

Believer, you cannot but admit that such a life of trust must be a most blessed one. You say; perhaps, that there are times when you do, with your whole heart, consent to this way of living, and do wholly abandon the care of your inner life to your Father. But somehow it does not last. You forget again; and instead of beginning each morning with the joyous transference of all the needs and cares of your spiritual life to the Father's charge, you again feel anxious, and burdened, and helpless. Is it not, perhaps, my brother, because you have not committed this matter of remembering your privilege, daily renewing your entire surrender, to the Father's care? Memory is one of the highest powers in our nature. By it day is linked to day, the unity of life through all our years is kept up, and we know that we are still ourselves. In the spiritual life, recollection is of infinite value. But for the sanctifying of our memory, in the service of our spiritual life God has provided most beautifully. The Holy Spirit is the remembrancer, the Spirit of recollection. Jesus said, 'He shall bring all things to your remembrance.' 'He which stablisheth us with you in Christ is God, who hath also healed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.' It is just for the stablishing that the Holy Remembrancer has been given. God's blessed promises, and your sacred acts of faith and surrender accepting of them, He will enable you to remember them.

Apply this to the promise of the text; 'He that stablisheth us in Christ is God.' As you now, at this moment, abandon all anxiety about your growth and progress to God, who has undertaken to stablish you in the Vine, and feel what a joy it is to know that God alone has charge, ask and trust Him by the Holy Spirit ever to remind you of this your blessed relation to Him. He will do it; and with each new morning your faith may grow stronger and brighter: I have a God to see that each day I become more firmly united to Christ.

And now, beloved fellow-believer, 'the God of all grace, who hath called us in Christ Jesus, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.' What more can you desire? Expect it confidently, ask it fervently. Count on God to do His work. And learn in faith to sing the song, the notes of which each new experience will make deeper and sweeter: 'Now to Him, that is of power to establish you, be glory for ever. Amen.' Yes, glory to God, who has undertaken to establish us in Christ!

ABIDING AND FRUITBEARING.

BY REV. J. OSWALD DYKES, D. D.

FELLOW-BELIEVERS in Jesus Christ: when Paul and Barnabas went on their first trip as missionaries to the heathen we read that after going round and preaching the Gospel in the cities and towns of Asia Minor, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, instead of going home the nearest way, they turned back, and retraced their steps, revisiting the various cities, for the purpose of confirming the souls of believers; and that is pretty much what we are trying to do to night. "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God."

Young converts sometimes feel as if they did not want much confirming in the faith; but those who have had more experience will agree with me in this, there is hardly a time in the Christian life when the believer is in greater danger than a little while after he is first converted. For there is a good deal in first experience that cannot in the nature of things be permanent. The novelty, the new-fangledness, as it were, wears off, and certain phases of experience peculiar to first impressions and first believing pass away. There

is at such a time great danger that when these things do pass, and the hard stern battle of life begins, the conscience will become clouded, the old Adam crop up, and the old habits seek to reassert their former mastery over you. There is great danger that then you should begin to imagine your conversion was a mistake, your experience a delusion, and your joy a fallacy. You may be tempted to throw it all up, as if there had been nothing gained. Now this is precisely one of the perils of early Christian life, and it is a great help to those who are in such circumstances to be told by those who have had longer experience that they are not at all surprised at such a state of matters. You have to lay your account with it; these temptations have got to come; and to be prepared is half to win the battle.

Beginning and Continuing.

And you must learn to distinguish between beginning and going on in the new life to which you have been called. Everything seems different in the beginning from what it is in going on. There is a certain excitement in your conversion, a pleasure in the very newness of your hopes and experiences, a delight in the freedom realized from old and, perhaps, repulsive habits. But the course of life lies before you, its ordinary experiences have to be faced, and you must learn how to utilize and realize the power you have received in the business of daily life. In this respect spiritual life nowise differs from new beginnings made in other spheres. A young married couple leave the church very happy, and rightly so, but they have yet to learn to bear and forbear in the worries and cares, the crossings and frettings of temper in daily life and duty. They will be no less happy in the end, yet there is a change of experience. A soldier who has just become a recruit knows nothing of the long and tedious drills, while he learns how to keep rank, to use his weapons, and submit to the exigencies of discipline. These things, while strange to him, are difficult and toilsome, although easy and pleasant enough when he has mastered his drill. To the new beginner there is in all things a certain difficulty until he gets fairly under weigh and in active service. Perhaps there is at first hard work to get through until one gets accustomed to the routine of duty. It is very much the same thing in the spiritual life; and young converts ought to know what lies before them, and it is better they should know it. Christ asks none to come without making it clear they will have a good deal to bear, a good deal to suffer, and a good deal to do; and, when these things do come, He expects us to be prepared, not discouraged.

Continual Trusting.

Now the first thing I should like to say is *Christian life means going on as you have begun.* How did you become Christians? By repenting of your sins and putting your trust in the blessed Son of God. These are just the exercises you must continue; continually as often as you sin, and that is daily and hourly, and as long as you sin, and that is while you are in the body, for in this life you will never be wholly free from sin and temptation; continually, therefore, you have to keep on repenting of sins and confessing your sins. And then, what further? Simply that you have to keep on, as you began, taking Christ at His word; believing, because He says it, that He is faithful and just to forgive you your sins, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. Can you in true faith cast yourselves into His hand, exactly as you made the great venture at the beginning of your Christian life, at conversion? This is nothing new to you who are His; you have already trusted Him. But I want you to see that you go on as you began. Just as you trusted Him for the biggest of all things you can possibly require, the salvation of your soul, as you trusted Him for the forgiveness of sin and for salvation, so now in the little things of daily life, for daily comfort, and for daily guidance in per-

plexity, trust Him in all matters however trifling; let everything, contrary and harrassing as it may appear, only combine to make you exercise the Christian trust more continually and closely. You know that it is *staying* power that wins the race; those who begin with great speed and much promise, but soon get tired, will not win. It is sticking to it that wins. The Apostle Paul had occasion to observe this when he wrote to the young saints in Galatia, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you?" So I say to you to-night: you began well a few weeks, days, or months ago, are you hindered? What is hindering you? You must go on just as you began. The life of faith is a continuation of the first act of faith by which you became a Christian.

Close Personal Dealing with Christ.

Now I should like to ask you to turn to those chapters, which I may call the *vade mecum* of Christian life, the thirteenth to the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel. There we find the instructions given by our Lord and Master to the young disciples whom He was about to leave. Notice the word of admonition so constantly recurring—"Abide," and remember it is the same thing, whether rendered "continue," "remain," or "abide." In these chapters you get behind feeble nature into the secrets of God; particularly in the fifteenth chapter. There we are told in very familiar expressions what we are to abide in, and how we are to abide.

First of all, "*Abide in Me.*" Now, speaking as I am to those who are in Christ, I say it is much to know we are in Him, but we are to remember to *abide in Him.* That does not seem a hard expression. Let me put it plainly to you to-night. When you first received grace to your soul, when you were converted, when you found the forgiveness of sin, what had taken place? For the first time in your life you had had a personal interview with your Saviour. You heard Him, not by the hearing of the ear, but by faith, speaking the word of grace to you. Whatever others may say, you know you have had a real personal interview with Christ; you have come, as it were, into grips with Him, you have had a real downright talk with Him, and He has told you things you wanted to know. Thus, having heard Him, you became dear to Him, and He dear to you, and so you became a Christian. Now let me say, *have as many close personal interviews with Christ as you possibly can.* And that is something very different from saying your prayers, or going to church, or even reading the Bible: the more of these personal interviews we have with Christ the better for our growth in grace, but take care that not a day passes without at least one of them. I do not care how often your prayer hours may be, but I do implore you to take great care that every day you live you have one close personal interview with Christ, intercourse and fellowship *about yourselves*, and your own personal affairs, the state of your own hearts; how far back, or forward, you have got, how far the state of your feelings is right, how far you want reviving, and what you find hard to do, and how you want help to do it. A personal interview about ourselves. Get into personal grips with Christ, keep close to Him. Without that Christian life dies (I retract the word—God knows Christian life is hard to kill if its roots are in Him, it is hid with Christ in God), without such personal dealings with Christ you cannot be happy, strong, prosperous Christians.

Christ Speaking to us.

And then remember you have got to hear and hold His word, "*If My words abide in you.*" I want you to distinguish between reading the Bible and hearing Christ speak to you. He speaks in His word; but you may read chapter after chapter without God speaking to you. But read on, read with prayer, and all at once you come to some verse you may have read hundreds of times before, and it lays hold of you, and you say, "That

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