till all were seated as at a number of long tables, with fifty at a table. Christ, in adopting this plan, had evidently a threefold design: (1) To make it *convenient* to serve the food; (2) That the people might express their *desire;* and (3) That they might confess their *faith* in Jesus to supply the supper. From this we learn the appropriateness of asking those who desire to become Christians to not only hold up the hand or stand up for prayer, but also to come to the front seats, vacated for seekers, or to go into an inquiry-room. The objects are the same as were Christ's, namely: (1) For the *convenience* of seekers and workers; (2) As an evidence of their *desire* and willingness to accept Christ; and (3) As a confession of their *faith* that Christ will save them.

Suppose that when John asked one to be seated the reply had been given, "Why cannot I get my supper standing here as well as by being seated there?" John would have lovingly replied: "My friend, you do not want your supper very much, or you would not refuse such a reasonable request." So, those who refuse to come to the front seats or an inquiry-room, as seekers, show that they are not very anxious or fully decided to become Christians. Let us, as pastors, evangelists and Christian workers, learn from Christ to invite seekers after Christ to confess their desire and willingness to be saved by standing up for a moment, or by holding up the hand, and by coming into the centre seats or inquiry-room. The unconverted should not refuse to publicly avow their decision, but should thus seek the Lord "with all the heart," and confess Christ "before men." By doing so they shall, according to promise, assuredly find Christ and be confessed by Him in heaven.

6. After the people were seated, "*Jesus took the five loaves and two fishes and blessed them, and brake*

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and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude." How do you suppose the loaves and fishes were distributed? Certainly the disciples did not give to each person; for, had they done so, each disciple would have had about six hundred to supply. We know that one waiter in the two hours, from three to five o'clock, could not furnish with two courses six hundred hungry people, and also clear up the tables.

The work was evidently done in this way: As the thousands of people were in companies of fifty and rows of twenty-five, all that each disciple had to do was to break to the one at the end of each rank, and direct that one to break to the one next him, and so on up the line till all had received; just as waiters at large gatherings or picnics hand a plate of bread or cake to one at the end of the table and say: "Help yourself and pass it on." By this means not only had the disciples the privilege of receiving and then breaking to others; but each of those in the companies had a similar privilege.

The Lord Jesus Christ, I believe, here teaches us the way that the Bread of life is to be distributed, and the Gospel extended in all nations, till the world shall be saved. In this world we are arranged in families, in classes, in companies, or, shall I say, in ranks. God designs that every minister of the Gospel should break the Bread of life to those at the end of a number of ranks, and also seek to induce each one who receives to break to others. Then everyone that is a Christian should act up to his privilege and duty by endeavoring to break the Bread of life to those about him.

If this method were generally carried out, persons on every hand would be converted, and soon the millions of earth would accept Christ as their Saviour and King. But not more than one out of twenty professing Christians even makes an effort to win others for Christ; while, as ministers and Sabbath School teachers, many of us depend too much upon

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our public preaching and teaching on the Sabbath, and neglect daily personal appeals and hand-to-hand work. Sinners will not be converted in large numbers, and the world will never be won to Christ, till, as ministers and people, we waken up to adopt Christ's method as taught in this miracle.

To the extent any minister and people adopt this method, to that extent are they successful. Let every pastor, parent and Sabbath School teacher, yea, *every Christian*, feel responsible for seeking to win his or her flock, family, class and neighbors for Christ; or, in other words, to break the Bread of life to his or her row of twenty-five; or, at least, to *one other* person in the row. If we will act as the Lord here teaches us, young and old will be converted on every hand; not only during a few weeks of special meetings, but daily or weekly the year round.

No one can be excused from doing his or her part in the great work of breaking the Bread of life. Suppose Peter, as he held the little bit of bread between his two fingers and thumb, had said, "Why, Lord, this is not enough for myself," and so had neglected to break to others, what would have been the result? Many would have gone unfed, unless others had come in to make up for his delinquency. So, if you excuse yourself as you say, "I have not enough piety myself," "Others can do it better than I can," "I feel my weakness," or, "I am not talented," some may perish through your neglect who might have been saved had you done your duty. What you need is to think not of self, but of *others*, until you become impressed and absorbed about their spiritual need, and then, believing that God can use even you though you are weak, *consecrate yourself* to Him *for service*, thinking not, "What can I do?" but, "What can God do through me?"

7. The bread increased in the hands of those who broke and distributed to others. I think I see James going forth with a *little bit* between his two fingers

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and thumb; and, after he breaks to one at the end of the rank, he has to use his other two fingers to hold the increased supply. The persons at the ends of the ranks, seeing the increase resulting from breaking to others, need not to be told twice to give to those next them; and so we see each distributing to the one by his side, and in consequence each has more than before he broke, and soon we behold the whole multitude feeding on the bread and fish.

As it was here, so it is with us; our piety and talents increase as we use what we have. All may find this true, for there are no exceptions to this rule. Why is it that so many people have so little piety and grace? It is because they have not broken to others. They likely never will have more until they begin to obey Christ. Those who use what they have never fail to receive an increase of grace. It cannot be otherwise. The Divine order is, "Grace for grace.' That is, we receive more grace as we use what we have. We have the assurance, "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."

Have you very little piety now, and is what you have stale and dry? Let me entreat you to get a *fresh blessing* from the Lord to-day, and then begin at once to break to others, and continue to do so, and you will assuredly experience that God will give you an abundant increase.

8. We are told concerning the multitude: "*They did all eat,*" every man, woman and child. We are thus impressed that every youth and adult may receive Christ, "the Bread of Life," and be saved.

In other days children in our homes were not allowed to come to the table, when guests were present, until the adults were supplied. So, in former years, boys and girls were not invited to join the Church until they were from fourteen to eighteen. I am glad that there is a great change in this our day; as, in every well-regulated home, children are at the table, no matter if Queen Victoria or the President were

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dining in the home, so now, in every aggressive Church, the children, and boys and girls are cordially invited and received into the membership of the Church, and invited to the Lord's table. There is room for improvement still in all our churches. We want all the boys and girls to come.

Beloved, have you personally received Christ? It is your life to do so. Jesus says, "I am the living Bread; if any man eat of this Bread he shall live forever."

9. We read again: "*They were all filled.*" So there is a fulness for all who will receive it. Many are refusing blessings and *starving* their spiritual natures. Others are *stinting* themselves and feeding on crumbs when they might know the fulness. Some are trying to feel at peace before they receive Christ, "the Bread of Life"; and many are neglecting to exercise themselves in Christian work and saying, "O my leanness," when, as Moody says, they should lament, "O my laziness." Work is necessary to create an appetite. We read, "If any would not work, neither should he eat." Let us all see our privilege to know "the fulness of blessing," and go to work till an appetite is aroused, and then obey the invitation, "Ask and receive, that your joy may be full."

10. We are told that, after the supper was over, "*there was taken up of fragments twelve baskets.*" We saw the disciples starting out, each with a little piece in his hand; but now, after the thousands have been fed, we see them returning, each with *a basketful* on his arm, and no doubt their hearts were fuller of joy than the baskets were of fragments. This teaches us that everyone who will do his duty in breaking the Bread of life to others, will as assuredly receive an increase of grace and blessing as did they an increase of bread and fish. Hear the promise: "He who soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully," and obey the precept, "*Freely ye have received, freely give.*"

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About eight thousand men, women and children were supplied by the disciples and others on the mountain side as they obeyed Christ.

A great work is before us. Many thousands around us, of all ages, are unconverted. See your *duty* and *privilege* to break the "Bread of life" to at least some of them. The world may soon be evangelized if Christians will do their duty.

Had the disciples, or any in the ranks, neglected to break to others, what would have been the result? So, if any minister, Sabbath School teacher or other Christian will neglect to break to others, for whom Christ died, he may find in the eternal world that the blood of some of the lost is upon his skirts.

How responsible the position of all Christians to break the "Bread of life" to those with whom we mingle from day to day, and to others whom we may find and win for Christ. Every unconverted one is doubly responsible—first, for not receiving Christ; and second, for being unable to successfully seek the salvation of others.

There will be an inquest by and by over everyone that dies in sin and is eternally lost. A verdict of blame will rest somewhere. In some cases the blame will all rest upon the individuals themselves. In other cases, part of the blame will be upon those who had "the Bread of life" and neglected to give it to others. In many more cases the blame will largely be upon parents and others who neglected or refused to receive "the Bread of life," and hence could not give it to others.

Let us feel our responsibility, and each one receive "the Bread of life," and also do his or her part in breaking it to others, in view of the inquest that will be held over those who shall be lost.

Let us not, however, be overwhelmed with a sense of duty and great responsibility; but rather let us be encouraged by the blessed opportunity that is ours of

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breaking "the Bread of life" to those about us. Jesus says, "Give ye to the multitude."

Will you act up to your privilege and do your part? Let each one here and now resolve, "By the grace of God I shall endeavor to do what I can."

Are you a minister? Then as you are largely responsible for several companies of fifty, faithfully seek to break "the Bread of life," not only from the pulpit, but also personally, to the hundreds to whom you may have access in homes, streets and places of business, and also enlist other Christians to co-operate with you in this glorious work.

Are you a parent or Sabbath School teacher? Then, as you have your company or row to look after, claim your children or scholars for Christ; and by righteous living, fervent prayers, faithful teaching and by judicious personal interviews, do all that you can to lead them to trust and love Christ, and to encourage them in the Christian life.

Have you a company of friends and acquaintances who are unsaved? Have you spoken to them about becoming Christians? Have you thought of doing so? Will you not do what you can to insure that they may receive Christ, "the Bread of Life"?

Every Christian man and woman, and boy and girl, may share in this blessed work. If you are not able to preach a sermon, or teach a class, or pray in public, you may influence persons to attend the preaching services, Sabbath School or prayer-meeting, and that will be similar to your preaching them a sermon, teaching them the lesson, or praying with them. Did you ever think of that? Moreover, by speaking a few words to a person privately about becoming a Christian, you may do that one more good than years of public preaching would do him.

There are very few who have avowed saving faith in Christ that have not been personally spoken to and solicited to do so. How great our responsibility,

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and how blessed our *privilege* of *introducing* Jesus to those who are not savingly acquainted with Him!

I do not remember that I was ever personally spoken to about becoming a Christian, by either parent, minister, teacher, or any person else, until I was seventeen years of age, at which time I was converted. There are young people, and men and women, with whom we mingle every week, to whom no one has personally spoken as to being enlisted on the Lord's side. This largely accounts for so many being unsaved and out of the Church. We find in places where we hold meetings that the work of the Lord extends, and youth and adults declare their decision in proportion to the number who personally endeavor to get others to receive "the Bread of life," by speaking to them in the home or at school, in the meetings and out of the meetings.

Have you received the "Bread of life"? Then do not hesitate to avail yourself of the exalted privilege that is yours of breaking to others, and so of being used of the Lord Jesus in the salvation and upbuilding of men, women and children. This is a privilege that angels might desire; but it is too high a privilege for even Gabriel, yet it is conferred upon you and me.

No one can be excused from sharing in the great work that is to be done. If Christians, on every hand, will act up to their duty and privilege, the little children may be kept from wandering from the fold; the boys and girls who are not Christians may be won for Christ; many of the young men and women who have grown wicked or careless may be brought to repentance and faith; unconverted parents may be induced to give their hearts to the Lord; many of the unsaved among the business, professional and laboring men and women may be brought to accept Christ; and even some of the aged who know not the Saviour, and sceptics and others, who may be

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regarded as hopeless cases, may be influenced to receive "the Bread of life."

If you are not able to break "the Bread of life" to the multitude, then you may give it to a few at the ends of the ranks, who will pass it along to those associated with them; or, if you think you cannot do even this, then you may at least offer it to the one by your side, who will receive and extend it to others.

We are only told of one that Andrew brought to Christ; but that *one* was *Simon Peter*, and under one of his sermons three thousand were converted to the Saviour. Try to bring even one to Jesus.

Do you say, "I am not yet a Christian myself." Then I beseech you to reject Christ no longer, but yield to Him at once and accept Him as your Saviour; so shall you be able to break "the Bread of life" to others. What a glorious privilege is yours! Do not under-estimate it or sleep to-night before you gladly yield yourself to Christ to be saved and used in joyful service.

The Lord Jesus Christ personally invites you to come to Him now and accept the Gospel feast, His "great salvation." If you receive an invitation from Queen Victoria, the Governor-General, or the President of the United States, there are three ways of disposing of it: (1) Treat it with silent contempt; (2) Send a polite declination; or (3) Gratefully accept the invitation.

Jesus invites you and assures you: "Now is the day of salvation." He also entreats you: "To-day if you will hear His voice harden not your heart." What will you do with His invitation? You will either treat it with silent contempt by not thinking of it; or you will decline the invitation by neglect; or you will gratefully accept it. Which will you do?

You surely will not treat with indifference and *contempt* the invitation of Christ, *the Saviour* and "*Friend of sinners*," and "*the Judge of all the earth.*"

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Then will you sign, or with your lips repeat, the following declination:

To the Lord Jesus Christ,—Thy loving invitation to receive Thee and Thy great salvation comes to my heart again to-day. I decline for the present to accept.

You say, "Palsied be my hand or my tongue before I would sign or say that." I am glad you thus strongly express yourself. Then let me write a grateful acceptance, which you may gladly sign or affirm.

To the Lord Jesus Christ,—Thy oft-repeated invitation to accept Thee and Thy great salvation is pressed upon me again to-day. I should have responded before. Graciously forgive me, I will delay no longer; but I am now resolved to accept Thee and be a Christian.

Would you sign that, or say those words to the Lord? Do you say, "I would"? Thank the Lord. Accept Him now.

Or do you answer, "No, I would not sign or say that at present"? Then, beloved, as you are not now decided to accept Christ, do you not see that *you virtually sign the other* reply, "I decline for the present to accept." (*Lord, impress this thought.*)

Read those two answers to Christ's loving invitation over again, and ask yourself which one expresses your present decision. If you see that the first one does, then let me beseech you to consider your sinful state, and this very day decide to ask forgiveness. Do you say, "The second better expresses my desire, and I am decided to be a Christian." Then go still further, and, as you believe that Jesus is able and willing to save you now, say from the heart, "I now accept Christ to be my Saviour." Having done this be assured by the gracious promise (John i. 12) that you are now one of "the children of God."

While we are saved the anxious question is oft repeated, "How may those by whom we are surrounded be brought to Christ, and how may the

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millions in the nations of this redeemed world be converted to our Saviour and King?" These are important questions, but they are certainly answered by the lessons of the miracle we have been considering. If we, as ministers and Christians of every Church, will enter into Christ's design, and practically carry out the lessons this miracle teaches us, scores in our country-places would be saved, hundreds in our villages, thousands in our towns and cities, yea, the millions of our world, would soon be converted to Christ.

That is to say, if we as Christians will—(1) Become engrossed in thinking about the unsaved, and in praying and planning for their conversion; (2) Be impressed that the Lord designs to use us; (3) Feel our own insufficiency for this great work; (4) Consecrate what we have and are to Christ for service; (5) Hear and obey the Saviour's direction and go about the great work intelligently and earnestly; (6) Receive His blessing upon our own hearts, and have faith in Him to make us a blessing to others; (7) Use the grace and talents that we have, though they may seem to us to be very limited; (8) Faithfully persevere in personally speaking to others about Christ and His great salvation, and so seek to break to them "the Bread of life"; we will find that increased blessings and powers will come to our own hearts and minds, Christ's kingdom will be gloriously extended, and the questions, "How shall we reach the men, women and young people, and win them for Christ and the Church?" and "How shall the world be converted to the Saviour?" will be experimentally answered, and Christ "shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."

As the Lord again asks, "Who will go for us?" let every Christian heart joyfully respond, "Here am I; send me."

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Blunders about Faith.

——: XXIX :——

Precept: Isa. xxvi. 3. Prayer: Psa. xix. 14.
Promise: Deut. xxxii. 4. Praise: Rom. viii. 38, 39.

MANY seriously blunder about faith. They think faith in God is something mysterious. It is no more mysterious than faith in anybody else. In fact, faith in God is exactly similar as an act of mind to the faith of a child in a parent, or a parent in a child, or a friend in a friend. We trust God, however, for those things which He only can bestow.

A great many think that saving faith in Christ is a *special gift* of God. One reason for this idea is, that they misunderstand the Scripture that says, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Eph. ii. 8.) Any classical scholar, who examines the original, will tell you that the "it," which is said to be the gift of God, does not refer to faith at all, but refers to grace or to salvation.

Faith is God's gift, as every natural faculty we possess is His gift, but the power of saving faith is not a special gift or grace, which God imparts to some and withholds from others; but is a natural gift, which He bestows upon all, just as the power to see is a natural gift. Faith is the eye of our spiritual nature. God gives to us all power to believe, and hence holds us responsible for our faith.

Faith honors God, and God honors faith.

Faith is no new thing to any of us. It is the thing with which we are most familiar. We use it every hour, in the home, in business, on the train, at the table, or on the street, sleeping and waking.

We are trusting our parents, servants, cooks, neighbors and friends every day. We could not live long in this world without faith. So in the Christian life, "The just shall live by faith."

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So many people also blunder as to how faith in God is developed. We develop faith in God just as we develop faith in any other reliable person, namely, by becoming acquainted with Him. Hence we read: "They that know Thy Name will put their trust in Thee." (Psalm ix. 10.) We thus see that we do not need so much to be urged to believe as to be made acquainted with God, and then faith becomes natural to us. Moreover, seekers do not need to be thinking of faith, and *trying* to believe, but they should think of the Lord, who is to be believed, and get acquainted with Him, when faith will instinctively follow. The Word says: "Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace."

But how are we to get acquainted with the Lord? Let me say, We become acquainted with Him as we get to know men; that is, by two ways: first, by obtaining information, and, second, by personal interview.

Persons you believe speak to you favorably of one you never met, and at once you respect and trust him. So Paul says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." God has given us His Word, which reveals to us His person and character, and has appointed ministers, parents, teachers and Christians generally, to so tell of Him as to make children, youth and adults acquainted with Him, that they may trust Him and be saved.

The misrepresentations, however, of God's character by wrong theology, and partial, distorted, false, and diabolical teachings concerning God, have driven many to doubt and scepticism. How very important that, in telling of God, and preaching or teaching about Christ, we do not mislead people. It can be said of God, as of no one else: "To know Him, is to love and trust Him."

The second means of getting acquainted with God is by personal interview. Have you not heard of some one, and thought you would not like him:

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but, after being five minutes in conversation with him, your views changed, and you had unbounded confidence in him? This is often the case with reference to God. No man can number the vast multitudes on earth and in heaven whose minds were once carnal, and so at enmity against God; but who, becoming acquainted with God by a right understanding of His Word, and especially by personal interview, have been led to a life of faith, love and obedience. Five minutes' personal interview in prayer to "the God of all grace" has done for many a one what five or even twenty-five years of teaching and preaching had failed to do. We do not under-estimate faithful preaching and teaching; but they cannot take the place of prayer and personal communion with God. How true the song, "Sweet hour of prayer."

Very many think that saving faith is difficult, and so overlook its simplicity. Faith is the simplest act the human mind is capable of performing. It is easier than turning your hand over, just as a mental act is easier than a physical. God wrought out salvation for the race at infinite cost, and then infinite wisdom devised the simplest means by which man can receive this great salvation, namely, by repentance and faith.

Many mistakenly *try* to believe. Faith is not an effort, but it is an instinctive and natural act, when we go the right way about it. Do not insult God by saying, "I am trying to believe," as if He were a doubtful character. Faith comes as the result of evidence. It is for us not to *try* to believe, but to look at the reasons for faith. A lady said to Mr. Moody, "I will try and trust." Mr. Moody said (ironically), "I don't believe you will succeed, for God is such a liar." She looked surprised; and then, thinking of God, exclaimed, "God is not a liar. I do now trust Him. He saves me now."

Do not think of faith apart from Christ, the object

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of faith. People talk about "naked faith in a naked promise." Such an expression is naked nonsense. Faith cannot be separated from the object of faith, or the promise from the promiser. Let us know the experience of living faith in a living Promiser.

Are you not a Christian, but seeking or desiring to become one? Guard against the blunder that nearly everyone makes of thinking of faith, instead of thinking of Christ, the object of faith. In Guelph, a young man said to me, "I am trying to believe." I replied, "You are adopting the wrong course. If I promised to enter into an agreement with you, wherein a thousand dollars were involved, you would not try to believe me, but would inquire about me of Dr. Griffin, Rev. Mr. Scott and of others you know; and, if you found out that I was worth thousands, and my word as good as the bank, you would naturally and without an effort believe me, and enter into the agreement. So, now, do not try to believe; but ask yourself, 'Who is Jesus? Has He promised to receive and save? Is His promise faithful? Has He ever failed those who trusted Him? Is He able and willing to receive and save me now?' As you think thus, you will not find it an effort to believe." After speaking to another a few minutes, I returned to him, when he said, "It is all right now. I had only thought of Jesus a few moments, as you told me, when I said, 'Lord Jesus, I trust myself to Thee now,' and was, according to His faithful promise, received and pardoned." So may it be with you.

Are you troubled with sceptical thoughts and temptations? A commercial traveller said to me, "I have been a sceptic for years; but the last three years I have tried to expel my doubts and get faith, but have failed, and have, in fact, become more and more confirmed in my scepticism." I replied, "I would expect such a result from your wrong method. If there were darkness in the house in mid-day, you would not try to bucket it out or empty it out; but

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you would open the blinds and shutters, and let the light in, and then the darkness would flee before it. So, do not *try* to expel your doubts or *try* to get faith, but lift up the blinds of *prejudice* and open the shutters of *opposition*, and think not of your doubts or faith, but of Christ, the object of faith, Who is the Light, and faith will be spontaneous and you will become a Christian." The second evening after this he said: "I did as you told me. My doubts are all gone, and I have, by faith, received Christ as my Saviour."

Many look for faith, and pray for it, and wait for God to give it to them, instead of obeying God: "Look unto Me and be ye saved."

Faith is the eye that beholds Christ. Christ is the object of faith. Think of Christ, seek Christ, and believe Christ; that is, look with your eyes to Christ, instead of looking at your eyes.

Some say, "I cannot believe," or "I am trying to believe," or "It is hard to believe," because they are thinking of faith or self instead of thinking of Christ.

It is written of Abraham, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded that, what *He had promised*, He was able also to perform." (Rom. iv. 20, 21.)

The secret of his strong and unfaltering faith was that he thought of God and His immutable promises.

Beloved, stay your mind on the Lord, Who changeth not, and then no matter what changes, your faith will be unwavering, and the spontaneous expression of your heart will ever be:

"I am trusting, Lord, in Thee,
Blest Lamb of Calvary;
Humbly at Thy cross I bow,
Jesus save me, save me now."

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How to Live a Christian.

———: XXX :———

Precept: Col. ii. 6, 7. Praise: 2 Tim. iv. 8.
Promise: Rev. iii. 21. Prayer: Psa. cxliii. 8, 10.

IT is of the utmost importance that we have a correct idea of how to become a Christian, and a true ideal of a Christian life, if we will be real and exemplary Christians. Many buildings have been wrecked because of a bad foundation, or because the plans, specifications and details were defective.

Some people have no ideal at all in life, but are mere creatures of their environment; others have an unworthy aim in life, and aspire only to worldly riches, honors or pleasures.

I rejoice to believe that many people have a true ideal of life which takes in this world and the next, and includes our duty towards God and our fellow-creatures. The chief aim of such persons is "to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

Not a few, however, have a low or partial ideal of a Christian life. I am afraid that there are many who are very similar to the man an English Church clergyman tells us about. Said he: "As I was travelling South I met a citizen who claimed that he was also an Episcopalian. 'To what parish do you belong?' I asked. 'Don't know nuthin' 'bout any parish,' was his answer. 'Well, to what diocese do you belong?' I inquired. 'There ain't nuthin' of that sort in this part of the country that I ever heard of,' he replied. 'But who confirmed you?' said I. 'Nobody,' he said. 'But didn't you tell me you were an Episcopalian?' I asked in astonishment. 'Oh, yes,' said the old man; 'I'll tell ye how it is. *Last spring* I went down to *New Orleans* visitin', and while I was there I went ter church, and it happened ter be an Episcopalian one, and among other things I heard 'em say that they'd left undone them

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things they'd oughter done, and done them things they hadn't oughter done; and I said to myself: "That's just my fix too;" and since then I've always considered myself an Episcopalian.' 'Well,' said I, 'if your ideas of an Episcopalian are correct, we are the largest denomination in the world.'" I do not want you to be like that man.

I have often thought that the frequent repetition of the words, "We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us," has a strong tendency to foster a low ideal of how a Christian should live, and so produce a low type of Christian life and morals, as people are not likely to live above their ideals.

We should not adopt this low ideal, thinking it necessary to do anything that is wrong, or omit what we know to be right; but, having obtained God's forgiveness for our sins of omission and commission, we should seek grace to cherish and carry out in our lives the ideal of the prayer of the Episcopalian Church which follows the confession: "Grant, O most merciful Father, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous and sober life, to the glory of Thy holy Name." Let all the people say, Amen.

Life is a precious heritage. What shall we do with it? How shall we live? The Lord calls us to be Christians. The world needs our Christian service. By grace every one of us may be an out-and-out Christian all through life. The oft-repeated question of many anxious hearts is:

"How am I to live a Christian?" Paul answers this question when he says, "The just shall live by faith." Let me say that no new element or theory is introduced into the Christian life different from that which is necessary in the marital, family, social or business life. Faith is the life of domestic happiness, of financial prosperity, and of social harmony. To the extent that mutual trust or confidence between

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husband and wife declines, happiness is gone. What is the great cause of financial depression from time to time? It is not so much that there is less money in the country, but that it is not circulated; confidence has been shaken.

In order to live as a Christian, you certainly need to be a Christian by receiving Christ as your Saviour. Jesus says, "I am come that ye might have life," and we read again, "He that hath the Son hath life." Many people mistakenly try to live a Christian life before they become Christians, and so think it hard to live as Christians, whereas they do not know anything about it, not being Christians.

Many seek in vain to make their actions, words and thoughts good and pure; that is, they try to purify the stream of their lives, instead of trusting Christ to make the fountain pure. We must *be* before we can *do*. "Keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

Let each one thus reason: "As God requires trust in Him and His Word, I *can* believe; as it is necessary to trust in order to be saved, I *will* believe; and as he is worthy of my perfect trust, I *do* now believe. May you be able confidently to say,

"I can, I *will*, I *do* believe that Jesus saves me now."

After we become Christians, certain things are necessary to promote spiritual life and health.

First. We need pure atmosphere.

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air."

Therefore, do not neglect prayer. We need, also, to avoid impure and evil associations and companions, and seek the atmosphere of Christian fellowship. Do not be a recluse, or shut yourself up in a box, so to speak, and breathe again and again your own breath. The Lord designs us to be social creatures.

Second. Suitable food is requisite. This is provided in the Word of God, and we must not neglect it. Let

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us say with the Psalmist, "The words of His mouth I esteem more than my necessary food." It is no wonder that many people do not get along well in the Christian life, when they neglect the daily reading and study of His Word. We should also read other religious writings to help us on the way.

Third. Pure water is also necessary to health. An impure water-supply produces malaria, fevers and death. "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God." God is the fountain of living water. Let us never, like Israel, forsake this "living water" for the "broken cisterns," stagnant pools, and fever-producing streams of the world; but may we know the experience, "With joy shall ye draw waters out of the wells of salvation."

Fourth. Exercise is an essential to spiritual health. We read, "Exercise thyself unto godliness." Let the heart be loving, the hand generous, the feet ready to walk in wisdom's way, the mind active, the eye looking for opportunities to do good, and the voice ever kind and ready to encourage the weak and erring, and help the unconverted to Christ. Nothing will take the place of Christian service. Many Christians are not joyous and strong because they are not "workers together with God." Next to the joy of knowing our own sins forgiven is that which comes by being used of God in leading another to Christ.

Fifth. Timely rest and relaxation are as necessary as work, and should be enjoyed. Many go to camp-meetings, summer resorts, and the like, and there attend so many religious services that they wear themselves out, and bring on physical, mental and spiritual depression. Jesus speaks to us, as He did to the disciples, "Let us go aside and rest awhile."

Sixth. Faith, however, is the essential thing in the spiritual life, as in the marital, business and social life. It is the *first* and *last* thing necessary. It links us to the Alpha and Omega. It causes the other helpful and necessary things to be adopted

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instinctively, rather than by rule, and the Christian life becomes a privilege rather than duty; yea, duty becomes a delight.

Faith is the breath of the soul. Trusting moment by moment is like breathing; hence, no wonder Paul says, "The just shall live by faith."

We become Christians by an act of faith, and we live a Christian life by faith becoming a state of soul.

Faith in Jesus Christ is so easy when we go the right way about it. If we are willing to believe, and then think not of our faith but of Christ, the object of our faith, saving, *abiding* faith will be ours.

We have solid ground to rest our faith upon, namely, the unchangeable God and His immutable Word. No other such credentials exist in the universe. Sooner might the heavens fall and the pillars of the earth crumble, than that God or His Word should fail the trusting one.

Make Christ and His Word the ground of your faith and hope. Jesus said, "These things are written that ye might believe."

No matter what our environment, God's grace is sufficient for the trusting one *where duty calls;* but to needlessly expose ourselves to danger or temptation is not faith, but *presumption.* (Matt. iv. 7.)

Lord Macaulay relates that in the battle of Naumur, while William, Prince of Orange, was commanding his forces, as the bullets were flying past him he, with surprise and excitement, saw among his staff officers Mr. Michael Godfrey, the Deputy-Governor of the Bank of England, who was desirous of seeing a real battle. "Mr. Godfrey," said King William, "you ought not to run such hazards." Godfrey answered, "Sir, I run no more risk than your Majesty." William replied, "Not so. I am where it is my duty to be, and I may, without presumption, commit my life to God's keeping; but you——" The sentence was not finished before a cannon ball laid Godfrey dead at the king's feet. We may learn from his fatal mistake.

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Faith believes what God says, and obeys, even though it is dark and mysterious betimes.

One has said, "I have known a timid traveller, whose route lay across the higher Alps, on a path that —no broader than a mule's foothold—skirted a dizzy precipice, when he saw the foaming river far below diminishing to a silver thread, find it safest to shut his eyes, nor attempt to find the course or touch the bridle when a touch was fatal, throwing the steed and rider over, to bound from shelf to shelf and be dashed to pieces in the valley below. And there are times and circumstances when, to be kept from falling, the believer must, if we may say so, shut his eyes, and, committing his way to God, let the bridle lie on the neck of Providence, and walk, not by sight, but by faith."

A person may have saving faith, and yet lack perfect faith and perfect peace. He may have certain doubts and many temptations to doubt. This is evident; as Paul, speaking of the Christians at Thessalonica, desired to perfect that which was lacking in their faith. (1 Thess. iii. 10.) On the other hand, it is our privilege to be as Stephen, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." (Acts vi. 5.)

Many think of and trouble about the witness of the Spirit, and forget or under-estimate the witness of faith. Let God attend to His own work—which He ever does—as we do our part. It is for us to rest by faith in Christ and His Word. So shall the witness of the Spirit be given, received, and retained more or less clearly.

A man was willed a vast fortune. It seemed too good to be true, so that he could hardly believe it was his. As legal papers, however, were given to him, he read them, and, believing the testimony, received the bequest, and yet could not fully realize that he was indeed rich. As he began, however, to handle the money, and look after the estate, the realization fully came that he was indeed a millionaire.

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Notice the order: First, the legal testimony; second, the witness of faith that he accepted the testimony; third, the consciousness or realization that he was a rich man.

So our Heavenly Father hath willed us pardon, purity, abounding grace and eternal life. The record is signed, and is also sealed with the blood of Calvary. "All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen." (2 Cor. i. 20.) "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." (1 John v. 11.) Shall we receive this record? "He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." (John iii. 33.) As we *receive* Christ as our personal Saviour, *rest* upon the truth of God and His Word, and *commit* ourselves to a Christian life, the realization fully *comes* and *abides* that we are rich in Christ, and heirs of God and Heaven.

The order is: First, God's infallible testimony; second, the witness of faith in God and His testimony; and third, the conscious realization of possession, or, in other words, the Holy Spirit's witness with our spirit.

Christian faith is not merely an assent to particular doctrines or facts, and an expression of certain words or sentiments; but it includes a principle of devotion to Christ, resulting in a righteous life. A young lady gives herself to and receives a gentleman in matrimony; then she, as a true wife, avoids all flirtations, finds increasing joy in being loyal and devoted to him, and so abides in his love as the years go by. Do you yield yourself to Christ and receive Him as your loving Saviour? Then believe His Word, "Ye are the bride; I am the Bridegroom," and show your loyalty and devotion to Him by ever avoiding what you know to be wrong and questionable, and by joyously doing only that which you believe to be right, so shall you, according to promise, "abide in His love."

In the Christian life we should not worry about

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the possibilities of the future, but learn to live a day at a time, yea, a moment at a time.

Do you not remember the story of the pendulum that had counted the number of times it would have to swing in a year, and so became disheartened and stopped, until it was reminded that it only had to swing once a second; whereupon it started again, and cheerfully continued to swing as the years rolled on.

Beloved, if you can trust the Lord and do right for one second, then you can for a minute, yea, for sixty minutes, a second at a time. Then if you can trust and obey for one hour, you can for twenty-four hours, a second at a time; and if for one day, then you can for seven days; and if for a week, then you can for four weeks; and if for a month, then you can for twelve months; and if for one year, then you can for sixty years, *a second at a time.* You say, "I shall likely be in heaven before sixty years." Then, like the pendulum, move on, and grace will be given you *moment by moment*, just as you need it." (2 Cor. xii. 9.) Moment by moment overcome to-day's temptations, bear to-day's trials, do to-day's duties, and worry not about the possibilities of the future, but trust the Lord now. Trust yourself, with all your weaknesses, idiosyncrasies, faults, failings, cares and sorrow, to Jesus. Yea, trust your unmanageable self into the hands of Him Who is able to manage you.

God understands all about you and your burdens, temperament, cares and duties. Then, "Cast all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." "He shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

Do not, as some others, fear and hesitate to submit yourself by perfect surrender and faith, saying, "Thy will be done." A lady said to another, "I am afraid to say to God, 'I resign myself entirely to Thee in all things, and only want to know Thy will,' for fear He would add burdens, trials, cares and undesirable tasks to my life." The other replied, "If your only son

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would say to you, 'Mother, I have decided to let you have your own way with me in everything,' would you think, 'Now, I have got you as I desire, I will put bitterness and burdens into your life'?" She instantly answered, "No; as a mother, I would, if possible, be kinder and more considerate of him, so that he would never regret the day he resigned all to my will." The other lady asked, "Would God, your loving Heavenly Father, be less considerate of you?" Seeing her mistake, she said, "Lord, forgive me for my thought. I do now resign myself and all to Thee, for time and eternity. Thy will be done."

No one, in earth or heaven, ever regretted having taken the steps of entire consecration and perfect trust. Do you know what this experience means? If not, you may know to-day. Have faith in God for a present, free and full salvation. Christ can do more for you in one moment, as you fully surrender and trust Him, than you can do for yourself in twenty years. Thousands have proven the experience:

"Long my wearied heart was trying
To enjoy this perfect rest,
But I gave all trying over,
Simply trusting, I was blest."

If an estate is willed to a person, but he does not believe it, or think it possible to secure it, he will not take possession of it. This was why Israel did not enter into the promised land, but fell in the wilderness. God wills to us, by promise and command, the Beulah land of perfect love. Shall we, like Israel, hesitate, doubt and fear, or shall we go forward, and, having faith in God, claim and take possession? Shall we not now, with Joshua, say, "Let us go up at once and possess the land, for we are well able."

In closing, let me request you to consider and act upon the following passages of Scripture, which so specifically direct us how we may ever live as Christians.

1. The Psalmist lays down seven important direc-

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tions in Psalm xxxvii. 1-8, which, being obeyed, will insure a Christian life.

(1) "Fret not."
(2) "Neither be thou envious."
(3) "Trust in the Lord, and do good."
(4) "Delight thyself in the Lord."
(5) "Commit thy way unto the Lord."
(6) "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently."
(7) "Cease from anger and forsake wrath."

Let us study these seven rules, teach them to others, memorize and often repeat them, pray over them, and seek to practise them until they become living principles within us, controlling our lives.

2. Peter, in his Gospel arithmetic, directs: "*Add* to your faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, love." "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall." (2 Pet. i. 5-7, 10.)

3. Paul asserts: "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.) Our characters largely result from the thoughts entertained, the feelings cherished, and the actions performed. Hence, we should be careful always to think, feel and do only what is right. By associating with Christ, and seeking to follow His blessed example, we imbibe His spirit and learn to walk in the steps of the Saviour.

4. The Apostle Jude, after warning us against those who would endeavor to shake our faith in Christ and the Scriptures, adds: "But ye, beloved, *building* up yourselves on your most holy faith, *praying* in the Holy Ghost, *keep* yourselves in the love of God, *looking* for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." (Jude 20, 21.)

5. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in a very few words, teaches us how to live a Christian life, when he says: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love;

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even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love." (John xv. 10.)

6. John, the loving disciple, tells us: "Whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him." (1 John ii. 5.) Love to God is not a mere emotion, a gush of happy feelings or a sentiment; but love is a principle of loyalty and devotion.

7. Paul gives us the secret of his wonderful Christian life. Read his experience: "Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.) Christ dwelling in the heart makes a life of trust and obedience easy.

8. The last words of our Lord Jesus Christ, just before His ascension, were: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Our ascended Lord, in these His parting words, reveals that the secret of a vigorous and victorious Christian life is the constant indwelling of the Spirit of Jesus Christ in us. He, abiding in us, so dominates our minds and controls our lives as to energize our activities, give power over self and sin, as also power to witness for Him and influence others for the Saviour.

How different were the apostles after Pentecost from what they were before! Do you know the fulness of the Spirit? Remember the parting words of the Lord Jesus, and know the Christian experience and life promised.

The best illustration of this wonderful passage that I know is the electric car system. The electric current is a mystery, but a mighty propelling power. The wheels of the car are placed upon the two rails. The trolley-pole is put in touch with the overhead wire, and then the circuit being completed, the electric current flows through and impels the car, according to the will of the motor-man.

The Holy Spirit, the divine electricity, is a mys-

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tery, but is the mighty moral-power we all need. We place ourselves upon the rails, so to speak, by consecrating ourselves to God for salvation and service, *according to His will*, and then we keep ourselves in touch with God by opening our hearts to Him, and staying our minds on Him by constant surrender and trust. (Isaiah xxvi. 3.) While in this relationship to God the electric circuit is complete, and the divine current flows through us, dominating and illuminating our minds, warming and inspiring our hearts, and energizing and impelling us in Christian life and service according to God's will.

I cannot fully express the divine illumination, fellowship and power that have come to me by consciously carrying out this illustration. I covet for every Christian a similar experience.

Do not, like the old horse-car, be dragged along by a mere sense of duty; but know the inspiring and impelling power of the divine electric current, which will change every duty to a delightful privilege.

If you shall at any time find that the current is broken because you are off the track, or out of touch with God, or isolated by icy formality, do not be content to stay in that condition, or give way to discouragement; but, before you sleep, know again that you are in touch with God, and that the current of communion and power is restored.

Beloved, meditate upon this illustration for yourself until you see and feel its force, and then practically carry it out, that you may constantly know the blessedness of that complete consecration and perfect trust which will keep you in touch with God and under the domination of the Spirit of Christ; so shall you know the love, joy, peace, illumination, comfort, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit; yea, the truth of our Lord's parting words will be realized by you, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

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Practical Talks

(SECOND SERIES.)

COUNSEL ON THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

TO

YOUNG CONVERTS AND
OLDER CHRISTIANS.

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Introduction.

"THE disciples were called Christians." (Acts xi. 26.) That is a good name. I desire that everyone who reads this volume may so trust, love and imitate Christ as to deserve the name of Christian.

I have found great pleasure and profit in reading again and again "*Morning and Night Watches*," and similar books, in connection with my private daily Scripture reading and prayer. I trust that the arrangement of the following thirty-one chapters, suitable for daily readings, may help many in the Christian life.

The paragraphs in each chapter may be considered as *Seed Thoughts* on the subject, which the reader is requested prayerfully to ponder and develop.

"The Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means." (2 Thess. iii. 16.)

H. T. CROSSLEY.

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Be an Assured Christian.

——: I :——

Promise : Heb. vi. 17-20. Prayer : Psa. li. 10.
Precept : Heb. x. 35. Praise : Isa. xii. 2.

KNOW that you are a Christian. Not to be fully assured of this will impede you and hinder others. Do not rest in merely doing better, or in turning over a new leaf, or in morality, or in generous acts, or in being as good as others, or in baptism, or confirmation, or church membership, or in anything short of Christ and conscious salvation from sin.

In B—— I asked one, "Are you a Christian?" The reply was made, "I belong to St. ——— Church." "Have you received Christ as your personal Saviour?" "I have not thought much about that." Lamentable state! I fear that many are trusting in the *Church* instead of *Christ*. Do not *presume* that all is well unless you are saved from your sins, saying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace;" but trust in the "mighty to save."

I asked one in London, "Were you a Christian before the meetings began?" She replied, "I *thought* I was, but now I *know* I am." There are some who *think* they are Christians, others *hope* so, while many *know* that they are. How is it with you?

Some who yield to Christ and trust Him, think it humility to doubt themselves. It is rather presumption to do so, as it reflects on the truth of God. (John xx. 31.) Believe Christ's assurance: "I know My sheep, and am known of Mine." Hear Paul declare, "I know Whom I have believed," and know it to be your privilege with others to say, "I am the Lord's and He is mine."

The best book ever written on assurance is the First Epistle of John. Nineteen times in the five chapters he affirms, "*We know.*" Read these verses,

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mark them in your Bible, memorize them, and experience all that John says "*we know.*"

You may not have the feeling or assurance that you have heard or thought about, but you may certainly have that of which the Bible speaks.

A school teacher, a very moral, clever fellow, recently sought an interview with me. In the conversation, he clearly assured me that he had yielded to Christ and trusted Him. "But," said he, "I do not feel any differently, and so cannot say that I am saved." I replied: "Instead of using the word *feel*, let us use the higher and better word *know*, as knowing includes feeling. Do you *know* that you yield to Christ, and trust Him to forgive your sins?" He answered, "Yes, I *know* I do." I said, "Jesus gives peace to those He pardons. (Rom. v. 1.) Now, is there yet a sense of guilt upon your mind, or is there the promised peace?" He replied, "There was guilt, but now there is peace." I then asked, "What does this all mean? You say—(1) You *know* you yield to Christ; (2) you *know* you trust Christ; (3) you *know* the promised peace. Is there any change? Has God promised any evidence that you now lack?" His face brightened, as he said, "That makes it clearer. I have been looking for I hardly know what; but I see it now—the Lord accepts me. It was all right last Saturday night when I yielded."

Many of the best Christians cannot tell the exact time when they first yielded to Christ; for, when very young, their hearts went out in love and trust to Jesus, as to mother, or they yielded as gently and gradually as a flower turns to the light, or as a rosebud opens, or as the day dawns. The great point is to willingly, trustingly yield to Christ *now*, and know His peace, and you cannot be wrong.

When I was seeking to become a Christian, I tried to feel the peace and love of Christ in my heart before I yielded to the Saviour. That is, I tried to feel that the Lord received me before I gave myself

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to Him. Nearly every person makes this absurd mistake. To act thus is as if you would try to feel that you were home before you went home. Do not make this common blunder; but, being assured by the promises of Christ, know that you yield yourself to Him now, and be assured that He does not cast you out, but receives you.

Boys and girls, and even "the *little children*," as certainly as adults, may be Christians and know it. (Mark x. 14, 15.)

Many children and young people are now *conscious Christians;* but, not being recognized as such or told what properly constitutes a Christian, they are not *assured* and *confessed* Christians. Let me say to every young person, that to be a Christian is to *trust* Jesus, to *love* Jesus, and to *obey* Jesus. If you *love, trust* and *obey* Jesus, I want you, with a thankful heart, to know that you are a Christian now, and then tell others, that they also may love, trust and obey Him.

If you are not now an assured Christian, you may become one to-day, if you will take Jesus at His word. A little girl wished to join the Presbyterian Church. As she appeared before the session, an elder asked, "Do you think that Jesus has forgiven your sins and saved you?" "I know that He has," was the artless reply. With surprise, he asked her, "How can you be so confident?" She replied, "I have the Lord's word for it. He said if I confessed my sins, He would forgive me; and I confessed my sins to Him, and I believe His word, that He forgives and saves me." All the boys and girls, as also the adults, may know, as did this Christian girl, that the Lord is their Saviour and Keeper.

Get on promised ground, and there confidently stand, being assured that sooner might the heavens fall than one promise of God fail. As you yield to Christ, confidently affirm, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid." (Isa. xii. 2.)

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Be a Bible Christian.

——:II:——

Promise : Acts xx. 32. Praise : Psa. xix. 7-11.
Precept : Mark xvi. 15, 16. Prayer : Psa. cxix. 18.

MRS. PHŒBE PALMER said, "When I was converted, I resolved to be a Bible Christian." Her family, the Church and the world, as well as herself, have felt and seen the glorious results of the resolve of this illustrious woman.

1. *Be a Bible-admiring Christian.* Sceptics and wicked men do not like the Bible, because it condemns them. Other books are great in proportion as they copy after the Bible. Shakespeare and Scott chose their greatest characters and best style from the Bible.

2. *Be a Bible-hearing Christian.* Have a Bible in church, and hear and follow the minister as he reads and comments. In the Sabbath School, and at family prayer, "Take heed how ye hear."

3. *Be a Bible-reading Christian.* The Bible is the text-book given by the Holy Spirit. We honor the holy Guest by studying it daily.

Possess a well-bound reference Bible that will last a life-time, with not too small print, and having a flexible cover. My Bible is a Bagster, with a broad margin. The Collins and Oxford are equally good.

The simplest and best general rule for reading and studying the Bible is *book by book*, as with other libraries. I discuss this method in second talk, Part I. Read from the New Testament in the morning, and from the Old Testament in the evening, or *vice versa*.

Other methods, for occasional studies of the Word, are the topical and biographical.

You may, with profit, make a special study of such *Bible topics* as hope, joy, love, peace, prayer, trust, grace, angels, riches, heaven, assurance, temptation,

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repentance and gospel; and such biographies as Jesus, Daniel, Joseph, Paul, Jacob, Nehemiah, Peter, Sarah, Deborah, the Marys and Ruth.

Use Cruden's Concordance to help you find and select the passages of Scripture.

Occasionally read an epistle or prophecy through at a sitting, as you do another book.

The random way so many people read the Bible does not deserve the name of method.

If you do not attend the sessions of the Sabbath School, let me suggest that you join, what I may call, the Home Sabbath School Union, and weekly study the lesson that occupies the thoughts of millions of youths and adults in Christendom.

In studying the Sabbath School lessons and other subjects, *always* do some independent thinking, before you read lesson helps and commentaries.

It is well to read the Bible aloud, that it may impress itself through both the eye and ear gates.

We should always study the Word for our own benefit, so shall we the better be able to use it to help others.

Have a regular time for daily Bible study, as you have for your meals, and do not act merely on feeling or convenience. It would be a wonder if some got along well religiously, for they so much neglect to daily feed on the milk and meat of God's Word. If you neglected daily food for the body, you would not be surprised that you did not feel strong.

Luther literally fed upon the Bible. He called the 118th Psalm his own. If you would be a strong, healthy and useful Christian, be a daily student of the Bible.

4. *Be a Bible-loving Christian.* Say with the Psalmist, "O! how love I Thy law." The more we read the Bible, and study it, and understand it, the more we talk about it, meditate upon and employ it, the more will we love its sacred pages. In Psalm cxix., the Bible is mentioned 173 times.

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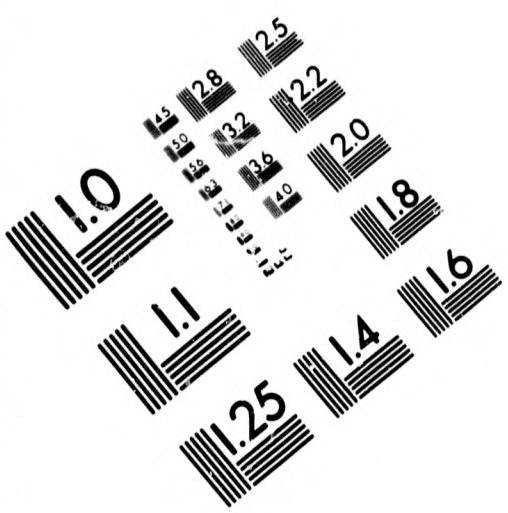

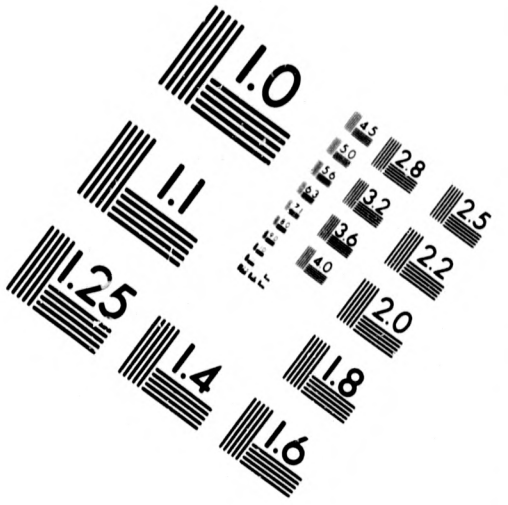

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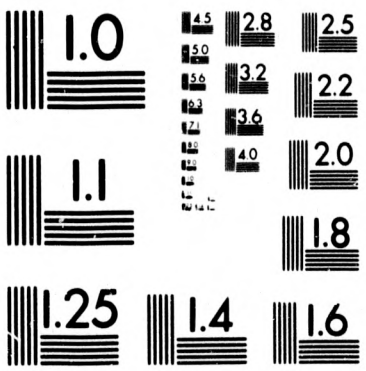

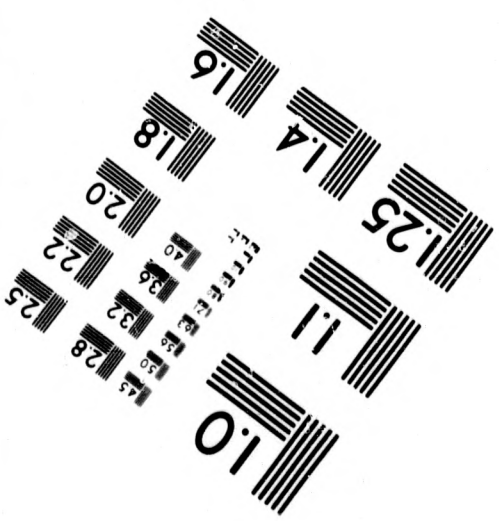

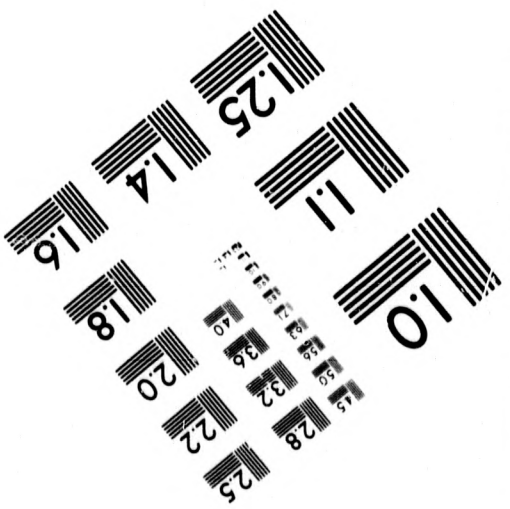

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Love to God, the Author of the Bible, is the great secret of love for His Word.

The Bible reveals to us how rich, as Christians, we are. After the Chicage fire, a man said to Mr. Moody, in a sympathizing tone, "I understand you lost everything in the fire?" "No indeed," said Mr. Moody, "you have been misinformed." "Have you got much left?" "Yes; I am rich; I cannot tell how much I am worth. Here is my title deed, 'He that overcometh shall inherit all things.'" (Rev. xxi. 7.) You, if a Christian, may say the same thing, for "All things are yours." (1 Cor. iii. 21-23.)

5. *Be a Bible-using Christian.* The Bible should be appropriately employed in all prayer-meetings and in all meetings of young people's societies, leagues and bands, and at family prayer. Some read the Bible through at family prayers. This is not a good practice. Read that which is especially spiritual, instructive and suggestive to prayer. All the books in the New Testament and certain books of the old, such as the Psalms, Daniel, Proverbs, Nehemiah, Jonah, Esther, etc., are appropriate and helpful in family reading. The daily home readings in connection with the Sabbath School lessons are very suitable at family prayer.

6. *Be a Bible-living Christian.* The Bible is best studied in the light of an obedient life. (John vii. 17.) To desire to agree with the Bible is one thing, but desiring to make the Bible agree with you is vastly different.

At the time of the American war, one anxiously exclaimed, "I hope the Lord is on our side." President Lincoln replied, "That does not concern me as does another more important thought. The Lord, I know, is on the side of right, and I trust that *we* are on the *Lord's side.*"

Do not regard anything a pleasure that the Bible in spirit forbids. Say, with the Psalmist, "Thy testimonies are also my delight and my counsellors." (Ps.

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cxix. 24.) Our obligations are divine. Any minister or Christian or Church that favors or advocates what the Bible in spirit condemns is not, as some claim, *liberal;* but is a libel on Christianity and the Church of Christ.

Square your life by the Bible. We will be judged by the Word at last, and not by others' opinions. Let us now judge and regulate our lives and actions by God's Word.

7. *Be a Bible-meditating Christian.* Commit to memory one verse or passage in the Bible daily.

Memorize the names in order of the books of the Bible, that you may, in a moment, turn to any book. I am thankful that I did this when a boy.

Know by heart and experience 1 Cor. xiii. Memorize the 23rd Psalm, and often recite it, emphasizing the *personal* pronouns *I*, *my* and *me*, that are repeated sixteen times.

Do not simply read God's Word and then forget it, but upon its promises and precepts "meditate day and night." (Ps. i. 2.)

8. *Be a Bible-talking Christian.* We should especially cultivate the power of expounding the Scriptures, and *study* to rightly divide the word of truth. (2 Tim. ii. 15.)

A Christian wife and mother, whose husband was a jesting infidel, when asked how she got all their children to be Christians, said: "To the opinions of a father I do not oppose those of a mother, but I refer all questions to the Bible, and let it answer, reprove or encourage." The Bible is our final court of appeal.

It is well for ministers and leaders of meetings to make suitable comments as they read the Scriptures, as did Ezra and Jesus. (Luke iv. 18-22.)

The Scripture selection should be short; the comments and lessons bright, crisp, instructive and practical. The time occupied in reading and running comments should not exceed ten or fifteen minutes.

I succeeded the Rev. W. J. Maxwell in St. Catha-

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rines as a pastor. His lessons were better remembered and more spoken of than his sermons.

I know another minister that reads a long lesson, and tritely talks about almost every verse, until people become sick and tired of his effusions.

Mr. Hunter's nightly characteristic Bible reading is an important feature in our evangelistic meetings.

Conversation and discussion upon Bible passages and themes may be very profitable, but all *debating* and *arguing* had better be avoided.

9. *Be a Bible-marking Christian.* Many of the directions on Bible marking are so complicated and impracticable as to be, to most persons, almost useless.

My method is this: I, with black or red ink and ruler, put lines at the side or around the verse or verses that I desire to mark, and then underline any word or words that I wish more particularly to notice. Any words or passages I wish to connect, I do so by means of a light line or railroad drawn across the page. While reading, I put down with pencil on a sheet of paper the verses and notes I wish to mark in my Bible, and then at my leisure mark the verses, and enter the thoughts with a fine pen in the broad margin of my Bible.

Do not draw a line under each line of the verse or verses, as some do, as this disfigures the book and is not neat. If you mark with a pencil, let the lead be so hard that it will not rub.

Bibles printed on India tea paper are not suitable for marking with ink, as ink shows through the leaf.

You might mark neatly in your Bible the texts of sermons, preachers' initials, and thoughts suggested by sermon, reading or study; so will your Bible become an invaluable commentary to yourself and others.

10. *Be a Bible-giving Christian.* A Welsh clergyman asked a little girl for the text of the last Sunday's sermon. She answered not, but wept. Inquiring, he found out that her parents and neigh-

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bors had no Bible. This caused him to start the Bible Society for Wales. Other Christians caught the idea, and formed the Bible Society for England, for France, and also the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society. All this resulted from taking interest in a little girl.

A prominent business man in Syracuse gives away four copies of the New Testament daily. It had been his habit to smoke four cigars each day. Some years ago he found that the price of each cigar would buy a Testament, so he stopped the smoking habit and began the New Testament gift habit. A delegate to the Y.M.C.A State Convention stopped off at Syracuse recently, to thank him for the gift that led him to Christ. Talk of enjoyment! Giving away Testaments will certainly afford more enjoyment than smoking. Try it.

A Bible is a most suitable Christmas or birthday present from parents to children, or from friend to friend.

Shall we not be interested in distributing the Bible to youths and adults? Such a present will be cherished, and who can tell the good it may do?

A wealthy man in Paris, after our meetings, had well-bound Testaments suitably inscribed, and one presented to each candidate for membership in the various churches.

Tyndale and others died as martyrs, that the Bible should be *given* to the world. What shall we do to distribute the blessed book?

11. *Be a Bible-guided Christian.* The Bible is a wonderful book. It is a law to rulers and subjects, magistrates and witnesses, judges and jurors, parents and children, masters and servants, rich and poor, ministers and hearers, youth and adults, married and single; yea, to everybody.

Some sincere but misguided persons in our day so think and speak of divine guidance as not only to encourage disregard for the Bible, but also absurdly to

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put their so-called Holy Spirit's guidance in conflict with the Spirit-inspired Scriptures. Keep far from such fanatical and presumptuous ideas.

The Holy Spirit guides us by studying His Word, and not by neglecting it, Deut. vi. 6-9; by using our judgment, and not fanatical fancies, Ps. xxv. 9; by an inwrought consciousness, and not mere impressions.

Do not make another person's opinions, conscience or practice an excuse for violating or adjusting your own conscience. You beg the question if you say, "If it is no harm for so and so, it is no harm for me." "To the law and the testimony."

Some do wrong, and then ignorantly and complacently say, "My conscience does not condemn me." Never set your perverted conscience or opinions against God's Word. "Let God be true." It will be sad, indeed, if you disregard the Bible and follow your misguided conscience or erroneous opinions in the "ways of death." (Prov. xiv. 12.)

Conscience is not our guide, but God's Word. Paul, as a persecutor, was conscientious. Conscience is as it is trained or educated. Conscience may be "defiled," morbid, perverted, "corrupt," "seared," destroyed, "pure" or enlightened. We should regulate our conscience by God's Word, as we do our clocks and watches by the sun.

Do not, like some, try to excuse yourself for doing certain things by saying, "This or that amusement or practice is not condemned by *my Church*, or by *my clergyman;*" but ask, "Does the Bible in spirit forbid it?" and so be independent, and say, "I will keep the commandments of my God." (Ps. cxix. 115.)

"He mistook the light." That was the explanation of a pilot's mistake. What was the result? The steamship *Great Britain*, which cost $1,000,000, was wrecked. But that was not all; 300 precious lives were sacrificed. A false light misled. Do not be misled by the false lights along the shore, or by

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your perverted or morbid conscience, and so be wrecked yourself, and also destroy others.

Test all words, actions, tempers, thoughts, opinions and impressions, yea, all things, by the Word. If temptations come to you to do that which the spirit of the Bible shows to be wrong, questionable or inexpedient, even though siren voices say, "Others do it;" "Your minister does not forbid it;" "Mr. or Mrs. So and So does not think it wrong," like Jesus, take the sword of the Spirit and say: "It is written, 'Abstain from all appearance of evil.'" If one blow is not enough, use another, and answer, "I must obey God."

The Psalmist said: "Thy Word is a lamp and a light." (Ps. cxix. 105.) The Bible is a light to illumine, direct, expose, warn and to cheer.

Make a special Bible reading of the following:

The Bible is a lamp and light for us.

In the home it is—(1) A Hall light, Rom. xii. 13; (2) A Parlor light, Heb. xiii. 2; (3) A Dining-room light, Luke ix. 16; (4) A Nursery light, Psalm cxliv. 12; (5) A Library and Reading-room light, 2 Tim. ii. 15-18; (6) A Kitchen light, Luke x. 41, 42; (7) A Bedroom light, Matt. vi. 6, 7.

The Bible is a light for the Church. It is—(1) A Pulpit lamp, 2 Cor. iv. 5; (2) A Pew lamp, Jas. i. 22; (3) A Choir lamp, Eph. v. 19; (4) A Prayer-meeting lamp, Ps. xcv. 6.

The Bible is a more general lamp and light. It is—(1) A Street lamp, Prov. vi. 23; (2) A Bar-room lamp, Prov. xxiii. 31, 32; (3) A Prison lamp, Prov. xiii. 15; (4) A Store lamp, Prov. xx. 14; (5) An Office lamp, Matt. vi. 33; (6) A Sick-room and Hospital light, Is. xli. 10; (7) A Cemetery light, Rev. xiv. 13; (8) The Judgment light, Rom. ii. 16.

12. *Be a Bible-believing Christian.* Believe the Bible to be truly the inspired Word of God.

Memorize the following from Wesley: "The Bible must be the invention either of good men or angels, bad men or devils, or of God. (1) It could not be

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the invention of good men or angels, for they neither would nor could make a book, and tell lies all the time they were writing it, saying, 'Thus saith the Lord,' when it was their own invention. (2) It could not be the invention of bad men or devils, for they would not make a book which commands all duty, forbids all sin and condemns them to hell to all eternity. (3) Therefore, I draw this conclusion, that the Bible must be given by divine inspiration."

Scepticism is cruel, wicked, and the height of meanness, as it would, *if it could*, take from us the Bible and Christ, and give us nothing in their place.

Voltaire prophesied the destruction of the Bible and Christianity, but Christianity has advanced, and Voltaire's house is now a Bible repository.

Ignorance, or partial data or misrepresentation often causes doubt and perplexity. When you read anything in the Bible that perplexes you, I want you to think, "If I knew the explanation of that, and had sufficient knowledge, I would see it to be all right;" and so, for the time being, put it on the shelf for future reference. If you are never able to solve the question in this world to your satisfaction, you may safely leave it on the shelf till eternity, and say, with Abraham, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Believe the Scriptures to be, as revealed, "The oracles of God," Rom. iii. 1, 2; "the word of God," Luke xi. 28; "the word of truth," 2 Tim. ii. 15; "the word of faith," Rom. x. 6-9; "the word of His grace," Acts xx. 32; "the sword of the Spirit," Eph. vi. 17.

Cherish and employ the Bible during life, for you will want it in death. A schoolmate of mine, in later years, became profane and sceptical. He was dying of a lingering disease. One morning his cousin found him reading the Bible. Looking up, he said, with deep emotion and anxiety, "I never thought I would come to this, but I have to."

Do not fear defeat as you trust in God and His

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Word. Christ and you are more than a match for Satan and all your foes.

> "*Trust and obey;* there is no other way
> To be happy in Jesus but *trust and obey.*"

Turn a deaf ear, not only to avowed infidelity, but to the sophistical, presumptuous and egotistical utterances of the *misnamed* "higher critics." One has said, "Higher criticism means lower piety."

The learned Rev. Dr. Howard Osgood declares: "Of all the attempted divisions of criticism, the most unscientific and meaningless is that of higher criticism. Its emptiness becomes more plain with every attempted definition."

The largest brains, warmest hearts, highest scholarship and best life stand by the old Bible as it is. Daniel Webster, whose brain was the largest and heaviest ever examined in America, lived in the faith of the Bible. His last utterance was, "*Lord, I believe.*"

We have solid ground to rest our faith upon. Not one in heaven, on earth or in hell can say that God or His Word ever failed one who trusted Him. (John iii. 33.)

Though attacks may be made against the Bible by not only avowed foes, but professed friends let us joyously sing our faith:

> "Should all the forms that men devise
> Assault my faith with treacherous art,
> I'll call them vanity and lies,
> And bind thy Gospel to my heart."

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Be a Covenanted Christian.

———: III :———

Promise : Ps. ciii. 17, 18. Praise : 1 Kings viii. 23.
Precept : Deut. xxix. 12. Prayer : Ps. xciv. 18.

THE Lord says: "I will make an everlasting covenant with you." (Isa. lv. 3.) You should, therefore, remember that, being a Christian, you have entered into an everlasting covenant with the Lord, and, as long as the attitude of the will is toward Christ, the covenant holds good.

You are not, as some suppose, one moment or day a child of the Lord, and the next the child of the devil, changing your relation at every misstep or as your feelings change. If your will is Christward, though you may lament defects, trust in the Saviour and know that you are His. (Rom. vi. 16.)

Christians often say, "I hope I shall be able to keep *it*," and when their feelings change, "I have lost *it*." As well might a young bride say, "I hope I shall be able to keep it," or, as she feels depressed, "I have lost it;" and so leave her husband and resume her maiden name. You have not received some "*it*," but Christ, as your personal Saviour and divine Bridegroom.

Some, when they lose their temper, utter a rash word, or do something else which brings condemnation, think "it is all up with me now," and so give up their faith and hope, and abandon their allegiance to Christ. You must not think and act thus. You have covenanted with Christ forever.

You do not, as a son or daughter, when you do any wrong, change your name, and think, "My father does not love me," and so desert him and your home.

The Lord, as a loving Father, makes every allowance for your ignorance, faults, sins and weaknesses, and often takes the will for the deed, and is *infinitely* more interested and watchful to keep you from fall-

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ing, and to tenderly pick you up again when you do fall, than are the kindest earthly father and mother when teaching their first-born child to walk. See how often God forgave His returning covenant people Israel. He will be equally gracious to you.

Do not think it necessary or inevitable that you fall into sin, 1 John ii. 1, 2; yet, if you fall as grievously as did Peter when he swore, do not give up your faith and hope, but remember the covenant of grace, and that Jesus loves you still, and, like Peter, repent and pledge yourself to Christ anew.

While in Picton, Mr. C., who had been a drinker, said to me, "I was converted last night; now, suppose that at any time in the future I should have a slip and do wrong, is it all up with me?" I replied, "I imagine you have had a happy married life; but, let me ask you, have you and your wife ever had a tift or any differences?" He answered, "Yes, a few." "Well, was it all up with you when you had the first little jangle?" Smiling, he said, "No, *indeed;* we made it up before the day was over." "Remember, then, Jesus says, 'Ye are the bride, I am the Bridegroom.' Now, if you ever slip, what will you do?" He replied, "I see it; I hope I may not slip, but if I ever do, I will never sleep till I am forgiven." Two years later, as I met him, he grasped my hand, and said, "I have not had a slip yet, and I trust I may never have one; but if I ever do, I'll not sleep till all is well again." Make his resolution yours.

Christ is always ready to forgive. He who enjoined that *we* should forgive the returning one "seventy times seven," will assuredly not be less forgiving, but *infinitely more so.*

Though others seem to lose faith in you and give you up, and though you often fail, "hope thou in God," and remember the "everlasting covenant." Be like Mrs. Phœbe Palmer, who said, "In forty years I have not once laid myself down to sleep without knowing, come life or death, all is well."

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Be a Confessed Christian.

——: IV :——

Precept: 1 Peter iii. 15. Praise: 2 Cor. iv. 13.
Promise: Matt. x. 32, 33. Prayer: Dan. vi. 10.

LAST words of friends are fondly remembered. Christ, just before He ascended, said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me." (Acts i. 8.) Cherish and obey these last words of your Saviour.

The two great powers that God appointed and employs to convert the world are the Word and personal testimony. See how often these two powers are spoken of together in the Bible.

(1) John was in Patmos for "the Word and testimony," Rev. i. 9. (2) Martyrs in heaven for "the Word and testimony," Rev. vi. 9; xx. 4. (3) Saints overcame by "the blood, the commandments and the testimony," Rev. xii. 11, 17. (4) Andrew and Philip, as new converts, confessed, "We have found the Messias," and invited others to Him, John i. 41-46. (5) Peter preached Christ, and gave his testimony, "We are witnesses," Acts x. 39. (6) Paul was appointed "a *minister* and a *witness*," Acts xxvi. 16. His conversion is recorded three times in Acts. (7) The wonderful revival in Samaria resulted from the woman's brief *testimony* and the words of Jesus. (John iv. 29, 39-42.)

Success or failure is in proportion as these *two powers* are faithfully employed or culpably neglected. The history of the different Churches and the experience of individuals prove this true. No minister, teacher, parent or anybody else will win many others to Christ unless he has a clear experience and tells it.

1. Confess Christ with your lips. Paul mentions three things a Christian does: (1) Believes with the heart; (2) Confesses with the mouth; (3) Is not ashamed of Christ. (Rom. x. 8-11.)

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Some say, "I don't believe in talking about my religion." Perhaps they have no religion to talk about.

Being Christ's witness, as in courts of law, you should "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." In almost every Church, testimony meetings are now recognized.

Do not doubt that you are a Christian or neglect to witness for Christ because from nervousness, lack of practice, or self-consciousness, you feel it a cross to speak in meetings. I was troubled for years after my conversion, because I felt it a cross to speak in meetings. This continued till, when a school teacher, I stood up nervously in a temperance lodge to second a motion, and when I sat down I was bathed with perspiration. I saw the mistake I had been making, and said, "Satan, I have found you out; it is not a cross to speak *for Christ*, but it is a cross *to speak*."

2. Speak briefly in a sentence or two. In our meetings twenty-five speak in five minutes.

3. Do not get into the habit of speaking in a whining or cant tone, or talking about trials and troubles; but speak *naturally* of the peace, victory, comfort, hope and love that Christ gives you.

4. Let your testimony be more *confession* of *Christ* than *profession* of what *you are*. Let your *life* speak louder than your lips, that saints and sinners may see and admit you are a Christian. (Psa. cxxvi. 2.)

5. Confess Christ by becoming a church member. Christ enjoins it, the Church needs you, and even the world expects it. Victorinus, a noted man of Rome, told his heathen friend he was a Christian. He replied, "I will never believe it till I see you openly profess your new faith in church."

6. Confess Christ by Christian conversation. You will find it pleasing to God, and profitable, to familiarly speak "often one to another" about Christian faith, life and hope. (Mal. iii. 16-18.) Brothers and sisters, husband and wife, parents, children and friends should daily enjoy this privilege. (Deut. vi. 6-9.)

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Be a Consistent Christian.

——: v :——

Precept: 2 Cor. vi. 17-18. Praise: Gal. vi. 14.
Promise: John x. 27, 28. Prayer: John xvii. 15.

BE what Moody calls "An O. and O. C.," that is, an out-and-out Christian.

Do not see how near the precipice you can go and yet be safe, but keep far away from danger.

Be an everyday Christian. While you will not blacken your shoes or shave yourself on Sunday, except when necessary, do not blacken your neighbor's character or shave him on Monday.

Do not try to separate honesty from Christianity. Godliness is not only an experience, but a life also. Either be honest, or do not profess to be a Christian.

Know the will of God and cheerfully do it.

Control your *lowest* and *worst* self, while you act out your *highest* and *best* self, and be as good as you know how.

Practise the two great Bible precepts concerning evil.

1. "Abhor that which is evil." (Rom. xii. 9.) All know and admit that dishonesty, profanity, falsehood, licentiousness, drunkenness, idleness, covetousness, evil-speaking, backbiting, slander, gambling, malice, hypocrisy, Sabbath desecration and such like are evil. Then let us abhor all these recognized evils.

2. "Abstain from all appearance of evil." (1 Thess. v. 22.) That is, keep from everything that is doubtful or questionable. As so many ask, "Is there any harm in the theatre, the parlor dance, card-playing, horse-racing, reading trashy novels, using tobacco, and wine-drinking," it is very evident that these are all questionable practices, to say the least. Then let us give ourselves the benefit of the doubt, be on the safe side, and turn from all these, not feeling that we are making a sacrifice, but that they are all good riddance. (Matt. xiii. 44.)

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Be as good out of Lent as in it, unless you are sure that you will die during Lent. We should be good all the time, and so be ready for life or death, for earth or heaven.

Have the same moral and religious standard for boys and men that you have for girls and women.

Every Christian, to be consistent, should seek the conversion of others. Christ commands this, love constrains, and sinners expect it. A young man dying said, "I don't believe there is anything in Christianity, or my mother and sister, who are church members, would have spoken to me about it."

I would rather for the present, and for years to come, be on earth than in heaven; because, if I were in heaven, I could only rejoice when sinners repented; but, being on earth, I may not only rejoice, but also have a hand and voice in their salvation.

Do not barter Jesus at any price. Judas, to many, seems a most despicable character, because he sold and betrayed the Saviour. I fear that others, besides Judas, have sold him for a trifle. When a Christian acts inconsistently in politics, in business or in his amusements, he sells and betrays his Lord.

People often say, "I will not go where I cannot take Jesus with me." That is a good rule, but it is even better to say, "I will not be found where Jesus does not *lead* the way."

Mrs. Cleveland, when first her husband was President, was invited by the council of one of the first cities of the United States to accept the honor of presenting new colors to the brave men of the fire department. Mrs. Cleveland politely and firmly declined the invitation, as her husband was not invited, for the mayor was not friendly to the President.

We honor this noble woman for her decision.

Never accept any invitation or proffered honors where Jesus, your divine Bridegroom, would not be a welcome Guest, and all heaven will honor you.

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Be a Church Christian.

———: VI :———

Precept: Acts xx. 28. Praise: Ps. xxvii. 4.
Promise: Heb. xii. 22-24. Prayer: Matt vi. 10.

THERE are two classes of persons—the saved and the unsaved. All the saved, of all ages, should be in the Church as members, and all the unsaved outside.

If you are a nominal member, but not a Christian, I would not say, "Get out of the Church," but I would say, "Yield to Christ before you sleep." If you are not a Christian, and outside of the Church, I would not say, "Stay out," but I would urge you to become a Christian and at once join the Church.

If a person has no home, he is called a tramp; hence a Christian, without a church home, may be properly and politely called an ecclesiastical tramp. Tramps do not seem to respect themselves, and cannot command the respect and confidence of other people as those who have homes. By all means, let me kindly and earnestly beseech you, as you value yourself and your influence, not to be an ecclesiastical tramp, but to have a church home.

You cannot put much dependence upon those professing conversion who refuse to join the Church. The time to count fish is when putting them on the string.

Do you say, "I can live as good a Christian without joining the Church as if I were a member?" Many have attempted this, but have signally failed, and you will be no exception to the rule if you try. Do you know one *living* person, not a member of some religious organization, that is living a consistent, exemplary Christian life? If you do, I would like to be introduced to him or have his picture, as I am especially fond of curiosities.

Living a consistent Christian life includes obeying

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Christ, but not to associate yourself with His Church and people on earth is disobeying Him.

Living as an exemplary Christian is setting an example worthy for all to imitate. If every Christian would follow the example of the few who call themselves Christians, and yet refuse to become members of any branch of the Church of Christ, while some of us might get to heaven, the world would go back to heathenism.

Let me mention several reasons why you, if a Christian, should join the Church:

1. For the sake of Christ, who has saved you. (Matt. v. 14, 15.) God says, "Ye are My witnesses."

2. For the sake of His Church, that needs you. If you *secretly* endeavor to be a Christian, you will be used against the Church and Christianity, for people will say of you, "He makes no profession of religion, and he is a great deal better than many of the Church members;" and so they will use you to slap the Church and professing Christians. You do not desire this; then give what influence you have to the cause of Christ, and at once confess Him and get into His Church.

3. For the sake of your example to others. Kant, the philosopher, speaks of the "categorical imperative." By this he means "a rule suitable for universal law and practice." Acting on this standard rule, you will certainly unite with the Church.

4. For the sake of your own household. (Joshua xxiv. 15.) Do not wait for another to join with you, but as husband or wife, parent or child, *do your duty*, and God will bless you and make you a blessing.

5. For the sake of yourself. It will strengthen your purpose to thus commit yourself. You will feel your responsibility to Christ and His cause all the more, and by God's grace will fulfil it.

Do you say, "I am too young?" Not if you love and trust Jesus, and want to please Him. I know hundreds of boys and girls that are members of the

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Church and happy Christians. Mr. Hunter's daughter, Mabel, has been a member of the Church since she was five years old.

Do you say, "I will join the Church when I find one perfect?" As Spurgeon said, "My friend, you will not find it this side heaven, and if you did they would not accept you, for then they would *cease* to be perfect." Get into the Church you prefer.

If the church of your choice is not where you are living, then unite with the church there that suits you best. Be a member of some church.

I will give you three rules by which you may decide which church you, as a Christian, should join: (1) Where you believe you can be most at *home;* as the Church is a home. (2) Where you believe you can *receive* the most good; as "charity begins at home." (3) Where you believe you can *do* the most good; as God designs you to be useful.

God will direct you in this important matter as you sincerely open your heart and mind to Him.

I will give you three more rules: (1) Do not join a Church because you think it will bring you greater social position or financial gain; (2) Do not join a Church because it will grant you license to live in sin or indulge in questionable practices, and not disturb you; (3) Do not join a Church that unchurches other Christian denominations, and is not doing aggressive work for God.

Some people foolishly ask, "What Church would Christ join if He returned to earth?" He, as our Exemplar, when on earth, united with the then existing Church and priesthood by circumcision and baptism, and is *now* the head of His Church on earth and in heaven.

Do not be only a boarder in the church, though you do pay for your board, but recognize yourself as a son or daughter in the family, and make yourself generally useful.

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Do not stand on ceremonies, but feel at home and be courteous to all, old and young.

Have a strong preference for the Church of your choice; yet, do not be a bigot, but have a broad charity for all sister Churches.

I like to hear a solo sung, but a quartette pleases me much better. Let us, while we think of our respective church homes, sing together in exquisite harmony, "There is no place like home."

You that are *Presbyterians* take the bass, and ever *persevere* in rolling out the song, "There is no place like home," and think of the *Presbyterian Church* as you sing.

You that are *Baptists* sing the alto, and bring in your beautiful *liquid* notes, feeling that there is nothing like the *Baptist* Church for you.

You that are *Episcopalians* ring out the tenor notes, whether *high* or *low*, that your voices may be heard above the rest, but keep in harmony with all the others, remembering that yours is only *one part* of the song.

Let the *Methodists* take the soprano, and sing with heart and voice, "There is no place like home," each one feeling, "the Methodist Church for me."

Thus let us sing, in "the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace," our Christian Church quartette, "There is no place like home," and let all other denominations join in the song, and our voices will rise to heaven in sweetest harmony, rivalling the music of the angels and redeemed, and delighting the ears of our common Lord and Saviour.

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Be a Charitable Christian.

——: VII :——

Promise : 1 Cor. iv. 5. Praise : 2 Thess. i. 3.
Precept : Matt. vii. 1-5. Prayer : Ps. xix. 13.

WE all admire persons who are charitable; that is, those who show a disposition to think favorably of their fellow-mortals, and who put the best possible construction on the words, actions and *motives* of others. Let us imitate their worthy example.

Christ, in His memorable Sermon on the Mount, so very strongly warns us against censoriousness, or the disposition to condemn and express censure. Read His own words in Matt. vii. 1-6: "Judge not, that ye be not judged," and guard against this great hindrance to true piety.

The Saviour's words prohibit all judging that is harsh, unjust, or envious, and all unfavorable conclusions reached, without knowing all the facts. His words also warn against all judging that is rash or censorious, and contrary to love; but the Lord allows judging that is judicial, ecclesiastical, intelligent, necessary and charitable.

It is in *human nature* to be censorious; *Satan* attacks this weak point.

Some persons set a wrong *example*, and many *occasions* and *temptations* arise to be uncharitable in thoughts and words.

Let me point out several reasons for watching and praying against censoriousness:

1. Jesus forbids it. This alone is sufficient. Shall evangelists censoriously criticise pastors, and pastors evangelists; and those that adopt one style and method the persons who adopt another; and people of one Church those of other Churches? Jesus, in Luke ix. 49, 50, and Matt vii. 1-6, teaches the follow-

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ing important lesson to saint and sinner: "Mind your own business."

2. Censoriousness is deceptive, as it diverts the mind from self and Christ, fosters pride and self-righteousness, arouses and confirms doubt in humanity, then in Christianity, and, finally, in God Himself.

3. It is unjust. To say, "I take every man for a rogue till I find him honest," is absurd, wicked and diabolical. Things and persons are not always as they appear, and especially as they are seen by a prejudiced person, who has a beam in his own eye. "Judge righteous judgment." (John vii. 24.)

4. Censoriousness is unnecessary. God is the Judge, and hence we do not need to be. (Rom. xiv. 10-13.)

Have broad charity for Churches other than your own, and for those who work differently to you or your Church. Go on with your own Christian life and work; and, as to others, carry out the maxim of Dr. Gamaliel, "Let them alone . . . lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." (Acts v. 38, 39.)

5. Censoriousness is *inconsistent*. Christ teaches us that persons judge others by themselves. (Matt. vii. 1-5.) The one that has most faults and inconsistencies sees and talks most about others' defects.

A woman, speaking to several ladies, said: "Mrs. So-and-so is the meanest, most selfish and unladylike person I ever met." One artfully replied, "Hush! you are forgetting *yourself*." Do not, in your criticisms, forget yourself.

6. Censoriousness exhibits folly. The poorest critic, and the one most open to criticism, is often the most critical. "Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones."

The faults we are *most ready* to speak about in others are but the faint reflection of our own. (Matt. vii. 2.)

Do not think that you are above being criticised, but, like Christ and sensible people, be above a

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disposition to criticise even the criticiser. "The highest exercise of *charity* is charity toward the uncharitable."

7. Censoriousness is egotistic. This awful sin is a temptation that especially assails persons who *think* that they are better, or do more, or are higher up than others.

An old Scotch lady was very censorious and critical. One said to her, "A person would think, to hear you talk, that you thought you and the minister were the only Christians in the world." She replied seriously, "Indeed, I hae my doubts sometimes about the minister."

Egotistic thoughts of personal holiness, devotion, divine guidance, faithfulness and superiority foster uncharitableness. God, speaking of those who have elevated conceptions of themselves, and who say, "I am holier than thou," declares, "These are a smoke in my nose." (Isa. lxv. 5.)

8. Censoriousness is contrary to Christian love. "Love *thinketh* no evil;" that is, imputes no evil, but puts the most favorable construction upon the actions, words and motives of others.

Do not be ready to believe an evil report, or imagine evil about any person. "Love hopeth all things." The way we think and speak of other people's faults and sins may be a much greater fault and sin than theirs.

The heart, not the head, determines the character of the individual. I occasionally see and hear of persons that do strange things in business, or that harbor bigotry, narrowness or prejudice in Church or religious matters, or that seem to exhibit morbid conceptions of truth, honesty and worldly conformity, that if I, with my light, did as they do, I would certainly not call myself a Christian at all; and yet I do not for a moment think that they are not Christians, and even devoted ones; for I think of their different training or environment, or their

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different conscience and light, and hence I put the blame upon their *heads* and not their *hearts*. I learned this from Christ and Peter. (Acts x. 34, 35.)

Christ brands the censorious as a "hypocrite," because "the mote" or splinter that such an one *thinks* he sees, and points out in another's eye largely results from "*the beam*" or timber in his own eye.

Spurgeon truthfully said: "When persons find fault with others, they are usually, though unconsciously, looking at their own faces in a glass."

If a person is narrow, egotistic, selfish, dishonest, lewd, or is a liar, hypocrite, or plagiarist, he will be most ready to think and speak of others as being guilty of these faults or sins.

One said to Emperor Frederick III., "I wish I could find some place to go to where no hypocrite inhabited." He replied, "You must travel beyond the frozen ocean, and then you will find a hypocrite, if you find yourself there."

We should be very slow to think, much less call another a hypocrite, unless, like Christ we know the heart.

9. Censoriousness is disastrous. It undermines character. It ensures eternal ruin, as we fix, by our own judgment, the scale and "measure" by which we shall be judged; for Christ has declared, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." (Matt. vii. 2.)

What weights and measures are you now using? Ask God to examine them, and use only those that bear His stamp, the stamp of "Love."

No wonder that I mark censoriousness in my chart, for I nearly foundered on this sunken reef. When teaching school, I became hypercritical of other Church members that I considered inconsistent. In prayer-meeting, as I heard them praying, I thought, "Better live as you pray," and as they spoke in testimony meeting I soliloquized, "That is a very good Sunday story, but wait till Monday." This continued for weeks and even months, till my feet were well-

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nigh gone, and I said to my class-leader, "Brother Hogarth, If it were not for you and a few others in whom I have confidence, and that I know God has wrought a work of grace in my own heart, though it is very small now, I would doubt Christianity and humanity in general." One night at prayer-meeting, while kneeling, God by His Spirit showed me myself. I saw my great sin and danger, asked for mercy and pardon, and was graciously forgiven. My feet were restored, a fresh peace and love filled my heart, the resolution of Joshua came to my mind, and gratefully I said: "As for me, no matter what others do, I will serve the Lord." Since becoming more consistent myself, I have not seen or thought of so many inconsistent persons; but when I am compelled to behold one, by grace I am enabled to put the mantle of charity over that one, and, instead of being impeded, I pledge myself to God afresh and seek to live all the more consecrated and consistent.

As you value your life, your influence, the good of others and the glory of God, forever keep far away from uncharitable judging and censorious speaking of others, for on these rocks many have been injured or wrecked.

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Be a Courageous Christian.

——: VIII :——

Precept : Josh. i. 9. **Praise : Psa. xx. 5.**
Promise : Isa. xli. 10. **Prayer : 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17.**

THE Lord teaches us the importance and necessity of faith-inspired courage when He, in two chapters, directed Joshua seven different times: "Be strong and of a good courage." (Deut. xxxi. 6, 7, 23; Josh. i. 6, 7, 9, 18.)

Some are worse than failures in life from want of courage or moral backbone.

1. Have courage to confess Christ and show your colors. Captain Hedley Vicars was at first laughed at by his comrades, and derided as a Methodist, but, ever being firm in the discharge of Christian duty, he won the respect of all; and many in his regiment, through his godly example, became pronounced Christians.

2. Have strong moral and religious principles, and have courage to stand by them and resist temptation always and everywhere. Dare to be a Daniel, even in high society. (Dan. i. 8.)

3. Have courage to say "No." I heard of one who was repeatedly asked to drink, who answered first, "No, thank you;" then, "No, sir;" and lastly, "*No.*" That settled it.

4. Do not be either coaxed, joked, bribed, frightened, or allured to do wrong, or to compromise with sin. "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." (Prov. i. 10.)

It is not trust, or courage, but *presumption*, to unnecessarily go into places of danger or sin. Like Christ, trust, but do not presume. (Matt. iv. 8.)

Learn from Samson's sad fall to keep your head off Delilah's lap, and not to parley or trifle with temptation. Follow the example of Joseph, who asked, "How can I do this great wickedness?" and say with Peter, "I must obey God rather than man."

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The Christian who adheres to the right has nothing to fear. How often God says to us, "Fear not." To control yourself is an evidence of the greatest heroism. Be a valiant general and control your temper, tongue, thoughts, curiosity and appetites.

5. Do not let the prevalence of sin or a temporary victory of Satan dispirit you. Remember God lives and rules, and shall reign from pole to pole.

Martin Luther, during the long struggle of the Reformation, was once for a few weeks utterly discouraged. One day as he returned home, after a few days' absence, he was dismayed at finding his wife dressed in deep mourning and looking dejected. In the greatest anxiety, he exclaimed, "What is the matter, Kate; who is dead?" She said, "Should I not be sad as you, when our Heavenly Father is dead?" We may learn, as did Luther, from the strange reproof.

6. Have courage to do Christian work. Fear keeps many as drones, and impedes others. God cannot use a person that is afraid. He sent home 22,000 of Gideon's soldiers who lacked courage. (Jud. vii. 3.)

If you get discouraged and silently show it—or, worse still, if you complain, scold, abuse or blame others, you will ensure *failure* every time.

Do your duty, and you will have success. Jesus says, "Fear not, thou *shalt* catch men." (Luke v. 10.)

7. Lack of courage keeps many out of promised experiences, as with ancient Israel. (Num. xiii. 30, 31.)

The Holy Spirit imparts true courage. (Acts i. 8.) Peter, naturally cowardly, becomes courageous after Pentecost.

8. The Christian life is a "good warfare." Complete armor is provided. (Eph. vi. 11-18.) Courage and faith in our Captain will ensure victory. Do not be afraid of the lions *by* the way, for they are chained. "Keep in de middle ob de road."

How dare we get discouraged? Trustingly sing, as did Cromwell and his Ironsides, "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

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Be a Consecrated Christian.

——: IX :——

Promise: 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. **Praise: Luke i. 68-74.**
Precept: Rom. xii. 1. **Prayer: 1 Thess. v. 23, 24.**

ENTIRE consecration to God is having a willing and obedient spirit. It is trustingly and *practically* saying from the heart, "Thy will be done." By consecration, the will is not lost, or broken, or weakened, but the Christian lovingly wills to do what he believes to be God's will.

Do not think or talk of sacrificing for Christ. We might say that there never was but one sacrifice made, and that was by our Lord Jesus Christ for us.

When Rev. S. Bradburn, who had been a cobbler, heard several young ministers speaking of sacrificing their *all* for the ministry, he arose and quaintly said: "I made a double sacrifice; I gave up *two* of the best *awls* in the kingdom to become an ambassador of God in the Church and a gentleman in society."

When you give yourself fully to Christ, and cast aside anything and everything that stands in the way of Christian fellowship and faithful service, you will know what true pleasures, honors and riches are.

As you read the biographies and experiences of consecrated men and women, do not think, as I did, that you should be and feel and act as they.

The colored preacher, with forceful and native eloquence, said: "If we want full salvation, we must git away from de weeds, de snags and mud at de shore, and out into de middle ob de ribber. Dere's Brudder Johnson stuck in de mud ob covetousness, and Sister Brown is tangled in de weeds ob worldly and sinful pleasures, and a whole lot ob us are caught in de snags of questionable habits and practices. Come, and let us all swing out into de middle ob de ribber where we can't find bottom, and den we can sing and shout, 'I's gwine down de ribber, I's gwine

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down de ribber, I's gwine down de ribber unto glory.'"

Captain Hedley Vicars, while reading 1 John i. 7, was so impressed that, trusting Christ, he said, "Lord, by thy grace I shall, from this moment, live as one cleansed from sin."

Let me illustrate the true idea of consecration to God. A pastor, visiting in a home, was delighted to see part of an old book similar to one he had owned when a boy. He expressed his regret at having lost the book, and not being able to find another, it being out of print. The mother pressed him to accept this book, which he agreed to do, and promised a more costly one to the children. The children, pleased to exchange, hunted up all the parts of the old book they could find and gave all to the minister. A few days after, they found one of the boards of the cover, and from time to time several loose leaves. As they found any part of the book, they said, "That belongs to the minister," and so laid it aside for him. They, at first, consecrated all of the book that they knew of; but as time went on, and they discovered other parts, they consecrated them. So, at the time when a person is converted, he wholly consecrates himself to God as far as he knows, saying, "Here, Lord, I give myself to Thee;" but, as he advances, fresh light may discover in his person, business, habits, amusements or life, certain things that were not seen at the first, and then, recognizing that he belongs to the Lord, the consecration is made more complete. That is what Paul means when he says, "Perfecting holiness."

Let us always realize the joy of being entirely consecrated to God as far as we know, and pledge ourselves to Him that, as additional light may be received, or increased powers or talents acquired, all shall be cheerfully yielded to Him, Whose we are and Whom we serve. (1 John i. 7.)

Let your consecration be specific. Know the blessedness of the experience of Miss Havergal's consecration

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hymn: "Take and keep my life, my hands, my feet, my voice, my lips, my silver and gold, my moments and days, my intellect, my will, my heart, my love, myself, ever, only, all for thee."

Miss Havergal's little book, "Kept for the Master's Use," gives the true idea of consecration.

The Jewish altar was sanctified or set apart to a sacred use, so that all the offerings laid thereon became holy or sanctified. (Ex. xxix. 37.) This material altar typified Jesus Christ as our altar and sacrifice (Heb. xiii. 10), Who, by His incarnation and atoning death, sanctified Himself (John xvii. 19), so that all who now yield to Him are *sanctified* or *made holy;* that is, are set apart to the worship and service of God, and through Jesus Christ their persons and services are accepted. (1 Peter ii. 5.)

We thus learn that every Christian, from the weakest babe in Christ up to the greatest saint, is sanctified or holy, and the term sanctification or holiness covers the whole range of Christian experience, including even those who like the Corinthians are but "babes in Christ," and to a degree "carnal" (1 Cor. iii. 1-3), and yet are addressed as "sanctified in Christ Jesus." (1 Cor. i. 2.)

It is very important in this day of conflicting and confusing teaching on the question of "holiness" or "sanctification" to remember that every Christian is holy or "sanctified in Christ Jesus;" but, at the same time, let every one improve the light he has, and rise to a higher degree of holiness, obeying the precept, "perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord," so shall we not continue mere babes, but will know by experience what is meant by "the fulness of God," "perfect love," "purity of heart," or "full assurance of faith."

Let us know the experience of entire consecration, as did Alfred Cookman, when he said, "On these hands I see written, 'sacred to Jesus;' on these feet. these lips, these eyes, this intellect, this heart, I see written, 'sacred to Jesus.'"

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Be an Exemplary Christian.

——: x :——

Precept: 1 Tim. iv. 16. Praise: 2 Cor. iii. 18.
Proverb: Prov. xi. 1. Prayer: 2 Cor. xiii. 7.

TAKE as your daily motto: "Let your light *so* shine before men" (Matt. v. 16), so will you glorify your Heavenly Father.

Every *professing* Christian and church member should be a living Bible. (2 Cor. iii. 2.) We are the Bible the world reads. Christianity is judged more by its professors than by the Bible. You will be read like a book, and correctly commented upon. Great is your privilege and responsibility. If inconsistent, you will wrong Christ, and injure the unconverted and yourself (1 Cor. viii. 12), but, being consistent, you will honor Christ and save yourself and others.

It is easier to lose the confidence of people than to regain it. Some destroy their influence for a trifle. Be careful about the little things. Do not sacrifice a good reputation for any price. You may sell your reputation for twenty-five cents, but you cannot buy it back for that.

Learn to say *no* politely, but very firmly. Never compromise, but always and everywhere set an example worthy of imitation; so shall your life before the world, like Daniel's, be unimpeachable.

Christ represents us in heaven, and appoints us to represent Him on earth. (2 Cor. v. 20.) If you were His only representative, what would those who know you think of Christianity? People often say, "If that is Christianity, I don't want it." Raise no false light.

One practical evidence of "pure and undefiled religion" is, to keep "unspotted from the world." (Jas. i. 27.) See that *you* are not spotted by the world.

A young man, being asked to become a Christian, retorted: "Better speak to some of your church members. There is Mr. F—— can take his glass

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the same as any other sinner." Neither drink intoxicants, treat nor be treated; and so set the example of a total abstainer and prohibitionist.

Bishop Vincent lays down the sensible rule, "Better not," with reference to "Wine," "The Drama," "The Dance," and "Card-playing." Carry out this rule and you will never regret it in time or eternity.

The higher you stand in society or the Church, the greater your influence for good or evil. We are responsible for our influence, not only in things that are evil, but also in those things that are doubtful to others. (1 Cor. viii. 9-13.)

Keep off Satan's territory, and never be found where it would be a disgrace to die. The story is told of one who died at a dance, and, while Satan was dragging her down to hell, Peter claimed her for heaven; but Satan protested, saying, "I found her on my territory."

Do not take the older members, or even pastors, or evangelists' or ministers' wives, as your example; or only so far as they follow Christ, our great Exemplar.

Adopt, as your ideal of experience and life, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. ii. 5.) What does that mean? If I have your mind, I will not necessarily act as you do, but as you would act if you were in my position; so, if you have the mind of Christ, you will not do as He did, but as Christ would do if He were in your position. Often think, "What would Christ do if He were in my place?" and act accordingly. Study and imitate His character; so shall you imbibe His spirit.

The emblem of The Society of King's Daughters and Sons is a white cross, bearing the initials, "I.H.N.," meaning, "In His Name." If you are a Christian you can say, "I'm a child of the King." Say not then, "What is the harm in this or that?" "Other Christians do it." "If I never do worse, I guess I will be all right;" but ask, "Can I do it in Christ's name, looking for His presence and blessing." (Col. iii. 17.)

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Be a Faithful Christian.

—: XI :—

Precept: Heb. x. 23. Praverb: Prov. xiv. 5.
Promise: 2 Thess. iii. 3. Prayer: 1 Thess. v. 23, 24.

GOD rewards faithfulness rather than success. He says, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

1. Be faithful with the talents you have. Though your talent is small, do not slothfully bury it or lap it up in the napkin of modesty, but do the best you can, and no man or angel can do more. Act out in your life Camp-meeting John Allan's text, "As much as in me is, I am ready" (Rom. i. 15).

2. Be faithful in employing time. It is the material out of which life is made. Eternity is near.

3. Be faithful, as a steward, with your property. "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts." (Haggai ii. 8.) Hear Christ's solemn words: "If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" (Luke xvi. 11.) God is a great banker, and each one of us is appointed as manager of one of His branch banks. Each manager should seek to increase the bank capital, and every year, *by wise contributions*, make definite and systematic returns of 10 per cent. and upwards to the head bank; then use what is necessary for personal and family needs, and retain the balance to advance the interests of the Lord's branch bank. This idea gives responsibility and dignity to business. Shall we be defaulters, and so sin, disgrace and injure ourselves by robbing God of "tithes and offerings?" (Mal. iii. 8.)

4. Be faithful to Christ and His commands. Remember that *omission* of duty is sin.

Do not try to excuse yourself for doing anything evil or questionable because another does it or thinks it no harm. Jesus says, "What is that to thee? follow thou Me." Take as your motto: "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." (John ii. 5.)

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5. Be faithful to yourself. "Do thyself no harm." I know those who, having made a wrong promise, think they must stick to it. We are commanded to do right, and not make rash vows, much less carry them out. Jesus teaches us that a rash vow should be broken. (Matt. xxi. 29.)

6. Never compromise or swerve from the right. Ever act, like Daniel, on principle.

Do not say, "I am as good as others," or, "I shall be *more* faithful," but "be *faithful*."

7. Be faithful to the unconverted. Live worthy of their confidence, and thus seek to win for Christ both youth and adults. (Col. iv. 5.)

8. Be faithful to your family, whether as a father or mother, husband or wife, son or daughter, brother or sister, by ever acting out the Golden Rule. Read and obey Eph. iv. 22-28; v. 1-4.

9. Be faithful to the Church of Christ; for by it the world is to be saved. Be true to your own church, its pastor and members, and seek to make it the model church. Be as faithful in attendance upon the means of grace as upon school, business or meals.

Be true to all sister churches; do not speak against them. Do not seek to proselyte members; that is, do not be a "*sheep stealer*."

10. Always be faithful. Apelles, the great Grecian painter, said in rapture, "I am painting for eternity." Ever feel and say the same thing.

The dispirited Macgregor clan, at Preston-Pans, was aroused to enthusiasm and victory by the words of their wounded chief: "I am not dead, my children; I am looking at you to see you do your duty." Our glorious Captain was wounded for us, and died; but He is alive again, and, gazing upon us, cheers us on. "Lo, I am with you alway." With fresh inspiration, go forth to do your duty in the world, your family and the Church, and you shall hear the welcome plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant"

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Be a Forgiving Christian.

——— : XII :———

Precept: Rom. xii. 19-21. **Proverb:** Prov. xv. 1, 18.
Promise: Matt. vi. 14, 15. **Prayer:** Luke xi. 4.

PAUL says, "Be ye kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." (Eph. iv. 32.) We should seek to be as patient and forgiving with others as God is with us.

Forgiveness is Christ-like, but revenge is devilish.

1. Do not seek to be revenged. He who does the wrong suffers most. Endure wrong, but never do wrong. We should pity wrongdoers, for they must answer to God for the wrong.

Anger or passion convinces no person; but it shows weakness, and results in humiliation and disturbed peace.

If another is angry at you have enough sense to keep cool, and do not be tantalizing.

Silence is often the finest eloquence, and forbearance the most potent resentment.

The wise man said, "It is an honor for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling." (Prov. xx. 3.)

An enemy, or one who has wronged you, can stand abuse; but kindness will conquer him.

Resentment feeds resentment, and coldness and severity foster still stronger opposition.

The most effective way of treating an enemy, or one that has done you an injury, or a person that will not speak to you, is to kill him with kindness; for, as Mr. Hunter says, "If you kill him that way, it is the easiest way of disposing of him, as then you don't have to bury him."

2. Do not be disposed to either give or take offence.

I believe many of the seeming variances have no malice, revenge or ill-will in them, but are only *absurd* whims, *childish* differences, or petty party

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jealousies. In heaven many of us will say to others, "What fools we were on earth to harbor little whims, and not speak to one another!" Would it not be better for such to have a little common sense now, and so see their folly, give up their whims, childishness and seeming differences, and speak to one another and act as Christians should?

A wise man said, "I am resolved not to take offence—First, with those who do not intend to give offence, for it is unjust to take umbrage when it was not intended; second, with those who do intend to give offence, for I should pity and pray for such and not quarrel with them."

Let us adopt President Lincoln's motto: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the light."

3. Be wise in the treatment of injuries. Do not, as some people, *brood* over injuries, *nurse* your grievances, *imagine* insults, slights, and wrongs, and *talk* about them, or the very fire of perdition will inflame you.

An old writer says, "A man strikes me with a sword, and inflicts a wound. Suppose, instead of binding up the wound, I am showing it to everybody; and, after it has been bound up, I am taking off the bandage constantly and examining the depth of the wound, and making it fester, is there a person in the world who would not call me a fool? However, such a fool is he, who, by dwelling upon little injuries or insults, causes them to agitate and influence his mind. How much better were it to put a bandage on the wound and never look to it again!"

If we will obey the words of Jesus, "Love your enemies," instead of exposing the wounds and bruises inflicted by cutting words and cruel acts, we will use the balm of love or liniment of grace, and get the bandages on at once and keep them there till the wounds are healed and the soreness gone.

4. Let us imbibe the spirit of Him Who, while suffering inexpressible agony and anguish upon the Cross, yet

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in love prayed for His enemies and murderers that wonderful prayer: "Father, forgive them." No wonder they said: "Truly this was the Son of God." Let us have grace to follow His loving example, so shall people know that we are sons and daughters of God.

Let it be said of you as of Macaulay, "He remembered everything except an injury."

"Do with troubles, wrongs, insults and grievances, as dogs do with bones, bury them, and then if anybody dare dig them up—growl."

The importance of having a forgiving spirit is most impressively taught us by Jesus, as He makes only one comment upon the Lord's Prayer. Study His words carefully: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. vi. 14, 15.)

That one who repeats the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us," and yet retains revenge, malice or hatred in the heart, prays not to be forgiven and insures his own condemnation.

A person said to me, "I cannot say the Lord's Prayer, for there is a person I won't forgive." Beloved, do not be as that one.

5. Perhaps you say, "I cannot forgive a person till he is willing to receive it." Do not make that argument an excuse for having an unforgiving spirit. We can forgive when asked, and also, like Jesus, we may be always *forgiving;* that is, we may be always disposed to forgive.

Jesus teaches us to always have a forgiving spirit, and to forgive a penitent offender, not merely once, but many times; for He says, "If he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." (Luke xvii. 4.)

To have a spirit of forgiveness does not imply that

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you will allow yourself to be defrauded, or the designs of law and justice to be frustrated.

To harbor an unforgiving spirit is suicidal. We should forgive, that we may be forgiven. (Mark xi. 25, 26.)

The Rabbins forgave thrice. Peter suggested "seven times" as a limit. Christ directed four hundred and ninety times. (Matt. xviii. 21, 22.)

If you were dying you would want to be forgiving. I fear, however, some persons would be like the farmer Mr. Hunter tells about, who, thinking he was dying, shook hands with his neighbor over an old score, and then added, "If I die I forgive you; but remember, *if I live, it stands just as it was.*"

6. Is there any person to whom you will not speak? Phil. ii. 5 prescribes an effectual cure. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

John Wesley, hearing General Oglethorpe say of another, "I'll be revenged on him, for I never forgive," said, "Then, sir, I hope you never sin." The reproof was sufficient. It would be well for some others to consider this reproof.

If you have had difficulties with another, act on the maxim, "Bury the hatchet;" but, as one has said, "Do not bury it with the handle sticking out, so that you can readily get hold of it again." Bury it deeply and forever.

7. Some complacently say, "I will forgive when asked." Christ directs, "Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Matt. xviii. 15.) We had better obey Christ.

When, however, you reprove or correct a person who has done wrong, or ask for an apology, you should never do it for your own glorification or personal satisfaction, much less to humiliate the one who has trespassed; but you should especially seek to win him and do him good.

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Do you say, "I have done my part, for I spoke to him once?" Did Jesus treat *you* thus?

Do not think that to have a forgiving spirit, or to forgive a person, implies that you will confide in him, admire him, or make him your familiar friend.

The spirit of forgiveness is thus expressed by Jesus: "*Love* your enemies, *bless* them that curse you, *do good* to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." (Matt. v. 44.)

8. Christianity is the only religion that expels the spirit of revenge.

After the conversion of Asanajwa, a Japanese, he said, "Before Christ gave me a new heart, I bitterly hated my father's enemies, and was pledged and resolved to be revenged; but, when converted, I thought I could forgive them. The old feeling came back *in part* sometimes, but since Christ gave me my present new heart I feel no revenge, but I want to tell them of Jesus." He is now an ordained Methodist preacher in Japan.

I met a school teacher who desired to become a Christian, and yet was almost in utter despair, because she could not remove from her heart the bitter hatred and revenge that she felt against those who had so grossly slandered her character. I told her that it is human nature to hate our enemies, but it is divine to forgive; that she had not to remove those revengeful feelings in order to be accepted of the Lord, but that she might admit Christ to the heart just as she was with the desire to have these wrong feelings removed, and He would expel the hatred and give her a forgiving spirit. (Rev. iii. 20.) She saw her mistake, hope dispelled her despair, and, receiving Christ as her personal Saviour as I spoke to her, His light of love expelled the darkness of hatred from her heart and mind. Of course she did not love those who had wronged her with a love of confidence or esteem or delight, much less did she justify their cruel

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words; but she loved them with a love of pity, and could, like Stephen, pray for the wrong-doers.

We wisely sing and pray, "Jesus, keep me near the Cross." Here we may imbibe Christ's spirit, and love will expel revenge and hatred, so that for our worst enemies, like Jesus, we will instinctively pray, "Father, forgive them."

9. Let me now say a few words about the importance of apologizing, or asking forgiveness, when we in any way wrong others. Remember the precept, "Confess your faults one to another." (James v. 16.)

Do not forget that Christ also enjoins that you should seek to reconcile any one that "hath ought against thee," though you have nothing against him. (Matt. v. 23, 24.) It may go against the carnal nature to do this, and especially so if you gave any cause for offence; but let grace triumph, and obey Christ. The eternal salvation of another may depend upon you doing your duty. We should, however, always endeavor to avoid the necessity of making apologies by always controlling our spirits and actions, tongues and tempers. If we apologize when we speak unkindly or act wrongly, we will be more careful to always have our words kind and actions right.

It is much better to keep from giving offence than to apologize after the wrong is done. That husband and wife were wise who adopted a system of storm-signals. They arranged that when anything had angered him through the day, and he was returning home out of humor, he would display his storm-signal; that is, he would wear his *hat on the back of his head*, and when anything had gone wrong at the house, and the wife was a little out of sorts, she would *tuck up the corners of her apron* as her storm-signal. By this means or some other wise method avoid storms in your home.

I have known persons to pretend to apologize for some wrong words or act; and, instead of apologizing, they sought to defend themselves, and greatly

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aggravated the first offence. Do not thus add insult to injury.

When a person having done wrong apologizes, that one rises in the estimation of others. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

John Wesley requested his servant to post some letters before the service, but the servant refused. Wesley first urged him and then insisted that the order be obeyed. His servant impudently refused to do as directed. Afterwards Wesley demanded an apology, but his servant positively said, "*I'll make no apology* to you or any other man." "Then," said Wesley, "I will apologize to you," which he did. The servant was astonished and conquered, and at once made an ample apology and humbly asked forgiveness, and ever after was a most obedient servant.

Parents often urge that their children shall ask their forgiveness or the forgiveness of each other; but, while this is right, it would also be proper and beneficial for parents, when they treat their children wrongly, to ask forgiveness.

Bishop John H. Vincent, speaking of his mother, said, "Her patience was wonderful. Never but once, and that was in my very early youth, do I remember seeing in her the slightest impatience, and then I was the sole cause. Too often, alas, through boyish carelessness and selfishness, I was irritatingly rude. The manifestation of her vexation was very slight, but it grieved her to think that she had given expression even for a moment to her annoyance. Afterwards, when we were together, she asked me to forgive her! Think of it! My mother (and such a mother) asking *me* to forgive *her*. I never forgot that wonder of a mother's grace."

A gentleman tells the incident that, when he was a student, one of the professors had exhibited a disposition of unfailing sweetness and beauty. His life seemed blameless. One day, however, a student came in late. The professor kindly asked the cause. The

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student aggravated the offence by answering flippantly, and with curtness. The next moment the hitherto self-possessed teacher rose to his feet, while his eyes flashed and his hand pointed to the door; with angry tone he addressed the offender, "*Leave the room, sir.*" We stared in amazement, almost in fright. The culprit, with downcast eye, slunk out of the room. The door was shut. The storm was passed, and the professor's face turned pale. With difficulty he got through his lecture.

As soon as the class was dismissed, a message was sent to the offending student to come to the professor's room. He obeyed the summons, expecting a severe reprimand. But there sat the professor in tears.

"My brother," he sobbed, "will you forgive me?" "It is I who should apologize," said the student, overwhelmed. "No, no, I am older. Will you forgive me? I am very, very sorry. Say that you forgive me——" The student managed to get out a word or two. "And you must tell all the students that I have apologized, will you?" And again there was a pause for the promise. "Now," said the noble old man, "I will go and ask God to forgive me."

The students of the college said, "Nothing in all that life, nothing in all his words, ever did us so much good as that. We knew then under that gentleness and beauty what fires burned; and every man of us had a new faith and a new hope and a new love."

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Be a Home Christian.

——: XIII :——

Promise: Acts ii. 39. Prayer: 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17.
Precept: Deut. vi. 4-9. Praise: Psa. xxiii. 3.

PAUL says, "Learn *first* to show piety at home." Home is where the true character comes out.

One asked another, "Do you think Whitefield is a Christian?" He replied, "I do not know, I never lived with him." So live that those who know you best will have most confidence in you.

1. Consecrate your home. I know those who called in their pastor and friends, and, by prayer and Christian fellowship, *consecrated* their home to Jesus. I know others who invited their worldly acquaintances and friends, and, by dancing, card-playing and drinking, *desecrated* their new home. Let your home be consecrated, as was the home of Martha and Mary, and Jesus will be your abiding Guest.

Some Christian parents allow their unconverted children to desecrate their home. God appoints the Christian father as priest in his own house, and will hold the parents responsible, as he did Eli, for the unrestrained sin of their children. (1 Sam. iii. 13.)

In some places the principal women sign a "Round Robin," agreeing that no liquor-drinking, card-playing or dancing shall be allowed in their homes. This is a worthy example to every Christian woman.

2. Morning and evening let the voice of prayer be heard in your home at the family altar, and also "give God thanks" or "ask a blessing" before every meal.

3. Home life, as a rule, determines the future life. Rev. G. W. Henderson, my class-mate, told me, "I lived in a home a year, where there were the parents, two sisters and two brothers, and I did not once hear an unkind word in the family, or see an unpleasant look." Learn the habit of being kind, courteous,

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polite, unselfish, patient and obliging at home, and you will certainly inspire a similar spirit in others.

A child asked her mother the significant question, "Does God ever scold?" How is it that when children are "playing home," the one who acts the mother's part thinks it proper to scold, and the one representing the father speaks crossly and uses the rod?

4. Guard against impatience and the habit of complaining while getting ready for church, and do not dissect the minister or anybody else, on your return.

5. The renowned "two bears, *bear* and *forbear*," have made and kept peace in many families.

A little girl, dying, artlessly asked, "Mother, will there be room among the angels; you know I have always been in your way." May you and yours find room in heaven.

6. Remember that God designs that your home shall illustrate heaven. For your own sake, and that of others, yea, for the sake of Christ and heaven, "abhor" and "abstain from all appearance of" the "evil" of scolding, fretting, nagging, teasing, fault-finding and grumbling. Make home a paradise.

Are you given to criticism and looking sour, even at home? If so, we will give you a *long vacation* on some *solitary island* until, by *loneliness* and *prayer*, you imbibe a better spirit.

Memorize the "Golden Rule." Have it written on your heart, and in all the details of home-life, as a brother, sister, child or parent, seek to carry it out.

Josh Billings said, "I am resolved that nobody shall beat me in kindness, so long as it remains as cheap as it is." This is a grand resolution.

As I sat at midnight reading, waiting for a poor man to die, his wife, holding his hand in her two as she gazed at his pallid face, soliloquized, "Those lips never spake an unkind word to me." One of these days we will be dying. Let us so live that when our eyes shall close in death our loved ones may say of us, "He never spake an unkind word to me."

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Be a Hopeful Christian.

——: XIV :——

Precept: 1 Peter i. 13. **Praise: 2 Cor. v. 1.**
Promise: 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14. **Prayer: Rom. xv. 13.**

HOPE consists of expectation and desire.

It is natural to become discouraged. Expel this tendency by faith in God and His promises, and by cultivating a hopeful spirit.

1 Be hopeful of success in *living a Christian life.* Some would really be surprised if they did not fail. Expect to prove true; but do not become discouraged though you occasionally or even frequently fail. There are few soldiers or Christians but have met with some defeats. King William aroused his dispirited men to glorious victory, as he said:

"God will be your King this day,
And I'll be general under."

If you ever fail, be not dismayed, but hear Christ your Captain, say, "Lo, I am with you alway;" rally your forces, and you may gain the day.

Wild geese, when they start south, fly so low that hunters, with shot-gun or rifle, wound or kill some; but the flock flies higher and higher, so that soon they are so high that neither shot nor ball will reach them. So, if temptations assail, and you yield and are wounded, fly higher and keep on your course till you reach that altitude of grace and nearness to Christ where temptations lose their power.

2. Be hopeful of success in *Christian work.* This is most important. A person said to me, "I used to have great success in the work of God; but now I have none. What is the reason?" I replied, "You are discouraged; your face and conversation show it; hence, you do not now help but hinder others." The mistake was seen and corrected, and, taking fresh hope in God, success came again.

3. Be hopeful about *the conversion* of your friends

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and loved ones. Worry and despair are the children of doubt, and always militate against success.

4. Be hopeful about *getting to heaven.* Many are distressed because of frequent failures and unworthiness, and fear they will miss the better land. Think not of your merit or demerit, but of your "Father's good pleasure," and hear Jesus' words, "Fear not."

As the mariner's compass points to the polar star, so keep your faith *ever* toward Christ, and sail on.

5. Seek to inspire hope in others. Many persons get discouraged, and so discourage and injure the very ones they desire and endeavor to help.

6. We should especially encourage the boys and girls in the home, school and church. What they will become depends so much upon this.

You can, if wicked or ignorant enough, take a child that is naturally clever, kind and good, and you may, unless some one counteracts your influence, by oft speaking of him or her as being *stupid, cross* and *bad,* make that one *dull, dogged* and *devilish.*

Again, you may take a child that is stupid, careless, stubborn, hateful and devilish, and by patient, cheerful, firm and persistent encouragement, make him *bright, thoughtful, docile, kind* and *good.* (Rev. iii. 2.)

Dr. Adam Clarke had been called "the dunce" at school; but one aroused his ambition by saying, "You will make a clever man yet," and he became the great *scholar,* preacher and commentator.

Study carefully the following Bible reading.

I. Reasons for our Christian hope: (1) Christ: 1 Tim. i. 1. (2) His death and resurrection: 1 Peter i. 3. (3) The promises: Titus i. 2. (4) The Gospel: Col. i. 23. (5) God's oath: Heb. vi. 17-20. (6) Christ in the heart: Col. i. 27.

II. The gracious fruits of Christian hope: (1) Faith: Rom. iv. 18-21. (2) Love: Rom. v. 5. (3) Rejoicing: Rom. v. 2. (4) Assurance: Heb. vi. 11. (5) Fruitfulness: Jer. xvii. 7, 8. (6) Purity: 1 John iii. 3.

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Be an Intelligent Christian.

——: XV :——

Precept : James i. 5. Proverb : Prov. xxx. 24-28.
Promise : 1 Cor. ii. 14-16. Praise : 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

REV. JOHN A. WILLIAMS, addressing a class of young men, said, "God has greatly blessed me, but He never blessed my ignorance." Be educated, cultured, kind and intelligent.

1. Know enough not to destroy yourself or your influence by getting off on fads, hobbies, vain speculations, crankish notions or side lines. So-called "Christian Science," "Spiritualism," "Higher Criticism," "Plymouthism," "Adventism," etc., have led many astray. Let such writings and theorizing alone, and sing, "The old-time religion is good enough for me."

2. While cordial with every person, be very careful to select only the good as your companions. People are rightly judged by the company they keep. Select a true Christian when you are choosing your life-companion.

3. The disposition that looks for and takes slights is ignoble, unhappy and pitiable. Let your intelligence keep you from either giving or taking a slight.

4. Have your life insured, if you are a man, and so provide that, if you should be taken to heaven, your wife will not have to go out washing for a living. Many spend more money on tobacco or liquor than would keep a few thousand insurance on their life.

5. Ever act on principle, no matter what your *feelings* or *impulses* are. Animals run on feeling, but we should be guided by intelligence.

6. Do not *say*, or *do*, or *read* or *write* anything that you cannot submit to God for His approval.

7. Do not, in private or public, *debate* or *argue* with others on doctrinal points, Scripture passages or scepticism. I nearly made shipwreck, in my early Christian life, by arguing with others on baptism.

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Some people are always ready for an argument or debate, and they are public nuisances. Tell them to debate with the man in the moon, but do not you be so lunatic as to debate with them.

8. Do not be driven or try to drive others. Remember the wise motto, "He leads best who seems to follow."

9. Do not doubt the reality and purity of Christianity because of the inconsistency or wickedness of some professing Christians. Infidelity makes this blunder. It is the Christian light that discloses the wrong.

10. Have enough common sense not to turn against a Church or denomination because of what one of its ministers or members did. A near relation of mine, rightly disapproving of a funeral sermon he heard, said, "I am disposed to vow that no *Methodist* minister shall ever preach my funeral sermon." I replied, "Would that be intelligent? The man, not the Methodist ministry, made the great blunder." He saw how absurd his thought was.

11. Do not ask an explanation of spiritual things, as did Nicodemus, or seek to understand or explain spiritual mysteries.

Some foolishly say, "I will not believe what I cannot understand and explain." If so, then they will not believe in heat, light, electricity, sound, gravitation, matter, life, medical science, digestion, affinity, or anything else, for there is not *one thing* in all the *material universe* that any human being understands and can explain how, why, and what it is. So, everything in the spiritual world is equally mysterious and inexplicable to man. We *know*, but cannot explain the facts, that the wind blows and the Spirit renews the heart, that water satisfies bodily thirst and Christ satisfies spiritual thirst, that heat, light and electricity are mysteries, but realities, as are also love, joy and hope. Be able to say, "We *know* the things that are freely given to us of God." (1 Cor. ii. 12.)

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Be a Joyous Christian.

——: XVI :——

Precept : 1 Thess. v. 16.	Praise : Ps. xx. 5.
Promise : Is. xii. 3.	Prayer : Ps. xlviii. 11.

PAUL says, "Rejoice in the Lord alway," and to impress this privilege he adds, "Again, I say, rejoice." (Phil. iv. 4.) It is as easy to get into the habit of being joyous and grateful, as to form the habit of being sad and discontented.

1. God designs that we shall be happy: "The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and *joy* in the Holy Ghost." (Romans xiv. 17.)

2. If Satan cannot get you back into his service, he will endeavor to get you to caricature the religion of Jesus Christ. "Some Christians look and act as if their Heavenly Father had died and had not left them a cent." You should sing with joy and gratitude, "All glory to God, I'm a child of the King," and "Beulah Land."

3. Do not think you must seek the amusements of worldlings in order to be happy. They know of no higher joys than their "*cisterns*" and *stagnant pools* afford, but your joy is derived from "the *fountain of living waters.*" (Jer. ii. 13.)

A good Presbyterian said, "Christians in all the Churches are bound for the same place, but the Methodists seem to have the best time on the way." Shall this be the case, when "the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever?"

4. Do not slander the world by *howling* about it being a "howling wilderness," or misrepresent Christianity by *whining* about the trials and troubles incident to human life; but speak of your joys and triumphs, and "Let your songs abound."

One said to Dr. W. C. Palmer, "Have you no trials or troubles; I never hear you speak of them." He replied, "Oh, I suppose I have as many as other folks,

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but my mind is so engrossed in helping others in their troubles, that I rarely think of my own."

5. Do not measure your piety by the length of your face, but rather by its breadth. (Eccl. viii. 1.)

A man said to me, "I knew Mr. W., and he was so pious that he was never known to laugh after his conversion." I laughed when he told me, for I knew that the same man had died of liver troubles and indigestion at twenty-seven, largely because he did not laugh. Man is the only animal that can laugh, and he should employ this God-given power so as to do himself and others good, and "to the glory of God." (Psalms cxxvi. 2.) A person's character can be told by what he laughs at.

6. The unconverted may know something about *happiness* and pleasure, but only the Christian has true *joy* and satisfaction. His is the "oil of joy;" that is, the concentrated essence of joy.

David said, "A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand." (Psalms lxxxiv. 10.) Thus a Christian has more joy and satisfaction in *one day* than a sinner has in about *three years.*

7. Look on the bright side of things in the world, in the Church, and in human character. (Phil. iv. 8.)

8. Do not think anything a sacrifice which you give up for Christ. His was the only real sacrifice ever made, and, for everything He requires you to give up for His sake, He gives you "*an hundred-fold*" more pleasure in its abandonment than you could have in retaining it, and "everlasting life." (Matt. xix. 29.)

9. God has implanted in everyone a desire for happiness; but he fails of true happiness who makes its pursuit his object. Joy is a "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. v. 22), and a result of doing good. (Acts. xx. 35.) Live to please God and to make others happy, yea, to win them for Christ, and you will be a joyous Christian. (1 Thess. ii. 19.)

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Be a Loving Christian.

——: XVII :——

Promise : John xiv. 21-23. Praise : Rom. viii. 38, 39.
Precept : Mark xii. 29-31. Prayer : Phil. i. 9.

"CHRISTIANITY is Love." Love is not merely an adjunct of Christianity. "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." (1 John iv. 7.)

We should measure our piety or religion by the amount of real, practical love we have to God and to our fellow-creatures.

Christianity is the only religion that not only enjoins, but also empowers persons to love their enemies. To love our enemies does not imply that we love them with a love of admiration or delight; but, like Christ, with a love of pity and compassion.

Love is the all-important thing, the *constant* and *eternal* thing; yea, the greatest thing in earth or heaven. (1 Cor. xiii. 13.)

Jesus says, "Love one another." John affirms, "God is love." Peter enjoins, "Above all things, have fervent love among yourselves." Paul asserts, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The whole sum of the law is love to God and man.

Love turns law and rules into living principles, so that we obey the law or keep the commandments instinctively, without thinking of the rule or precept.

The test of character or acceptable religion at the last great day is not creed, or happy feelings or emotions, or church membership, or baptism, or loud profession; but it is love *practically* and *tangibly exhibited.* (Matt. xxv. 34-40.)

In 1 Cor. xiii. 4-8, we have love analyzed. "The spectrum of love has nine elements, nine colors, nine ingredients: Patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, guilelessness, sincerity. These make up the supreme gift. You

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will observe that all these things are in relation to men, in relation to life, in relation to the known to-day." (Drummond.)

1. Show your love, by word and act, to people while they are living. The love we have for others is largely proportioned by what we do for them. A parent's love is greater than a child's, and a mother's love than a father's, because the service rendered is greater.

2. Be as loving to your own sister or brother as you are to the sister or brother of that other person. A loving brother or sister makes a loving husband or wife, and *vice versa*.

3. Be, at least, as loving and attentive five years, yea, twenty-five years, after the marital knot is tied, as you were the month before, or the month after, your wedding-day. With many, mutual love increases as the years go by, as the affinity becomes more perfect, and they by look, word and act *express* their love for each other.

4. Draw forth the love of your sons and daughters, from their earliest age, by warm, intelligent love. Love is largely reciprocal. It remains with parents to decide the esteem and love in which they shall be held by their children. I have often been delighted to see parents and children like fond companions or lovers.

5. Exhibit love to your parents. If they have shattered nerves, broken-down health, or business or domestic worries that may tend to make them irritable and cross, still be loving and kind; so shall you foster and encourage affection in yourself and them.

As a young man stood by his mother's dying bed, he said, "She has been a good mother to me." Opening her eyes, she asked, "Why did you not tell me that before?" Let your love not be silent.

6. Be loving to everybody. The great power that subdues, wins and conquers humanity is love. "God is love." "We love the Lord because He first loved us."

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Our success in winning others for Christ will not be determined by our intellectual ability or our eloquence, but by the Christ-like love we have for them, and to the extent we impress the truth that God loves them.

Love needs no apology. If you speak with harshness and act cruelly, do not think it a sufficient apology to say, "The heart is kind," for words and acts proceed from the heart, unless you are but acting a part. (Matt. xii. 34.)

Cold, or scorching, or bitter, or wrathful words may freeze, or burn, or embitter, or make wrathful; but obedience to Paul's precept, "Speaking the truth in love," convinces, wins and saves.

One has said, "If a circle were drawn around the Cross, with a three-feet radius, you would have the sphere in which Alfred Cookman lived, labored and died." Live near to Jesus, and your life, like His, shall be loving and potent for good.

Memorize 1 Cor. xiii., using, as in the revised version, the word *love* instead of charity. Often read or repeat it, and think of its meaning. Read Prof. Drummond's address on this chapter, entitled "Love, the Supreme Gift." Study and imbibe the mind and character of Christ, so shall your character and life be transformed. (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

7. Love the Lord with all your heart.

There are different degrees of love. This fact is taught by Scripture, and experience confirms it. If the heart be not filled with love, something contrary to love will be there also, as there are no vacuums in our natures. (1 Cor. iii. 1-3.)

An essential law in philosophy is that "no two bodies can occupy the same space at the same time." This law holds good in the spiritual world, hence the fulness of love casts out all that is contrary to love. Know by experience the expulsive power of God's satisfying love.

After my conversion, when a school teacher, I read

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experiences and articles in the magazine named "*The Guide to Holiness.*" As I read of "entire sanctification," "holiness," "Christian perfection," "second blessing," "receiving the Holy Ghost," etc., and thought, what is the experience of which they are speaking? I got all perplexed and mystified, and the more I read, thought and prayed, the deeper did the mists become, until, in my confusion, I cried out, "*What is it?*" and there came back through the darkness to my agonized heart but the echo, "What is it?" and so I wandered on in confusion.

This state of mind continued for many months, until, when Dr. Palmer was leading an after-meeting at Tilsonburg, a man rose and asked, "Doctor, can a person love God with anything more than all his heart?" He answered, "Why, no, my brother." "Is that what people mean by the higher life, entire sanctification and Christian perfection?" The Doctor replied, "Yes, that is just what is meant." As the brother's face lighted up, he exclaimed, "Glory to God! I have it now. I love God with all my heart."

As I sat there and thought, Is that it? the mists at once began to clear away, and I said to myself, "I know that the love of God dwells in my heart, yet there are things there contrary to love, but God is able to remove them. He has given me the desire to have them removed. He also commands me to love Him with all the heart. That is surely not too high an experience from me; that is what I need to keep me. As God loves me with *His great heart* of *infinite love*, I cannot be satisfied to love Him with less than all my heart."

In a few moments the mists and confusion created by the many terms I had been reading about were gone, and I saw just where I was. Thanking God for what He had done for me, and then for what He had promised and was able and willing to do, I gave Him every key of the blood-redeemed temple,

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and by faith received Him to fill my heart with His love; *yea, with Himself*, for "God is love."

Have you been, as I was, confused by the many terms and conflicting, fanatical and mystifying teachings? Lay those mystifying terms and teachings aside think of having the love of God to fill the heart, seek this experience, and soon you will know what John spoke of as "perfect love." (1 John iv. 18.)

Let me also beseech you not to confuse other people by using unscriptural terms, or Scriptural terms in a confusing and unscriptural and limited sense.

The fact that so much of the teaching on the "higher Christian life" is so confusing, and provokes such opposition from so very many undoubted Christian ministers and laymen, is an evidence, not of the carnal mind, as some think and affirm, but it proves that the *way* it is taught is misleading and wrong; hence, as Jesus teaches us, His sheep, not knowing the strange voice, "flee," whereas, if it were His voice, they would "*know* it, and *follow*." (John x. 4, 5.)

Have you been prejudiced or annoyed by the presumption and egotism, or by the talk and life of *some* who professed "holiness," "divine guidance" or "second blessing," but whom you and others thought of as "cranks, nuisances and hindrances to the work of God?" Let me ask you to think of them in pity and charity, and, while you dismiss them from your mind as examples of high piety, study and *know* the *ideal experience* of *the fulness* of *love*, that Paul so fully explains under the term charity, in 1 Cor. xiii., and that he embraces in his inspired prayer for the converts in Ephesus (Eph. iii. 14-21). Memorize this prayer, make it personal and by faith know the answer is yours.

It is the privilege and duty of each to have the love of God so fill the heart that there will be no room for any feeling or principle that is contrary to love. (Mark xii. 30)

Do you ask, "How may I obtain *perfect love?*

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1. If you have not this experience do not disparage, as many do, what God has already done for you; but thank God for the pardon and love you have received, or that He waits to bestow, praise Him for the desires and promises divinely given you, and for the provision God has made to fully cleanse the heart and fill it with His love. You will thus find that a thankful heart will be a receiving heart.

2. Have a definite idea of what you desire, namely, the love of God to fill the heart, and believe that Christ is able and willing to satisfy this desire.

3. Remember that love is of God. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who is given unto us." (Rom. v. 5.)

Remember that love cannot be worked up. Love comes from God. It is not an *attainment*, but an *obtainment*. An American bishop, after long seeking the experience of "perfect love," which his wife received after a few days' thought and prayer, anxiously asked her, "My dear, how did you *attain* this experience?" She replied, "I did not *attain* it, I *obtained* it." He saw the mistake he had been making in thinking of his own efforts to attain it, and so, looking to Christ by faith, *obtained* the fulness of love.

4. Receive God's gift of perfect love by faith. Some, thinking of themselves, mistakenly try to *empty* their hearts of what is wrong before they receive the fulness of love. As you cannot empty the darkness out of a room except by letting the light in, and then the light, not your effort, expels the darkness; so you cannot by your tears and endeavors, however great, empty your heart of that which is contrary to love. You should look away from your own efforts to Christ, and *by faith* receive "the love of God" and "be filled with the Spirit"; so shall the darkness and wrong be expelled by the magic power of love divine.

Our love is an effect of God's love. "We love the Lord *because* He first loved us." That is—(1) We

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believe and meditate upon the love of God in Christ; (2) His love inspires our love; (3) a desire for His love to fill our hearts springs up; (4) we believe Christ is able and willing to satisfy this desire; (5) we trust Him to do it *now*, and (6) the great work is done. Then we can sing:

"Long my wearied heart was *trying*
To enjoy this perfect rest;
But I gave all trying over,
Simply *trusting*, I was blest."

The experience of perfect love is retained (1) by staying the mind on the Lord and trusting in Him: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." (Isa. xxvi. 3); (2) by habitual, loving obedience to Christ's commands: "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love." (John xv. 10).

Do you ask, How is this love exhibited? How can love be manifested but by loving thoughts, and tempers, and words and deeds. (1 Cor. xiii. 4-7.)

Do not forget that "perfect love" does not make us all act and speak alike, as our temperaments, early educations and emotional natures are different.

As in politics, business, social and family life, whole-heartedness is differently shown by various persons according their temperaments, so it is in the religion of Christ. One that does not get excited, shout or exhibit much emotion in other things, will not do so in religion, but will be as cool as I am.

The fulness of love is shown, not necessarily by great emotion, clapping of hands and the like; but by loving thoughts, words and actions and by constant obedience to God. (John xiv. 15, 21, 23.)

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Be a Liberal Christian.

——: XVIII :——

Proverb: Prov. xxx. 8, 9. Promise: 2 Cor. ix. 6-8.
Precept: 1 Cor. iii. 21-23. Praise: Phil. iv. 19, 20.

CHRISTIAN liberality is an interesting and popular subject when *properly* considered and taught. Many persons' hearts are right, but they need to be educated in "this grace" of giving.

With few exceptions, those I have heard on the question did not *teach*, but indulged in *fault-finding*, *tirade*, abuse, begging or driving. These methods repel and offend. Systematic beneficence should be taught as a *privilege*, duty, grace, and source of blessing, so making it attractive like other parts of the Gospel.

Ministers are recreant to their trust who neglect to do this. Just before the salary is due or after a *deficiency* is, however, not the time for the pulpit to present the subject, as self-interest might then seem to be in the mind. Example is also a good preacher. Let us all practise what we preach.

Do not slander those who have riches. I have become tired and grieved, again and again, when hearing people misrepresent and abuse the rich in general, because of some miserly person they have known or read about. Among the noblest of earth are many who are rich. The rich are as liberal as other people; but one stingy *rich* man will provoke more contempt and comment than ten men in ordinary circumstances that are as tight as the bark to a tree. A person does not need to be rich to be miserly.

I believe that wealthy men and women and people generally are much more liberal now than in other days. Do not disparage the liberal contributions of the wealthy by saying, "What is that to him!"

Some prate about what others should giveand what *they* would give *if they* had the wealth of somebody

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else. Satan also was very liberal with what did not belong to him, as he said to Christ, "All this will I give Thee," (Matt. iv. 9.) Be liberal with your own.

To have riches is no sin. The Bible teaches us:

(1) Righteousness tends to wealth and honor. (Ps. cxii. 1-3; Prov. iii. 16.) (2) Poverty leads to more sin and crime than does wealth. (Prov. xxx. 7-9.) (3) Christ promises and bestows earthly treasures and other secondary blessings to those who "seek *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness." (Matt. vi. 33; 1 Kings iii. 12, 13; Eccl. v. 19.) (4) Some of the best Bible characters were rich; such as Abraham, David, Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat and Joseph. (Matt. xxvii. 57-60.) (5) The rich are directed how to use their money. (1 Tim. vi. 17-19.) (6) Wealth properly earned and used is an honor to a person and a testimonial of worth. (Proverbs x. 4.) (7) "Godliness," as also "a good name," is better than silver and gold. (1 Tim. vi. 10, 11; Proverbs xxii 1.) (8) A righteous man with a little is better off than the wicked who have much. (Ps. xxxvii. 16.) (9) Many laboring men are happier than some who are rich. (Eccl. v. 12.) (10) We should desire money, not for its own sake, but for the good we may get and do with it. (Eph. iv. 28.) (11) If we cannot all be rich in money, we may be "rich in faith." (James ii. 5.) (12) It is contrary to faith, philosophy and wisdom, and is sheer presumption, foolishness and wickedness to neglect to provide, if we can, for a "rainy day" or the winter that may come.

God directs us, in Prov. vi. 6-8, to "go to the ant and be wise" by learning to be diligent, to have foresight and to be provident. In the summer and harvest of life we should, by trust in God, industry, economy, life insurance and doing good, seek, like the ant, to provide for self and family against the future.

In your consecration to God let your property be included, like the good Baptist about to be immersed, when asked to remove his pocket-book from his coat

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pocket, replied, "When I am baptized I want my purse to be baptized too." With some the purse is the last to be converted and the first to backslide. Oh, for a widespread baptism of pocket-books! Let all the people say Amen.

Those who truly honor God with their substance, be it small or great, God, according to promise, honors and prospers. (Prov. iii. 9, 10.)

Let me give you an interesting and striking example: Over a century ago, a servant girl married a young weaver. By hard work and industry they in time saved enough to buy a little home. The morning they moved to their own house, the young wife knelt in the front-door yard and gratefully consecrated the place to God, and made this vow: "O Lord, if Thou wilt bless me in this place, the poor shall have a share of it." The Lord did bless them, and that consecration vow was carried out by husband and wife, and has been carried out by their children and children's children to this day. Prosperity and honors have ever been theirs. Four thousand hands are now in their factories. Besides thousands of other gifts, they built dwelling-houses for the poor, presented a great park to the city of Halifax, England, endowed an orphanage and two alms-houses. Who has not heard of the wealth, the carpets, the liberality and the good works of the Crossleys, of England?

Why is it that one is personally esteemed and honored in the Church and society more than another? It is usually not because of difference in wealth, but difference in personal worth. Flies do not gather round an empty sugar-bowl, or one with the lid on. Have the *sugar* of *true worth* in yourself and you will be appreciated, whether you have wealth or not.

Various questions about systematic-giving arise.

1. What proportion of our income should we give? The Lord has appointed one-tenth as the minimum amount each one should give. (Lev. xxvii. 30-32.) This law is not ceremonial, and so, like the law of the

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Sabbath, it remains uncancelled, and needed not to be re-enacted in the New Testament. Christ, however, sanctioned the law of giving a tenth, for, when He was referring to tithes, etc., He said, "These ought ye to have done." (Matt. xxiii. 23.)

If one-tenth were given under inferior light and privileges, surely we should not give less. If you are not giving one-tenth, ask, "Am I not robbing God?" Have you any warrant for fixing a less amount?

Sin costs its votaries more than one-tenth. You *cannot afford not to give a tenth.* Israel became bankrupt and captives because they withheld their tithes. (Mal. iii. 8-12.) Would you not rather have 90 per cent. and God's approval than 99 per cent. and run your own schedule?

Some say, "Give until you feel it." That is nonsense. Give systematically and you will enjoy it.

Do you say, "I do not give systematically, but I am liberal." Would you be surprised to know that you do not give 5 per cent.? Do not guess, but *know* that you give at least 10 per cent.

Do not ask, "How little can I give, but how much?" Ask not merely, "What should I give; but what should I retain?"

Do not give by haphazard, or by impulse, or as others, or as formerly, or grudgingly; but give systematically, cheerfully and as you have prospered. (2 Cor. ix. 7.)

Do not try to excuse yourself from *enjoying* the privilege of giving systematically by saying, "I can't afford it," "Others don't do it," or, "I am always giving." Remember God is always blessing, and you should obey Him. If the adversary says to you that 10 per cent. is too much, tell him it is none of his business, that you will give 20 per cent. if you like.

Do you say, "I must be just before I am generous." One-tenth to God is the first debt, and anything above that is a freewill offering. A good motto is the in-

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scription that is on a stone by a spring in Aberdeen: "As heaven giveth me, I give to thee."

The New Testament lays down this rule: "As God hath prospered." (1 Cor. xvi. 2.)

2. I am often asked a question like this: "Suppose one person's income is $2,000 and that of another but $200, if the first should give but a tenth should not the other give less?" That is reasoning the wrong way. Each one should give a tenth, that is, one should give $200 and the other $20, *for that is a debt;* and then the one with the larger salary may give as much more as he pleases as *a freewill offering.* The Bible so often enjoins "freewill offerings" as well as "*tithes.*"

3. Another asks: "If a person has no income, but has run behind in his business during the year, how then?" Such an one has no tithe to give, but he should recognize God by "freewill offerings."

4. It is also asked, "Does the same rule of giving apply to the unconverted as to Christians?" There is one law of right for all persons. Our obligations are divine. God blessed the heathens who dealt kindly by Israel. Giving results in good to the donor.

5. Another question is, "On what should the tenth be levied?" It is levied, not on the *gross* receipts, or on the amount saved after deducting your living, but on the *net* amount of your salary or income.

6. Some ask, "Should the poor give anything?" Christ compliments and commends the poor widow's gift. A person should not degrade himself or herself by becoming as a pauper, though little of this world's goods be possessed. The Lord extends a privilege to all when He says, "None shall appear before me empty." (Ex. xxiii. 15; Deut. xvi. 16, 17.) To carry out this rule fosters personal recognition of God, self-respect, social recognition, industry, carefulness, hopefulness, gratitude and joy.

7. Still another asks, "Are we not now under the law of love?" Certainly; but while love may prompt

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us to go above the rule of a tenth, it is surely contrary to love to stay below that rule. If a person does not give, at least, a tenth, he should think that he is even more selfish than was a Jew in the olden time. Has Christianity lowered the standard of the virtue of liberality? Nay, it has entered it among the graces. (2 Cor. viii. 7.) Love changes rules to principles, and transforms duty into privilege.

Do not harbor or ask any questions about giving that show distrust of God and the spirit of disobedience to Bible precepts, and so deprive yourself of the temporal and spiritual blessings promised to those who are liberal. (Mal. iii. 10.)

After giving a tenth or more, we should recognize that what remains is the Lord's gift to us, to be held and used by us as His stewards according to His will.

We do not need to be rich in order to make, in Christ's eyes, munificent gifts. Christ counted the farthing of the poor widow as "*more than all*" the large contributions of those who had an "abundance." (Mark xii. 41-44.)

If the salaries or incomes of five persons were $5, $60, $120, $600 and $5,000, and they gave fifty cents, $6, $12, $60 and $500, respectively, God would count them all as having given the same amount, each having given 10 per cent. This is an encouraging thought, especially to persons of small means.

Let each one, as God may direct, adopt a definite scale of "freewill offerings," that may be worthy of imitation; and then systematically carry it out as the years go by. I would strongly recommend the following scale:

Till you are worth $10,000.00, give 10 per cent. of your income.

From $10,000.00 to $15,000.00, give 20 per cent.
From $15,000.00 to $20,000.00, give 30 per cent.
From $20,000.00 to $25,000.00, give 40 per cent.
From $25,000.00 to $30,000.00, give 50 per cent.

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Then, after you are worth $30,000,00, give all your income above your expenses.

Some may not wish to put the sum as high as $30,000.00, while others, such as some merchants, manufacturers, shippers, contractors, etc., may need to put the maximum amount at $50,000.00 or $100,000.00, and in a few cases even higher. The rule of Mr. Hunter and myself is 20 per cent. tili worth $10,000.00, and then 30 and 40 per cent. up to $20,000.00, which is our limit. After that, *if we ever reach that amount*, we will give all above expenses.

Study, at your leisure, the following Bible truths:

I. *Riches properly used and distributed:*

(1) Exhibit grace: 2 Cor. viii. 7-9. (2) Draw us nearer to God: 2 Chron. xvii. 5, 6. (3) Make to us friends: Luke xvi. 9. (4) Are deposited in heaven: 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. (5) Ensure greater prosperity: Mal. iii. 10; 2 Cor. ix. 6-11. (6) Are pleasing to God: Acts x. 4; Gen. xxviii. 22. (7) Produce wealth of soul: Prov. xi. 25. (8) Impart special happiness. Jesus said, "It is more *blessed* to give than to receive": Acts xx. 35. Happiness is not secured so much by getting and having as by giving. The great part of the world is on a wrong line in seeking happiness. By liberal contributions let us show our faith in Christ's words.

II. *Riches unduly sought and hoarded:*

(1) Are uncertain and short-lived: Prov. xxiii. 4, 5; xxvii. 24. (2) "Hurt" the owner: Eccles. v. 13. (3) Deceive: Matt. xiii. 22. (4) Fill with pride: Ezek. xxviii. 4, 5. (5) Become putrid and condemn the holder: James v. 1-3. (6) Keep from becoming a Christian: Mark x. 23, 24. (7) Lead to false trust: 1 Tim. vi. 17. (8) Bring Christ's pitying rebuke, "Thou fool": Luke xii. 20, 21. (9) Ensure "destruction and perdition": 1 Tim. vi. 9.

A person being asked concerning a man who had

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died, "What did he leave?" replied, "Left it all." What will be said of you?

You might better not have than not use. Count not what is *laid up* as your riches, but what is *laid out.*

Do you say, "I fear to *give* lest my *motive* is not pure?" You have more reason to fear the impurity of motive that prompts you to *keep* what should be given.

III. *Covetousness is a most dangerous, though not much-dreaded sin:*

(1) Christ warns us, "Beware of covetousness" Luke xii. 15. (2) It is classed with adultery, fornication, theft and drunkenness: 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. (3) It shows "the *love* of money, which is the root of all evil": 1 Tim. vi. 10. (4) It is a crime, and tends to poverty: Prov. xi. 24; 2 Cor. ix. 6. (5) It excludes from grace and heaven: Eph. v. 5. (6) Many, as Judas, have been destroyed by it. (7) Covetousness defeats its own object, degrades man, dishonors life, destroys self, and robs and blasphemes God. (8) The grace of liberality will save us from covetousness and its dire results: Prov. xi. 25.

As a boiler gauge indicates the pressure of steam on each square inch of the boiler, so the *pocket-book*, or our Christian liberality, is a gauge of our piety. (Luke xvi. 9, 10.)

A man saved from drowning offered his rescuer 10 cents. When the people laughed and derided him, the poet, Robbie Burns, quaintly said, "Let the man alane; he kens the value o' his ain life the best." So our contributions are an index of our appreciation of the gospel of grace.

All good and happy beings give liberally, and find joy in doing so. Not to *delight* to give liberally is to be out of harmony with nature, the Bible, the good of earth, angels and God.

1. *Be liberal to the poor.* Many special promises and reasons encourage us to do this. Christ became

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poor for us. That which is given to the poor is loaned to the Lord. (Prov. xix. 17.) The interest is large. Dean Swift, in his famous charity sermon on this text, said, "If you think the security is good, down with the dust."

Do not suppress compassion, or simply express it by tears or good wishes. (1 John iii. 17.) At a meeting for a benevolent object, the tears of a stingy man flowed freely. One who knew him well said, "This enterprise cannot be run by *water-power*; money is needed." Tears and prayers have their place, but will not serve in lieu of money.

2. Educate the children and youth in the proper use of money, and so save them from being stingy or spendthrifts.

Some men subscribe, "Mr. What-you-call-Him and Family," and then the father pays it all. Let the sons, daughters and wife have their names down, and see that they have money of their own to pay the amounts subscribed.

3. By precept and practice do your part towards giving your minister a liberal support, that he may in turn, be just and generous. Do not be like the man who prayed, "Lord, keep our minister *humble*, and we will keep him *poor*."

4. Give liberally in thy collections. Paul said, "Now concerning the collection," 1 Cor. xvi. 1. From one-half to two-thirds of almost every congregation do not give even a cent in collection. For example, in a congregation of 1,000, on a recent Sabbath evening, the treasurer reported that 8 persons gave 25 cents each, 55 gave 10 cents each, 249 gave 5 cents each, 4 gave 2 cents each, 66 gave 1 cent each, and 618 persons gave nothing.

There are few of us but can give the price of a cigar or street-car fare, and many of us much more.

To contribute ten cents each Sabbath means but $5.20 per year, and to give five cents at each week-evening meeting for a month will be $1.00, which is

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only the price an ordinary sinner gives for one night at the opera or theatre.

In the West they have no coppers. The first Sunday evening we held meetings in Grace Church, Winnipeg, the treasurer, at the close of the service, with a smile, said, "Brethren, I found two curiosities in the collection"; and then, as he opened his hand, in which were two cent pieces, he added, "Two men must have followed you from Ontario." The collection that night was $90.00, and none but the two from the East had put on copper pieces.

If you have little, and cannot give *anything*, or but *a cent*, the Church welcomes you; but those who have means should plan to give accordingly.

Many tea-meetings and socials are demoralizing, and foster a wrong spirit and idea of giving. Grab bags, election cakes, necktie socials and the like, are an iniquity and a curse.

Special collections are being successfully adopted in many places.

5. Have your will made while in health, and change it, or add codicils as necessity may require. Persons neglecting to do this have often caused confusion, administering, lawing, heartache, loss and strife.

Do not leave all your property to the boys, and, as Mr. Hunter says, only give your girls "a great setting out" of old quilts, organ and other traps.

A wealthy man said, "I will not give or leave a child of mine more than $5,000; for if he is any good he will not need it, and, if he is no good, it would be a curse to him." How much did you inherit?

Do not leave Christ and His Church out of your will any more than a husband would his wife. The Church is Christ's bride. What is done for the Church and humanity, Christ considers as done for Himself. (Matt. xxv. 40.) Does it not seem to you that you would be ashamed to have property, and

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die and go to heaven, if you had left little or nothing to the Church of God and cause of humanity; yea, that you would want to return to earth long enough to change your will? Many, now in heaven, would make a vastly different will if they could return to our planet. As you cannot come back to earth, make your will now in the light of eternity.

Do not think that making your will is getting ready to die; but that it is doing a necessary thing while you have health and time, and is the only way of ensuring that your life shall not close and leave an important duty neglected. Moreover, bequests to charity, to be legal, must be made at least six months before death. Who of us are sure to live six months more? Not even the witnesses need know a single bequest in your will, as they do not read it, but only sign their names as witnesses to your signature.

That any person, without lawyer or fee, may write his or her own will, I shall insert here a

LEGAL FORM OF WILL.

This is the last will and testament of me, , of , in the county of , and province of ; made this day of , in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety- .

I revoke all former wills, or other testamentary dispositions by me at any time heretofore made, and declare this to be my last will and testament.

I direct all my just debts, funeral and testamentary expenses to be paid and satisfied by my executors, hereinafter named, as soon as conveniently may be after my decease.

"I give, devise and bequeath all my real and personal estate, of which I may die possessed of or interested in, in the manner following, that is to say:

"To, etc. (Here follows bequests to family, relations, friends, benefactors, churches, benevolent

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institutions, missionary and other societies, colleges, etc., etc.)

"And I nominate and appoint (enter here the names of three persons) to be the executors of this my last will and testament.

"In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand the day and year first above written.

"Signed, published and declared by the said , the testator, as and for his last will and testament in the presence of us both, who, present together at the same time in his presence, at his request, and in the presence of each other, have hereunto, at , subscribed our names as witnesses."

.....

.....

6. *Be liberal during all your life.* Some we know and respect not only have generous bequests in their wills, but they also in life enjoy the happiness, honor and blessing of building, in whole or in part, hospitals, churches and poorhouses, besides endowing colleges, supporting missions, helping the poor, educating the needy, and doing good generally.

Be your own *executor* and so distribute your surplus money while living. Would not this be infinitely better than to pile it up beyond all possible needs, and then sit on it till you fall off dead, and so deprive yourself of the happiness and reward of giving.

The objects of Christian beneficence are many, such as (1) church erection; (2) ministerial support; (3) missionary, superannuation, Bible society, Sabbath School and educational funds; (4) hospitals and poorhouses; (5) widows and orphans who are needy;

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(6) books, tracts and papers for distribution; (7) colleges and schools.

Mr. S., of B., left $10,000 in his will to build a hospital after he was dead. This act is worthy of imitation; but a still more worthy example is our esteemed fellow-citizen, Amasa Wood, Esq., who, in addition to his many generous gifts to churches and the poor, has, while living, built a hospital at a cost of $15,000 and presented it to our city of St. Thomas. He has, I believe, by so doing, added years to his life, joy to his heart and honor to his name.

The late John F. Smith, the great Philadelphia type-founder, gave to various charities more than $100,000 a year during the closing years of his long and useful life. "Everything I have to give away," he said, "I shall give away before I die."

If you are wealthy scatter your property for the Lord while you can, for if you do not, your children and others will likely, as is generally the case, scatter it for the devil.

Andrew Carnegie, the millionaire-philanthropist, speaking in England lately, said that the only pleasure money had ever brought him was the *planning* to use it for helping and elevating others, and that he and Mrs. Carnegie had already planned the outlay of more than they were ever likely to possess.

Need I say, give liberally? Your own *better nature* says give. The *Bible*, by its precepts, proverbs and promises, says give. The *example* and *honored names* of the good and true say give. The *life*, *death* and *dishonor* of the selfish and stingy say give. *Humanity*, in our own and heathen lands, with its poverty, sickness, ignorance and sin, holds out beseeching hands and cries give. Jesus Christ our Saviour, by His incarnation and nativity, by His agony and bloody sweat, by His cross and passion, by His precious death and burial, by His glorious resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Spirit, says *Give! Give!! Give!!!*

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Be a Peaceful Christian.

—: XIX :—

Praise : Luke ii. 14. Precept : Rom. xiv. 19.
Promise : Isa. xxxii. 17. Prayer : 2 Thess. iii. 16.

TAKE as your motto that which heralded the Saviour's advent, "On earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke ii. 14.)

Avoid the despicable habit of teasing or criticizing others, unless you enjoy others to so treat you.

Practise the art of being agreeable.

Have sense and grace enough to put away the pitiable and mean disposition of discontent, jealousy and imagining slights.

If you are misrepresented or opposed in argument, keep cool, and do not let your peace be disturbed.

Keep your voice down, and temper will not rise.

It is egotism and conceit of the worst kind for a person to set up *his opinions* as infallibly correct, and impatiently talk and act towards those who differ from him as if he had all the "*common sense.*" Allow others the same liberty you claim for yourself, and agree to differ.

Pay no attention to gossip or censorious criticism, for "people will talk, you know." Commit not only your character but also your reputation to God.

It takes two to make a quarrel or get up a dispute. Usually one is as much to blame as the other. Do not be either one.

The maxim of "*tit for tat*" is unchristian and foolish. (Rom. xii. 17.)

Let others have the last word sometimes.

Obey the proverb, "Pour oil on the troubled water," and prove the proverb true, "A soft answer turneth away wrath."

Do you say, "I'll *give* him a piece of my mind." No, don't; it will do no good unless *generosity* prompts the gift. The way we feel against and

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reprove a wrong-doer may be much worse than the wrong done.

Have enough *self-respect* to avoid all *tirade, abuse* and *offensive* personalities by voice or pen. You might, if annoyed, write a good *strong* letter for present personal relief. Keep it for three days, and you will then never send it, but burn it up. This plan will save you much trouble and regret, as it has a friend of mine.

Learn the art of holding your tongue. (Prov. xvii. 28.) By making no reply, or by introducing another subject, you may often avoid needless disputes, discord and hard feelings. We learn this from Christ, who "held His peace" and "reviled not." It shows a small mind or despicable spirit to always retaliate.

Belong to and get others to join the Society of Peacemakers. It was established by Christ. Its motto: "Blessed are the peacemakers." (Matt. v. 9.)

So set your mind that the prattle and noise of children in play will not disturb you. Children have their rights.

Cherish a peaceful disposition:

Avoid envy and strife. (James iii. 14-16.)

Never persecute. Give no reason for an offence. "If it be possible, live peaceably with all men."

"Be at peace among yourselves" in the church, the home and the neighborhood. (1 Thess. v. 13.)

If you remember that a person "hath aught against thee," though you have no wrong feelings against him, and may *think* or *know* you gave no occasion of offence, there is but *one right course* to pursue: "Go and be reconciled." (Matt. v. 23, 24.) This rule applies to everybody. Do not evade it.

Does your temper trouble you? I will give you a secret that will work like a charm: Stay your mind on God and trust Him.

A lady in Winnipeg said to me, "I have an uncontrollable temper which, in spite of all my resolves and prayers, masters me." I asked, "If I were in your

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home for a day, would you exhibit your temper in my presence?" She answered, "Indeed I would not let you see me in a temper." I replied, "Then, certainly, as my presence would keep you from showing your temper, if you are always conscious of the presence and aid of the Lord, much more will you find your temper subdued. I want you to take as your daily motto Isaiah xxvi. 3, 'Thou wilt keep him in *perfect peace*, whose mind is *stayed on Thee:* because he *trusteth in Thee.*' As you *stay* your mind on God and *trust* Him, He will *keep* you in '*perfect peace*,' and your temper will not control you, but will be subdued or controlled." Some days subsequent this lady said to me, "I am so changed. I thank the Lord for constant victory." Beloved, we may every day and hour experience the truthfulness of that verse, and find that the Lord cannot only subdue our tempers, but also give us victory over everything that would militate against "perfect peace."

Study the following Bible reading on Peace:

1. Salutation of peace. (Eph. i. 2.)
2. "God of peace." (Phil. iv. 9.)
3. "Prince of peace." (Isa. ix. 6.)
4. "Gospel of peace." (Eph. vi. 15.)
5. "Bond of peace." (Eph. iv. 3.)
6. Precept of peace. (Rom. xii. 18; Ps. xxxiv. 14.)
7. Ambassadors of peace. (2 Cor. v. 20, 21.)
8. Christ's legacy of peace. (John xiv. 27.)
9. Benediction of peace. (2 Thess. iii. 16.)

Peace is a promised gracious result of—

1. Pardon. (Rom. v. 1.)
2. Obedience. (Prov. xvi. 7; Isa. xlviii. 18.)
3. Love for Bible. (Ps. cxix. 165.)
4. Righteousness. (Isa. xxxii. 17; James iii. 18.)
5. True wisdom. (Prov. iii. 17; James iii. 17.)
6. Love for the Church of God. (Ps. cxxii. 6-9.)
7. Receiving the Spirit. (Gal. v. 22; Rom. xiv. 17.)
8. Prayer. (Phil. iv. 6, 7.)
9. Trust. (Isa. xxvi. 3; Rom. xv. 13.)

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Be a Prayerful Christian.

——:xx:——

Promise : Isa. xl. 31. Praise : 1 John v. 14-15.
Precept : Heb. iv. 14-16. Prayer : Eph. iii. 14-19.

PRAYER is appointed by God as a special means of spiritual life and blessing. Prayer is the spirit's vital breath ; hence, we cannot live spiritually without prayer.

Do not be perplexed by the mystery of prayer. Prayer is talking *with* God. "It is a mystery to everyone how God can speak to us, and we to Him ; but the telephone is equally mysterious and inexplicable. There is telephonic communication between God and us. In the breast of everyone there is a divinely implanted instrument called consciousness. God speaks to us over unseen wires, and we hear His voice, as evidenced by the divinely given desires, impulses, peace, love and hope We speak to God over these same unseen wires, and He hears and answers us.

1. *Ejaculatory Prayers* are very helpful to a Christian. They foster devotion, ward off temptation and stimulate to work.

2. Private Prayer is the privilege and practice of every Christian. May it be a constant pleasure and blessing to you. Begin the day with secret prayer. Let not indolence, business, study or anything else tempt you to deprive yourself of the privilege of enjoying the "Morning Watch."

Daniel, though Prime Minister, found time and disposition to pray "three times a day" (Dan. vi. 10). Let us follow his example, and say with the Psalmist, "Evening, morning and at noon will I pray." Do not, however, think you should pray for hours at a time because others have done so. We are not heard for our much speaking. (Matt. vi. 7.)

Pray about the *little things* of everyday life, as

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well as about great events, and ever remember that the Lord hears and answers prayer. If, however, the Lord does not grant you the very thing asked for, He will give you grace to do without it, which may be a greater blessing than the thing desired.

Are you troubled with wandering thoughts in secret prayer? If you will not only think your prayers, but *speak* them in a soft whisper, you will be greatly helped. Take with you words" is the divine command. Do not fail to act on this suggestion. If, however, your thoughts do wander somewhat, do not condemn yourself too severely, or think that the Lord condemns you.

Prayer is not only petition, but it is adoration, confession thanksgiving, praise and communion.

Only a small part of prayer can be uttered in words. A father asked his little boy, "Well, Willie, what do you want papa to do for you now?" He answered, "I don't want anything. I just want to be with you, papa." Have you never felt in prayer like that? "Companionship with Jesus makes life with bliss replete."

Ever keep in the spirit of communion with God, so shall you fulfil the precept, "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thess. v. 17.)

3. Intercessory Prayer, or praying for others, is enjoined, and is very important. (1 Tim. ii. 1-4.) We should have a "*prayer list*" of relations and others, whom we should remember daily at the throne of grace.

4. Family Prayer should be found in every Christian home. Have it in yours. The Temple lamps were always kept burning, yet every morning and evening they were cleaned and filled. So ever maintain the blessed state of communion with God, and morning and night offer special petition and thanksgiving.

Do not think that you have not time for family worship. It only takes five or six minutes to read and pray.

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Family Prayer should never be dull and wearisome, but should be made, *even to the children*, an attraction and a fascination. I have seen families where all delighted to be present at the time of family prayer; but I have also seen families where the boys and girls would make excuses to get out before the time of prayer. They had confidence in their father's piety, but he made the family prayer long, doleful and tedious, yea, almost a penance. How is it in your home?

Do not get into the habit of repeating the same prayer at the family altar, but know what is meant by "praying in the Holy Spirit." Mr. Hunter tells of a farmer who was conducting family prayer, when a neighbor came to borrow something. Getting tired waiting, the neighbor asked one of the boys near the door, "When is your father going to get through?" The boy, waking up, listened to the prayer, and then answered, "He is at the Jews; he is just half through."

Watch as well as pray. Many pious parents would be surprised if they opened their eyes to see how their children act during prayer-time.

Let your prayers be short, *varied* and interesting. The Scripture verses read will suggest themes for praise and petition.

It will wonderfully help you in prayer if you memorize many of the Bible prayers, precepts and promises. It is most important, however, that you open your heart and mind to God that the Holy Spirit may indite the prayers. (Rom. viii. 26; Eph. vi. 18.)

If you think that you cannot pray aloud in your family, then read and have short silent prayer, ending with an audible sentence, or the Lord's prayer, repeated *correctly*.

It is marvellous how many repeat the Lord's prayer wrongly. Write down the Lord's prayer as you use it, and compare with the following recognized form:

"Our Father, which art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on

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earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

The poorest time for family prayer is just before retiring, as some are sleepy; others are already in bed, and it is the time for private prayer.

It is seldom wise to read a long chapter, or a large number of verses at family worship.

I would suggest the following usage: In the morning, after breakfast, read from ten to twenty verses in the Bible, then kneel and have prayer from one to three minutes. Again, after the evening meal, read a short paragraph, and all kneel in prayer, or you may sometimes bow your heads in prayer while seated at the table.

I like to sing at family devotions a verse or two of children's hymns or other sacred songs, such as "Jesus loves me," "I am so glad," "When He cometh to make up His jewels," "How sweet the call of mercy," "Bringing in the sheaves," "Saviour, more than life to me," "Abide with me," "Sun of my soul," "Jesus, keep me near the cross." and "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

5. Ask a blessing, or give thanks, before eating. The Bible teaches us to do this. Jesus Christ "blessed" the bread and fish; and Paul, before the meal, "gave thanks to God." (Luke ix. 16; Acts xxvii. 35.)

It is certainly a graceless and deplorable habit, and worse than heathenish, to sit down to the table, spread with the bounties of providence, and not recognize God as the giver. Whether persons are Christians or not, they should certainly give thanks before each meal.

Mr. Hunter, in speaking upon this subject in the West, said: "The idea of you and your family sitting

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down to the table, and not thanking God, but eating like hogs!"

There was a man present who would neither ask a blessing nor allow his wife or children to do so. He became desperately enraged at Mr. Hunter's remark; but next morning, when seated at the table, he hesitated a moment, and then said, "I guess we had better not eat like hogs any longer. Wife, you ask a blessing in the morning; William, you do so at dinner, and I will try to ask a blessing at supper." In less than three days he was a Christian man. Beloved, if you think you cannot ask a blessing at your table, have your wife, or son or daughter do it.

As so many have asked us to write out a blessing for them, it may be suitable to insert the following blessings:

Our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the food provided. Grant us grace to ever do Thy will, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Lord, grant that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we may do all to Thy glory, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

"Grant us Thy blessing with these mercies, and help us in all things to glorify Thee, through Jesus Christ. Amen." (J. E. H.)

Some families adopt the following impressive method: The father leads in asking the blessing, and the mother and children repeat after him, phrase by phrase. This is especially appropriate when the children are young.

When taking your meals at a hotel or boarding-house, bow your head and ask a blessing silently.

6. Be a *Prayer-Meeting* Christian. The prayer-meeting may be considered as the gauge of the piety of the church.

Take some public part in the weekly prayer-meeting, but do not help to kill the service by praying or talking ten or fifteen minutes, as some do. Few can

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pray in public with profit longer than from one to three minutes.

I attended a prayer-meeting where the question was practically answered, "How shall we make our prayer-meetings interesting?" The meeting lasted just one hour. The leader had a brother read the Scripture and speak five minutes. The prayers were short and spirited. The testimonies crisp and to the point. The singing lively and frequent. Men, women and young people took part. The meeting closed with silent prayer and the benediction.

I did not wonder that there was a weekly attendance at that prayer-meeting of about three hundred. Help to make your prayer-meeting interesting to saint and sinner, old and young.

7. Having been a pastor for years, it may be appropriate for me to give a few suggestions to my ministerial brethren.

The great men of God and the most useful men have been men of much prayer; as, for instance, Abraham, Moses, Daniel, Paul, Luther, Knox, Fletcher, Wesley, Carey and Finney. Our success in the ministry will largely be determined by the time we spend in secret prayer, and to the extent that we are dominated by the Spirit of the Lord.

Make much of the prayer-meeting; yea, plan, pray and practice to have a model prayer-meeting in your church. Give such judicious counsel as may be necessary to prevent persons praying too long in public services, and also set an example worthy of imitation. Do not, however, speak against long prayers and urge people to *pray short* in such a way as to restrain or destroy the spirit of true prayer. We have often known this done. It is hardly consistent for the leader of a prayer and praise meeting to occupy half an hour in speaking and praying, and then say to the others, "Now, be short." Example and precept go well together.

It is frequently advisable in religious meetings,

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during the last season of prayer, to have sentence prayers. This will encourage new converts, young people, and those not accustomed to pray in public. Moreover, it will let those who usually pray too long see that they can be brief. In a young men's meeting I heard seventeen lead in prayer in about five minutes.

If you properly conduct a weekly prayer-and-inquiry meeting for about twenty minutes at the close of the evening preaching service, and a similar monthly meeting after the Sabbath School service, you may thus largely help to bring about a continuous revival in your church.

Pulpit prayers are often too long. We should not pray in public any longer than we can lead the congregation in the prayer. When a person prays so long that others wish, and almost pray, that he would reach the "Amen," devotion ceases. Some ministers pray ten, twelve or fifteen minutes, and some even longer. A prayer from four to seven minutes is long enough, even in the pulpit. Few know how long they do pray. I have known ministers and others to be told how long they prayed, and they were not only surprised, but thought the informant had made a mistake. I know those who urge others to "*pray short*," who themselves pray from two to four times as long as they say prayers should be. Would it not be proper for you to occasionally look at the clock or watch before you begin and after you end your prayer in the pulpit, and see how long you really are in the habit of praying in public? I know those who have done this, and who were surprised at the length of their prayers, and wisely shortened them.

It is well for you to have the congregation join in concert with you in saying the Lord's prayer. This can be brought about by publicly requesting it, and by personally speaking to two or three in different parts of the congregation to set the example. We, as religious teachers, should be careful to repeat the

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Lord's prayer in the usually recognized form, and not bungle it, as is often done.

No minister should neglect to have prayer in the home when he is engaged in pastoral visiting, or in calling upon the sick. In pastoral visiting it is very important to carry a Testament in the pocket, from which to read before prayer, so as not to have to ask for a Bible, or humiliate any person who cannot conveniently find a Bible, or to cause any to apologize for not having a large Bible. The reading and prayer should naturally blend with the conversation and not embarrass any person. In praying with the many who visit us as inquirers about themselves or others, we do not usually kneel, but, just before it is time for them to leave, we bow our heads and pray as seated in the parlor or study.

When praying with the sick and those unable to kneel, I prefer not to kneel; but, after reciting or reading a few verses and singing a sacred song, to pray while seated. It seems less stiff and formal.

Ministers often find it inconvenient or embarrassing to propose to have prayer where they are dining, or taking tea, and spending a social hour or two with a family. There is an informal method that we regularly adopt under such circumstances, which I commend to ministers and other Christians. Just as the meal is concluded, and before anyone has left the table, we have a familiar verse of a hymn sung, and as all bow their heads at the table, one leads in prayer. Sometimes the singing is omitted.

When in a city in the United States, we, with a large party, were dining on a Saturday evening in the home of the Mayor, who was sceptical, but whose wife was a Christian. At the close of the dinner, Mr. Hunter said to the host: "It is our custom to sing a verse and have prayer just as we are seated at the table. Mr. Crossley will lead us in singing, after which we will join in prayer with Dr. Houghton." We sang and prayed together, without any stiffness

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or seeming innovation; and the Lord was present and blessed us. If we had not had prayer then, we could not have had it during the evening, without seeming to drag it in, as the guests left for home at different intervals. The pastor present said to us, "I have been in that home again and again for meals, and at other times, but never have been able to get the family together for prayers. I thank you for the lesson I have learned to-night, and I shall adopt that custom for all the future." We have known sceptics and irreligious persons to be *drawn to us* and won to Christ by this method.

8. Permit me respectfully and with a reverent spirit to mention certain faults in prayer, which every one should guard against.

In prayer avoid the habit of *whining* like a spoiled child, *shouting* as if God were deaf or far away, *whispering* so that few can hear you, using a *sing-song, elevated* or *affected* tone, or ending your sentences with an "ah" or a gasp.

Do not pray in a solemn or sad tone, or keep the voice on one pitch; but be animated and natural.

Do not put your face in the corner of the seat or on the chair, but hold your head up.

Do not pray too fast or too slow, but as you speak when in earnest conversation.

In prayer, do not try to be *quaint* or to say *smart* things, for to do so would be gross irreverence. The angels in heaven veil their faces with their wings as they worship God.

Throw away old *hackneyed* expressions and *formal* prayers with your cast-off shoes, and speak your real thoughts and desires in your *natural voice* to God.

Do not offend true reverence by *oft* repeating "O Lord," "O God," "Heavenly Father," and similar expressions. Do not fill your prayers with "*O's.*" Never address God as "*You,*" but as "*Thou*" and "*Thee.*" It would be well also to avoid the *too familiar* expressions "*Dear Jesus*" and "*Dear Lord.*"

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Instead of using the words, "Almighty and Everlasting God," "Mighty Jehovah," and other high-sounding phrases, it would be better to use the title that Jesus taught us, "Our *Father*." Moreover, Jesus says, "The true worshippers shall worship the *Father*," and Paul affirms that by the spirit of adoption we cry, "Abba, *Father*." (John iv. 23; Rom. viii. 15.)

Hold up your minister's hands by your prayers, but do not be so irreverent as to pray *at* him, as is sometimes offensively done.

Do not spoil your public prayers by having them too long. Many people pray ten minutes or more in a prayer-meeting and around the family altar. Such is a great mistake. Two or three minutes are usually long enough. There are few who pray in public but pray much longer than they have any idea of. Many people pray too long in public and too short in private. It might be well for persons who pray or speak so long in prayer-meeting, as to take the time others should have, to recall the command, "Thou shalt not steal." I heard a pious colored woman who closed an earnest prayer of about two minutes with this petition, "Lord, if I have prayed too long, forgive me. Amen."

Study the prayers of the Bible, and you will remark how short they are. The effectual prayer of Hezekiah was about half a minute long. The longest public prayer was at the dedication of the temple, and even that one occupied only about seven minutes. The wonderful prayer of Jesus, as found in John, the seventeenth chapter, takes but three minutes to read slowly, and the model prayer our Saviour gave us is repeated in less than one minute. The prayer of the penitent thief contained nine words, and that of the publican seven words.

Avoid formality in prayer. Unwritten forms are worse than written forms. Before going to the pulpit or prayer-meeting, and before family prayer, it is well to think of the special causes for thanksgiving and

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the objects for which to pray, and so have the mind and heart prepared for leading others in devotion.

It is a great mistake to think that a sinner should not pray. Prayer is the appointed means by which sinners come to God for mercy and pardon. Jesus approved of the prayer of the publican, and Peter directed Simon Magus, when in "the bonds of iniquity," to "repent and pray" for forgiveness. God is our Father. Prayer is talking to Him. Everybody should certainly speak to his Heavenly Father. If a sinner prays he will be restrained from evil, and will likely be converted and "justified," as was the publican.

9. Live as you pray. Paul expresses this idea: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." (Col. iv. 2.) Oh, that we were as devout and earnest in our lives as in our prayers, and as true and loyal on our feet as we are on our knees!

A special week of prayer is properly appointed every year by the churches; but would it not be a pious thought to appoint now and again a *week of practice?* The topics for the week of prayer may be chosen: On Monday, practise *temperance* in eating, drinking and speaking, yea, in all things. On Tuesday, work to help the *Sabbath Schools*, and aid the children. On Wednesday, seek to promote *Christian unity* and forbearance. On Thursday, endeavor to effect the conversion and spiritual advancement of the members of our *families.* On Friday, particularly seek to advance the interests of the Church, and resolve to be a worthy church member. On Saturday, plan to contribute liberally to the missionary cause, and also act as a *home missionary* by earnestly seeking the conversion to Christ of your friends and neighbors.

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Be a Persevering Christian.

——: XXI :——

Precept : 1 Pet. ii. 1-3. **Praise : 1 Pet. i. 3-5.**
Promise : 1 Pet. ii. 9. **Prayer : 1 Pet. v. 10, 11.**

I BELIEVE in the perseverance of the saints, but not in the perseverance of the sinners.

The Christian life is like riding a bicycle; we must keep on the move, or we will fall.

Some persons are like a child on a rocking-horse, always on the move, but making no progress.

There are certain others who might politely be called ecclesiastical crabs. We have often seen crabs headed towards the shore, but pulling out into the stream; so we have seen persons professing to be headed towards Christ and the Church, but who were certainly working out into the stream of worldliness and sin. Do not be an ecclesiastical crab.

When the Roman invaders first landed on the shores of Britain they burned their ships, and so removed the possibility of retreat or thought of defeat; and as they marched against the foe, while their ships were burning, their watchword was, "Victory or death." No wonder they conquered. Like the Romans, do not entertain the thought of defeat or going back, but fully *consecrate* yourself to Christ, and *commit* yourself to the Church and an *out-and-out Christian life,* so shall you burn the ships behind you and be *more than conquerors.*

Though like Moses at Pihahiroth you may be beset by enemies, and insuperable difficulties seem to stand before you, hear and obey God's voice, "Go forward." (Ex. xiv. 15.)

A Highland piper, taken prisoner, being asked to play a retreat, answered: "Na, na; I never learned a retreat." Be as he, play no retreat, but ever sound an advance.

Persevere in what you know to be right; that is,

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ever act on Christian principle. Daniel consulted not worldly policy or expediency, political position or advancement, personal wealth or safety, but only what was right in the sight of God, and from this he swerved not. (Daniel vi. 10.)

The Lord's Word enjoins, "Grow in grace." Your daily or weekly growth in grace may not be distinctly noticed, though the monthly or yearly advancement may be very apparent.

We are creatures of habit. Form the habit of reading the Bible (Acts xvii. 11, 12), secret prayer (Psa. lv. 17), attending the prayer-meeting and public services (Acts xvi. 13; Heb. x. 25), and doing good to all (Col. i. 10), and ever persevere in these things as the days and years are going by.

Do not think of backsliding. Persons used to speak so much of the possibility of backsliding that many came to think this sin almost inevitable, and no wonder that some realized their fears. Many, however, are called backsliders who never slid forward.

If a person will remember the awful sin of backsliding, which God calls "*spiritual adultery*," he will abhor the thought of ever turning his back on Christ.

Do not think of ceasing the heavenly race, or "good warfare," for you have omnipotent power at your command now, and unfading crowns await you.

Paul said, "Go on unto perfection." (Heb. vi. 1.) That is, do not remain babes, but go on unto *maturity* of Christian character. If a babe does not grow, it becomes a *dwarf*. I fear there are many dwarfs in our churches. (Heb. v. 12.)

Do not be ready to think yourself a backslider, though you often fail. God looks at the *perfection of intention*. To be a Christian is not to receive *something*, which we lose every time we do or say anything that is wrong, but it is "*receiving Christ;*" it is becoming a "*child of God;*" it is entering into an "*everlasting covenant*" with the Lord.

When we were boys and girls at home and acted

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wrongly, we did not give up our father's house and name, but asked and obtained forgiveness. We should act as wisely with reference to our loving Heavenly Father. He is infinitely more willing to forgive us when we ask Him than is any earthly parent. He will not only forgive us "seven times in a day," as He directs us to do with others, but He will in His boundless love forgive us as often as we ask Him.

Did you ever read the Indian's excellent poetry? He desired to have an original song, so he wrote the following lines:

"Go on, go on, go on, go on, go on, go on, go on,
Go on, go on, go on, go on, go on, go on, go on,
Cho.—Go on, go on, go on, go on, go on, go on, go on."

He wrote fourteen verses, all similar, and sang them to the tune of "Auld Lang Syne." You may be full of hope and determination now; but, if the time should ever come when your sky is dark, and temptations assail, and friends turn against you, and failures discourage, and the thought comes to give up the race, then sing to the familiar tune this inspiring song, "Go on, go on," and do not omit the chorus. If one verse is not sufficient, sing on, and before you reach the fourteenth verse the despondency will be gone, your head will be erect, and a new determination fixed to "So run that ye may obtain." (1 Cor. ix. 24.)

Do not allow storms to hinder you, or adverse winds to turn you back, for Jesus directs you, as he did His first disciples, to "Go to the other side." As Christians we are not dependent upon the winds and currents of circumstances; but, having Christ in the heart, we, like a steamship, have a power within to propel us, and so under every circumstance we may advance. Moreover, as steamships often make better time when there is a headwind to fan the furnaces than when the wind is fair, or when all is calm, so it may be with us as Christians.

Continue, as you began, "looking unto Jesus, the

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author and finisher of our faith." Don't spend your time looking back, much less looking at others. Three boys, entering a field covered with snow, said, "Let us see who can make the straightest track to the other side." One often looked *back* to see how he was getting along, and made a crooked path; the second boy looked to see if the *others* made a crooked course that he might criticise them, and so his course was almost as crooked as a rail fence. The third boy steadily fixed his eyes on an object at the other side of the field, and marched toward it, looking not backward or to the right or the left. The result was, his course was as straight as a bee-line. If we keep looking back, or spend our time in criticising others, our courses will be crooked; but if we take as our motto, "Looking unto Jesus," and advance, we will make straight paths and our lives shall be exemplary.

The children of Israel should have entered the promised land at Kadesh Barnea; but neglecting to do so they, as a nation, wandered forty years in the wilderness before they entered the promised land. Let us not close our eyes to our privileges, or neglect, or refuse to receive all that our loving Lord offers us; but as we read of "the full assurance of faith," and "purity of heart," and "the higher life," and "full salvation," let us not be unbelieving and afraid, as was ancient Israel, but say with Joshua and Caleb, "Let us go up at once and possess the land, for we are well able," and by faith enter into the promised experience, even the "Beulah land" of "perfect love."

Ever persevere, for—(1) God commends it. (2) It shows your faith. (3) Sinners persevere. (4) It is the only safe way. (5) The eyes of the world are upon you. (6) It brings great reward. (7) The love of Christ constrains you. (8) The example of Paul and others allure you. (9) There is nothing to go back to. (10) The great cloud of witnesses on earth and in *heaven* inspire you with their gaze. (Heb. xii. 1, 2.)

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Be a Reverent Christian.

——: XXII :——

Precept : Lev. xix. 30. **Praise : Ps. lxxxix. 7.**
Promise : Heb. ix. 24. **Prayer : Heb. xiii. 20, 21.**

WHEN I was a lad I heard a good old gentleman say to my father, "Mr. Crossley, I have hopes for a boy or man as long as he has reverence for sacred things." These words made a deep impression upon my mind, and have had a lasting influence for good upon my character and life.

Cherish the spirit of reverence for everything that is sacred; for it is your life. To the extent that reverence for things sacred declines hope passes away, and when reverence is gone hope dies.

Let me mention some persons and things that are sacred, that we should *ever reverence:*

1. God, as our Creator and Redeemer, is sacred. Angels reverently veil their faces as they worship Him, saying, "Holy, holy, holy." Let our worship, conversation and life ever show reverence, gratitude and love to our God and Father.

We should so reverence God as never to profane His sacred name. It is very important also to avoid the use of such words as, "gosh," "gollie," "by George," "by jingo," and all other words approximating to swearing. We should also seek to stop the awful habit of profane swearing in others, by kindly reminding them when they swear.

2. The house of God is sacred. The Lord says: "Ye shall reverence my sanctuary."

The church should be made neat and attractive in appearance, and ever kept clean and in good repair. Some church edifices are a disgrace.

All entertainments, such as election cakes, neck-tie socials, grab-bags, comic readings, songs and speeches in the church of God, are irreverent abominations and should be discountenanced.

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It is not only irreverent, but unmannerly, for a boy or man, not a Jew, to have his hat or cap on in the house of God, just as it shows lack of culture to have the hat on in a gentleman's house. The Orientals show reverence by removing their sandals or shoes.

In the church everything should be done "decently and in order." We should, however, not confound stupidity, sanctimoniousness, stiffness, drawling or solemnity with reverence, or think cheerfulness, life, brightness or smiles to be irreverent.

Let reverence during worship ever be maintained in the pulpit, pew and *choir*, so shall all coarseness and slang be avoided in the pulpit; and in the *choir* and pew, during prayer time, sitting upright, looking about, turning leaves, passing books and whispering will be unknown.

3. The Bible is a sacred thing. Do not irreverently toss it about, or even turn down any leaves, or use a large Bible as a music stool, as some do.

Edward VI. of England, being offered a Bible to stand on in order to reach an object, said: "No, not on that book." Let similar reverence be ours as we feel and say, "Precious Bible, book divine; precious treasure, thou art mine."

Have such reverence for the sacred book that you will instinctively avoid all *punning* and *jesting* on Scripture passages.

Though some of those who are called "higher critics" (?) treat the inspired Word with presumptuous irreverence, let us put them and their misnamed "higher criticism" on the shelf, and continue in thought and teaching in the "old paths."

4. *Truth* is sacred. Let us hold it in the highest reverence, and so not only keep from and abhor all wilful or malicious lying and slander, but also avoid lying of every kind, such as so-called "white lies," little lies, lies of trade, lies of society, lies for fun, fibs, the lie that exaggerates, misrepresents, tells half the truth or prevaricates. (Rev. xxi. 27.)

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5. *Prayer* is a sacred thing. It is most disgraceful and wicked for a person not even to say his prayers, for it is refusing to speak to his loving Heavenly Father.

Do not merely *say* your prayers, but *pray*.

Avoid all *jesting* or talking flippantly about prayer, and do not outrage the idea of prayer by trying to be peculiar or *quaint*, much less by praying *at* people.

In church, home and school, during time of prayer, let your eyes be closed and your mind attentive to the prayers.

6. Ministers or clergymen of all churches should be regarded as sacred, as they especially occupy the position of "ambassadors for Christ." (2 Cor. v. 20.) We should think of the sacred office and work of ministers more than of the men, and, as Paul directs, "esteem them very highly in love for their *work's* sake" (1 Thess. v. 12, 13), even though we may sometimes think them imperfect and recreant to their sacred trust. Do not let the disgrace or faults of any minister lower your reverence for the ministry.

Unless parents wish to lessen the influence of ministers for good over their sons and daughters, or utterly ruin their children, as some have done, let them avoid the evil practice of speaking against certain ministers and retailing personal grievances.

We should ever possess, and seek to cultivate in others, a high reverence for the ministers of Christ.

7. Our parents should be regarded as sacred. Our Heavenly Father appoints them to represent Himself. Great is their responsibility and privilege.

When parents show *love* and *justice*, as also *kindness* and *firmness* in perfect harmony, they draw forth the reverence, love, confidence and obedience of their children, and so make it easy and natural for them in early life to love, trust, reverence and obey their Heavenly Father; that is, to be genuine Christians; but those parents who act otherwise misrepresent God, and render it almost certain that their children shall

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not be Christians, or but poor specimens. (Eph. vi. 4.)

Sons and daughters should always reverence their parents, however imperfectly they represent the character of God. (Eph. vi. 1-3.)

Never irreverently speak of your parents as "the boss," "the governor," "the old man," or "the old woman."

Never say to father or mother, "*I won't.*" "Obey your parents in the Lord." (Eph. vi. 1.)

Many have found irreverence and disobedience to parents sure steps to crime, disgrace, the penitentiary or the gallows.

Do not forget or neglect your parents after you are away from home, but cheer them with frequent letters, occasional visits, Christmas presents and pecuniary help when needed. You may be old some time.

8. The Lord's day is sacred. It is intended as a type of heaven. God says, "*Remember* the Sabbath day to keep it holy." (Ex. xx. 8.)

The Sabbath day is compared to the parlor of our houses. As the parlor is where we have the best carpet, furniture, pictures and best company, so the Sabbath is our *best day* or *room* in the week, and we should only want to have our best things, thoughts, words and deeds in it.

We do not feel it a restraint or hardship to keep our muddy boots, shovels, chisels, dish pans, and milk pails out of the parlor; so, when the heart and mind are right, we do not feel to say, "Why can't I, on Sunday, go boating, swimming, skating, playing and shooting? or why can't I go on an excursion, or work as usual, or lounge around, or read novels or secular papers?" We esteem the day as our best day, our parlor *day*, and too good for such things.

On the Sabbath, works of benevolence, religion and *necessity* are proper.

The Sabbath is a necessity. It is given to rest the

body and mind, and to elevate the moral, social and spiritual nature of mankind.

The Lord's day is not, as some suppose, a day taken out of us by the Lord; but it is a special day He has, in love and mercy, *given* to us, for Jesus declared, "The Sabbath was made for man." (Mark ii. 27.) It is the workingman's day, the children's day, the Christian's day, "the day of all the week the best."

Do not for yourself, your children or others, fill the Sabbath with nots: "You *mustn't* do this, you *mustn't* do that, you *mustn't* do the other," but think and speak of what is right to do on Sabbath.

Some make the day one of wicked dissipation, or spend it as a holiday, or in business, or in worldly conversation and visiting. Others wear a long face, and make the Sabbath a prison, or a task or burden to themselves and their households, much as the woman who, before going to church, tied her boy to the bedpost to keep him quiet, and directed him to learn the lines, "Thine earthly Sabbaths, Lord, we love; but there's a nobler rest above."

Children must be employed in some way on Sabbath. Shall it be, "go as you please," or shall the attempt be made merely to restrain them? No. Wisely direct as to the Sabbath School, the church, suitable reading, pictures, music, etc., so as to make the day a delight. Children like to be read to on Sabbath.

Parents, who do not in the true sense of the term make "the Sabbath a delight" to the children, virtually *break* the Sabbath.

Any nation, or family or person that disregards the Sabbath, goes down.

The Lord directs us to "call the Sabbath a delight." (Is. lviii. 13, 14.) Study to make the day one of Christian delight, and a source of pleasure, comfort, joy and blessing to the higher nature of yourself, your family, and those about you; so shall your earthly Sabbaths be as stepping-stones, leading to the eternal Sabbath in our Father's house in heaven.

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Be a Sociable Christian.

——: XXIII :——

Precept : Rom. xii. 10.	Prayer : Psa. cxxii. 6, 7.
Promise : Jas. iii. 17, 18.	Praise : 1 John i. 3.

PAUL believed in Christian sociability. You see this in his every epistle; while, in the last chapter of Romans, he speaks of *greeting* or *saluting* twenty-two different times.

Shaking hands is peculiarly the Christian salutation, and its exercise develops Christian sociability.

A great deal of religion can be expressed in a hand-shake. If it is not natural for you to shake hands, you should cultivate this habit until it becomes natural.

Do not, however, indulge in the *vice*-shake that some people give, when they almost crush the fingers or crack the joints of the hands they clasp.

Avoid also the *pump-handle* shake that swings the hands up and down three or four times.

The *dead-fish* hand-shake is the worst of all.

I often meet persons who merely put out the hand and give no clasp whatever, but leave their fingers extended, so that if I did not take hold of the hand, it would certainly fall. I would about as soon clasp the tail of a dead fish as such a hand. I pity such persons, however, for they either lack heart or strength of character.

In the social greeting, let us give a hearty, animated, Christian clasp of hand. Force of character and largeness of heart can be greatly developed by the proper exercise of hand-shaking.

1. Do not be deceived by wrong ideas of sociality. It is a misnomer to call intoxicating liquor, "The Social Glass." People drink and sing, "We won't go home till morning," and "Three Cheers for the Red, White and Blue." The latter song is appropriate for

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them, for they give their *white* money for the *red* liquor, and get the *blues* for nothing.

Never drink any person's health with that which may injure your own physical or moral health. Be a total abstainer. (Eph. v. 18.)

2. Be sociable in the true sense of the term. Christ, our Exemplar, was very sociable, so much so that He was truly called "the Friend of sinners."

The best people are most sociable. Get a half-dozen ministers together, and if they do not indulge in more true wit, humor and Christian sociability in an hour than any other half-dozen men, it is because you can find others as good as they are.

3. Express cheerful sociality in your face. Some faces are so stolid that they never lighten up when you meet them, or express any more animation than the face of a clock.

4. Do not have such a mean disposition or weak mind as to give or take a slight. "Be courteous." "Be patient." Do not look for slights, or you will be sure to think you discover them. Nine-tenths of the slights taken were never meant at all.

Do not wait for persons to salute you on the street or greet you in the church first, and then complain that you are slighted. Those who complain the most are usually the least sociable, and themselves most to blame.

True worth will ever be appreciated, whether we are rich or poor: "Water rises to its own level."

Some people always have good neighbors and kind friends; while others find their neighbors selfish, mean and hard to get along with. How is this? Jesus explains it, "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." (Matt. vii. 2.)

Some persons find the people, more or less, sociable in every church they attend; but others always find the churches cold, formal and stiff, and complain, "No person spoke to me," or "No person shook hands with me." Why this difference? The wise man

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accounts for it, "A man that hath friends must show *himself* friendly." (Prov. xviii. 24.)

When we were crossing the Atlantic we saw twenty-six icebergs; but, I can assure you, we kept our distance from them. So, if you are cold and stolid as an iceberg, you need not be surprised that people do not run up against you, and that they are not cordial with you. Get thawed out by fervent love and true friendliness, and you will secure all the friends and cordiality you could reasonably desire.

5. Be sociable at home. I like the practice in so many homes of saying "Good-night," as they are retiring, and, as they meet again, "Good morning."

6. Be sociable in the church. If our churches lack sociality, it is because they lack the Spirit of the Lord. Have you not noticed how sociable people are during and after a genuine revival?

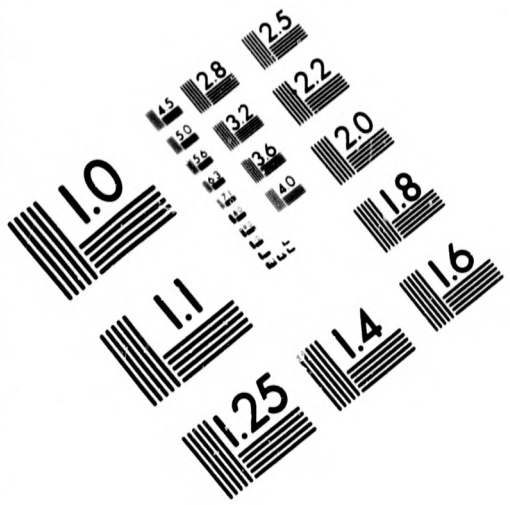
Some in all our churches are babies and have to be spoon-fed. It is necessary to have a "silver spoon" for such. Paul recognized this. (1 Cor. iii. 1, 2; Heb. v. 12-14.)

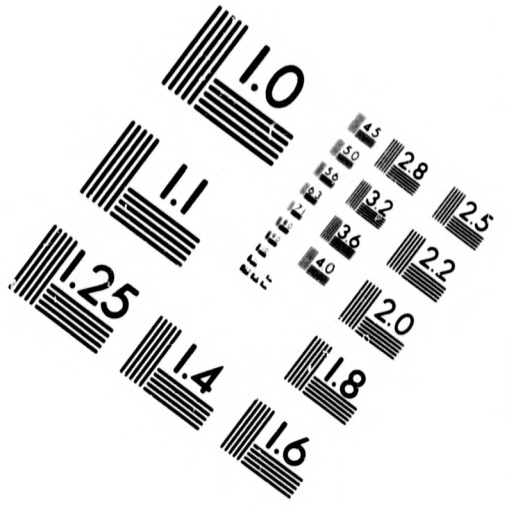
The ushers in our churches should be very sociable, and especially so with the strangers and young people.

I know a Presbyterian church in Detroit, where they announce, and have five or ten minutes at the close of the morning service, for social greetings.

In our several churches, we should not expect the pastor and a few others to shake hands with everybody. That would be doing the business by *wholesale*. We should do a large retail business; that is, in each service everyone should shake hands with two or more persons. Let us shake hands with our friends and strangers, with youths and adults, with Christians and unconverted, with the poor especially, and do not slight the rich.

In doing Christian work, sociality and judicious hand-shaking is a mighty power. Mark Guy Pearse said, "Man is the only animal that has a hand. The





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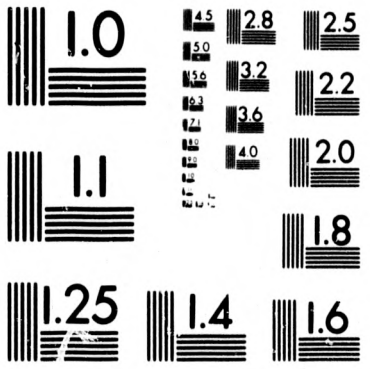

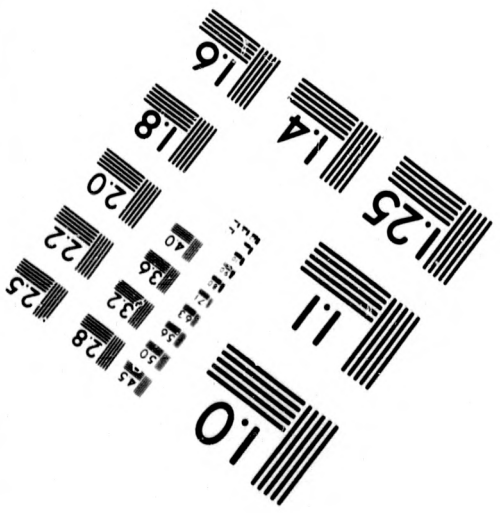

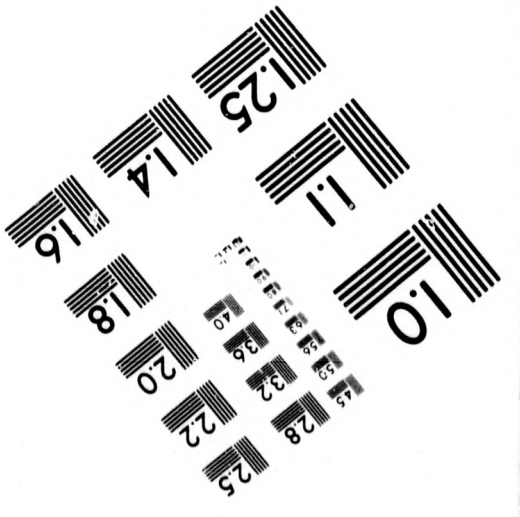

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hand, my brother, my sister, marks thee off to help others."

7. Be sociable with strangers. Many good people, and even ministers, while very cordial and sociable with their own church members and pew-holders, neglect to get acquainted with and to be sociable with strangers. This is a lamentable mistake. Speaking to a ministerial friend who had made this mistake, I said, "I want you to take a fresh start in being sociable, and to get to know personally every hackman, drayman and coal-heaver in the town; and speak to the children and give them a smile as you meet them, so that two-thirds of the boys and girls in the town will greet you by name as they meet you on the street." If all the ministers in every church would act on this advice, many more would be induced to attend church, and would be won to Christ and helped on in the Christian life.

Mr. D. L. Moody tells of a husband, wife and large family that were all won to Christ and the Church by a smile and a nod to the children from a sociable minister as he passed by their home from time to time.

I know that one of the secrets of the success that God gives us in our evangelistic work, is that we are sociable, and speak to persons as we meet them on the streets, or in the shops and offices, as also on the trains, boats and vehicles, as well as in the meetings.

How sociable and affable all sensible persons become when they are electioneering for votes for themselves or others.

We should remember that we are electioneering for Jesus Christ, so shall we always and everywhere be kind and sociable, and thus win persons, not merely to ourselves, but also to accept Christ and His salvation, and to "crown Him Lord of all."

Let us think and speak more about "The Recognition of Friends on Earth." There is no doubt about "The Recognition of Friends in Heaven."

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Be a Steadfast Christian.

—: XXIV :—

Promise: John xv. 9, 10. **Praise:** Jude 24, 25.
Precept: 1 Cor. xv. 58. **Prayer:** John xvii. 11.

"STAND fast in the Lord." "Be strong."

A man, when very drunk, staggered up the church aisle and seated himself with many others who were giving their names as candidates for Church membership. So as not to create a scene his name was quietly taken. Having slept off his drunken stupor, his Christian wife, next morning, told him how grieved and humiliated she felt at what he had done. He said, "I surely did not stagger up and give my name to join the Church—*did I?*" Being assured again and again that he had done so, he, *with firmness*, said, "*Well, I'll stick to it.*" He became a Christian, and ever after was true to Christ and the Church. We admire such resolution and stability.

The eyes of those on earth and in heaven are upon *you*. Declare your choice to be a Christian, and, *trusting in the mighty God*, put down your foot and say, "*I will stick to it.*"

Carry out the sentiment of the plantation song, "Keep in de middle ob de road." Some are on the fence, others in the ditch, and not a few over in the field. Where are you?

Be the same out of special meetings as in them, in summer as in winter, in recreation as in business, away from home as at home, in election campaigns as at church, on your feet as on your knees, and in your life as in your prayers, so shall you be steadfast continually, retain God's favor, and have a mighty influence for good on all about you.

Presume not upon your own strength and resolution, but expect to be KEPT. Say with Paul, "I am persuaded that He is able to keep." (2 Tim. i. 12.)

Simon Peter presumed upon his own strength and

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failed. After he was restored, he took as his motto, "*Kept* by the *power* of *God* through faith," and for over thirty years he was *true, till he died as a martyr.* We should be ashamed to think of falling when we have omnipotent power to keep us.

Johnnie and his father were walking on a slippery and rough road. The father said, "Give me your hand, Johnnie." He answered, "No; let me take your hand, papa." He could not grasp his father's big hand, but simply held two of his fingers. Only a few rods were passed over when he slipped and fell. His father said, "Now, let me take your hand." Johnnie choked down the sobs as he replied, "I did not hurt myself, papa. Let me hold your hand again." Though he clung more firmly to his father's two fingers, they had not gone far when he stubbed his toe and fell sprawling. He could not now keep back the tears, as through his sobs he said, "I guess, papa, you had better take my hand this time." His father took his tiny hand in his strong one and on they went; yet they had not gone six rods till the boy slipped again, but he did not fall, for his father held him now. A little further on and Johnnie again stubbed his toe and went forward; but he kept his feet, for his father was able to "make him stand."

Why do I give this instance? Read in Rom. xiv. 4: "He shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand." If you think to keep yourself, or hold the Lord, you will surely stumble and fall; but, if you put your hand in the Lord's hand and trust "the mighty to save," though the way may be rough and slippery, you shall find the Lord "able to keep you from falling" till he brings you to heaven.

The Christian's armor consists of "breastplate, girdle, greaves, helmet, shield and sword." (Eph. vi. 13-17.) There is no defence provided for the back. In the "good fight of faith," the Lord expects us to "Stand like the brave with our face to the foe," remembering that "the crowning day is coming by and by."

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Be a Trustful Christian.

——: XXV :——

Precept: Isa. l. 10. **Proverb: Prov. iii. 5, 6.**
Promise: Psa. xci. 4. **Praise: Rom. viii. 38, 39.**

AS you yield yourself to Christ, ever affirm, with full assurance of faith: "Behold God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid." (Isa. xii. 2.) If you trust, you will love. If you love, you will obey. God's order is believing, being, doing.

Those who, like Peter, presume upon their own strength or resolution, fail; but those who trust in the Lord are "kept by the power of God."

Our Heavenly Father, with unerring *wisdom* and infinite *love*, is *planning* and *working* for our present and eternal good, so that we may well trust God, though mysteries surround us. (Job xiii. 15.)

If God's promises and *apparent* providences for a time appear to conflict, and you are perplexed, like Abraham, still trust in the Lord and obey Him, and you will yet find that they perfectly harmonize.

A man while in doubt and darkness lay wakeful and almost in despair. His child in the cot, waking from sleep, cried out with fear. As he spoke to it the child said, "*Father, it is dark; take my hand.*" As the uplifted hand was clasped the child became quiet, and was soon peacefully sleeping. The lesson of trust was learned from the child, and, looking up, the sad and doubting man now said trustingly, "Heavenly Father, it is dark; take my hand." His fears at once were gone, and his mind was at rest.

The reason and ground of our trust are the unchangeable character and immutable promises of God. Not one of the three thousand promises of the Bible has ever failed. Get on promised ground and there stand secure, knowing that sooner might the heavens fall and the pillars of the earth crumble than that one promise of God should fail.

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Let us have faith and show it. "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou *trust*." (Ps. xci. 4.) When danger threatens, the chickens take refuge under their mother's wings, and, though it is dark to them there, yet their cheerful chirping expresses their trust. Some of us have not as much faith *as a chicken*. Let us ever take refuge under God's wings of *promise* and *providence*, and there trust, so shall we, though sometimes it may seem dark or mysterious, forever be secure.

Trust the Lord to supply you grace as you need it. He is "*a very present help*." Therefore do not worry about trials, temptations and duties in the future. Many are like the woman who said, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" God's angel removed the stone ere she came to it. (Mark xvi. 3, 4.) Nine-tenths of the trials and difficulties that we anticipate are never ours.

Do not doubtingly say: "How could I bear this?" "How could I do that?" "I fear I shall not be faithful," or "How shall I meet death?" By grace *bear* to-day's trials, *overcome* to-day's temptations, *do* to-day's duties; and, with every new day, *take a fresh start*, so shall you daily find the promise true, "As thy days so shall thy strength be," and even when you meet "the last enemy—death," God will, *then and there*, give you grace sufficient to be "more than a conqueror." God will never fail you.

Samuel, as he reviewed the past, erected an altar and called it Ebenezer, meaning: "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." (1 Sam. vii. 12.) Abraham, as he thought of the future, built an altar and named it Jehovah-jireh, which means, "The Lord will provide." (Gen. xxii. 14.) As we look *backwards* and *forwards*, let us gratefully erect our Ebenezer and Jehovah-jireh; and, as we stand between the two, let us sing from loving hearts: "We'll *praise* Him for all that is past, and *trust* Him for all that's to come."

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Be a Thankful Christian.

———: XXVI :———

Precept: Heb. xiii. 15, 16. Praise: Rev. i. 5, 6.
Promise: Phil. iv. 6, 7. Prayer: 1 Thess. i. 2, 3.

THE Bible contains many exhortations to thankfulness, and is full of ascriptions and songs of praise. It seems natural, however, for some to complain, grumble and fret. Let us think how useless, foolish, disagreeable, injurious and wicked is the habit, and so avoid such a mean business.

A *man* will make more ado if a button is off his shirt than a *woman* will in getting herself and half-a-dozen children ready for church; yet even some women are not entirely free from the sin referred to. One of such having died, a neighbor said, "Poor woman, I hope she has gone to heaven; but I doubt whether she will find things *there* to suit her."

It is God's will that we should, "*In* everything give thanks;" not *for* everything, as many things result from the mistakes, carelessness or sins of ourselves or other people; but God, *even then*, does the best possible thing for us.

A man, who by his own blundering broke his leg, said, "I thank God it was not my neck."

You make your own choice whether you will live on *Grumbling Alley*, where the air is bad, frogs croak, neighbors are disagreeable, and life becomes a burden, or on *Thanksgiving Avenue*, where the air is pure, the birds sing sweetly, society is very much like heaven, and life is a joy and blessing.

1. Ever exhibit a thankful spirit at home, in the church and everywhere. Favors are bestowed upon the thankful both by God and man.

2. The worship of God should largely consist of thanksgiving and praise: "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving." (Ps. c. 4.)

3. Tell your minister, teacher and others when

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their words or actions did good. It will not spoil them, but make them thankful and encourage them. Success humbles a good man. (Lu. v. 6-9.)

Plato, as a heathen, thanked God—(1) that he was born a man, (2) a Grecian, and (3) a philosopher. It will take eternity to utter all God's praise.

Pride on the one hand, or self-depreciation on the other, is a great fault and weakness, and hinders true greatness; but a *consciousness* of *God-given* ability, and *thankfulness* to God for it, are sources of strength and tend to success.

4. Look for reasons in your own life and in your family and church for thankfulness to God, not for complaint, and you will surely find them; and, having a thankful spirit, the causes for gratitude will multiply.

Consider the many general reasons for thankfulness: the progress of the Gospel, the elevated moral standard of the world, the unity of the Churches, the ever-increasing missionary spirit, the presence of God and the promise of final victory.

5. Thankfulness expels pride and vainglory. Do not spend your time, as many do, in trying to *crush* out *self;* but commit yourself fully to Christ, think of Him and His service, and then, as He fulfils His promise, "I will deliver him, I will set him on high, I will honor him" (Ps. xci. 14, 15), let thankfulness and love to your blessed Lord abound more and more, and self will not trouble you.

If you are tempted to pride or vainglory because of any talent, grace or success you have, think "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" (1 Cor. iv. 7), and give the glory to God; so shall the recognition of every talent, grace or success that the Lord gives you, instead of puffing you up, increase your *thankfulness to God.* Let us on earth possess the spirit that we shall have in heaven, and ever ascribe "Glory, and thanksgiving, and honor unto our God forever and ever. Amen." (Rev. vii. 12.)

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Be a Uniform Christian.

——: XXVII :——

Promise: 2 Cor. xiii. 11. **Praise:** Isa. xxvi. 3, 4.
Precept: 1 Cor. xv. 58. **Prayer:** 2 Thess. iii. 16.

THE experience and life of many Christians are so variable. They might appropriately sing, "I'm sometimes *up*, I'm sometimes *down*, Yet my soul seems heavenward bound," while some are like the man I know, who said, "I've been a Christian *off* and *on* for over twenty years." I do not want you to be one of these *up* and *down* Christians, much less one of the *off* and *on* kind.

2. For years my experience was very inconstant, till I found the secret of a uniform Christian life. I will now tell you this secret. I found it in Isa. xxvi. 3: "*Thou* wilt *keep* him in *perfect* peace, whose mind is *stayed* on *Thee:* because he *trusteth* in *Thee.*"

As I read, "*Thou* wilt *keep* him," I saw I had been *trying* to keep myself, instead of trusting the Lord to keep me. As I read about "*perfect peace,*" I saw I had been wishing for ecstasy or great joy, instead of peace, the highest heritage of God's children. As I read, "whose mind is *stayed* on *Thee,*" I saw I had been staying my mind on myself, my feelings, my faith, my peace or my doubts, instead of on God. As I read, "because he *trusteth* in *Thee,*" I saw that thinking of my feelings I had been doubting myself, and thought I was doubting the Lord; but now, thinking of the Lord, my doubts vanished, and *trust in God* seemed as natural as to breathe, and peace, yea, "*perfect peace,*" was mine.

For twenty years I have, almost every day, lived in the blessed experience of that verse. Many persons, also, have told me, "Since you explained that verse in Isaiah it seems so easy to live a Christian, and my experience is so changed."

Beloved, do you know the experience of this verse?

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If not, comply with the conditions mentioned, and the result is certain. The important, yea the pivotal point is staying your mind on Christ. This may require deliberation at first, but soon it will become instinctive or natural.

3. If you lack peace, or the consciousness of His presence, and so are tempted to doubt, do not stay your mind on the lack, but on Christ the object of faith, so shall doubt and unrest be gone.

4. When great peace is yours do not think, "Now if I can only keep this peace I shall be all right," but stay your mind on Christ, the source of peace, and He will keep you.

5. Does your temper trouble you? If I were in your home for a day, would you let me see you lose your temper? Do you answer, "Certainly not?" Then, assuredly, if you stay your mind on Christ, and so are conscious of His abiding presence and gracious help, your temper will not overcome you.

6. Are you tempted to wrong of any kind? Stay your mind on Christ, so shall temptation lose its power, and Christ will govern even your thoughts.

7. Are you seeking to know the Lord more fully, yea, to constantly experience what is meant by "Blessed are the pure in heart," and "Perfect love casteth out fear?" Open your mind to Christ, so shall you be taught of God; and, like others to whom I have explained this passage, you will certainly trust Christ and receive the experience spoken of by Presbyterians and Baptists as the "Rest of faith," and "Full assurance of faith," or what the Methodists and others call "Purity of heart" or "Perfect love."

8. Mark this passage in Isaiah in your Bible, memorize it, believe it true, daily tell it to the Lord as an expression of your faith, move into it in your experience, and, for the remainder of your life, prove it true as the days are going by.

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Be a Watchful Christian.

——: XXVIII :——

Promise : Isa. lxii. 6. Proverb : Prov. iv. 23.
Precept : Mark xiii. 35-37. Prayer : Psa. cxli. 3.

"WATCH *and pray*, lest ye enter into *temptation*." The fall of others warns us not to drive too near the precipice, lest a wheel break, or our animal become unmanageable, and we fall into sin, and so disgrace our friends and the Church.

2. *Watch against spiritual weakness.* A vigorous spiritual life resists temptation and sin as a healthy body resists disease. "Keep thy heart diligently."

3. *Watch lest curiosity*, the strongest faculty of the mind, lead you astray. A physician in Victoria proposed to take me through the haunts of vice in underground Chinatown. I said "No." Do not, from a morbid or depraved curiosity, look upon sin, or hear and read about crime, or investigate vice, lust and debauchery. Mind your own business.

4. *Be watchful against becoming sour, impatient, peevish, fretful, crabbed* or *fault-finding*, or I pity those who have to live with you. Like Paul, even to old age, have sense and grace to always keep sweet, kind and contented. (Col. iv. 18.)

5. *Watch against being dull, stupid or doleful.* Our success in public-speaking, leading a meeting or winning others for Christ, as also in business, depends largely upon the way we go about it.

At the Pennsylvania railroad station, on an exceedingly hot day last summer, the coaches were full of perspiring passengers. A boy of about fourteen, with *stolid* face, moved slowly through the train, repeating in a dreary, lazy tone, with *downward inflection:* "F-a-n-s; five cents." He sold just two fans. A moment later another boy entered the train with an armful of bamboo fans. His step was brisk, his head up, and his voice cheery and flute-like, as he

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called out with *upward inflection*: "Fans, five cents. Sea breezes; keep yo'selves cool. Five cents." The effect was magical. He sold sixty-seven fans; and, as the train moved out, he jumped off and shouted, "*That was quick business.*" The other boy stood and wondered how it was done.

6. *Be watchful against becoming a hobbyist.* I know many good people who make such a hobby of Christ's Second Coming, Faith-Healing, Baptism, The Second Blessing, Holiness, Divine Guidance, Dress, or Secret Societies, that they are *considered* fanatics or cranks, and so repel, distract or divert other people, and lessen their own influence for good. Guard against being run off on a side line, side-tracked or ditched; but keep on the main line, the two rails of which are: "Man a sinner" and "Christ the Saviour."

The opposition that hobbyists meet from ministers and Church members is not, *as they suppose*, because of the carnal mind of others; but it is because their own teaching is not the voice of Jesus, but that of "*strangers*," from which the sheep" flee." (John x. 2-5.)

God calls us to succeed; but, to do so, we need not only to be *sincere*, but also *sensible* and true to the great Gospel commission. (Mark xvi. 15, 16.) If Mr. Hunter and I were to get off the main line, which is *Christ the Saviour* of sinners, on some *hobby line*, God could not use us as He graciously does. Let us ever pray, "From all hobbies, fads, and crankish notions, *good Lord, deliver us.*"

7. *Watch for opportunities to win others for Christ and to help Christians on the way.* Take as your motto: "Watching for souls." Opportunities are all about you. You may find them in the home, on the street, in the railroad coach, in the Sabbath School and church, among old and young, rich and poor. Much of the religious fervor of Zinzerdorf resulted from the impression made upon his mind by a picture of the crucifixion bearing the inscription: "*All this for thee! how much for me?*"

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Be a Wide-Awake Christian.

——: XXIX :——

Promise : Eph. v. 14. Praise : Psa. cxxx. 6.
Precept : 1 Thess. v. 5, 6. Prayer : Psa. li. 10.

THE Psalmist said, "I myself will awake early." (Ps. lvii. 8.) That is a grand text for a practical sermon. If a horse is going at a lazy jog-trot we waken him up; so should we do with our bodies, for they are our servants. One wide-awake Christian will do more than ten sleepy ones.

1. Be wide-awake in your business, or profession, or study, or play, and in everything, "Do it with thy might." Idleness and laziness are sins. I like to see bricklayers work; but some other people make me tired to look at them, or hear them speak.

2. *Wake up and plan to be on time* at every church service, as if you were going to a train or to business. Frequently the larger half of a congregation arrives after the time for opening.

I have heard of an unpopular "*three-handed* person," who had a right hand, a left hand, and was a *little behind hand.* When you are behind hand, do not put the blame on your clock or watch, as *wide-awake people* have not slow timepieces.

The minister or leader is often most to blame for educating people to come late by not starting every service on the minute. If we are tardy in beginning a service, some people will be still more tardy in coming, and those who want to be on time, but not kept waiting, do not know when to go. The preacher or leader should be the last one to arrive, and he should always begin on time.

A woman, being asked how she could always be on time at every service, answered: "It is part of my religion not to disturb the religion of others."

3. *Keep wide-awake in church.* To prevent sleepiness: (1) Do not work too late on Saturday, (2) Don't

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eat too much on Sunday, (3) Have the church well ventilated, (4) Take notes of what is said.

A minister, while preaching, noticing a number nodding or sleeping, said: "I recently read an advertisement asking tenders for a hundred sleepers for a certain railroad. I think I could furnish them fifty *sleepers* from my congregation."

4. *If you are leading a meeting always be wide-awake.* A preacher suggested to his congregation to take snuff to keep them awake. One replied, "Put a little snuff in your sermon." Many speakers give good thought, and use nice language, but they lack animation and *dynamite,* or have a monotonous tone, or *downward inflection,* and so put people to sleep.

5. *In religious meetings or in talking about Christianity be wide-awake,* and do not look as solemn as an owl, or as if you lived in a graveyard. Don't sigh and groan. Many people, I fear, confound dolefulness and stupidity with seriousness and reverence.

6. *Sing with spirit and fervor* instead of drawling, like "The tune the old cow died on."

7. *Be wide-awake in prayer.* A Christian, while praying for an unconverted man, felt a hand on his shoulder, and heard a voice saying, "Stop a moment; if you are going to pray for me, I want you to do so as if you meant it." Do not in prayer-meeting, family prayer or any place else be formal, or stupid.

8. The unconverted should arouse. God calls, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead."

9. Christians who are "*at ease in Zion*" should at once wake up. Paul cries, "Awake to righteousness and sin not." (1 Cor. xv. 34.)

10. We should all be wide-awake to our spiritual and eternal interests. Make the most of your opportunities, not only of getting good, but also of doing good. Do not, like Macawber, spend your time waiting round and telling what you are going to be and do, but wake up and be and do something *now.*

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Be a Working Christian.

——: xxx :——

Precept : Mark xvi. 15, 16. Praise : 2 Cor. ii. 14.
Promise : John xv. 16. Prayer : Ps. li. 12, 13.

IDLENESS is a great sin and disgrace.

1. Have some worldly business, profession, trade or occupation, in which you shall be diligent, and let it be dedicated to God.

2. Do not neglect the Christ-like work of sympathizing with and comforting and helping those in sorrow, affliction, bereavement, poverty, or any other trouble. By daily kind words and deeds make your life a constant benediction at home and abroad.

3. Associate yourself with Christian workers in the W.C.T.U., Y.M.C.A., and other temperance and religious organizations, and be an active member.

4. I wish particularly to speak of the work of bringing the unsaved to Christ, and of establishing those who are Christians.

You have heard persons say, "I am resolved to make one for the Kingdom." Add to this, "I am resolved to take others with me."

The right place to begin Christian work is among the members of our own families. It is written of Andrew, "He *first* findeth his own brother Simon, . . . and brought him to Jesus." (John i. 41, 42.)

A Christian mother, when dying, as her family stood around her bed, said to her husband, "I charge thee, bring all the children home." God commissions parents to bring all their children to Christ and heaven.

We should also seek to help as many others as possible. Every Christian in our land should be filled with a missionary spirit, which is the spirit of Christ, and be himself or herself a missionary at home, and also help to send the Gospel to other lands.

This world may readily be converted to Christ if

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we go the right away about it. For instance, if there were now but fifty Christians in all the world, and each of these would win another for Christ this year, and then if each of this hundred would lead another to Christ next year, there would be two hundred Christians; and if the work were thus continued, so that each year every Christian would lead just one more to enlist on the Lord's side, the entire population of our earth would be converted in *twenty-five years*, for then there would be over 1,600,000,000 Christians. Starting with the numbers that are now Christians, and increasing in the ratio mentioned, the world would be converted inside of ten years. Christian people generally leave this work to ministers, and we depend too much upon pulpit efforts, instead of personal hand-to-hand work.

Will you not this year, and each succeeding year, endeavor to win at least one man or woman, or boy or girl, for our blessed Saviour?

I would rather be a man than an angel, because God uses *men*, not angels, in saving those for whom Christ died.

If you could save another by taking a trip around the world, it would be a paying undertaking. If you will, however, take a shorter trip, and speak to your neighbor or friend, or child or servant, or brother or sister, you may save one. (John i. 41-46.)

An illiterate man, a new convert, won twenty-seven for Christ during our six weeks' meetings in Toronto. How many have you won to be as stars in your crown of rejoicing?

If the "Society of Idlers and Strangers" in the various churches will enlist for active service, they will become a mighty army.

Let our maxim be, "*All at it and always at it*," and the world will soon be evangelized.

Consider the following reasons why you should be a Christian worker:

1. Jesus died to save sinners. What, therefore,

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should we, who are sinners saved by grace, do for those who are still unsaved?

2. The Lord Jesus Christ calls us to service. He says to every one, "Go, work to-day in my vineyard." Ask each morning, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do *to-day?*" and you will be kept from frittering away your time, and will be inspired to faithfulness.

3. The Lord and His Church need our service. As people seek to get others to vote to elect their man to positions of honor, so let us plan to get all we can to crown the Saviour King.

4. As so many are using their time and talents in the cause of sin and Satan, surely we should be equally earnest in the cause of righteousness and Christ.

5. Christian work is an evidence of faith and a means of developing it. When faith and works go not together, both are wanting. Each one dies if divorced from the other. (James ii. 18.) Do not sing, "Roll the old chariot along, and we'll *all hang on behind*," but show your faith by taking hold somewhere to help to advance the Gospel chariot.

6. Our own spiritual health and growth demand that we shall exercise ourselves in Christian work. Christians who do nothing for Christ will soon be found doubting and complaining. Do not complain about the people not helping you, but help others, and you will find it one of the best ways of helping yourself. (Prov. xi. 25.)

7. Christian work is a safeguard against backsliding and wrongdoing. If you be not a worker with Christ, Satan will get you to do chores for him. "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do."

8. Life is short; the work to be done is very great and opportunities may be found on every hand.

9. God's promises of success encourage us. The active, earnest and intelligent Christian "shall *doubtless* come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." (Psa. cxxvi. 6.) No one should think to

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excuse himself for failure by saying, "It is for me to do my duty and leave results with God," for God gives success to those who do their duty. (1 Cor. iii. 6.) Moody said, "I never saw the man who laid himself out to win souls who did not get them."

10. Rest of soul and joy of heart result from Christian service. (Matt. xi. 29; 2 Thess. ii. 19.) The wife of an English Church clergyman said: "I thought I could not do personal work among the unconverted; but seeing my husband inviting the unsaved to Christ, and being urged by the evangelists, I resolved to do what I could, and I have been greatly blessed, and I find that the work is so *fascinating*."

11. Every Christian is appointed by heaven as Christ's Ambassador of Peace, as much so as if he had been taken to heaven and commissioned back to earth. Paul declares, "We are ambassadors for Christ." (2 Cor. v. 20.) Two things are necessary to be His true ambassador: (1) To deliver the Gospel message; (2) To exhibit the spirit of Christ in its delivery. To neglect to urge men to "be reconciled to God," or to show temper or impatience if the message be not received, would misrepresent Christ, whose ambassadors we are.

12. The rewards that await the faithful are incentives to work. (James v. 20; Dan. xii. 3.)

13. Seeking to save and help others is a natural expression of our love to Christ. (John xxi. 16.) Should we feel comfortable in our pews, Sabbath after Sabbath, if we have not invited some unsaved person to the church and to Christ? We should not allow a week to pass without seeking to help some one religiously.

All true Christians desire to help on the work of God, but many seem not to know what to do. An American army officer, waiting for orders, asked his general, "Where shall my company go in?" The answer was given: "Go in any place; there is good fighting all along the line." So, go at something for

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Christ and do not be waiting round for others to direct you. Begin to-day.

I shall now speak about certain qualifications that are necessary to secure the greatest possible success in winning the unsaved to Christ and in building up believers.

1. Possess a clear knowledge of Christ as your personal Saviour. Our power with the unconverted will depend very much upon the reality and depth of our own personal experiences.

2. Have faith in God to use you, though you are a young convert, or though your talents are few. Do not delay to work for the salvation of others until you are older, or until you are more mature as a Christian, but, like Paul, begin "immediately." You may not be able to do some great thing, but you may do what you can, and an angel can do no more than this. Ask not, "What can I do?" but "*What can the Lord do through me?*"

3. Be consecrated to God for service. Harlan Page was only a carpenter, yet he, *by personal hand-to-hand work*, led fifteen hundred to accept Christ. One said to Moody: "It remains to be seen what God can do with a man who is fully consecrated to Him and His service." That led Moody to a fuller consecration for work, and the world has seen what God has done for him and through him. Follow his example and God will give you success.

4. It is important to have a good understanding of human nature and to know how to deal with different persons. It is written for our instruction: "He that *winneth* souls is wise." We cannot *drive* people to Christ by scolding, frowning and complaining, but we may *win* them to the Saviour by inviting, persuading and attracting.

5. Cultivate a hopeful spirit that looks on the bright side and so inspires hope in others. (2 Chron. xv. 7.)

6. Show Christ-like kindness and sympathy for

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all who need Christ and help, no matter how *low down* in the scale of humanity or *high up* in society they may be. (Luke x. 33.) We must have such a manifest love for humanity as will inspire confidence and beget love.

7. Have strong courage, that knows no such thing as surrender, and never shows discouragement. (Josh. i. 11.)

8. Christian courtesy must not be forgotten. Do not worry or confuse, or repel or insult people by always *nagging* at them, or by talking to them when others can hear, or by acting in a patronizing way, or by bluntly saying, as some do, "You are going to hell." If you use common sense, and are courteous and kind in speaking to others about the religion of Christ, you will find that, as in the case of Philip and the eunuch, courtesy will beget courtesy, and your work will not be in vain. (Acts viii. 30, 31.)

9. A knowledge of God's Word and how to use it is very important. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." In dealing with the various kinds of inquirers, however, it is only necessary to use a limited number of passages of Scripture.

10. Possess unbounded faith in the power of Christ and His Gospel to save persons of every age and character. (Heb. vii. 25.)

11. Be much in prayer. Every successful worker knows what is meant by fervent or inwrought prayer. (James v. 16.) John Knox, in the stillness of the night, prayed thrice, "O Lord, give me Scotland, or I die!" The Lord gave him Scotland.

12. Persevere in the Master's work, no matter what the results or indications are. (1 Cor. xv. 58.)

13. By grace and Christian service develop intense desires for the salvation of others. Dr. Lyman Beecher being asked, when dying, "What is the greatest thing in the world?" answered, "It is not theological controversy; it is to save a soul." Let us show our faith in that truth while in life and health.

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and, like Christ at the well and Philip in the carriage, *make* opportunities for winning persons to accept Christ and salvation.

14. *Expect* success, and strike out for victory in the name of the Lord. A minister was lamenting that no persons were being converted on his circuit. Mr. Hunter said: "Between now and next Sunday be much in thought and prayer about the unsaved, and then preach directly to them from a loving heart, and at the close of the service, as all heads are bowed in prayer, expectantly request those who desire the prayers of God's people to hold up their hands." A few days later he, with great joy and gratitude, told us that at each service several had declared their decision for Christ. If pastors and people would expect conversions of adults and youth in their churches and schools from week to week, and pray, plan and work for this object, they would rejoice in a continuous revival.

15. It is very important to use *tact* and prudence in dealing with the unconverted, and in putting tests in religious meetings. Some, in putting tests, first ask the Christians to stand up, and then ask those who desire to become Christians to rise. My experience and observation have led me to believe that it is a *serious* blunder to put such a test. It shows lack of tact. It provokes criticism and resentment. It hardens or repels some. It embarrasses or annoys many who keep their seats. It puts persons in a position that we would not wish to be placed in if we were unsaved. It keeps the unconverted from attending the services, when they think such a test may be repeated. That such embarrassing tests are put largely answers the question, "Why can we not get the unconverted to attend our ordinary revival meetings?" If the unconverted knew that no such test would be put, more of them would attend revival services and be saved.

The tests that we have found to be the best and

least objectionable are the following: While *the congregation is seated* and requested to keep in the spirit of prayer, ask those who desire to become Christians, or wish to be prayed for, to express such a desire by standing up, or by holding up the hand; or, after all are requested to *bow their heads in prayer*, ask those who desire to be prayed for to hold up the hand or stand up. Such tests will hinder no one; and when a person responds to such tests, it usually means decision and consequent salvation.

16. Every Christian worker needs the fire of enthusiasm that sets others on fire. (Eccl. ix. 10.)

Mr. Moody says: "A lot of people—ministers too—say to me, 'Would you tell me the secret of your success?' I answer, 'Get up and go to work, and you will find it. Just get a little fire into your soul and go about it.'"

A traveller, seeing twelve statues, asked, "What do those represent?" He was answered, "The twelve apostles in silver." He vigorously questioned, "What are they standing there for, doing nothing? Why don't you melt them down, and send them out preaching the Gospel?" Jesus asks statue Christians, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" (Matt. xx. 6.) His love is surely sufficient to melt us, and send us out to seek to save others.

17. The indispensable preparation for success, and the secret of love and enthusiasm, is the anointing of the Holy Spirit for service. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

The secret of Dr. Chalmers' power was his "blood-earnestness." Matthew Henry said, "I would think it a greater happiness to gain one soul to Christ than mountains of silver and gold to myself." Doddridge said, "I long for the conversion of souls more than anything besides." A Chinese convert said, "We want men with hot hearts to tell us of the love of Christ."

In closing this chapter, I want to say that not only

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should we work as individuals, but we should associate ourselves with others to extend and build up Christ's kingdom.

The success that attends union evangelistic meetings, or the work of any congregation, is largely determined by the way the Christians are organized for work. The members of every church should consider themselves as a regiment or company in the great army of Christ, and hear and obey the commands: "Fall in;" "Attention;" "Eyes front;" "Quick march to victory."

Rev. B. Fay Mills, when a pastor, after reading the Bible incident of the four men bringing the man with the palsy to Jesus, said, "If four men would combine to pray for and speak to one person about Christ, he would soon be converted." A few days later a man came to Mr. Mills and said, "That incident has deeply impressed me, and I have been thinking why can we not carry out the idea in our church. I will be one of four, and will try to get three others to unite with me." The three other men were soon secured. Each of the four men mentioned an unconverted person whom they agreed to pray for daily and speak to weekly about becoming a Christian. They reported to one another and their pastor weekly. Similar secret societies were formed in the church, and Mr. Mills tells us that almost every week, as a result of their faithful work, persons were converted to Christ and *united with the Church.*

Will you not, my reader, arrange with three others and form a similar secret society before another week passes? If every pastor would arrange to have such societies in his church, the question, "How shall we get persons to attend church and to become Christians?" would be solved.

Let me tell you of Mr. Wannamaker's church in Philadelphia. Mr. Wannamaker started a Sunday School in a shoemaker's shop, with twenty-seven scholars and nine teachers. A small church grew

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out of the Sabbath School. The school and church advanced year after year until, at the time of writing, there are 2,900 scholars in the school and over 2,800 members in the church, of whom 1,200 are men, and over 200 boys and girls are in the Junior League. In this church is a society called "The Brotherhood of Andrew and Philip." It consists of 250 men in bands of ten. There is a corresponding society of women. In these societies there are two rules, a rule of prayer and a rule of service. Mr. Wannamaker's Sabbath School class of 600 is similarly organized.

The Sabbath evening service is always evangelistic, and persons are converted in these services. Six hundred members were received into the church in one year. In this church they expect success, and pray, plan and work for it, and they are not disappointed. Success is not an accident, but is an example of cause and effect.

God will give success to every Christian, and every church, that will receive the baptism of His Spirit, and then intelligently plan, earnestly pray and systematically work for the conversion of sinners and the upbuilding of believers.

The Christian life is a "good warfare." Christ, our glorious Captain, calls upon everyone to enlist for *active service.* Hear the battle-cry: "In the name of our God, we set up our banners." (Psa. xx. 5.) Let us do what we can now, for the last engagement, as far as we are concerned, will soon be over.

A drummer boy, dying on the field of battle, said to his general: "Tell mother I never flinched a bit, but did the best I could all the time." Soon the battle of life with us will be ended. Let us never flinch a bit, but, by grace, so live and labor in our homes, the church and the world, that we may each hear our Saviour's welcome:

"*Well done, good and faithful servant.*"

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Be a Life-Long Christian.

——: XXXI :——

Precept : Col. ii. 6, 7.	**Praise : Rom. viii. 38, 39.**
Promise : Rev. iii. 21.	**Prayer : John xvii. 24.**

HEAR the Lord graciously speaking to you: "I will make an *everlasting* covenant with you." Think not that you are making a six months' experiment, or starting out on a three months' trial; but make a "perpetual covenant" with the Lord.

Becoming a Christian is not merely taking out a life insurance policy, with *dividends* payable during life, and *principal* at death; but it is entering into sacred covenant relationship, for time and eternity, with Christ our Saviour.

1. Jesus addresses you as His disciple or scholar: "Learn of Me." (Matt. xi. 29.) Never play truant, but ever learn of Him Who is "meek and lowly" till you graduate from earth and enter heaven.

2. Jesus calls us not servants, but "*friends.*" (John xv. 15.) As you are ever true to your constant friends; so, being *consistent with yourself*, you will be true to Jesus, your ever faithful Friend, no matter what others do. (Josh. xxiv. 15.)

3. You, as a believer, have become the *child of God.* (John i. 12.) Being then a member of the royal family of heaven, and heir to a "crown," a "throne," and a kingdom, yea an "*heir* of *God*, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ," you will surely *forever* honor your Father and King, and "hold fast, that no man take thy crown." (Rev. iii. 11.)

4. The most sacred relationship existing between Christ and Christians is that of Bridegroom and bride. If you think of yourself as the spiritual bride of Christ, and remember that God calls backsliding, spiritual *adultery*, you will *abhor* and turn from the very thought of such a sin; and, though conscious of many a defect, will ever cleave to Christ.

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In some countries, which I need not name, they disregard the sacredness of the marriage-vow, and marry as a sort of experiment; hence hundreds, yea thousands of divorces for trivial causes disgrace their country. In Canada it is different. Here we consider the marriage-vow binding for life; hence people rarely even think of becoming divorced. I am acquainted with but two persons who have been divorced by the law of our great Dominion.

Consider your covenant with Christ, not as an experiment, but as registered in heaven, and hence sacred for life; and sooner die than willingly prove untrue to Christ, your divine Bridegroom.

I was converted on the morning of June 25th, 1868, at the closing service of a camp meeting. About an hour later the opportunity was given to unite with the Church. The thought came to me, "Now you had better wait awhile to see how you get along; if you stand true for six months then join the Church; but if you go back, as some have done, it would be better for you, and less disgrace to the cause of Christ, if you had not become a Church member." As Rev. Mr. Bradshaw was speaking I saw Satan's sophistry; and, turning my back on Satan, I said to Jesus: "Lord, this is not a six months' experiment; by Thy grace, I have started for life." I united with the Church that morning, and the following Sabbath I attended my first class meeting. Brother Peter Carley said to me: "Well, brother Hugh, I am so glad you have started. Have you a word to say this morning?" My words, I assure you, were few and falteringly spoken. He replied with cheering words, and ended by saying: "Here's my heart, and here's my hand, to meet you in that heavenly land, where parting is no more." As I heard those words, I confirmed my determination to go through on the line I had started, and to serve the Lord for *time* and *eternity*.

I believe that resolution, by God's grace, has been

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the secret of me, though weak, never having given up my hope. When the world enticed, and I was tempted to give up, I remembered my vow, and sought more grace. When my faith and hope seemed wavering because of frequent failures, and love grew cold, and the tempter taunted me, "You are back now, and what is the use of *you* calling yourself a Christian?" I said, "Lord, I started for life. I now give myself afresh to Thee; restore and keep me to the end." At length Satan ceased to tempt me to give up, as every such suggestion drove me closer to Jesus, and so strengthened my resolution.

Resolution is more than half the battle. Pledge yourself to Christ for life, and in spite of temptations, hindrances, failures and discouragements, resolve, as I did, "*by grace* I am going through," so shall you ever be kept by Christ. (2 Tim. i. 12.)

Years after, Brother Carley was nearing the end of his journey, and the last day had come. As the sun was shining brightly, and he lay, propped up with pillows, in the front room, and gazed out upon the harvest field and the orchard, he smilingly said to his wife and family, "What a beautiful day on which to go to heaven!" That day he crossed over to meet the loved ones gone before.

I often think of him; and, as I do so, I seem to hear him speak again, "Here's my heart, and here's my hand, to meet you in *this* heavenly land, where parting is no more." By the grace of God I shall meet him there. To every one who has been a Christian for years, to all those who have recently been converted, and to you that are now resolved to accept Christ as your Saviour and live as a Christian, I would say, Here's my heart, full of love and hope for you; and here's my hand, ready to sympathize and help you on the way: "Here's my heart, and here's my hand, to meet you in *yon* heavenly land, where parting is no more." "If we love the Lord and obey His Word we *shall* all meet there."

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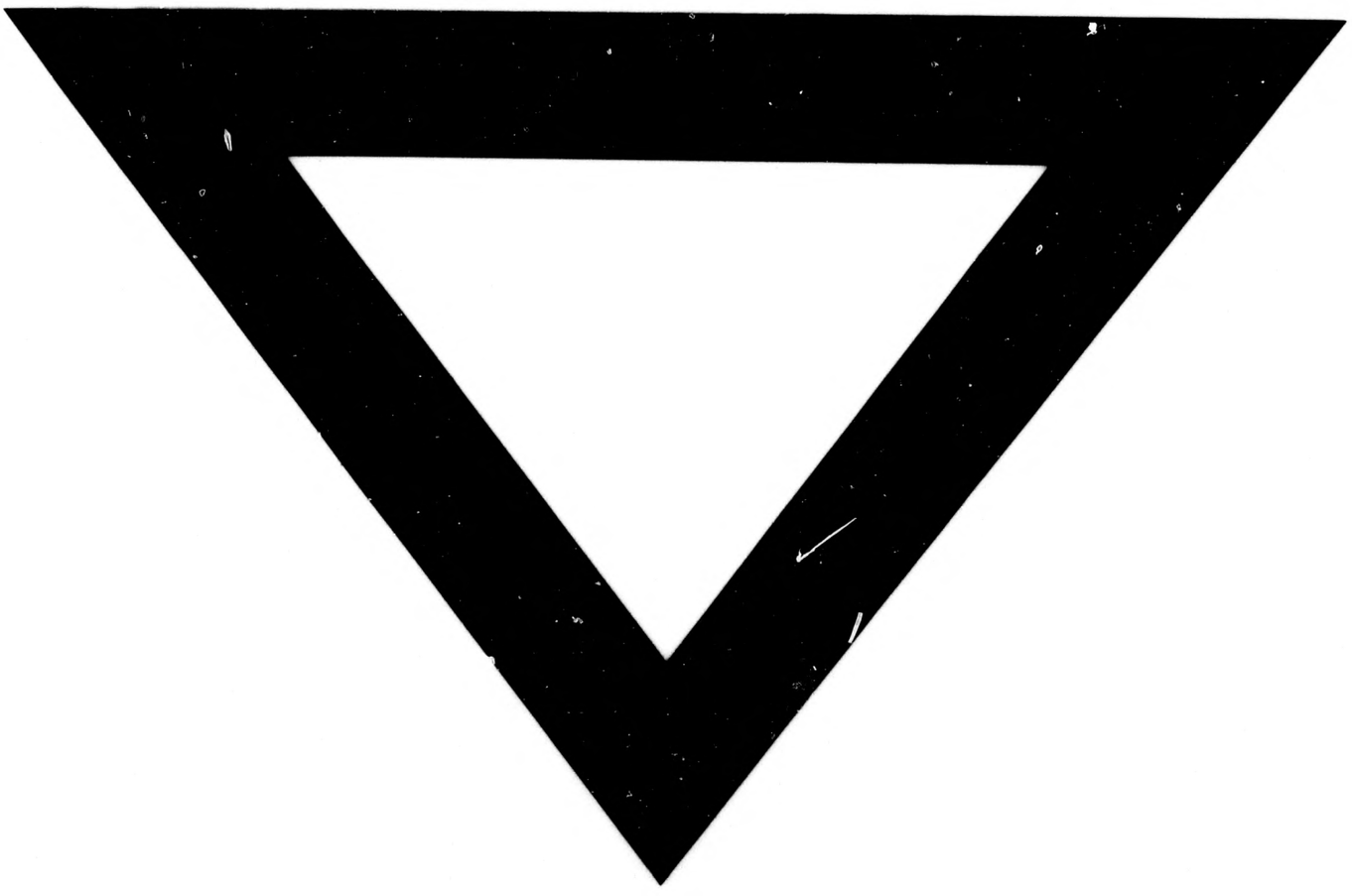

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