

2. We have seen, then, that the sacred historian paid this man's memory no undeserved compliment when he said he "feared the Lord greatly." We have already seen, in this short history, sufficient proof of this his godly fear. Now how shall we account for it? How came such a character to be formed: formed, too, under influences so adverse, and amid surroundings so unfavorable? I think we have the explanation in the words of our text. "He feared the Lord greatly, because he feared Him from his youth." Greatness of character is never the result of sudden, rapid growth. It vegetates slowly. That which springs up in a night will perish in a night. No great character cannot be turned out, all at once, perfect and complete, like the casting from a mould. Rather, like a tower, it must be gradually built up, stone upon stone, till its top reaches to heaven. Well then, if character is formed gradually, regularly and slowly, is it not of the greatest importance that that formation be rightly guided from the beginning? Otherwise, we shall have to pull down and build up again. And what follows? In consequence of this loss of time and labour, the building is not ready when wanted: the character is incomplete at death. Allow me to put the question in another form. If no part of a journey can be ridden over or omitted; but if each mile is to be walked, are we wise in delaying the start: especially if there be only a given time to do it in, and that time be running on? And thus it really is. Our time is fixed: moreover, it is limited—so is the work: there is a certain quantity to be done: there is only enough time to do it in. If then, any part of the time be wasted, part of the work must remain unfinished. We are so apt in our youth to suppose that if we but begin to fear the Lord before death: if we are only converted some time it matters little whether that conversion come soon or late. We are so apt to imagine that the man who begins to fear the Lord at 40 years of age, does as well as the man who feared the Lord from his youth. In this we do most grievously err. The man has lost time which can never be made up to him: he has neglected work which must remain undone forever; and though he live to an advanced age, the plan of his life is unfulfilled: he has failed to do all the will of God. I know that a workman may have a certain quantity of work to do within a given time: that he may trifle away the first hour, and then by dint of unusual energy make up that lost time, and have the work completed by the appointed hour. But, has he done his duty? No. Work done in a hurry cannot be done well; and though he leave the workshop at the appointed hour, his work suffers loss. I know too that a man may be expected to pay £1 sterling into a bank each day: that he may neglect so to do; and yet at the end of the year pay in his £365. But, has he acted honestly? No indeed. He robs the banking concern of the interest; and should he pay in interest also at the end of the year, the case is not met for the bank during the year may have had to borrow other money at a higher rate of interest, for the want of such deposits. Now these are but imperfect illustrations of an eternal truth. St. Paul says, (1 Cor. iii. 11-15), "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Well, upon that foundation one man builds "gold, silver, precious stones;" another builds thereupon "wood, hay, stubble." Now, is it immaterial what kind of work he builds—is it matterless how carelessly or hurriedly he builds—so long as it is built on Christ Jesus? Far from it. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: yet he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." The fact is, every man's life work is planned and ordained by God, not as to quantity only, but as to quality; and not as to quality only, but as to time; because of its relation to other men's life work, which has each its own place in God's universal plan. I am, required by the Supreme Governor, not only to do certain things, but in a certain way, and at a certain time; so that, though I perform the duty; and though I perform it perfectly; yet, if I do it not at the appointed time, I disarrange the Divine plan; and may then have done it in vain. For instance: God, in his comprehensive providence, arranges that a certain poor widow and her orphans shall be relieved; and that I shall relieve them. I am able to do it, and willing; though all unconsciously of the Divine plan. But I hesitate; and instead of giving my donation to the relief society this year I give it double next—I have done my duty; and done it to the required extent; but not at the appointed time. What then? Mean time, the widow and her orphans may have died; and my opportunity for relieving

those particular persons is forever lost. Not only so; they may not have been relieved at all. Obedience, we repeat is required by God not as to quantity and quality only but as to time. The work of youth is required in youth; and cannot be done at any other period. It cannot be done in mid-life; because mid-life brings its own duties; and because the flow and fire of youth has then forever gone. In like manner, the work of manhood's prime is required in manhood's prime. It cannot be done in old age; because old age brings its own obligations; and because the strength and wisdom of manhood has, by that time, forever fled. Moreover, what becomes of the influence and example of youthful piety? Can such an example be exhibited by the man converted at forty? No, he has lost that opportunity forever. Young men, remember this. It may be, you purpose in your hearts to serve God; only you refuse to enter upon that service now; and you delay because you imagine it matters little when you do it, so long as it is done before death. You fancy that your present disobedience will be forgiven; and your lost time made up. It never can be made up. Lost time and opportunities can never be replaced. The loss will be felt in all time to come.

3. This brings us to another great truth. Not only is youthful piety required of us in youth because it cannot be rendered at any other time; but, if we do not learn to fear the Lord in our youth, it is extremely improbable that we will ever learn. Obadiah would not have feared the Lord greatly had he not feared Him from his youth. Is it likely we would have heard of his uncommon piety, (or heard of him at all) had he first turned to the Lord along with the noisy, volatile crowd that shouted when they saw the fire, "The Lord, He is the God, the Lord, He is the God." Young men, turn, O turn now. Perhaps you say, let me first sow my wild oats, and then? Yes, what then? Now mind, the great God has said, "Whosoever a man sows that shall he also reap." Pray consider what this means. If you sow wild oats you will reap wild oats, and conversion itself will not prevent it. You may sow this evil seed, indulge in youthful follies and sins, and then experience the saving grace of God. But remember, though forgiven, and though converted, you will reap what you sowed—reap it in a harvest of evil thoughts and evil recollections which will crowd upon you in your holiest moments, and at your holiest work. You will reap it in a weakened body and an enfeebled mind. You will reap it in habits of mind and body which will follow and annoy you more or less until you die; and which in very many cases, choke the good seed, and render salvation impossible. Many a good man has all his life to pray, "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions," for whilst God, in His mercy, has forgiven and forgiven them, their consequences remain, and by the man himself can never be forgotten.

Now, if this be so in the case of a converted man, what must be the influence of a godless youth in the case of one who has not experienced such a change. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Each succeeding day strengthens existing habits, before which he is driven as helplessly as a withered leaf is driven before the autumn wind. "The herb yields seed after his kind, and the tree yields fruit after his kind;" and, in like manner, the wicked ways of a godless youth produce successive crops of thistledown, which cover and poison the soil of the heart, leaving it like wild moor-land, rough, stony and bare.

Dear young friends, our only hope lies in prompt, hearty decision. Decide to enter upon the service of God now. Give yourself to Jesus to-day. Accept Him fully as your Saviour and Master. Let Him save and rule you. And if borne to extreme old age, you will have the sublime satisfaction of looking back upon a whole life spent in the service of God; a life-time spent in preparation for eternity.

REMARKABLE CONVERSIONS.

SOME remarkable instances of conversion were experienced, during the labors of Rev. William Taylor in Australia, among which he gives the following:

A man in Melbourne was seeking pardon for days, but could find no relief. Many of his friends wondered why, and seemed almost disposed to charge God with "slackness concerning his promise." He called on me privately and said: "I know the difficulty in my case. Some years ago my wages were not equal to my imaginary wants, and I ventured occasionally to take a shilling from my master's money. A great deal of cash passed through my hands, and I knew he never would know it and thought it a small matter.

I took in all about twenty pounds. When I heard you preach the other night about restitution I saw at once that I never could be saved till I gave again that I had robbed." I will make restitution; I am thankful to say I am able to do it, and will pay back thirty pounds for the twenty I have taken; but I want to know if I will have to confess the theft to master. I am still employed by the same man, and he has entire confidence in me, and I can return the money as I took it without his knowing any thing about it." He then explained to me some peculiar facts in regard to his family and business relations.

I replied that under ordinary circumstances, and in all cases when the injured party had knowledge of the fact, a confession was an essential part of the business; but I believe there were cases in which a confession of that sort might do serious damage, and when no principle of justice required it I believed the restitution without the confession would meet the demands of righteousness. I thought, under all the circumstances of his case, the restitution without the confession would be sufficient. He did accordingly, and found peace with God that day.

But another man in Victoria, who had dishonestly appropriated one hundred and fifty pounds of his neighbor's money and slandered and abused him besides, could find no relief at our altars of prayer till he had not only arranged the matter of restitution, but made confession, and, so far as he could, repaired the damage he had done to the reputation of his neighbor. He wrote him a letter, asking his pardon, and requesting the injured man, who forgave him freely, to make any use of it he thought proper for the reparation of the injury he had received by "false witness."

Mr. Taylor's labors in Australia were attended with results as had never before been witnessed by the people, demonstrating that the Gospel was adapted to and could reach all classes, and that even the most degraded heathen could be saved by it.

COST OF A RELIGIOUS NEWS-PAPER.

A great mistake exists in the popular mind with regard to the cost of publishing a religious newspaper, which ought to be corrected. Most people suppose the outlay to be small, although when they see how many religious newspapers fail for want of adequate support, they ought to know better. Every one engaged in the business knows from experience the heavy financial responsibilities involved in addition to the labors of editors and assistants. The Rev. W. W. Patton, D. D., formerly editor of the Chicago Advance, was at the Monday meeting of the Congregational ministers of Boston, a few weeks ago, when an essay on the religious newspaper was read by a minister who supposed he knew all about it, but before he was done, showed himself in a great measure ignorant of the subject he was attempting to discuss. Dr. Patton was asked to give his views, which he did from actual knowledge:

"He spoke of the early religious newspaper as a mere religious tract, dealing little with matters in general; and of the change, a first-class religious paper now requiring the expenditure of \$10,000 or \$15,000 a year for editorial labors alone. It stands by the side of the pulpit and authorship. Its eye is ever watching all aspects of the religious world, and it speaks without delay. It has vast influence in molding opinions. If you enter a family and look at its religious paper, you at once form an opinion of the influence under which it is trained. Hence, any decided paper will have friends or foes according to the grounds it takes; and it must take sides, it must have a character of its own, able and fearless, or it will not be wanted. A model religious paper, therefore, will need a large capital, from \$75,000 to \$100,000 to start with. The "Independent" did not pay its way for many years. It was so with the "Union," the "Advance," the "Interior," and other first-class papers. The expenses of such a paper are fearful, and this was shown by the vast sums sunk in such enterprises. Hence, to succeed, such a paper

needs an editor-in-chief,—a strong man with helpers strong and in harmony with himself. Differences will weaken. If the paper takes no sides, it will have no character and will not commend itself to the public. Hence it must have a strong, decided leader, free to think for himself. Thus the "N. Y. Tribune," "Herald" and "Times" became great and strong under able leaders. Errors there will be, blunders, but these will be forgotten in the vigorous progress of the paper. Such a paper will be often ahead of the times, but it can afford to wait."

This is the testimony of one who has had long experience in newspaper life, and to the truth of which every editor and publisher of a religious newspaper can bear witness. In no other business have more signal failures been made. Not a single enterprise of this kind started within the last ten years has been a success. We have enough religious newspapers now to meet the demands of this country for many years in the future. What they need is a large support that their quality may be made better from year to year. Every subscriber should make it a matter of conscience to pay promptly; while all the friends of religion and education should exert themselves to extend the circulation of religious newspapers which inculcate and defend sound doctrine and pure morality, that the infidel and immoral literature which is flooding the land may be counteracted. The good that may be done and the evil that may be averted by placing a good religious newspaper in a family previously destitute of such reading matter, can hardly be estimated. The amount of vile reading matter now in circulation, and its poisonous character, should arouse the public to the enormity of the evil, and lead to active effort to displace it by what is pure, healthful and saving.—Presbyterian Banner.

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

At eventide, that holy hour, when hearts live o'er again,  
The bright hours of their sunshine, and their darker ones of pain;  
When the ministry of angels seems a silent unseen power,  
A sacred benediction comes with the evening hour.  
Oh, tell me not, ye never heard sweet voices from that shore,  
Nor tell me not they never press the lips they kissed before;  
For they surely soothe the old, dull pain, and ease the bitter smart,  
And rest the troubled tossings of the poor, wearied heart.

They breathe their influence round us, and soul meets soul once more,  
And by our hearts we know them, "not lost but gone before!"  
Though dark, and deep, his shadows may lay upon our soul,  
And all his waves of sorrow in billows round us roll.  
We may not hear their spirit tread, but yet we feel them near,  
And, being low, they hush our grief, with balm of love and cheer;  
And the yearning heart grows calmer, and bright the clouded day,  
For white hands beckon upward, and beckoning show the way.

Yes, unseen hands, so pure and white that slowly unclasped ours,  
Only a moment ere they clasped a wreath of fadeless flowers;  
And hearts that waved their signals back, while crossing Jordan sea,  
Soon, soon were touching airy clouds, of Heaven's minstrelsy.

Then tell me not, O tell me not, that Heaven is far away,  
For hearts and voices blended notes come to me every day;  
Death's waters hid them from my sight, but yet no crest or wave  
Is deep enough, or wide enough, to make for them a grave.

How oft come guardian angels, on white wings to our bed,  
They come and lay ethereal hands upon the dreamer's head;  
Or when the noonday scorching, seems all too hot to bear,  
Their ministry nerves wearied hearts, again to do and dare.

For the veil that hides the unseen, a breath might heave aside,  
But the mystic chord that binds us, death never can divide;  
For the soul can leap the abyss of time, nor tremble in its plight,  
Till bathing in the sunshine of the eternal light.

Then tell me not, oh tell me not, that Heaven is far away,  
For echoes from sweet voices come to us every day;  
And when we lay our armor down by the river side,  
And breast the surging waters of Jordan's icy tide,  
When the Phantom host shall bear us, from life's silver shifting sands,  
We will see the long lost faces, we will touch the "considered hands,"  
And our ears shall catch the refrain, that our hearts have heard before,  
And soul to soul united, shall be severed never more.  
—Mrs. J. Shenton.

Bishop Potter, as Chairman of the Domestic Committee of the Episcopal Board of Missions, makes the following statement: 1. The indebtedness of the committee, Sept. 30—the close of the fiscal year—was \$23,000. 2. On the 1st of October the committee were obliged to provide \$20,000 more with which to pay the quarterly stipends of nine missionary Bishops and more than two hundred other missionaries. 3. On the 1st of January over twenty

thousand more will be needed to pay stipends and other bills for the quarter ending with the date. 4. The receipts from Oct. 1st to Nov. 20th have been much below these for the corresponding period of last year. 5. The committee have, therefore, been forced to postpone all appropriations for 1877 until the mind and will of the Church can be known.

YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD!

DEDICATED TO A YOUNG MINISTER.  
As stands you lighthouse forth, and braves  
The anger of the stormy sea,  
Casting its light on those fierce waves  
Which round it break incessantly;  
Warning the doubtful mariner  
That danger there awaits his bark,  
Sending the friendly message far  
Through closely spray and shadows dark.

So standest thou, thou noble one,  
Mid the dark waves of earthly life,  
And where they most fiercely run,  
Sheddest thy calm light on their strife.  
To storm-tossed spirits, wandering night,  
Dark rocks of death, thy warnings speak,  
And they, those grim shores passing by,  
Reach the fair haven which they seek.

Round there the wearying tides break,  
The wrathful waves against the bar,  
But nought can that foundation shake  
On which are set thy steadfast feet.  
Thy light upon that treacherous sea,  
Brightly in storm as calm doth shine,  
For its pure beams are given thee  
And guarded by a hand divine.

Thou canst not know the blessings wrought  
By thine endeavor, canst not know  
As yet, what souls from perils caught  
As jewels in thy crown shall glow.  
But when at length Heaven's light shall dawn,  
Past the long night of doubt and tears,  
That bright-gemmed crown thou shalt put on  
To wear through everlasting years.  
—Clara Everett.

January 6th, 1877.

FINDING HIMSELF IN THE HOSPITAL.

"What place do you call this here?" Benny asked, at length; "and how did I come here?"

"This is the Victoria Ward of St. Thomas's Hospital," answered the same soft voice, "and you were run over in the street this morning, and brought in. That is all I know about you, my little fellow."

"Oh, I remember now," said Benny, with a flash of returning intelligence. "I was trying to find some work, and was running across the street, when I got knocked down."

"Trying to find work!" echoed his new friend. "Such a tiny mite as you looking out for work?" she repeated half incredulously, half pityingly.

"Yes; cause father can't work; he's bad and won't never be no better; and mother, she can't do anything half her time, 'cause of her hands. So I was thinking of trying for something, and I had earned a penny already," he added, as if to prove his own powers, for the compassionate look on the face before him seemed rather to doubt his capabilities.

"You are indeed beginning betimes," she rejoined with a little sigh; for she knew how long it would be before the poor maimed little fellow would be going about again.

I must get up and go back to mother now. I s'pect I've been away a long time already."

"No, my boy, you must lie quiet and still where you are for the present," said the lady, who was training at the hospital to be a nurse. And she put her hand gently upon him as he was about to attempt to rise. "You can't get up yet, so don't try."

"But I must go to mother!" he cried, his large brown eyes fixed wistfully upon the other's face, whilst tears began to gather in them. "I want mother, and she'll want me, and she won't know what has become of me. If I don't never go back she'll think I'm killed." Tears were pouring down the little cheeks by this time.

"My poor little man, it is impossible for you to go back now, because you have been hurt very badly, and it will be some time before you can walk again. But we'll try and let mother know all about it, and some day, I dare say, she'll be able to come here and see you. And, meantime, you'll try to be a brave boy, so that we may be able to tell her how good you have been."

But Benny could not repress that yearning for "mother" which grew the sorer the time his pain increased. His longing was so great to lay his little head round upon her breast. For all around him was strange, pleasant though it might be. But it was not home.

Oh, the magic sound of that word! the hold it takes upon the heart! Poor little Benny loved that dark, dreary, miserable room in Pincher's Alley, in spite of its wretchedness, just because it was home; and he would rather have it gone back there than stand amid all the comparative grandeur of his present surroundings.—From the Quiver for October.

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