

CHEERFUL GIVING.

Right motives would cause us to offer *cheerfully*. The want of cheerfulness does much damage; it disheartens the office-bearers of the church; it deprives contributors of a rich reward. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." But unless we aim at the glory of God, if we do not give out of a sense of his love, we can never be liberal, seasonable, cheerful givers. This duty may be urged on the following grounds:—

1st Because we are all such debtors to the Lord. "Of his fulness have all we received."—John i. xvi. "He was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be made rich."—2 Cor. viii. 9. Who can estimate fully our obligation to the Lord for the Bible, for health, and other favors too numerous to be mentioned! Are we to do nothing then by way of gratitude and acknowledgment? Can we blame our fellow-creatures for ingratitude to ourselves, if we do not suitably acknowledge the unspeakable mercies of God?

2nd. It is a great privilege. In this we shall be co-workers with God. We shall be promoting our own temporal and spiritual welfare. At the last day honorable mention will be made of all your works of faith and labour of love. Not even a cup of cold water given to a disciple in the name of a disciple shall be forgotten. He that watereth shall be watered also himself. "Honour the Lord with thy substance and the first fruits of all thine increase so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses burst forth with new wine."

3rd. The cause of Christ needs our contributions. That "the Lord hath need of these" ought to be sufficient to move our hearts and open our purses for every good object. How much means are needed?—How many missionary, evangelistic, and philanthropic schemes might be set on foot, if the means were found? At present the church is almost at a stand still for want of means. Our Colleges, Home Mission, and Widows' and Orphans' Fund, are all in need of help. What a field of active benevolence might be found in many destitute localities at home; and yet the case of the

heathen is still more affecting. There millions are ignorant, degraded, brutalized, and dwelling under the shadow of death. "The Lord hath need of them," yes, of all his people can spare, in order to reach the benighted heathen and save them.

4th. The eye of the Master is upon us. He saw the poor widow among the crowd. He knew her circumstances thoroughly. His knowledge of us is equally clear. If we have means and do not give them, he knows that; and we may well be told at the last day "I was hungry and ye gave me no meat." On the other hand, such as sincerely devote their substance to his cause will yet hear a joyful welcome from the lips of their glorified Redeemer.

HAVE WE DONE WHAT WE COULD.

But how has it been with us in respect of this duty. Have we deemed it enough to give irrespective of the spirit or motive? Have we thought a small donation to be of no use, or did we content ourselves with giving what remained after our wants were supplied? If so, let the decision of our Saviour convince us of our error, and let us by genuine repentance turn from it.

Every one can help the cause of the Redeemer. It is now in need, but it will soon be triumphant. The Saviour is kind and considerate; he will accept your mite if you love him and cannot do more. What then is to hinder us? Why talk of poverty?—Think of the poor Macedonians who were willing above their ability. Think of Barnabas who sold all his possessions and brought the money to the apostles. Ought not the cause of Christ to be equally dear to you? Think of the people of God in the olden time, giving one-fifth, if not more, to the cause of Christ, and yet their privileges were not equal to yours. Theirs was mount Sinai: yours is mount Zion. Theirs was the heavy yoke of ceremonies: yours is Christ's easy yoke and his light burden. Theirs was the early dawn: yours is the noon day sun. Will you be less liberal than they? Above all, think of Him who was rich, yet for your sake was made poor. His lowly birth, his hunger and thirst, his trials, his sufferings and death, all in love for the poor, the perishing—and can you forget his