

give a tenth. But many could devote far more than this. Five pounds so set apart from an income of £50 a year is evidently a far larger offering in the sight of God than a thousand pounds out of an income of £10,000. This appears from our Lord's remark upon the gift of the poor widow (Luke xxi. 3, 4). The one would leave £45 to live upon; the other, £9000. And an old writer has well remarked that the real value of a gift is according to *what is kept back*, rather than the actual amount given. There are many who might give half their income, and yet be far richer than those who give their tenth.

Of course, there may be reasons why some who might be expected to give more must keep to the lesser proportion, such as larger necessary expenses, or the requisite provision for a large family, etc. But we say 'necessary expenses,' because this is a consideration which lies at the very root of the matter; and the Lord's people need very plain teaching about needless extravagance.

It is a very common notion that one is perfectly justified in 'living up to one's income;' and so long as people do not exceed this they very lightly regard a large amount of extravagance which might easily be avoided. But our whole income is provided for us to use for the Lord, to live not 'up to it,' but *out of it*, and to see that any remainder is used in a way which He would sanction. The self-indulgence of wealthy Christians, who might largely give to the Lord what they lavish upon their expensive houses, their luxurious tables, their extravagant tastes, or their dress and other personal expenditure, is very sad to see. But the same spirit is seen also in poorer Christians in their smaller measure.

There are great advantages in having a definite proportion set aside for the Lord. The question of *how much* to give is then a settled one. Most people would always have some little sum in hand for this purpose, and the only question would be how best to dispose of it to His glory. Giving would become a far greater pleasure than it often is; and certainly asking for money would be far more agreeable than it is, if Christians kept a sum set aside for giving away. Instead of complaining about 'so many calls,' they would be *looking out* for suitable cases to help, and be thankful to those who brought such to their notice.

2. Then the proportion so set aside, whether large or small, should be a *first charge on our income*; it should be laid by before anything is used for other purposes; and our income available for our various expenses should be definitely reckoned as less by just this sum.

To many this would be easy. They have enough and to spare; and there is only needed the 'willing mind.' But some who have the 'willing mind,' or think that they have it, hold back from not quite seeing the principles involved in such a habit. They say at once that they would not see their way, with their various expenses, to adopt it.

We would ask, in the first place, whether their expenses really are reduced as much as they might be. Is there not some needless luxury or expensive habit which might be laid aside?

Then, there is a more important consideration still. This habit calls, perhaps more than any other, for *the exercise of faith*. We do not advocate giving away all the money in hand which the Lord has provided for meeting our needs, and 'trusting the Lord to pay the bills,' as some put it. But we do believe in a sober and systematic way of giving, regulated by sanctified common sense. And we think that when we follow out a principle so manifestly indicated by God's word, we may most implicitly trust Him to provide for us and ours. Those who really believe that all temporal blessings are at God's disposal can trust Him as regards future supplies, so far as never even to lay by against future needs what *ought* to be laid out

in the present necessities of God's work. They will never so far take their future out of His hands by encroaching on the portion which should be given to Him.

And this is one reason why we strongly recommend it. *It is a scriptural method of exhibiting trust in God*. It is very well to talk of trust. But with some it means very little. The moment it is required to be *really* exercised, many shrink back.

Of this, however, we are sure—that not only does God, in a general way, provide for those who trust Him in a general way, but a very *manifest* and *special* blessing seems vouchsafed from the moment the believer definitely and really exercises his trust, in setting apart a *first charge* on his income for the Lord. He not only shares more largely the blessedness of the man 'that considereth the poor' (Ps. xli. 1-3), in all the many forms in which it is described in God's word; but all that he thus 'lends unto the Lord,' He will 'pay him again' (Prov. xix. 17), not only hereafter when the fullest reaping time comes, but He will not keep us waiting so long. As we 'honour the Lord with our substance, and with the first-fruits of all our increase,' our 'barns shall be filled with plenty' (Prov. iii. 10). Only we must heartily believe and act upon His promise, which will prove true in this, as in everything else, 'Them that honour Me I will honour' (1 Sam. ii. 30).

But some may ask what is to be understood by giving this special sum to the Lord. Is it all to go in actual subscriptions to Christian work, or given to the poor? We reply that it may be laid out in anything which is *distinctly a work of love to others done for the Lord's sake*. This includes a wide field for its employment.

Some may feel it such a work of love to devote something to help poorer relations, who of all have the greatest claim on us, when they really need it. Temporal blessings bestowed upon others is a work which Christ Himself did, when He 'went about doing good' (Acts x. 38); and when bestowed for His sake, and after His example, is real service for Him. As He did not confine Himself to giving spiritual blessings, neither should we, in laying out money for Him; but, like Him, we should seek to make the temporal open the way for the spiritual. Bodily comforts of all kinds for the sick, food and clothing for the poor, should certainly come out of 'the Lord's purse.' Hospitals and infirmaries should be supported from it. Then there are countless Christian works going on which call for help.

But we must return to our first thoughts in this chapter. After our tenth has been deducted to give to the Lord, what about the rest? It is all His, and should be spent as such. Were this really done, we believe that many who felt that they ought to devote less than a tenth would find out that they could give more than they thought. They would begin to ask themselves whether they *really want* this or that, or whether they could not just, or almost as well, do without it; and they would often discover that there was, after all, more which they could give to God than they at first supposed. Economy and care in expenditure would be the result, not, as it so often is, just because of 'limited means.' But whether the means are 'limited' or not, the economy and care would arise from the very highest grounds—grounds that would link all expenditure with God Himself. And economy, be it remembered, is not necessarily to buy the cheapest thing, but what will give best value for the money expended, although perhaps dearest at first.

Those who try to spend all their money for God get into the habit of seeking His will as to what they ought or ought not to purchase, even in the least things. To some it may be a new thought to connect such little matters with God, or to suppose that He is interested in what we spend. But He is interested, more than we can imagine, in all that concerns His

people, for it concerns Himself, with whom they (with all their interests) are one.

This habit of seeking His will should be cultivated, not in any spirit of scrupulous bondage, but with that happy willingness to please Him in everything which a really devoted child naturally exhibits towards a really beloved parent. It should be carried out in the spirit of the child who knows that his parents wish him to be happy, and to have all that is reasonably conducive to happiness, comfort, and health.

This habit would give an untold interest to life, and do much towards establishing a frequent spirit of communion with God. It shows a very hallowing influence over ordinary life, to see that money laid out on the necessities of existence may be regarded as spent for Him. 'Tradesmen's bills' would be looked upon in a different light, as registers of His supply of our needs, and as His provision for others to live; and they would be more readily and punctually 'settled.' Wages paid for necessary service would be regarded in the same way.

And then those who, after all their economy and care, find that they still cannot manage to give the tenth to God, must keep to a smaller proportion. Only let this, as far as possible, be a *fixed first charge* on their income. However little it may be, let them be 'faithful' with it; and they will eventually 'enter into the joy of their Lord' equally with those who have been entrusted with more, when the Master 'reckons' with His servants (Matt. xxv., compare vers 20, 21 with 22, 23).

WYCLIFFE COLLEGE.

ANNUAL CONVOCATION.

The Convocation of Wycliffe College was held last Thursday evening, May 15, at eight o'clock. A very large audience of ladies and gentlemen filled the lecture-rooms of the College, which were thrown into one. Among the gentlemen present were Hon. Edward Blake, Colonel Gzowski, Dr. Daniel Wilson, President of University College, Dr. Geikie, Dr. Geo. Wright, Rev. Principal Caven, Prof. Gregg, and Rev. Prof. McLaren, of Knox College, Prof. Clark and Prof. Newman, of McMaster College, Colonel Denison, Sheriff Jarvis, Mr. J. K. Kerr, Q. C., Mr. A. H. Campbell, Mr. N. W. Hoyles, Mr. John Graham, Mr. B. Homer Dixon, Hon. S. H. Blake, Q. C., Rev. Septimus Jones, Rev. W. F. Campbell, Mission Secretary of the Diocese, Rev. T. C. Desbarres, Mr. Robert Baldwin, Mr. George Musson, Mr. George M. Evans, and very many others. Rev. Mr. Sanson being absent from the city, was unable to attend. The Ven. Archdeacon Boddy signified his regret that he was unable to be present.

Colonel Gzowski, A. D. C., occupied the chair, and beside him on the platform was Rev. Dr. Sheraton, Principal of Wycliffe College.

The proceedings of the evening were opened by the singing of Montgomery's hymn, "Sow in the morn thy seed," in which all joined. This was followed by the reading of the scripture by Rev. W. F. Campbell, and prayer by Rev. T. C. Desbarres.

THE CHAIRMAN'S OPENING ADDRESS.

The Chairman, upon rising to deliver the opening address, was received with loud applause. He said:—"I observe in the programme of the proceedings that it is stated that you are to receive the opening address from me. I think it will be appropriate that the words from the chairman should be brief. Permit me to say that as in duty bound we sent an invitation to be present here this evening to his Lordship the Bishop of Toronto, but his reply is that he cannot come. I have also received a letter from our colleague in the council, Judge Benson, of Port Hope. The letter is full of the kindest feeling and sympathy with us, and expresses his regret that it is utterly impossible for him to arrange matters in such a manner as to be present this evening. Still, his letter is a gratifying one, and shows that he is heart and soul with us. I have pleasure in saying that we have with us to-night the Principal of the Presbyterian College. (Applause.) We would have had also the presence here of the Principal of the Baptist College (applause), but we have a kind letter from him expressing his deep regret that he cannot be with us. The addresses which you will hear to-night will be one from our respected and reverend Principal and others from several friends, which I know will be far more interesting than anything I can say. As, however, it is expected that I shall say a few words to you I cannot refrain from performing that duty. Allow me