

Godliness

Catherine Booth

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GODLINESS.

BEING

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

BY

MRS. CATHERINE BOOTH.

INTRODUCTION BY DANIEL STEELE, D.D.

PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

In giving this volume to our American readers, we are assured that we are doing a special favor to all the lovers of "Christianity in earnest." "Aggressive Christianity," from the same talented author, has met with unusual favor, and has been the means of much good. We are confident that the present volume is in all respects equal to the former, and that no one can read it without great spiritual profit.

The Introduction, by Dr. Daniel Steele, is a forcible presentation of the main doctrines of the book, and is creditable to the head and heart of the writer, and a commendation which all intelligent readers will highly esteem.

Our object in publishing these sermons, is, that their perusal may kindle a flame of revival in the hearts of believers, which may result in many turning unto the Lord.

MCDONALD & GILL

BOSTON, MASS.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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

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

compensated for any unfriendly criticism with which it may meet.

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

CATHERINE BOOTH.

London, Nov. 10, 1881.

INTRODUCTION.

The sermons of Mrs. Booth already re-published under the title of "Aggressive Christianity," came to American Christians as a tonic to their weakness, and a stimulant to their inertness.

The sermons in the present volume are a much-needed prophylactic, a safeguard against several practical errors in dealing with souls; errors which lead them into Egyptian darkness, instead of the marvelous light.

The sermon on Repentance is a most faithful showing up of spurious repentance, the vain substitute for a downright abandonment of every form of sin, and right-about facing towards the Lord. In directness and point, it is a model for earnest revival preaching,--rather, for all preaching to unsaved souls, outside the church, or within it. All of these will be found in some subterfuge, which must be ruthlessly torn down, before it will be abandoned for the cleft Rock.

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

After her timely correction of erroneous teachings on faith, Mrs. Booth proceeds, pruning-knife in hand, to cut away from the tree of modern Christianity the poisonous fungus of a "spurious charity." Her four sermons on Charity are four beacons set on the rocks of counterfeit Christian love. She sets forth several infallible tests by which genuine love may be distinguished from the devil's base imitation. Like the Epistles of St. John, these sermons are full of touchstones for testing love, that golden principle of the Christian life. It would be very profitable for all professors of that perfect love which casteth out all tormenting fear, to apply unflinchingly these touch-stones to themselves. They may find the word "perfection" taking on a meaning deeper, broader and higher than they had ever before conceived. Why should not our conception of Christian perfection steadily grow with the increase of our knowledge of God and of His holy law?

The sermon on The Conditions of Effectual Prayer, we commend to all Christians and to all seekers of Christ, who are mourning because their prayers do not prevail with God. In the clear light of this sermon they will find that the difficulty lies, either in the lack of fellowship with Jesus Christ, or of obedience to His commands, or in the absence from their hearts of the interceding Spirit, or in defective faith. In the discussion of these hindrances to prayer, the preacher lays open the heart, and with a skilful spiritual surgery, searches it to the very bottom. The incisiveness of her style, her courage and plain dealing with her hearers, tearing off the masks of sin and selfishness, the various guises in which these masquerade in many Christian hearts and obstruct their access to a throne of grace, remind us of Dr. Finney's unsparing exposure and condemnation of these foes to Christian holiness, and of John Wesley's cutting up by the roots "Sin in Believers."

In this sermon Mrs. Booth turns her attention to another phase of faith and of practical error in the guidance of souls to Christ. Her views on this vexed question are not extreme but philosophical and scriptural. She teaches that God has made the bestowment of salvation simultaneous with the exercise of faith, and that "telling a person to believe he is saved, before he is saved, is telling him to believe a lie." But she insists that the act of faith is put forth with the special aid of the Holy Spirit giving an assurance that the blessing sought will be granted. This assurance, or earnest, given by the Spirit, becomes the basis on which the final act of faith rests, namely, "I believe that I receive." This corresponds with William Taylor's Divine "ascertainment of the fact of the sinner's surrender to God, and his acceptance of Christ," before justification. [Footnote: Election of Grace, pp. 38-42.] Both teachers agree with Wesley's analysis of faith which teaches that the fourth and last step, "He doth it," can be taken only by the special enabling power of the Holy Spirit, [Footnote: Sermons. Patience, Section 13; Scripture Way of Salvation, Section 17; and Whedon on Mark xi. 24.] All three locate the Divine efficiency before the declaration, "I believe that I receive," or "have received" (R. V.), making that declaration rest upon the perception of a Divine change within the consciousness. They all insist that saving faith is not a mere humanly moral exercise, but that power to believe with the heart descends from God, and that it must be waited for in prayer, and that it becomes in the believer a series of supernatural and spiritual acts, a habit of soul, at once the seed and fruit of the Divine life-stirring, uniting in itself the characters of penitent humility, self-renunciation, simple trust, and

absolute obedience grounded in love. These teachers magnify the Divine element in faith. We look in vain in their writings for any such direction to a penitent as this, "Believe that you are saved, because, God says so in His Word," but rather believe that you are saved when you hear His Spirit crying, Abba, Father, in your heart.

Many modern teachers fall into the error of treating saving faith as an unaided intellectual act to be performed, at will, at any time. It is rather a spiritual act possible only when prompted by the Holy Spirit, who incites to faith only when He sees true repentance and a hearty surrender to God. Then the Spirit reveals Christ and assists to grasp Him. In the refutation of the high predestinarian doctrine that faith is an irresistible grace sovereignly bestowed upon the elect, there is great danger of falling into the opposite error, called Pelagianism, which makes saving faith an exercise which the natural man is competent to put forth without the help of the Holy Spirit. The real guilt of unbelief lies in that voluntary indifference toward Christ, and impenitence of heart, in which the Holy Spirit cannot inspire saving faith.

In our introduction to "Aggressive Christianity," we advertised, in behalf of the American churches, a universal want--Enthusiasm. In her brief Exeter-Hall address, Mrs. Booth discloses the source of the supply. Holiness is the well-spring of enthusiasm. Hence it is not a spring freshet, but an overflowing river of power in all its possessors, and, notably in the Salvation Army, bearing the unchurched masses of England on its bosom. A holy enthusiasm is contagious and conquering. We cannot touch the people with the icicle of logic; but they will not fail to bow to the scepter of glowing and joyful love. Few men can reason; all can feel. Enthusiasm and full salvation, like the Siamese twins, cannot be separated and live. The error of the modern pulpit is that of the blacksmith hammering cold steel--a faint impression and huge labor. The baptism of fire softening our assemblies would lighten the preacher's toil and multiply its productiveness.

The four addresses on Holiness are hortatory rather than argumentative or exegetical. They are spiritual cyclones. It is difficult to see how any Christian could withstand these impassioned appeals to make what Joseph Cook calls "an affectionate, total, irreversible, eternal, self-surrender to Jesus Christ, as both Saviour and Lord," in order to attain that "perfect similarity of feeling with God," wherein evangelical perfection consists.

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

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

DANIEL STEELE.

Reading, Mass., Nov. 23, 1883.

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CHAPTER I.

REPENTANCE,

And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.--MATT. iii. 2.

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.--MATT. iv. 17.

"Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Qentiles, that they should repent and torn to God, and do works meet for repentance."--ACTS xxvi. 19,20.

In the mouths of three witnesses--John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and the Apostle Paul--this word shall be established, namely, that repentance is an indispensable condition of entering the kingdom of God.

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

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

him. Then, oh! how gladly will my fatherly affection gush out! How I should run to meet him, and put my arms around his neck! but there is a 'cannot' in the case." Just so. It is not that He does not love you, sinner; it is not that the great, benevolent heart of God has not, as it were, wept tears of blood over you; it is not that He would not put His loving arms around you this moment, if you would only come to His feet, and confess you were wrong, and seek His pardon; but, otherwise, He may not--He cannot. The laws of His universe are against Him doing so. The good, it may be, of millions of immortal beings, is involved. He dare not, and He cannot, until there is a change of mind in you. You must repent. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

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

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

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

Neither is repentance mere sorrow for sin. I have seen people weep bitterly, and writhe and struggle, but yet hug on to their idols, and in vain you try to shake them from them. Oh! if Jesus Christ would have saved them with those idols, they would have no objection at all. If they could have got through the strait gate with this one particular idol, they would have gone through long since; but to part with that--that is another thing. Such people will weep like your stubborn child, when you want him to do something which he does not want to do. He will cry, and when you apply the rod he will cry harder, but he will not yield. When he yields, he becomes a penitent; but, until he does, he is merely a convicted sinner. When God applies the rod of His Spirit, the rod of His providence, the rod of His Word, sinners will cry, and wince, and whine, and make you believe they are praying, and want to be saved, but all the while they are holding their necks as stiff as iron. They will not submit. The moment they submit, they become true penitents, and get saved. There is no mistake more common than for people to suppose they are penitents when they are not. There are some of you in this condition,

I know. I am afraid you are quite mistaken--you are not penitents. God is true though every man should be a liar; and, if you had sought, as you say you have, and perhaps, think you have; if you had been sincere and honest with God, you would have been saved years ago. Oh! may God, the Holy Spirit, help you to come out and be HONEST. That is what God wants--that you be honest. "Oh," says He, "why cover ye my altar with tears, and bring your vain oblations? Just be honest, and I will be honest with you and bless you; but while you come before Me and weep and profess, and bring the halt, and the maimed, and the blind, a curse be upon you." He looks at you afar off. Be honest. Repentance is not mere sorrow for sin. You may be ever so sorry, and all the way down to death be hugging on to some forbidden possession, as was the young ruler. _That_ is not repentance.

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

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

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

God; they hid it from their pastor, perhaps, and from the deacons, and from the people who talked with them.

Now, I say, Abraham might have been willing to have given up every other thing that he possessed; but, if he had not been willing to give up Isaac, all else would have been useless. It is your Isaac God wants. You have got an Isaac, just as the young ruler had his possessions. You have got something that you are holding on to, that the Holy Spirit says you must let go, and you say, "I can't." Very well; then you must stop outside the kingdom. I beseech you, do not deceive yourselves by supposing that you repent, for you do not; but, oh! my dear friends, let me beseech you to repent. The apostle says, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;" and this is, I believe, the greatest work of the ministry. To do what? To persuade men to submit. We are constantly talking to thousands of people who know just what God wants of them. We cannot bring many of them any new light or new Gospel. They know all about it. They used to tell me that so often, that I longed for a congregation of heathen, which I have found since then. Consequently, when they hear the Gospel, like the publicans and sinners of old, they go into the kingdom, while such as some of you who are the natural children of the kingdom, are shut out, because when they hear they receive, and submit, and obey, while you stand outside and hold on to your idols, and reason, and quibble, and reject! My dear friends, let me persuade you to trample under foot that idol, to tear down that refuge of lies, and to come to God honestly, and say, "Lord, here I am, to be a servant, to be nothing, to do anything, to suffer anything. I know I shall be happier with Thy smile and Thy blessing than all these evil things now make me without Thee." When you come to a full surrender, my friends, you will get what you have been seeking, some of you, for years.

But then another difficulty comes in, and people say, "I have not the power to repent." Oh! yes, you have. That is a grand mistake. You have the power, or God would not command it. You can repent. You can this moment lift up your eyes to Heaven, and say, with the prodigal, "Father, I have sinned, and I renounce my sin." You may not be able to weep--God nowhere requires or commands that; but you are able, this very moment, to renounce sin, in purpose, in resolution, in intention. Mind, don't confound the renouncing of the sin, with the power of saving yourself from it. If you renounce it, Jesus will come and save you from it. Like the man with the withered hand--Jesus intended to heal that man. Where was the power to come from to heal him? From Jesus, of course. The benevolence, the love, that prompted that healing, all came from Jesus; but Jesus wanted a condition. What was it? The response of the man's will; and so He said, "Stretch forth thy hand." If he had been like some of you, he would have said, "What an unreasonable command! You know I cannot do it--I cannot." Some of you say that; but I say you can, and you will have to do it, or you will be lost. What did Jesus want? He wanted that, "I will, Lord," inside the man--the response of his will. He wanted him to say, "Yes, Lord;" and, the moment he said that, Jesus supplied strength, and he stretched it forth, and you know what happened.

Don't look forward, and say, "I shall not have strength;" that is not your matter--that is His. He will hold you up;--He is able, when you once commit yourself to Him. Now then, say, "_I will._" Never mind what you suffer--it shall be done. He will pour in the oil and balm. His glorious, blessed presence will do more for you in one hour, than all

your struggling, praying, and wrestling have done all these weary years. He will lift you up out of the pit. You are in the mire now, and the more you struggle the more you sink; but He will lift you out of it, and put your feet on the rock, and then you will stand firm. Stretch out your withered hand, whatever it may be;--say, "I will, Lord." You have the power, and mind, you have the obligation, which is universal and immediate. God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent," and to believe the Gospel. What a tyrant He must be if He commands that, and yet He knows you have not the power!

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

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

Will you come to that point now? Don't begin making an excuse. Now!--all men! everywhere! --NOW! Oh! my friend, if you had done that ten years ago! You have been accumulating sin, condemnation, and wrath ever since. God commanded you these ten years to repent, and believe the Gospel, and here you are yet. How many sermons have you heard?--invitations rejected? How much blessed persuasion and reasoning of the Holy Spirit have you resisted?--how much of the grace of God have you received in vain? I tremble to think what an accumulated load of abused privilege, lost opportunity, and wasted influence, such people will have to give an account of. Talk about hell!--the weight of this will be hell enough. You don't seem to think anything of the way you treat God. Oh! people are very much awake to any evil they do to their fellow-men. They can much more easily see the sin of ruining or injuring their neighbors than injuring the great God; but He says, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me." Do you not see; the awful weight of condemnation that comes upon you for putting off, rejecting, resisting, vasculating, halting, while He says, Now--now? He has had a right to every breath you have drawn, to all your influence, every hour, of every day of all your years. Is it not time you ended that controversy? He may do with you as He did with such people once before--swear in His wrath that you shall not enter into His rest. Are you not provoking Him as they provoked Him? Oh! my friend, be persuaded now to repent. Let your sin go away, and come to the feet of Jesus. For your own sake be persuaded. For the peace, the joy, the power, the glory, the gladness of living a life of consecration to God, and service to your fellow-men, yield; but most of all, for the love He bears you, submit.

A great, rough man (stricken down), said to my husband, a few weeks ago, when he looked up to the place where other people were being saved, "Mr. Booth, I would not go there for a hundred pounds!" My husband whispered, "Will you go there for love?" and, after a minute's hesitation, the man, brushing the great tears away, rose up, and followed him.

Will you go there for love--the love of Jesus!--the great love wherewith He loved you and gave Himself for you? Will you, for the great yearning with which your Father has been following you all

these years--for His love's sake, will you come? Go down at His feet and submit. The Lord help you! Amen.

CHAPTER II.

SAVING FAITH.

And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.--ACTS xvi. 30,31.

This is one of the most abused texts in the Bible, and one which, perhaps, has been made to do quite as much work for the devil as for God. Let every saint present, ask in faith for the light of the Holy Ghost, while we try rightly to apply it. Let us enquire:--

1. Who are to believe? 2. When are they to believe? 3. How are they to believe?

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

Christians have not done their duty, and have not discharged their responsibility to these souls, when they have told them that Jesus died for them, and that they are to believe in Him! They have a much harder work to do, and that is, "to open their eyes" to a sense of their danger, and make them, by the power of the Spirit, realize the dreadful truth that they are sinners, that they are sick, and then they will run to the Physician.

The eyes of the soul must be opened to such a realization of sin, and such an apprehension of the consequences of sin, as shall lead to an earnest desire to be saved from sin. God's great means of doing this is the law, as the schoolmaster, to drive sinners to receive Christ as their salvation.

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

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

Look at one or two other cases--the three thousand in a day. Surely this is a scriptural illustration. Surely no one will call that anti-Gospel or legal. What was the first work Peter did? He drove the

knife of God's convincing truth into their hearts, and made them _cry out_. He awoke them to the truth of their almost lost and damned condition, till they said, "What must we do to be saved?" They were so concerned, they were so pricked in their hearts, their eyes were so opened to the terrible consequences of their sin, that they cried aloud before the vast multitude, "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?" He convinced them of sin, and thus followed the order of God.

Again, the eunuch is often quoted as an illustration of faith; but what state of mind was he in? Was he a careless, unconvicted sinner? There he was--an Ethiopian, a heathen; but where had he been? To Jerusalem, to worship the true and living God, in the best way he knew, and as far as he understood; and then, what was he doing when Philip found him? He was not content with the mere worship of the temple, whistling a worldly tune on his way back. He was searching the Scriptures. He was honestly seeking after God, and the Holy Ghost always knows where such souls are; and He said to Philip, "Go, join thyself to that chariot: there is a man seeking after Me; there is a man whose heart is honestly set on finding Me. Go and preach Christ, and tell him to believe." That man would have sacrificed, or done, or lost anything, for salvation, and, as soon as Philip expounded the way of faith, he received it, of course, as all such souls will.

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

Cornelius, is another instance, but what was the state of his mind and heart? We know that he feared God and wrought righteousness, as far as he was able. He gave alms to the people, and prayed day and night. That is more than some of you ever did, who live in the Gospel times. You never prayed all night about your souls. No wonder if you

should lose them--not half a night, some of you. But Cornelius did--he was seeking God. He honestly wanted to know Him. He was willing, at all costs, to do His will: consequently, the Lord sent him the glorious message of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

I might go on multiplying instances, but I must stop. We have said enough to show who are to believe. Truly penitent sinners, and they only.

This text is to a repenting, enlightened, convicted sinner. Now, some of you are enlightened, convinced, and so wretched that you cannot sleep. You do repent. You are the very people, then, to whom this text comes--Believe. You are just in the condition of the gaoler.

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

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

You see sin. An entirely unawakened soul does not see sin; that is, in its true character, in its heinousness, in its consequences. He admits that all people are sinners. Oh! yes; but he

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

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

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

Take another illustration. I don't mean that the soul has power to save itself from its internal maladies. That you will get when Jesus Christ saves you. But, I mean this: here is a soul convinced of sin. Here is a man who is daily addicted to drink. He is a drunkard. He becomes convinced of sin. Now, then, the Spirit of God says, "Will you give up the cup?" Then commences the struggle. Now, the question is, are you to teach that man that he is to go on drinking, and

expect God to save him? Are you to keep putting before him faith, and telling him, "Oh! never mind your cup, but believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved"--or, are you to tell him, "you must put away your sin, cut off that right hand, pluck out that right eye, renounce that drink forever in your heart, in your purpose, in your will, and until you do, you cannot exercise faith on the Lord Jesus?"

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

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

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

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

Suppose you had a disobedient and rebellious son, and he had been living irrespective of your law and will, wasting your money and trampling under foot your commandments. Suppose he comes back, he sees the error of his course. His eyes are opened, perhaps, by affliction, perhaps by want, or ten thousand other things. At any

rate he sees it, and he comes home and says, "Oh! father, what a fool I have been; how wicked I have been. I see it all now--I did not see it when I was doing it. I see my evil course, my sins that made you mourn, and turned your hair grey. Oh! how I hate it all. I repent in dust and ashes. Father! I forsake it all! I come home to you!" What would you say? Would you say, "My son, you have not repented enough. Go! begone! Wait till you feel it more!" No, your paternal heart would go out in love and forgiveness, and you would put the kiss of your reconciling love upon his cheek. "Even so there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth!" as there would be joy in that family circle over the return of that wandering child.

But suppose that lad were to come and say, "Father, I do thus repent; I do thus forsake my sins; but there are some companions who will follow me so closely that I am afraid I shall again fall under their power, and there are some habits so terrible that I am afraid they will again conquer. Let me, then, be always by your side. You must strengthen me." What would you say? Would you not say, "Then, come in, my son; sit by me, live with me, and I will shield you--I will deliver you? Thou shalt never cross this threshold without me. I will live with you; I will hold you up." And, as far as a human being could shield another, you would shield your son; he would never lack your sympathy or your strength day or night. Your Heavenly Father lacks neither sympathy or strength. His eye never sleeps. His arm never tires, and you have only to go and lay your helpless weakness on His Almighty strength by this one desperate leap of faith, and He will hold you up, even though there were a legion of devils around you.

Lastly, you renounce your sins, that is, in will, purpose, and determination. You say, "I never wish to grieve Him again." You sing it, and you feel it. "I never want to grieve Him any more;" and if you could only live without grieving Him, you would not much mind, even if it were in hell itself. Is not that penitence? You know it is. You renounce sin. You do not say, "Lord Jesus, save me with this right hand, with this right eye; Lord Jesus, save me with these forbidden things hanging about my skirts." No; you say, "Lord Jesus, save me out of them. Make me clean." That is penitence. You see it. You hate it. You renounce it. Now then, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, Holy Spirit, reveal the simple way of faith.

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

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

Instead of this, the faith of many people is like that of a person afflicted with some grievous malady. A friend tells him of a wonderful physician who has cured hundreds of such cases, and gives him abundant evidence that this doctor is able and willing to cure

him, if he will only commit himself to his treatment. The sick man may thoroughly believe in the testimony of his friend about this physician, and yet, for some secret reason, he may refuse to put himself into his hands. Now, there are numbers like that with Jesus Christ. They believe He could cure the malady of sin on certain conditions. They believe He is no respecter of persons. They believe He has done it for hundreds as bad as they, and yet there is some reason why they do not _trust Him_. They hold back.

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

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

CHAPTER III.

CHARITY.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.--1 COR. xiii. 13.

It must be a precious thing to be greater than _faith_, and

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

The day is coming when He will behold all the dire progeny of this first rebellion fall also. Haste, happy day!

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

First--It is Divine. It must be shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

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

Secondly, I want you to note that this love is a Divine principle, in contradistinction to the mere love of instinct. All men have love as an instinct; mere natural love towards those whom they like, or who do well for them. "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even publicans the same?" Wicked men love one another from mere natural affinity, as the tiger loves its cubs. There is great confusion amongst

professors of religion on this subject. They feel sentiments of pity and generosity towards their fellow-men, and they may even give their goods to feed the poor, and yet not have a spark of Divine Charity in their hearts. Saul, after God departed from him, was not wholly destitute of generous feeling respecting his family and kingdom. Dives in hell had some pity for his brethren! But neither of them had a spark of this Divine Charity. Mind you are not deceived; millions are!

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

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

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

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

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

A false Charity begins in self and ends on earth. Here is a mark for you to distinguish between it and God's Charity. The devil's Charity always contemplates the earthy part of man in a superior degree to the spiritual part; and here it exactly crosses and contradicts the Divine Charity, which always contemplates man in the entirety of his being, and always gives the first importance to the soul.

We have plenty of spurious Charity in these days. The other day when I took up a so-called "religious print," and saw some fulsome things

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

Oh, people say, when speaking of Godless, and even wicked men, "You must be _charitable,_ you must not judge." Satan does not care how much of this one-sided Charity there is; the more the better for his purpose; it will make people all the more comfortable in their sins, and get them all the more easily down to hell.

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

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

Divine Charity is always revolving round that great problem of infinite love. "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Oh, I can never get it out of my ears or away from my heart! Oh, how I see the emptiness and vanity of everything compared with the salvation of the soul! What does it matter, if a man dies in the work-house--if he dies on a door-step, covered with wounds, like Lazarus--what does it matter, if his soul is saved? It is your creed as much as mine, that the soul is immortal, and that the death of the body is only its introduction, if it be saved, to a glorious future of everlasting felicity, progress, and holiness. Does the child remember how he used to cry over his lessons, when he becomes a man? Does he remember all the little difficulties of his school days, when he is inheriting the fruits of them? Just so; ten thousand times less important will be all our sufferings, trials, and griefs here, if we save our souls, and the

souls of others.

This Divine Charity makes everything else subservient to the salvation of souls; it uses everything else to save and bless the inner and spiritual man. Do you remember, on one occasion, when the Master had fed the multitudes, and when they came to Him again to be fed, He said, "Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." You would have said, "Quite right; the people want to be fed; they are hungry." But do you hear the Divine lament that comes out in these words, that they were so spiritually obtuse, that they valued the earthly bread more than the heavenly! Give them as much temporal bread as you like, but mind you give them the spiritual bread first, for this is characteristic of true Charity.

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

CHAPTER IV.

CHARITY AND REBUKE.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.--1 COR. xiii. 13.

The second main point of difference between a true and a false Charity, we want to remark, is, _Divine Charity is not only consistent with, but it very often necessitates, reproof and rebuke by its possessor_. It renders it incumbent on those who possess it to reprove and rebuke whatever is evil--whatever does not tend to the highest interests of its object.

This Charity conforms in this, as in everything else, to its Divine model--"As many as I love I rebuke and chasten"--when necessary for the good of its object, for He doth not _willingly_ afflict or grieve the children of men, any more than a father willingly chastises a disobedient child; but, if he be a wise father, he will do it because he loves it. Just so the possessor of this Divine Charity can afford to rebuke and reprove sin wherever he finds it. He will not suffer sin upon his neighbor, but will in any wise reprove him, and strive to win him to the right. We will just turn to a beautiful illustration (there are many, if we had time to go into

them) of the working of this Divine Charity in the heart and life of the very apostle who wrote this 13th of Corinthians. We cannot get wrong, because it is Paul himself. (Gal. ii. 11-15.)

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

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

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

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

There is a greater example still in our Lord Himself, in the Master whose whole soul was love, whose life was one sacrifice for the good of His creatures; and yet how faithfully He reproved His own when they erred from the truth, and how fearlessly He exposed and denounced the shallowness and hypocrisy of those who professed to love God, and yet contradicted this profession in their lives. How fearlessly He reproved sin everywhere. He said to his disciples on one occasion, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." As if He had said, you ought to have learned this before now.

On another occasion, He said, "Are ye also yet without understanding?" And again, "Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things that be of God;" that was Divine Charity, that was faithful love, that dared to rebuke, rather than let the object of it do wrong, and sin against God. And again, when He goes to the hypocrites and Pharisees, He says, "Ye say ye are the children of Abraham"--(it was as difficult for Jesus Christ to confute the

professors of His day, as it is for His ambassadors to confute the professors of this day, who are living inconsistently with their professions)--He said, "Ye say that ye are the children of Abraham; if ye were the children of Abraham, ye would listen to me; or, if ye were the children of God, ye would believe in me, for I came out from God. No! ye are the children of your father, the devil, and his works ye do." And yet His Divine heart was full, to breaking, of love, and broke itself on the cross for them, and prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Oh, that your Charity and mine might not lack this lineament of the Divine likeness! Would to God there were more of this faithful, loving Charity, that dares to reprove sin, and to rebuke its brother, instead of the false Charity that fawns on a man to his face, and goes behind him and stabs him in the back.

Do you suppose that the great mass of the professors of this generation think one another to be right? Take almost any given church. Do you suppose that the great mass of the members of that church suppose in their hearts that their fellow members, brothers and sisters in church communion, are living consistently--I don't mean in things only, but in heart--that they are living really godly lives? Alas! witness what they say behind each other's backs. They believe no such thing; they know perfectly well it is not so, and they take care to tell other people so; and yet there is not one in a thousand of them ever went privately to his brother, and took lovingly hold of his hand, and reprov'd him for his sinful and backsliding conduct.

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

If everybody who sees sin upon his neighbor would do that--if he would take the Lord's counsel and go and see his brother alone, and tell him his fault--how many would be saved from backsliding, and how many a disgraceful split and controversy in churches might be saved!

But where are the people who will do it? I don't mean there are not any--God forbid--I know there are; but I am speaking comparatively. Where is the man who will inflict pain upon himself?--for that is the point. If it were a pleasant duty, he would do it easily enough; but it is a painful duty, he does not like to screw himself up to it. Where is the man that will do it, rather than suffer his brother to

go to sleep in his sin, and rather than the precious cause of Christ shall be disgraced and injured? Where are the saints who will go in meekness and in love to try to reclaim the one who has erred? I hope you know a great many. I am sorry to say I know only a few. If you know many, I am very glad, and the more you know the better I am pleased. If you are one of these, that is one, at all events. If every Christian would have this sort of Charity, what a change would soon come about. That is what the church wants--people who can afford to rebuke and reprove, because they don't care what men think of THEM --who are set only on pleasing their Lord and Master, and doing His will.

Have you got this Charity that seeketh not her own? What a contrast between Saul and Paul. Did you ever think about it? What does he say? "I went about to establish my own righteousness." That was his inspiring motive; that was the spring of his action, before he got true Charity; not that he cared for the kingdom of God, but he cared for his own honor, glory, and exaltation, and wanted to stand well with his nation. Then contrast him when he becomes Paul. What does he say? "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." _There_ is Charity, if you like. These were the very people with whom he had been so anxious to stand well, and whose good word he wanted; but, when the Holy Ghost had come, and Paul had got the Divine Charity, and got his eyes opened to see their devilish and lost condition, he so weeps over them that he says, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

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

False Charity is the opposite of this. Its possessor is most concerned about what people think of HIM; not how they treat his professed Lord. The possessor of false Charity cannot afford to reprove anybody. Oh, dear, no! he would faint at the very idea; and he calls people hard and legal and censorious who dare to do it--poor, sneaking coward! but he will not be afraid to stab a man behind his back. The speech of this false Charity betrayeth it, it flattereth with its lips; honey is on its tongue, but the poison of asps is underneath; beware of it! Even when it professes to commend a brother, or neighbor, it rolls up its sanctimonious eyes, and always puts a "but" in--one of the devil's "buts." "Oh, he is a good man, but--." "Yes, I have a great esteem for him, only there is such and such a thing." Oh, it is very Divine. The devil can put on a garb of light when it answers his purpose. Oh, the fair reputations that this

slime of the serpent has trailed over! Oh, the influence for good that this venom of the devil has poisoned and ruined, for it has been, truly said, "There is no virtue so white that back-wounding calumny will not strike"--even in God's perfect man, those who are watching and seeking to betray can find something on which to ground their accusations.

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

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

This is the devil's Charity; and the more the better for his purpose. But the Charity and the wisdom which is from above, is first pure, and then peaceable! I would rather be in everlasting warfare in company with that which is fair, and true, and good, than I would walk in harmony with that which is hollow, and rotten, and vile, and destined for the bottomless pit. The Lord help you to make the same choice!

CHARITY AND CONFLICT.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.--1 COR. xiii. 13.

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

It was so with our Lord. He was the very personification of it. He was love itself, and grace and truth poured from His lips incessantly. His blessed feet went about doing good, and His hands ministering to the necessities and happiness of His creatures, yet His whole course through this degenerate world was one of conflict, opposition, and persecution. His proper mission was to bring peace on earth; but the result of it was a sword! Why? That was not His fault. He would, doubtless, have enjoyed being at peace with all men, as His ambassador exhorts us--"as much as lieth in us to be." More, He was the Prince of Peace! Then, how was it that wherever He went, there was sword, opposition, and conflict to the death? Because men resisted and rejected His Divine and Heavenly ministrations. They would not hear His rebukes and His teaching, because they condemned them. They would not listen to His voice, because they were of their father the devil, and the works of their father they would do; and, therefore, they went about to persecute Him, and to kill Him.

This was the reason--not that He wanted it to be so, but it was the consequence of their resistance to the beautiful, heavenly, and Divine truths which He taught; and it is just so now, with the same truth, and the living embodiments of such truth. JESUS CHRIST COME IN THE FLESH AGAIN IN HIS PEOPLE, living out before the world His principles, acting upon His precepts, living for the same objects for which He lived, will produce, exactly and everywhere, the same result. It must be so while men are divided into two classes--the righteous and the wicked--those who are born of the flesh, and those who are born of the Spirit. One must either give in, or there must be perpetual conflict and warfare. It was so with the Saviour, and so, perhaps, with some of us.

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

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

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

I believe it will be found, in the great day of account, that there have been more blessed enterprises crushed, more leadings of the Holy Ghost disobeyed, more urgings of the Spirit quenched, through the influence of what are called Christian friends, than all other influences put together. "Suffer me first to go and bury my father," is an everlasting standing excuse for those whom, the Lord calls on in advance paths of Christian service! Oh, my friends, I am sure of it. Look out, you fathers and mothers, you brothers and sisters, and aunts!

Do not misunderstand me. Carefully weigh, probe, and examine, before God, your impressions and desires. Go into your closet, spread them there before the Lord. Lay them out, examine your own heart. Be sure there is no self-interest, no vain glory, no desire to be great, or to do some out-of-the-way thing. Be as clear as you like; be satisfied, in your own mind, that it is God's call, and then let fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, husbands, or wives complain--but go forward, my brother, and God will justify you. If, twenty years ago, I had stopped for Christian friends to sanction and to open the door, I should have waited till today, and the number of souls God, in His infinite mercy, has given me, I should not have gathered. But I did not wait for anybody's sanction to my Lord and Master's call; but said, "Lord, if I die in attempting it, I will do it." He seldom lets people die in attempting His will. He stands by them, and gives them abundant fruit.

A lady said to me the other day, "You know my father is a Christian, and I am so afraid of going opposite to him." "Yes," I said, "that is quite a right feeling; I respect that feeling in you." But she was a woman of considerably matured age, and I added, "But is your father awake to the interests of God's kingdom as he ought to be?" She replied, "I dare not say he is." "I suppose," I said "he is comparatively old--a sort of dried-up Christian, who has lost the vigor and enterprise of his youthful days, when he wanted to go out and make everybody Christian?" "Yes," she said, "he has gone sadly behind in his zeal for the kingdom of Jesus Christ." "Now," I said, "God holds you responsible, just as He holds any other being. _He has not two codes--one for men and one for women._ There will be no two judgment seats, whatever men do here. God will hold you responsible for obedience to the teaching of His Spirit, and the leading of His providence, as much as your brother. What shall you say? You will be in the position of the man who said, 'Suffer me first to go and bury my father.'" She said, "I am afraid I shall."

Now, I say, let us settle this, you Protestant Christians here. Because Catholicism has abused this principle, that a man is to leave

his father and mother, and houses and lands, if needs be, is that any reason that we Protestants are to give it up? And has it come to this, that a man has only to follow Christ when everybody approves it --cries "Amen"--and when his own interests appear to him to be secured by so doing? Then, if it were so, I would give up religion altogether, and go and enjoy myself. I said to a lady, "When you married yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ, you put yourself in the same position as you would to an earthly husband." What woman in the world would feel that she ought to obey father and mother, rather than her husband? Ridiculous! Much less is she to obey her father, if her father's wishes are exactly contrary to the Divine teaching. She is only to obey IN THE LORD, and yet thousands of fathers and mothers are preventing their children working for God. Oh! what will you say to God when your precious children stand at His bar, without the sheaves they might have gathered, and the souls they might have won? What will you say to Him? And why do you hold them back? Oh, the mean, paltry considerations that you would be ashamed to own before this congregation! Is it for fear of suffering? Not in many instances; but, even if it were, did you bargain with Jesus Christ when you gave yourself and children to Him, that they were not to suffer for Him? Is it because of your pride?--because you want for them this world's applause and favor? Look out! God has wonderful ways of chastising His people in those very things in which they sell His interest. But you say that "everybody will be against you!" Yes, very likely. Let us settle that at once. Count all things dung and dross. Let none of these things move you. You say, "It will be a life of conflict to the end." Very likely, so was His. "I am so weak," you say. He knows all about that. You say, "It will be so cutting to have people saying this, and saying the other." I know it is cutting, but that is the path He calls you to tread, and He will give you grace to bear the cutting. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake;" and, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."

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

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

Further, a false Charity shrinks from opposition. It cannot bear

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

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

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

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

Further, a false Charity _refuses to call things by their proper names!_ Oh! what endless ways it has of putting lying! lying that is done on this day by professing Christians! Oh, the nice, comfortable, self-indulgent ways it has of looking at ungodly trades and practices! What do I mean? I mean trades that cannot be made subservient to the interest of the kingdom of Christ; trades that thrive by ministering either to the vile passions of human nature, or to the ungodliness of human nature. By what nice names it calls Satanic traffics in the bodies, hearts, and souls of men! And, when

Divine Charity remonstrates with it, it turns round and says, "Well, you know, but we must have regard to our own interests; we have large interests at stake." I sometimes say, "God knows you have! and, when the Judge riseth up to avenge those who have been oppressed and destroyed by your iniquitous traffics, you will find them sadly TOO LARGE, TOO BIG FOR THE HELL ITSELF TO CONTAIN."

The Lord have mercy on any of you who are living on the follies or wickedness of your fellow-men. Make haste to get out of such trades. Wash your hands of them, for, depend upon it, that is the devil's Charity that would try to make you comfortable in them! It has nothing to do with Divine Charity.

"Oh, my soul, come not into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united," but stand aloof from all such alliances of light with darkness, of truth with falsehood; "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," "For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." He is the same God; He changes not! Let us call things by their right names. Let us face the evil. Let us chase it out of the world--or, at any rate, chase it out of the church. Depend upon it, the Lord is going to prove all things. I can hear, as it were, the rumbling of the earthquake of the Divine indignation underground, I can see the gathering of the Divine wrath overhead; and, IF THIS NATION DOES NOT REPENT, AND IF THE CHURCHES OF THIS LAND DO NOT COME OUT AND WASH THEIR HANDS OF THESE THINGS, GOD WILL SEND US SUCH A BAPTISM OF BLOOD AS WE HAVE NEVER CONCEIVED OF, AND HE WILL PUT US OUT, and put some other nation in our place, or else He will act contrary to all His former dealings with nations! Do you suppose that Jerusalem was more guilty than we are? Have we not been exalted much higher than Jerusalem ever was? And have we not sinned against greater light and privilege than ever she did? Are not our professed Christians exactly the same in character as her Pharisees? Do they not make fine and long prayers, and, at the same time, devour the widow and fatherless? Yea, for hellish gain, do they not make widows and orphans wholesale? Might not God truly say of us, "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger: they are gone away backward." Even the prophets prophesy falsely, and the people love to have it so!

Do you say, "No, we are not so _bad?"_ I answer, look abroad over the land, open your eyes, observe and see. Has it not become proverbial--have you not heard it until your ears have tingled, and your face burned with shame--"Better go and deal with anybody than a Christian"? and, alas! has there not been much ground for it? Have we any need to wonder that infidels wag their heads? Can you go into a shop where you are sure you will not be extorted? Do you know anybody who keeps a conscience with respect to the profits he makes? Is there anybody scarcely who won't charge his neighbor more than the article is worth, if he has a chance, and call it lawful? _That_ is extortion. It may be only asking twopence for an article worth a penny, or a 1,000 pounds for what 700 pounds should buy; it does not matter the amount--it is EXTORTION!

God puts extortioners amongst the blackest of sinners. The Lord help me to "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on

the things of others," and have the Charity that will not take a mean advantage of my neighbor because I have the chance, and thus traduce the precious name of the Holy Jesus by calling myself one of His followers. It is time this satanic Charity was swept out! The very first law, the very vital principle of true Charity, is _righteousness._ There is no Charity apart from righteousness. If your Charity is incompatible with righteousness, it is born of the devil and leads to hell!

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

CHAPTER VI.

CHARITY AND LONELINESS.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.-I COR. xiii. 13.

The possession of this Divine Charity often necessitates walking in a lonely path.

Not merely in opposition and persecution, but _alone_ in it, and here, again, Jesus, who was the personification of Divine love, stands out as our great example. He was emphatically alone, and of the people there was none with Him. Even the disciples whom He had drawn nearest to Him, and to whom He had tried to communicate most of His thought and spirit, were so behind that He often had to reprove them, and lament their obtuseness and want of sympathy. In the greatness of His love He had to go forward into the darkness of Gethsemane. He was alone while they slept, and then through ribaldry, scorn, and sarcasm, to the cross. Alas! alas! almost alone, except a few--to their everlasting honor--poor faithful women--_alone!_

And, as it was with the Master, so it has been with all those whom God has called to go in advance of their race. It was so with John, and with Paul, and with most of the apostles, and with all those whom

God has called to extraordinary paths since. Must John have a revelation of things shortly to come to pass? He must go alone into the Isle of Patmos! Must Paul hear unspeakable words, not, at that time, lawful for a man to utter? He must go alone into the third heaven, and not be allowed even to communicate what he saw and heard when he came down; alone, he must necessarily go in advance.

And just so, when God has called some of His followers to an out-of-the-way path, they have had to go alone in an untrodden way. Superior love necessitates a lonely walk. You shrink, and say, "That seems so hard." Yes, I know; I wish I could make it easier, but I cannot help it. I simply state the fact, that superior love necessitates, in some measure, a lonely walk, because you see it is only they who--thus love, to whom the Lord tells His secrets. If you want to ask a confidential question and get a confidential answer, you must be on the bosom of your Master. You won't be able to do it at a distance. Then, you see, when He gives to any soul superior light to its fellows, and that soul follows the light, it necessarily entails a path in advance of its fellows. Unless he can inspire and encourage them (which, alas! is hard work) to follow, he must go on alone.

That was a beautiful illustration we read in the lesson (Acts x.). Here is Peter called to go in advance of the whole Church! Now, the Lord wants a man to do this, and whom does He choose? He chooses impulsive, energetic, head-first Peter. But then, there is something to be done first God lets down the sheet with all its unclean contents, and Peter fastens his eyes upon it. (I wish you had studied all the sheets the Lord has let down before your eyes, you would have come out very differently to what you have.) Peter studies them, and soon the Divine vision has absorbed Peter's attention. When the Lord has fairly got his attention, then comes the voice, "Now, Peter, rise, slay and eat." Then, when the Lord had taught him his lesson effectually, and when Peter saw that he had not yet explored all the ideas of the Divine mind about the extension of His kingdom, and that his business was to follow his Lord's directions, and not to have his own "ifs" and "buts," but go ahead and do as God bade him, then Peter goes on to carry out the Divine direction. Then the church, aghast, as usual, at anything new--always down upon a measure, whether good or bad, if it has the awful quality of being new--was down upon it. This new church, which had only just itself been brought to God by a set of new measures, is down upon Peter, and they call him to the council to answer for his conduct.

He tells them all about it in the truthful simplicity of a man of God, and, thank God, they had sense enough--yes, and love enough, charity enough, to accept his explanations, and to glorify God. Would to God we could get as much sense and charity in these days!

A lady writes to me, only the other day, of her husband, saying that he sympathises with outside work, but contends that there is everything one wants in the church; and another contends that there is everything everybody wants somewhere else, and so they are down upon all the Peters that dare to do anything out of the jog-trot line. You may reason ever so urgently, and show them that all these old measures are not enough for everybody, that there is a great mass of outlying population which they do not reach--the Gentiles of this generation; you may show them that these Gentiles are without the Holy Ghost, that they are not cleansed, that they are yet common and unclean; you may show them that these new measures of yours are quite as lawful as their old measures, and that, probably, they would be a

great deal more useful, and, moreover, that they have been borne in upon you by the Holy Ghost, and that you feel as if there were a fire in your bones urging you to go and try them, but they will not hold their peace and glorify God, but will loose their tongues and villify you.

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

I do not advocate anything unlawful, to do good--God forbid. Divine Charity says, "Anywhere with Jesus"--in the temple or outside of it--at the seaside or in Cheapside--on the mountain top or in the market place--in the streets--anywhere, Lord Jesus, if Thou wilt only come and take Thine inheritance and reign over the hearts and souls of men. True Charity is only too glad to become a Jew to the Jews, as weak to the weak, if it can only pick them up;--only too glad to descend to men of low estate, and put its arms round their necks, if it can only bring them to the cross and bring them back to the heart and Heaven of God; and it does not care what the Pharisee on the other side says; it is set on saving the poor sinner; it is pouring in oil and wine, and putting him on its own beast; it is intent on saving him, and does not care what anybody thinks. Have you got it? It is so good. It makes you feel so warm and comfortable inside. It is beautiful, and it proves better and better every day, and it will be better still when you are dying--Faith and Hope will be done away, but this love will last forever!

But this necessitates somebody leading the way--going on in advance. Will you be content to go in advance? Will you endure the hardness of a pioneer? Can you bear the ridicule and gibes of your fellow-men? Dare you go where the Holy Ghost leads, and leave Him to look after the consequences? If so, happy are you, and you shall have a harvest of precious souls; you shall shine as the stars forever; but, if you draw back, His soul shall have no pleasure in you. Step out on to the Divine love, that is able, alone amongst the breakers, to bear your little bark--able to make you more than a conqueror. Oh, step out--follow, follow, follow--do not be afraid!

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

False Charity hates to be in a minority--you never find it in an

unrespectable minority,--it wants company, and that of a respectable, genteel kind. Its possessors are always sticklers for the traditions of the elders; their horizon is bounded very largely by the opinions of men and the attitude of the _rulers_. They are always asking, "Have any of the rulers believed on Him?"

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

I wish people would stop and think that the path they are now standing in the well-beaten track on which they are now walking with such slow dignity--was one quite as new and unconventional and outrageous to the coadjutors of their forefathers, as the path which any new departure by the Holy Ghost may set before them _now_. I wish such people would read history. I suppose they do not, or, if they do, they read it as they do the Bible--they fail to draw any practical principle from it. Such people should read "Neale's History of the Puritans," and see in what a hurricane of excitement, opposition, contempt, and persecution, their forefathers fought for the very paths they are now _standing still in_, and holding so sacred that they cannot have them disturbed. Do you see how unphilosophically they are acting? If their forefathers had acted on the principles they are acting on, they would have stood still in old paths, and we would never have been in the new ones. These people stand in these paths of traditionalism and routinism, just where their forefathers left them, occupying all their time in admiring the wisdom and benevolence and devotion of their forefathers, instead of imitating _their aggressive faith_ and MARCHING ON TO THE CONQUEST OF THE WORLD.

Which is the most God-honoring? Which has the most common sense in it? Which will please your, forefathers the most? But it is now as it was in the days of the Son of Man--for, "ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, 'If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets."

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

Now, my friends, try yourselves--which Charity _have you got?_ Do you rejoice in the extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ by any lawful means, or are you more concerned _about the color of a man's coat than the state of his heart?_ Would you rather the poor drunkard were left to rot and seethe in his misery, than that a man should put on a blue jacket with an S.[Footnote: Badge of the Salvation Army.] on his collar, and go and fetch him out? Would you rather have men damned conventionally, than saved unconventionally? If you would, you are a Pharisee at heart--I care not what you call yourselves. Go home and read for your instruction Matt, xxiii. 23-28.

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

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

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

Fathers and mothers, look out! If you grudge your children to God, He will be even with you. "They that honor Me, I will honor, but they who do not, shall be lightly esteemed." They shall get light weight all round, and be whipped with their own rods. Mind how you withhold

that which is most precious from God! Mind you do not receive the grace of God in vain; _some people do_.

The fifth point in which this Divine and spurious Charity contradict each other, is, that Divine Charity--the pure love of God--is _law abiding_.

That is, it always manifests itself in harmony with the great moral law of the universe--it never does evil that good may come! You never hear it saying--"I cannot say that this is exactly square; I know this is not exactly the right course, but then I can accomplish such and such objects by adopting it." Never! that is of the devil! You may always know that the law of righteousness is entwined round the very heart of Divine Charity, and as justice and judgment are the habitation of the throne of its Divine Author, so righteousness is in the very core of its soul. It will never sacrifice righteousness for peace, or anything else.

Now, what is the whole duty of man? To love mercy, to do justly, and walk humbly with God; and, when the Holy Spirit has brought about that result in your soul, God will look on you with a beneficent eye, with a smile of approbation, and its genial influence will sun your whole being, and you will walk in the light of it, even as the angels do in Heaven. "Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God;" that is the whole duty of man--everything is included in that.

Do you hear it, oh! ye temporizers with Divine law? Do you hear it, ye who say that we must come down partly, and be a little like the world in order to win it? that you must come on to the level of the ungodly in order that you may win them to God?--I tell you that _all unrighteousness is sin!_ Do you hear this, you who contend for covering up by a false Charity certain sins which are sending men to perdition wholesale, and make laws and acts of parliament to protect men in these crimes? I know your specious arguments that come from the devil; but I ask, is it justice to take one part of the human race, and that the weaker, and, therefore, according to the law of Divine Charity, demanding the greater protection from cruelty and wrong, and offer that part up for the _supposed_ good of the other, because the latter is stronger? Is that justice? Is that mercy? and, mind, I say emphatically _supposed good_; for, do you think one part of God's creation can be trodden down without reacting with terrible moral force upon the other? Do you think it can? Was it ever done? Will it ever be done? _No! not while He sits on His throne_. Yes, _supposed_ good, for facts mock your arguments. It is not for their good; you know it is not. You cannot accomplish your purpose when you have done all; and think you that you will escape, by your satanic inventions, the Divine Executioner? Think you that your specious arguments will avail with Him who hath sworn in His holy habitation that He will avenge the oppressed and down-trodden of the earth? No, no! I see written between the lines, and I hear muttering between your speeches. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." You cannot escape the penalty!

The last characteristic of true Charity which I shall name is, that _it holds out_, in spite of ingratitude, opposition, and persecution! Its possessor seeks the good of all men, not because he ought, merely, but because he cannot help it. His _heart_ is on the side of God and truth. He _loves_ righteousness, and, therefore, cannot desist from seeking to bring all beings to love it, too, although they hate and

despise him for so doing. Jesus held out in this glorious love, even in the agonies of crucifixion. "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." His heart was set on bringing man back to God, and He went through with it. His soul did not draw back, and His Divine love constrained Him, even onto death.

Paul followed his Master in this respect; and though the more he loved some of his converts, the less he was loved, he went on, seeking their highest good, not being hindered for a moment by their ingratitude. He loved them--not their good opinion or applause! A spurious Charity soon tires when the objects of it prove unworthy. Its possessor says: "I have had enough of this; the kinder I am, the worse people treat me. I shall button up my pocket, and take my ease, till I am better appreciated." Self-glory is the very life of spurious Charity: it dies right out under ingratitude and contempt.

Which have you got, my brother?--my sister?

Does somebody say, as a man who had been to a service at Scarborough the other day, and had been hearing some straight truth, said, when asked, "How did you like it?" The man, a young, prosperous tradesman in the town, shuffled about, and said: "Well, it was awful; if that is true, I am on my way to hell." Thank God he had found it out. Now, have you got this Divine Charity? I told you, at the beginning, it did not grow on unregenerate human nature, so if you are an unregenerate man, and have not the Holy Spirit, I want you to find it out. You have to begin at the beginning, and get the plant planted. No matter what spurious imitations you have got, if you have not got the love of God. Have you got it, brother?--sister? If you have not, you can have it this afternoon. Will you seek it? We were all once without it, even as it is said, "We were the children of wrath, even as others;" we hated those who hated us; we hated things, not because they were wicked, and against God, but because they were opposed to us personally; our love and hate were influenced by selfishness, the same as others, but now the Lord has renewed our hearts, and made us in some little measure, like Him who "loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; and, therefore, God anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows." Oh! yes; the more you love righteousness and hate iniquity, the more of gladness you will have, and the more glorious the testimony you will give for God. You will be able to say, with David, "I have not hid Thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared Thy faithfulness and Thy salvation: I have not concealed Thy loving kindness and Thy truth from the great congregation." There will be no difficulty about declaring it. We find it easy to declare it when people get it. We cannot keep them quiet; they are like the early converts--they are up two or three together; and, like Paul, we have to say, "One at a time; you shall all prophecy, if you do it one at a time." When people get it, it bubbles up, and runs over; "it springs up," as our great Master said, "as a well of water, unto everlasting life." Many floods cannot quench it; it abideth forever.

Have you got it? Have you got enough of it to lift you above your petty, selfish interests, or are you guided by the Charity that first looks inside to see how any proposition will affect self, instead of seeing how it will affect the kingdom of God? And you, poor sinner, who know you have not got it--I have more hope of you than some who profess to have it. His great bowels of compassion move towards you; He is waiting to shed abroad this love in your heart.

The feast is spread; all things are now ready. Oh! come into His banqueting house, and sit under His banner of love for ever and ever.

CHAPTER VII.

CONDITIONS OF EFFECTUAL PRAYER.

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

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

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

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

I have not taken the texts in the order in which they stand, but in the order in which they logically follow one another, and in which they elucidate the subject.

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

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

Some years ago, when the wave of revival was sweeping over Ireland and America, you know the Churches in this country held united prayer-meetings to pray that it might come to England; but it did not come, and the infidels wagged their heads, and wrote in their newspapers: "See, the Christians' God is either deaf or gone a-hunting, for they have had prayer-meetings all over the land for a revival, and it has not come." Oh! how my cheeks burned with shame as I thought of it; how I mourned over it! I knew it was not because our God was asleep

--not because His arm was shortened--not because His bowels of compassion did not yearn over sinners--not because he could not have poured out His Spirit and have given us the same glorious times of refreshing they had in other places. _That was not the reason_. There was only one reason, and that was, that His people asked amiss.

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

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

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

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

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

Now, you see, friends, it is not enough that you were _once_ in union with Jesus, in order to get answers to your prayers. I am afraid there are thousands in a backslidden state. They have let go the grasp of faith; they are not abiding in Christ; they are abiding _out of Him_, and yet they are constantly praying and wondering why God does not answer their prayers. Don't you see, the first

condition is wanting. There is no possible way of approach to the Father but through the Son. All prayers are an abomination to God which do not go up to Him through His Son, and in His Son, except such as those of Cornelius, who never heard of Christ; but to people who have ever had the light and known His Son, no prayers while out of living union with His Son are accepted. And that does not mean saying, "For the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ." It does not matter much what people say. God never pays any attention to people's words; it is what they mean and feel that He pays attention to; and He knows when people really offer their prayers in union with His Son. They are not in union, and, therefore, their prayers never rise any higher than the room in which they offer them. They hardly get out of their mouths; God never hears them. They are drowned and buried in their own throats.

Oh! you young converts, never drop out of living union with Jesus. Keep in it--hold it fast--walk in it, and you will get answers to your prayers every day. You will be as sure of it as if you saw God doing what you ask, and heard Him speaking to you. You will be able to say, "I know that Thou hearest me always." Bless His name! Those who abide in Him can say that in their measure.

The next condition of prevailing prayer, is--obedience to the light. Now, what does it mean to walk in obedience? Well, it does not mean, searching this New Testament to find out how little of God's grace will get you into Heaven! It does not mean, running round to see what this person says and the other person says about such and such a text, in order that you may escape from the real, practical meaning of the text! Such people are hypocrites at heart, whoever they are; or at least, insincere. They don't want to know God's will; they would much rather not know it. They want to get away from the plain, practical, common-sense meaning of the text, and then they say, "It doesn't mean exactly what it says," and "It should be interpreted so-and-so," and they stroke themselves down, and try to make themselves feel comfortable when they are traitors at heart. That is not walking in the light.

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

First, desire to have the light. Oh! it makes my heart ache--I was going to say boil--with righteous indignation, in jealousy for God's honor, to think that He should be so traduced and blasphemed by those who profess to love Him--who try to make out that they get wrong for want of light. Nothing of the kind. Here is plenty of light; but you must say, "Yes, Lord, I am willing to have it, even if it condemns me. If it condemns my heart, my head, Lord, pour it on me. If it condemns my life, pour it on me. If it condemns those companions, those indulgences, pour it on me: I will give them up. If it condemns my business, pour it on me: I will abandon such business, and sooner die in the workhouse than continue in it. If it condemns my family relations, I will come out from them, and follow Thee." The Lord will always answer such a soul as that. He will put His finger down on this sore spot and the other, and He will tell you what to do, and you will be as sure of it as if you heard His audible voice. What does it mean to walk in the light? Obey His voice. Don't stop to

confer with flesh and blood, but, as Paul did, get up, and set off to commence the career which your Master commands. Paul did not stop to confer with flesh and blood. He did not stop to reckon what it would cost him, but on he went, and never stops, until he reaches the block. That is walking in the light--obeying--not standing, quibbling with the Lord about it; not saying, "Oh! but,"--but doing it.

Oh! friends, no matter who preaches another Gospel to you; no matter who comes with the doctrine that you can be accepted of God--be a saint on any other conditions. For Christ's sake and your soul's sake, don't believe them. As the apostle John says: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." You say, "But then it is such a costly sacrifice." It is, in one sense; but when you have paid the price, when you have made the sacrifice, when you have entered upon the road, the joy, the light, the power, and the glory are worth a hundred times as much. Did any man that ever got the Pearl of great price feel that he had given too much for it, even if he had given all that he had? Never! Martyrs and confessors have gloried in the possession of it while they have writhed on the rack and in the flames, and you never heard one solitary testimony that any man or woman of God ever thought that they had paid too highly for it. Never! Do you want to have your prayers answered? That is the way. Walk so that your own heart condemns you not. The obedient child that lives in complacent affection with its parent has no fear in coming up to ask for favors. It knows it will get them. Its own heart does not condemn it. "If our own heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." I defy any man to separate confidence and obedience. If you will not be obedient, you cannot have confidence. I challenge any Christian here to tell me that he can go up to the throne of God in faith for any blessing, when his own heart condemns him. He knows he cannot. HE HAS FIRST TO GET THAT STATE OF CONDEMNATION TAKEN AWAY before he can exercise faith for any blessing. Walk in the light, and then you shall have fellowship with Him, and His blood will cleanse you from all sin, and the Spirit will teach you how to pray, and what to pray for, which the great mass of professors know nothing about.

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

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

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

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

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

Then comes the last link--faith. Here is another secret. No believer can exercise faith for anything that the Holy Ghost does not lead him up to. You may pray, and pray, but you will never exercise faith until you have the Spirit making intercession in you. There is very little difficulty about believing with people who have taken the three preceding steps. Those who are in fellowship with Jesus, those

who are walking in the light, those who have the Holy Ghost as an interceding Spirit--they know what to pray for; they know what the mind of the Spirit is; they know how the Spirit is leading them, and they can march up to the throne and "ask and receive." They know their request is according to the mind of God, and they can wrestle, if need be, like the Syrophenician woman, if He sees fit to try their faith. He does not always answer at once. He lets them wrestle with groans that cannot be uttered; but they know the Spirit is making intercession for them, and they hold on sometimes amidst great discouragement and temptation till the answer comes. They get the assurance of faith, which says, "Yes, it shall be done." People look at them with wonder. Christian friends know the thing they are praying for has not come, and say, "You look as glad as if you had it;" "I have got the earnest: I know it is coming: I have the assurance that it shall be done." Now, every praying parent ought to wrestle till that is got for every child. You never ought to leave off till then, and then train as well as pray--co-work with God: that is the law of the kingdom, all the way through. Believe that ye receive it, and ye shall have it. Oh! the confusion, the jumbling there is, in dealing with poor souls at that point. People say, "Believe you are saved, and you are saved." I have heard Christians give that advice to souls many a time. "Believe you are saved, and you are saved." Believe a lie, and it will come true. Is that God's philosophy? What is the use of telling a person to believe he is saved before he is saved? That is telling him to believe a lie. People say, "Believe you are sanctified, and you are sanctified." Indeed! When were you sanctified? God never tells a person to believe a thing until it happens. He has made the bestowment of the gift to be simultaneous with the exercise of the faith. Believe that ye receive, and ye shall have--not that ye did receive an hour ago, for that would not be true; not that ye will receive an hour hence, for that would be presumption. There is no such promise, but believe that ye do now receive, and ye shall have. "I will never disappoint the man who dares trust me to that extent." He shall have it. You say the age of miracles is past. Yes, because the age of that sort of faith is past. You will get miracles back when that sort of faith returns. God has bound Himself over to the faith of His real people, and He would sooner break all the laws of nature, than He would break the laws of grace. He can easily set aside a law of nature; but He will never set aside a law of grace. He has bound Himself to faith--the only power in the universe to which He has bound Himself--and nobody ever rose up in this world yet, and said, "I trusted God, and He deceived me." Faith means TRUST--faith means ABANDONMENT--as if you were dying, and you had nothing left but the naked promise of God. You say, "I am dying: I must trust now," and that man jumps on to the promise. He gives up experimenting, and really trusts; and you have seen the light come into his eyes; you have heard the song of praise burst from his lips, because he believed he received, and he did receive.

Now, then, some of you who have written to me, know you are living in fellowship with Jesus. Some of you have lately commenced to walk in the light. You have cut off and put away the idols; you have abandoned yourself to the will of God, and sworn, by His grace, that you will follow Him all the way. You do feel the Holy Ghost is in you. Oh! I entreat you to obey fully, to let the Spirit have His way. Do not restrain Him. Don't think it will hurt your bodies: don't think it is too much; don't think you are getting fanatical; don't think that, after all, God does not require this kind of thing--

follow the Spirit. Let the Spirit lead you, and groan through you; let the Spirit wrestle with God through you--follow Him. If we had more of this in these services, we should have more fruit; and if the church had more of this, there would be more souls born into the kingdom.

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

Prayer is agony of soul--wrestling of the Spirit. You know how men and women deal with one another when they are in desperate earnestness for something to be done. That is prayer, whether it be to man or God; and when you get your heart influenced, and melted, and wrought up, and burdened by the Holy Ghost for souls, you will have power, and you will never pray but somebody will be convinced,--some poor soul's dark eyes will be opened, and spiritual life will commence.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PERFECT HEART.

For the eyes of the Lord ran to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him--2 CHRON. xvi. 9.

This passage occurs in the history of Asa, one of the most godly and devoted kings that ever sat upon the throne of Judah. We are told in the fourteenth chapter that he commenced his reign by setting himself to destroy the idolatry into which the whole nation had been betrayed by its former ruler, and to restore the worship and service of the God of Israel. He set himself to bring back the nation to its allegiance and obedience to God; and his success is a great

encouragement to any who shall set themselves, single-handed and with a perfect heart, towards God, to do this in any circle, under any circumstances.

He succeeded. God blessed him in his efforts to purge his kingdom inside, and God also delivered him from his enemies outside, and enabled him by His power to defeat the king of Ethiopia, who came against him with an exceeding great army, because King Asa was perfect in his heart towards God.

When this king came up against him, Asa went and cried unto the Lord, and cast himself upon his God, trusting Him to deliver him, and God never disappointed any man, either before or since Asa's day, who did that. God delivered his enemies into his hand and made him a successful and happy king, over a prosperous and increasing people.

But by-and-bye, after many years, for Asa was perfect in his heart towards the Lord for many years of his long reign; but whether it were, as, alas! too often happens, that a life of ease and prosperity brought forth in Asa the results of partial backsliding, we know not; but as years went on, another war was declared, and this time it was the king of Israel who came up against the king of Judah. What did Asa do? Did he go, as formerly, and cry unto the Lord, and put his battle into His hands? No, he did not. He had left His first love; he had become, in a measure, untrue to the Lord God of Israel. He forgot where his strength lay; his spiritual perceptions had become dim; he had lost his realization of God's ability to help and deliver him out of the hands of his enemies, and so he fell back upon worldly policy. He went down to Assyria and courted Ben-hadad, the king of Assyria, and said, "Come and help me, that my enemies may depart, for I am sore pressed." Ah! what a picture of backsliders. On another occasion, when Jehosophat made an ungodly alliance, a prophet met him and said, "Should'st thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?" No man ever did this without being sorely whipped, as poor Asa was. He succeeded, indeed, in the battle, and won the victory. It was a lawful end, but he accomplished it by unlawful means. He won the victory, and, I dare say, he was congratulating himself, and stroking his beard in self-complacency, when, lo! the prophet comes to deliver God's message to him, and he says:--

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

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

"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him. Herein thou hast done foolishly; therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars"--the very thing he went to Assyria to seek to avoid. He wanted peace, not war, and he went down to Assyria to enable him to spend the remainder of his days in peace, when, lo! the Word of God goes forth, "Thou shalt have wars." He was chastised in the very thing for which he sold himself and his God. "Be sure thy sin will find thee out." It is God's way to chastise His children by those very things in which they sell His interests. "Thou shalt have wars."

But we want to deal specially with the lesson which the prophet draws from this event; for he says, "Wherefore didst thou go to Assyria? Wherefore hast thou sinned against God? Hast thou forgotten who the God of Israel was? Didst thou not know that the eyes of the Lord run throughout the whole earth?" He would have helped thee now, Asa, as much as in the past. He will help any man who is whole-hearted towards Him--that trusts in Him. Now, I say, this is the lesson which the prophet draws, not only for Asa, but for all the Asas since his day, and those who are yet to come, for every man and woman who professes to be a servant of God, the prophet sounds down to the ages that "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him."

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

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

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

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

And, again, at 1 Cor. ii. 6--

"Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect."

And (2 Timothy iii. 17)--

"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

There are numbers of others, but these are samples, and I suppose all Christians attach some meaning to these terms. They must be terms signifying a great difference between the persons who are spoken of and ordinary men and women. Now, what do they mean? Well, the very lowest rendering of all divines and all schools is this, that it means sincerity and thoroughness. Well, that is all I want. Give me a man sincere and thorough in his love, and that is all I want; that will stretch through all the ramifications of his existence; it will go to the ends of his fingers and his toes, through his eyes, and through his tongue, to his wife, and to his family, to his shop, and to his business, and to his circle in the world. That is what I mean by holiness! Then, taking the lowest translation, it means that a man is whole-hearted in love, and thorough out-and-out in service! Amen. For that man who is thus perfect towards God, God will indeed show Himself strong in more ways than one!

This cannot mean a merely natural heart, it must mean a renewed heart, because there are no perfect hearts by nature. There is no one in this sense that doeth good and sinneth not, for every child of Adam has gone astray like a lost sheep, has done the things he ought not, and left undone the things he ought to have done, and the whole world has become guilty before God. There are no naturally perfect hearts. It must mean, then, a heart renewed by the Holy Ghost, put right with God, and then kept right. A heart cannot be kept right until it has been put right, and that is the secret of the failure with some of you. You are trying to bring forth fruits before the tree is planted. You are looking for the fruits of a perfect heart before you have got one. You may well be disappointed. You must get your heart renewed, and then kept right by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Then, what does this perfect heart imply?

1. A heart perfect in its loyalty to God, thoroughly given over to God's side, irrespective of consequences,--loyal. These are the hearts that God wants. This was the difference between David and Saul. There was not so much difference in the greater part of Saul's outward life, when compared with the life of David. It was only the prophet Samuel, perhaps, who knew the difference, and a few close observers; but the difference was, that David was loyal to God, and God calls him, for this reason, a man after His own heart.

From the first calling of David from the sheepfolds, right to the end, with one or two exceptions, during the whole of his life, he was loyal to God, and, if you will carefully search his history, you will find that in all his wars, and all his dealings with the nations round about, and with the leaders of affairs in his own kingdom--in everything,

David was loyal to God. It was the interests of God's kingdom that lay at David's heart--not his own honor, ease, or aggrandizement--not his own fame or riches, or building himself a house--it was the house of his God that was dear to his heart. He was loyal; whereas Saul was loyal only as far as it served his own purposes and interests. Oh! how many such Sauls there are in these days. When God's commandments went counter with his notions, he openly set God at naught, and did

as he liked. He sacrificed God's interests to his own. He was unloyal at heart, hence he was a traitor, and never could learn the way of the Lord. He was never perfect towards the Lord his God, and, at last, God cast him off, and Samuel did also, and you know what his end was. Just the difference between the two--loyal and unloyal.

A heart perfect towards God! What does it mean? It means--

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

People come to us and want to know what they are to do; they feel that they are only half-hearted in God's service; they have neither joy nor power, and say, "What must I do?" and we take, as God helps us, the dissecting knife, and try to find out the difficulty. We get them down under the blaze of the Holy Spirit's light, and try to probe them and find where they are wrong. Perhaps the Lord leads us to the sore spot, and we point out the difficulty, but, instead of obeying, they shrink away. They look ahead, and they see that to obey the light will involve loss of some kind--perhaps reputation, wealth, family associations, ease, or loss of friends, loss of temporal comforts, loss of good business. Loss is in the background, and they see it. They know where we are leading them to, and they slip back; they do not want to see, and yet they do not want to consider themselves dishonest, so they turn their heads away, and will not look in the direction of the light, smoothing it all over and singing--

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small," &c.

That is not a perfect heart, but a partial heart towards the Lord God.

The partial heart, so common, alas, now-a-days, wants to serve God a little. It is willing to go a little way with God, but not all the way; so that, taking the lowest interpretation, that is not a perfect heart towards the Lord. Can it be expected that the Lord should shew Himself strong in behalf of such people? Do you think you would if you were God?

Suppose you were a king, and had a prince or statesman who was serving you very valiantly and devotedly while it served himself; but, suppose the tables were turned, and you were dethroned and cast away into exile, your name being bandied about the nation where you once reigned as king, in disgrace and dishonor; suppose this statesman gave you up, and said, "Oh! I am going to be on the side of the reigning monarch. I was very devoted to this man while he reigned, but I cannot afford to be devoted to him now his interests draggle in the dust; I must be on the winning side." What would you

think of such a man? And if you were restored to your kingdom and power, would you show yourself strong on behalf of such a man? No; you would remember, as David did, the man who cursed you. But if you had a prince or statesman who followed you into exile, who ministered to you in secret, who tried to hold up your interests, who contended for your righteousness and justice, and held up your name and tried to make the people see that you were a good and true man, who held on to you, when all the nation was calling you traitor--if you came back to your throne, would you not show yourself strong in behalf of that man? Of course you would. The Lord says He will show Himself strong in behalf of those of such a heart towards Him.

You masters here have a servant--a clever, smart man; you know how well he can serve you, and how valuable he can be, and would be if he were true; but you have reason to believe that he will only go with you as far as it will be for his own interests; he will serve you as far as he can serve himself, too, but, if he can get up by putting you down, you may lie there. What would you say to such a man? You would say, "I shall never show myself strong for him." So God is not likely to show Himself strong for people who are not of a perfect heart. A lady said to me, "I have been doing this and doing that for years, but I have no power; why don't I have it?" I said, "Because you are not true to God. He will give it to anybody who is true to Him, and He can see into your heart, and knows you are not." Why will He not show Himself strong in your behalf? _Because you do not show yourself thorough in His behalf._ The moment you show yourself thorough, that moment will He show Himself strong for you. If you had been in Daniel's place you would not have done as he did. Daniel was one of the perfect-hearted men; he served his God when he was in prosperity. He set his window open every day. Then his enemies persuaded the king to make a decree that no man should pray but to this king for so many days. "Now," they said, "we shall have him." But Daniel just did as he was wont, he went and prayed with his window open. You say, "That was demonstrative religion, that was courting opposition. What need was there for him to make this display; could he not have shut the window and gone into an inner room? That was just like you Salvation-Army people, you always make a demonstration. Why could he not have gone into an inner chamber and prayed?" Because he would be thorough for his God in adversity, in the face of his enemies, as he was in prosperity. So he went and prayed with open window to the God of Heaven, and because _He is_ the God of Heaven, He is able to take care of His own. His heart was perfect towards the Lord his God.

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

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

CHAPTER IX.

HOW TO WORK FOR GOD WITH SUCCESS.

Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.--MATT. xxi. 28.

Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.--LUKE xiv. 23.

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

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

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

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

How surprised I have often been at the assumption of people who, perhaps, never gave one hour's consecutive thought in their lives to the best means of doing certain work, and yet they will pronounce an opinion right off as to certain modes and measures which have been tried and proved successful in the lives of some of the most

successful laborers for God. They will say, "Oh! I don't believe in it." "Oh! it is all nonsense, ridiculous, wrong!" while, perhaps, those people whom they condemn have been pleading, and weeping, and studying, and experimenting, and almost sacrificing their heart's blood to try to find out the best means of winning souls for Christ.

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

Then, further, the second qualification for successful labor is power to get the truth home to the heart.

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

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

"Use just the same diligence, earnestness, and determination that you would if you were resolutely set on any human project, and always be sure that I will be with you to the end of the world. Never doubt My presence when you are set on My business. I will be with you, and I will succeed you." Do it--the Lord help us to get the truth home!

This was the way with Paul, and this was the way with Jesus. Paul says: "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." Oh! what a beautiful insight this gives us into the ministry. Why do you persuade men, Paul? "Because I know the terror of the Lord that is coming on, and because we thus judge that, if One died for all, then were all dead. Therefore, I persuade men." He did not give up when he had put it before them. He carried them on his heart, and he says, "That by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." He wept it in, as well as drove it in, with his logic, and his eloquence, and with the power of the Holy Ghost in him. Make it go in--make your words felt; don't talk to them in that sickly, languid way that makes no impression--make them know it. If you have not enough of the Holy Ghost for this, go to your closet till you have, and then come and drive the Word home to their conscience as a two-edged sword, dividing asunder soul and spirit.

The second thing indispensable to success is simplicity--naturalness in putting the truth.

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

People sometimes come to me and say, "Oh! I would give the world to be natural, but I have got into this way of talking to people. It seems as though I cannot be natural. Can you help me?" I say, "Yes, I can help you, by this advice--Determine, by the help of God, that you will break the neck of this bondage. I will tell you how to begin. Begin with your family. Break off right in the middle of conversation on earthly matters, and begin to talk about their souls, or your own experience, or drop down on your knees, and begin to pray." "Oh! but it would be such a break." It should not be a break to talk to your Father. If you are in the spirit of it there will be no break. This will help you, more than anything else. Determine that you will overcome this sanctimoniousness, which is the curse of a great deal of the religion of this day. We want SANCTIFIED HUMANITY, not sanctimoniousness. You want to talk to your friends in the same way about religion, as you talk about earthly things. If a friend is in difficulties, and he comes to you, you do not begin talking in a circumlocutory manner about the general principles on which men can secure prosperity, and the sad mistakes of those who have not secured it; you come straight to the point, and, if you feel for him, you take him by the button-hole, or put your hand in his, and say, "My dear fellow, I am very sorry for you; is there any way in which I can help you?" If you have a friend afflicted with a fatal malady, and you see it, and he does not, you don't begin to descant on the power of disease and the way people may secure health, but you say, "My dear fellow, I am afraid this hacking cough is more serious than you think, and that flush on your cheek is a bad sign. I am afraid you are ill--let me counsel you to seek advice." That is the way people

talk about earthly things. Now, do exactly so about spiritual things. If your friend is a spiritual bankrupt, tell him so. Tell him where he is going, and that the reckoning day is coming, and that he will be in God's prison-house very soon, and that, if the creditor once gets hold of him, and shuts him up, he will never get out till he has paid the uttermost farthing. If your friend has a spiritual disease, tell him so, and deal just as straight and earnestly with him as you would about his body. Tell him you are praying for him, and the very concern that he reads in your eyes, will wake him up, and he will begin to think it is time he was concerned about himself. Try to attain this simple, easy, natural way of appealing to people about their souls. I believe if all real Christians would attain this, and act upon it, this country would be shaken from end to end!

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

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

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

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

assembled universe. What will that be? God helping me, I will avoid that I will sooner hang with Jesus on the cross, between two thieves, than I will bear that shame. "_I would thou wert cold or hot!_"

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

Then another indispensable condition is the surrendering of _all our powers_.

There must be no holding back. "Cursed be he that holdeth back his sword from blood." That curse is resting on Christendom to-day. Oh! they will thrust the sword a little way in, but they will not go in to the core. They dare not draw blood--the soldiers of this age--for their lives. They dare not touch a man to the quick, because, alas! they are looking to themselves, and thinking what people will say of THEM, instead of what God will say of them. You must not be afraid of blood if you are to be a true warrior of the Lord Jesus Christ. You must not be afraid to say, if need be, "Oh! generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? "You must not be afraid to say, if need be, "You have made my Father's house a den of thieves," if you save some of them by doing it.

Oh! this accursed sycophancy; I was going to say, this accursed fear to brave the censure of the world--this accursed making good evil and evil good, as if God were altogether such an one as ourselves. Don't you think He sees through the vile sham? Oh! my friends, if we don't mend in this respect, He will come in judgment before long, and we shall find out then the difference between the precious and the vile, if we do not find out before. If you want to be a successful worker, you must make up your minds to begin with, that you will be CRUCIFIED.

As a dear minister once said to somebody, when he was arguing with him about being so hard in the pulpit, "I don't care." "Oh!" said the other, "Don't you know what became of 'Don't care?'" "Yes," he said, "He was crucified, and I am ready to be crucified alongside of him." When you are in the right, don't care. You can but be crucified, and it will soon be over; and then the Book says, "They that suffer with Him will also reign with Him, and they shall be glorified together." It would be a wonderful thing to be glorified alone, but, oh, think of being glorified together!

A gentleman said lately, "I have been thinking a great deal about the glory. It is a wonderful thing--that glory that is to follow. This would be worth a man sitting on the dunghill all his life to obtain." I looked at him, and thought, perhaps you are nearer to it than you think, and perhaps I am, too. Ah! it _is_ a wonderful thing,

that glory that is to follow. Then let us be willing to suffer with Him and for Him. Make up your mind to be crucified at the start, and then it will be easy.

Further, complete abandonment is a condition of successful labor.

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

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

Reputation. Perhaps there are some ministers here. There were some last Sunday, and there were some the Sunday before. Some of you have written and others have talked to me. You say, "It would be such an entire breaking from one's circle." Exactly. Some say, "You see, the inevitable consequences of setting up this high standard would be a constant running of the sword into some of your best hearers and your best friends." Exactly; that is giving your sword to blood. You would not think much of drawing the blood of an enemy--it is the blood of your friends that is the test! I know all about it; I have been there. I was there a long while once. It was my own sore spot. The devil said, "If you begin preaching they will call you an impudent woman," and I felt it would be better almost to go to hell than have that said about me. He said, "They will put you in the newspapers, and say all manner of coarse and vulgar things about you;" and God only knows what that was to my soul; but I battled and struggled with it for a long while, until I said, at last, "Lord, I don't care what they call me--I give myself to Thee to win souls." Have I ever regretted it? Shall I ever regret it? No; He will take care of your reputation. Give it up to Him, my brother. The Scribes and the Pharisees never had anything good to say of Jesus coming in the flesh. Give up your reputation--follow Him. If it must be, decide to go after Him to Gethsemane, to Golgotha and the cross. Never mind--follow Him. Give up your reputation.

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

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

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

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

I must say a word about the reward.

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

Oh! the whole world is akin here. Every man and woman wants children. They are especially a heritage from the Lord. Nothing can make up for the want of children. The poorest parents, living in the humblest hut, would not sell you their children, and the rich man,

who has twenty thousand a year, would give it for a son or for a daughter, when he cannot have one. All human beings want children. Now, then, the Lord will give you children. A mother--even a sanctified mother--I suppose, cannot help feeling proud, or, rather, glad and thankful, when she shows good, obedient, and godly children to her friends. I do not believe that God wants to grind this out of us. I believe He delights in it Himself, just as He delighted to show His servant Job to the devil. "Hast thou considered My servant Job?" Ah! was He not proud of him?--and He has been proud of him ever since. God has put this feeling in us, and it is a right feeling when it is sanctified. We cannot help but be proud of godly and obedient children; but what will it be to show your spiritual children, to the angels? How shall you feel when you gather the spiritual family which God has given you round the throne of your Saviour, and say, "Here am I and the children whom Thou hast given me"?--the children won through conflict, and trial, and strife, such as only God knew; "Children begotten in bonds," as Paul says--chains--children born in the midst of the hurricane of spiritual conflict, travail, and suffering, and cradled, rocked, fed, nurtured, and brought up at infinite cost and rack of brain, and heart, and soul; but now, here we are, Lord. We are here through it all. "Here am I and the children whom Thou hast given me." How shall you feel? Shall you be sorry for the trouble? Shall you regret the sacrifice? Shall you murmur at the way He has led you? Shall you think He might have made it a little easier, as you are sometimes tempted to do now? Oh! no, no!--THE CHILDREN! THE CHILDREN! you shall have children! Won't that be reward enough?

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

CHAPTER X.

ENTHUSIASM AND FULL SALVATION.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED IN EXETER HALL.

Why should we be enthusiastic in everything but religion? Can you give me any reason for that? If there is any subject calculated to move our souls to their very centres, and to call out the enthusiasm of our nature, surely it is religion, if it be the real thing. Why should we not be enthusiastic? I have never seen a good reason yet. Why should we not shout and sing the praises of our King, as we expect to do it in glory? Why should not a man cry out, and groan, and be in anguish of soul, as the Psalmist says, as if he were crying out of the belly of hell, when he is convinced of sin, and realizes his danger, and is expecting, unless God have mercy, to be damned? Why should he not roar for the disquietude of his spirit as much as David did? Is there anything unphilosophical in it? Is there anything contrary to the laws of mind in it? Is there anything that you would

not allow under any great pressure of calamity, or realization of danger, or grief? Why should we not have this demonstration in soul matters? They had it under the old dispensation. We read, again and again, that when the people came together after a time of relapse, and backsliding, and infidelity, when God sent some flaming, burning prophet amongst them, and they were gathered on the sides of Carmel or elsewhere, that, on some occasions, the weeping, and, on other occasions, the rejoicing, was so great that they made the very ground tremble, and almost rent the heavens with the sound of their crying and rejoicing.

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

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

How is it that wherever we go, as an organization, these signs and wonders are wrought? Somebody said, "It is a strange thing; see what has been done at So-and-so, and So-and-so, and So-and-so. They had all tried, and you send a couple of lads or lasses, and you have the town in an uproar at once. What is it? What is the secret? Will you answer the question?" Well, it is the whole-hearted, determined abandonment of everything for the King's sake. That is it. It is going in, as the Apostles went in, determined to win souls, determined to set up the kingdom of Jesus Christ, at all costs. That is the source of our power, and if you get that, you will have power, and if you don't get that, it matters not what else you have. I want you reasonably and calmly to see that this holiness is a real, definite blessing; that it is a level on to which the great mass of the professing Christians of this generation have not come, or even scarcely looked up. It is a high level, but it is a level on to which every one of you can come, if you will. You have heard enough about it. You are convinced you may have it. Will you have it? The Lord is sitting there; He is looking at you, and He is saying, "What is all

this stir about? What is all this talk, this singing, and this praying about? Here I am. What do you want Me to do? I am ready to do it." And you say, "Lord, I want Thee to cleanse my heart from sin, and to fill me with the Holy Ghost, and to enable me to be whole-hearted and thorough in Thy service, and to go and win souls for Thee." "Very well," the Lord says, "I am ready to come into the temple, if you will clear out the rubbish. Are you willing for Me to come in? I am waiting to come in as a Refiner; but you must make a straight way for my feet. You must pick out the stones, and throw out the rubbish, and make Me a straight path."

Will you make Him a straight path? Will you trample under foot that accursed thing which has so long kept the fulness of the blessing from you? Will you give up arguing about it and trying to make out that it is not a stumbling-block, when you know it is? How many will? I wish we had room to have a form. I am sorry we have not. With all the light you have on the subject, with what I am sure the Holy Ghost has revealed and is revealing to your souls, with all the glory that He is putting before you, and the power for usefulness and happiness, will you make this full consecration? The light of the Spirit is on you: _will you, act? Will you act?_ Every spark of light you get without obeying it, leaves your soul darker. Every time you come up to the verge of the kingdom and don't go over, the less the probability that you ever will. I know people who have been going up and down for more than forty years, like the Israelites, and it is a question if they ever go in. You have come near again. Will you go over? You can tell the Lord without telling us, though we would like to know, and see you put your foot over the border, into this Canaan of peace and power. Will you put your foot over? Who will? who will? Will you stand up and raise your voices to the Lord and ask Him?

CHAPTER XI.

HINDRANCES TO HOLINESS.

I shall try, in the short time I may occupy, to go straight to the point--to some of the difficulties and hindrances which I know are keeping not a few here to-day out of the enjoyment of the blessing. I know there are some here who are satisfied that this blessing is attainable, who are satisfied that God can thus keep them, as we have been singing, if they were to lean the whole weight of their need--their soul, and body, and spirit--upon Him, and trust Him. They believe He could, and they believe He would. They have come to perceive that it is not at all a question of human strength, or human weakness, or human knowledge, but that it is simply a matter of Divine strength, fully recognized and fully trusted by human weakness. Therefore, there is no more a stumbling-block in their way about reckoning themselves holier than other people, or stronger than other people, for they recognize themselves as the very weakest and most sinful of _all_ people: but they have come to understand this blessing to be human weakness, leaning with all its weight upon Divine power; and they believe God does thus save and keep those people who do thus lean. Then, what hinders? There they stand, just where the Israelites stood, when they might have gone in and

possessed the good land. "They entered not in because of unbelief," and for that unbelief there is a reason--a cause. They dare not venture their souls on this Divine power, because there is back in their consciousness some difficulty, some obstacle, something which is only known to themselves and the Holy Ghost, which prevents them from doing this.

When they try to jump on to the Divine strength there is something that holds them back, and they cannot make the spring. They try to forget it--they sing, and pray, and seek, to make themselves believe there is nothing, and they come up again and again right to the entrance of the goodly land, and then they try to spring in. Some of you will today, but you will not be able to spring, because there is something holding you back; and you are conscious of it, but will not allow yourselves to realize it. Now this is the point, when my dear husband read that passage, "When they had prayed, the place was shaken," I thought, Oh! what was involved in that prayer--what does that mean? Why did the glory come? Why did the Holy Ghost overshadow them? Why were they filled with God--so filled that they had to go down and could not help themselves, but went into the streets and poured it out upon the godless multitudes around them? Why, why did it come? Why do hundreds of assemblies of God's people meet and pray, but nothing comes? They hold long meetings, and make long prayers, and sing,

"We are waiting for the fire;"

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

They won't think about it. They say, "Oh, it is nought, nought! That little thing would not hinder, it is so long ago." They would not, when they knew they ought, dig it up and burn it before the Lord. If this is so with any here, you must dig it up, or the Holy Ghost will never come. A lady, a short time ago, was brought up to the very edge of this blessing, but there was something she felt she ought to do. She had a sum of money which she felt ought to be given up to a certain object. She prayed and struggled, and attended prayer-meetings, and prayed long into the night; but, no, she would not face the difficulty. She said, "Oh! no; I am not satisfied in my own mind. How do I know God wants it for that purpose?" She might have struggled till now if she had not made up her mind to obey; but, the moment she did--alone, up in her bedroom, the blessing came. A gentleman came up to the penitent-form, after one of my West-end services, last season, and told me: "I am a preacher. I have been laboring in the Gospel for eight years, but I know I am utterly destitute of this power." "Do you want it?" "Oh!" he said, "I do;" and he looked as though he were sincere. "Then," I said, "what is it? There is a hindrance. It is not God's fault. He wants you to have it. He is as willing to give you the Spirit as He was Peter or Paul, and you want to have it. Now, will you have it? Have you understood the conditions?" "Ah!" he said, "that is the point." Now, you know I should be a false comforter if I were to try to make you believe you

were right when you had not yielded that point. "Well," he said, "you see it would be cutting loose from one's entire circle." Ah! he was led, you see, by "Christian friends." I said, "Did not the Lord Jesus cut loose from His circle to save you? and, if your Christian friends are such that to live a holy life you must cut loose from them, what are you going to do--stop in that circle, ruin your own soul, and help to ruin them, or cut loose and help to save them?" Oh! there is no profounder philosophy in any text in the Bible than that--"How can ye believe who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" You will have to come to God not caring what anybody thinks.

As a dear lady, who is going through floods of persecution for Jesus, said, "I don't care if they turn their backs on me, and never speak to me any more, and cast me out, and my children, too. I don't care if I can only have His presence and follow Him." When you come to that you will get this pearl.

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

A FRAGMENT.

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

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

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

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

Peaceful, joyful,
In His peace;

Filled full, kept full,
By His grace.

CHAPTER XII.

ADDRESSES ON HOLINESS,

IN EXETER HALL.

FIRST ADDRESS.

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

I heard a gentleman saying, a few days ago--a leader in one circle of religion--that for anybody to talk about being holy, showed that they knew nothing of themselves, and nothing of Jesus Christ. I said, "Oh, my God! it has come to something if holiness and Jesus Christ are at the antipodes of each other. I thought He was the centre and fountain of holiness. I thought it was in Him only we could get any holiness, and through Him that holiness could be wrought in us." But this poor man thought this idea to be absurd.

May God speak for Himself! Ever since I heard that sentiment I have been crying from the depths of my soul, "Lord, speak for Thyself; powerfully work on the hearts of Thy people and awake them. Take the veil from their eyes, and show them what Thy purpose in Christ Jesus concerning them is. Do not let them be bewildered and miss the mark; do not leave them, but Lord, reveal it in their hearts." There is no other way by which it can be revealed, and, if you will let Him, He will reveal it in your heart.

It occurred to me that I might say a word or two on what my husband said about infirmities, because I am so continually meeting people who will make infirmities sins. They insist upon it that the requirements of the Adamic law have never been abated; that we are not under the evangelical law of love, or the law of Christ, as the Apostle puts it, but that we are still under the Adamic law, and that these imperfections and infirmities, to which my husband has

referred, are sins. I wonder that such people do not think of a certain passage, which must forever explode such a theory, where the Apostle says, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." If these infirmities had been sins, we should have the outrageous anomaly of an apostle of Jesus Christ glorying in his sins! You see, his infirmities were only those defects of mind and body which were capable of being overcome and overruled by grace, to the glory of Christ and to the furtherance of His kingdom.

I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me --that, in consequence of these very infirmities, the power of Christ shall so rest upon me as to lift me above them, make me independent of them, master of them, so that, through these very infirmities, I shall more glorify His strength and grace than if I were a perfect man, in mind and body. In another place he says, "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me." Some people think this was sin; but surely, the words, "messenger of Satan," show that this thorn was no act or disposition of Paul's, but some external temptation or affliction, inflicted by Satan. Besides, the Divine assurance, "My grace is sufficient for thee," ought to forbid the idea of sin. Paul sought the Lord thrice to have this thorn removed; surely if it had been sin, the Lord would, have been as anxious to have it removed as His servant was! This thorn was, doubtless, some physical trial--as the words, "in the flesh," indicate--some tribulation or sorrow, through the patient endurance of which the strength of Christ could be magnified in Paul's weakness--one of those things which he could bear "through Christ who strengthened him."

But mark, this was a Divinely-permitted discipline to prevent Paul from falling into sin; quite a different thing to sin itself. "God tempteth no man with evil." The Lord sent this to Paul for the purpose not of making him humble, for he was humbled before, but of keeping him humble. And does He not send something to us all? Do we not need trials and tribulations in the flesh in order to keep us humble? But is this evidence that, because we require these things to keep us humble, therefore pride is dwelling in us and reigning over us? It is an evidence just to the contrary.

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

I have a beautiful letter, received a short time ago from a young lady, who wrote me soon after my former services in the West End. She told me that she had been the bondsman, I think, for four or five years, of a certain besetting sin, and her first letter was the very utterance of despair. She had struggled and wrestled and prayed, and tried to overcome the sin that had been reigning over her. Now and then she would get the victory, and then down she went again, and she said, "It is such a subtle thing, connected with my thoughts and imagination, so that I do not think I ever can be saved." I answered the letter, and tried to encourage her faith and hope in Jesus Christ. I showed her how dishonoring this unbelief was, and that, if she would only trust Him to come in and reign in her heart, He could purify and cleanse the very thoughts and imagination. She made a little advance, and wrote me another letter. I wrote her again, and

encouraged her to trust further. She said she could not come so far as to think that He could purify her thoughts. She had got as far as to believe that He could save her from putting them into practice, but she could not believe that He could purify them. I wrote her back once more, and tried, the Lord helping me, to show her how Jesus, by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, could purify the very thoughts of our hearts, and, thank God, she did go another step. I have had two letters from her since. She said in the first of them, "I rejoice with trembling, for fear it should be only temporary, but I have trusted Him to purify the source, and I must say HE HAS DONE IT, and, instead of thinking these thoughts, I have holy thoughts, and if Satan presents anything to my mind, it is so repulsive to me that I cannot tell you the grief and horror with which it fills me." I wrote her again, encouraging her, and I got another letter, in which she said, "It is a fact that He has cleansed the thoughts of my heart, and now I am conscious that my thoughts are pleasing to Him, that He has saved me from this sin which has been the trouble and torment of my life for all these years gone by."

Now, what I want to say to you, is, that what He can do for one, He can do for another. If I am wrong here, I give up the whole question. I am perfectly mistaken in the purpose and aim and command of the Gospel dispensation, if God does not want His people to be pure. Not to count themselves pure when they are not. Oh, no! We are told, over and over again, that God wants His people to be pure, and THAT PURITY IN THEIR HEARTS IS THE VERY CENTRAL IDEA AND END AND PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST; if it is not so, I give up the whole question--I am utterly deceived.

In justification of this, I have selected two or three texts which seem to put it all in one; summing-up texts, so to speak. I will take first, as a specimen, what my husband has been trying to enforce--"The will of God is your sanctification." There is, however, a sense, and an important sense, in which sanctification must be the will of man. It must be my will, too, and if it is not my will, the Divine will can never be accomplished in me. I must will to be sanctified, as God is willing that I should be sanctified. There are as many, and more, exhortations in the Bible to sanctify yourselves than there are promises of God to sanctify you.

The next text is James iv. 8: "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts ye double-minded." This was to backsliders, to people who had been professing to believe, but who had gone back under the dominion of their fleshly appetites and passions. There are two or three other texts where we seem to get the whole matter summed up, as, for instance, "He gave Himself for us (that is, for us Christians, the whole Church of God) that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."--That is, purify us. And then 1 Timothy i. 5 shows God's purpose and aim in the whole method of redemption. "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned"--cleansed and kept clean, for if it had been cleaned and become dirty again, it would not be a good but a bad conscience. And again, in I John iii. 3: "And every man that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure." Now, I say, these are summing-up texts, and there are numbers of others to the same effect, to show that the whole end and purpose of redemption is this--that He will restore us to purity; that He will bring us back to righteousness;

that He will purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God--not only purge you from the past, but keep you purged to serve the LIVING GOD; that it shall be done by the application of the blood to the conscience, and then it shall be maintained by the power of the Holy Ghost keeping us in a state of purity and obedience to righteousness.

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

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

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

"BORN--A SAVIOUR."

Luke ii. 11.

Jesus a Saviour born,

Without:

Without the inn, refused with scorn.

Cast out:

Cast out for me, my Saviour, King,

Cast out to bring this lost one in.

Jesus a Saviour born,

A man:

A man of sorrows, smitten, torn by stripes:

By stripes, O Lord, my soul is healed,

By stripes, Thy stripes, my pardon sealed.

Jesus a Saviour born,

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

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

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

SECOND ADDRESS.

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

I have been thinking about the word in the text, "that"--"that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God." This advance in the Divine life, as well as every other, right to the end, till we advance into glory, has its conditions. The condition of the advance from an absolutely unawakened worldly condition, to that of a convinced sinner, is the reception of the light. God awakens and enlightens tens of thousands, and thousands reject the light--instantly put it away--shut their eyes--will not have the light. These go back into greater darkness, and sin with more alacrity than ever they did before;--those who receive the light advance into the condition of awakened, enlightened souls.

The next condition of advance from the state of a struggling sinner, willing to part with his sins and to follow Christ, is faith, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that he may receive the forgiveness of sins. And at every advance onwards, if the believer is ever to get beyond the first principles, if he is ever to grow a single inch, so to speak, there is a condition involved in that advance! For instance, if, after conversion, the Holy Spirit reveals to him something which is inconsistent--which he did not before see--the condition of his advance another step is the renunciation of that thing!--the reception of the light, and obedience to it; and, if he shrinks from and does not receive and obey the light, he will never advance any more until he does. There are thousands of Christians, who, instead of advancing, have gone back

since their conversion, because they would not comply with the condition, "THAT" they might prove the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

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

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

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

There is nothing upon which the Holy Ghost has been more particular than in laying down the conditions. And what are they? "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice"--the living man--you, all of you; not it--not something in you.

The latter term is never used by the Holy Ghost when speaking to Christians, but always you, ye, your bodies, your souls, your mind, the whole man--YOU, "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." And is it not? Is it too much? Is it more than He bargained for when He bought you? Is it more than He paid for? It is "your reasonable service."

And now, then, comes the conditions: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove."

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

Nothing wounds me more, after being at meetings for dealing with souls, where I have tried to speak in a most pointed and thorough way to make everybody know what I meant, when I go to the dinner or supper-table, people have not known a bit, or, if they have, they

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

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

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

You women here, if you knew that you were not the first and only one in the affections of your husband, what would you say? And you husbands, would you dwell with a wife if you knew you were not the only one in her affections, but that they were divided between you and someone else? "Not likely!" you would say; "I am not going to

lavish my affections, and my society, and my gifts, and everything I possess, on one whose heart is divided with another. If she will have her heart divided, then she must go to that other."

Now you know God is a jealous God, and He knows who do mock Him, and He knows who will not sacrifice this conformity to the world that they may walk with Him in white. He knows, also, who do not care what anybody thinks of them, or what people say of them; who are willing to be counted fools and fanatics that they may walk with Him and promote the interests of His kingdom, and who only regard their bodies as His instruments and their homes as His temples; who are willing that their breakfast hours, or dinner hours, or luncheon hours, or any other hours may be upset, and, in fact, everything made subservient to the interests of His kingdom. We must place everything at His service--our children, business, homes, and everything. If I understand it, this is nonconformity to the world.

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

FAITH.

My faith _looks up_ to Thee--
My faith, so small, so slow;
It lifts its drooping eyes to see
And claim the blessing now.
Thy wondrous gift
It sees afar;
Thy perfect love
It claims to share,
And doth not, cannot fear.

My faith _takes hold_ on Thee--
My faith, so weak, so faint;
It lifts its trembling hands to be,
Trembling, but violent.
The kingdom now
It takes by force,
And waits till Thou,
Its last resource,
Shall seal and sanctify.

My faith _holds fast_ on Thee,
My faith, still small, but sure,
Its anchor holds _alone_ to Thee,
Whose presence keeps me pure.
And Thou always,
To see and hear,

By night, by day,
Art very near--
Art very near to me.

THIRD ADDRESS.

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

We feel that people go back again from the place where we have led them, instead of stepping up to the place to which God is calling them. They come and come, and we are, as the Prophet says, unto them a very pleasant instrument, or a very unpleasant one, as the case may be; and so they go away, and do not get anything. They do not make any definite advance. We have not communicated unto them any spiritual gift. They merely have their feelings stirred, and, consequently, they live the next week exactly as they lived the last, and go down under the temptation just as they did before.

Would you dream for a moment from reading the New Testament that this was the kind of thing God intended in His provisions of grace and salvation? Is there not a definite end in every promise, exhortation, and command? God is most definite in His requirements and promises, and in the provision which He has made; and yet many of the Lord's people are perpetually and persistently indefinite. They go to and fro, like a door on its hinges, and never get anything from the Lord. We want you absolutely to get something from the Lord, and we are quite sure you may and will, if you comply with the condition. The Lord is ready to give you that particular measure of grace, strength, and salvation which you need. Now that you have come up to the threshold of the goodly land, there is only one thing which can keep you out, provided you have made the needed consecration. Of course, if you are holding anything back, then you can never come in until you give that up. If you are cleaving to some doubtful thing, and don't give God the benefit of the doubt, you can never come in; but, if you see this, and make the necessary consecration, if you really desire this blessing, there is only one thing which can possibly keep you out of its enjoyment, and that is-- unbelief.

It will be said of you, in years to come, as it was said of some in olden times, "They entered not in because of unbelief." You have come right up to the threshold, and some of you have been there many a time. Oh! what gracious influences you have been the subject of. You have seen through the veil! You have felt His hand! You have had your feet on the threshold! You have been almost in, and then you have drawn back through unbelief. Shall it be so again to-night? God forbid! Will you step over? Will you venture? Will you trust? Will you leap on to His faithfulness? Will you spring into the arms of Omnipotent Love, and trust Him with consequences? Never mind if you do die, or something happens to you that never happened to anyone else in the world's history; God will take care of you. Never mind if the devil does come round and "consider" you, as he did Job, and afflict you with boils, and put you upon the dunghill--you will

be happier there with Jesus than in a palace without Him. Oh! this caring for consequences! The devil knows the grand _possibilities_ open to many of you; he knows not only what you might receive and enjoy in yourselves, but what you might accomplish for God if you would only come in and possess this blessing; and so he frightens you with consequences. He knows what you might do, and whom you might be instrumental in saving!

Who knows how many of these precious ones that cluster round you, you may be instrumental in leading on to this higher platform--this glorious vantage ground of Christian experience? and, through them, how many more? and how, in this way, the glorious blessing would spread? Remember, also, that every time you come near and go back, there is less _probability that you will ever come in at all_; and the nearer you come and go back, the less probability there is that you will ever come as near again.

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

FOURTH ADDRESS.

I think, dear friends, that I have only a very few words to say to you now. I am, as it were, holding on to God for power by which to say them, so that they shall sink into your hearts and produce some immediate and permanent results in your lives. I believe the Lord is not only grieved and disappointed, but I believe He is angry, when His people meet, and talk, and sing, and pray, and then go away without any definite result having been reached--without ever having given anything to Him, or received anything from Him. I believe He feels with respect to us, just as He felt with respect to His people of old, when He said, "Why come ye and cover my altar with tears?" As though He said, "You know what I want you to do; come and do it; and, when you do it, I will open the windows of Heaven and pour out a blessing."

My heart ached at what a lady told me this morning, before I came

into this hall. She said, "A friend of mine remarked, 'You don't mean to say that you are going to call four thousand people together to cry for the Holy Ghost?' She said, 'Yes, I do.' 'Well, it makes me frightened. What if anything should happen; if something should be done?'" Would to God something would happen; would to God something might be done that should frighten somebody. But oh! what did that reveal? Depths of infidelity and unbelief; and yet people wonder that infidelity is increasing. Is it any wonder that infidels are laughing us to scorn? Is it any wonder that at Christian Evidence Societies men get up and say that the Christian system has become effete? No wonder, when that is the state of heart of the Lord's people.

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

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

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

I challenge anybody to disprove by the Bible that He proposes to _restore_ me--brain, heart, soul, spirit, body, every fibre of my nature--to restore me perfectly, to conform me wholly to the image of His Son. If He could have saved me without restoring me, then He could have saved me without a Saviour at all. How do you read your

Bibles? How do you read the history of the miracles--the stories of His opening the eyes, unstopping the ears, cleansing the leper, and raising the dead? He will heal you if you will let Him. These are the sort of words the world wants--the living words, living embodiments of Christianity, walking embodiments of the Spirit, and life and power of Jesus Christ. You may scatter Bibles, as you have done, all over the world. You may preach, and sing, and talk, and do what you will; but, if you don't exhibit to the people living epistles, show them the transformation of character and life in yourself which is brought about by the power and grace of God--if you don't go to them and do the works of Jesus Christ, you may go on preaching, and the world will get worse and worse, and the church, too. We want a living embodiment of Christianity. We want JESUS TO COME IN THE FLESH AGAIN.

Did you ever notice the tense in that passage--"He that believeth that Jesus is come in the flesh"--not that He did come, or was come, but that He is come now. Oh! how people hate Jesus Christ in the flesh. You may be ever so devout, ever so Pharisaic, till you come to Jesus in the flesh, and then they will gnash on you with their teeth as they gnashed on Christ. They can't resist such people. This is what the world wants--holy people; and nothing else will do. We have tried everything else. You Christian people from other divisions of the Lord's forces, you have tried Bibles, and preaching, and singing, and services, and Sunday-schools. I have been lately to a part of the country where they told me that nearly every member of the population had passed through their Sunday-schools, and yet there are men there who will drag a young girl down a flight of stone stairs and kick her till she is black and blue. The great mass of the people who took part in the Lancashire Riots have passed through your Sunday-schools.

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

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

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

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

I said to a lady who had got this blessing when somebody got at her and began with this verse and that verse, and this translation and that translation--"Mind you don't begin to reason; you will lose your blessing"--and she did lose it. You can't know it by understanding. Oh! if the world could have known it by understanding, what a deal they would have known. But He despises all your philosophy. It is not by understanding, but by faith! If ever you know God it will be by faith, becoming as a little child--opening your mouth, and saying, "Lord, pour in;" and then your quibbles and difficulties will be gone, and you will see holiness, sanctification, purity, perfect love, burning out on every page of God's Word. I weep before God, I feel almost more than I can bear, over this awful knack that some people seem to have of plucking the bread out of the children's mouths when they are just getting an appetite for it. The Lord have mercy upon them! If you don't come in yourselves, for Christ's sake don't keep other people out.

A minister--a devoted, good man--was trying to show me that this sanctification was too big to be got and kept. I said, "My dear sir, how do you know? If another man has faith to march up to Jesus Christ and say, 'Here, I see this in your Book; You have promised this to me; now then, Lord, I have faith to take it:' mind you don't measure His privilege by your faith. Do you think the church has come up to His standard of privilege and obligation? I don't. It has many marches to make yet. Mind you don't hinder anybody." The law of the kingdom all the way through will be--"According to your faith." If you want this blessing, put down your quibbles, put your feet on your arguments, march up to the throne and ask for it, and kill, and crucify, and cast from you, the accursed thing which hinders it, and then you shall have it, and the Lord will fill you with His power and glory now, and something will happen. The Lord grant it.

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