

for the glory of God and the prosperity of His cause, all the blessings and privileges bestowed upon us. The day of reckoning is coming; are we preparing for its approach?

THE MANNER OF CHRISTIAN GIVING.

Regarding the manner in which Christians are to contribute for religious and benevolent purposes the Apostle lays down the principle: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." The time for making the contribution is thus clearly pointed out and by it we are taught two important lessons.

1. That this laying aside must be done

SYSTEMATICALLY.

It is not left to each man to decide when, or how, he is to give. It must be done every Lord's day. There must be system. As God has set apart a special day for praise and prayer and for Bible reading and religious instruction, so He has set apart a day on which His people are to bring their offerings for the Lord's treasury.

2. It must be done

DEVOTIONALLY.

It is on the day set apart for worship. Men should worship God in their giving. Most men seem to think that they can worship God only in praise and prayer; and, as a consequence, they dissociate giving and worship. The direction of the Psalmist is: "Bring an offering and come into His courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness"—Ps. 96: 8, 9. No Jew was allowed to appear before the Lord empty-handed. He was commanded always to bring an offering. The Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews (chapter 13; 15, 16) tells his readers "to offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips giving thanks in His (Christ's) name;" but he does not stop there. "But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." He tells his Roman readers to "present their bodies a living sacrifice holy and ac-

ceptable unto God." The Apostle evidently believed that he could worship God as acceptably with his gold and silver and in doing good to his fellow men, as he could in his singing and praying. Indeed the man who does not worship the Lord by liberal contributions of money according to his means is not in the position to worship Him acceptably with the heart. The degree of liberality is a fair test of the degree of spirituality.

THE PLACE FOR CHRISTIAN GIVING.

The place where the offering is to be made is indicated. Regarding the words, "Lay by him in store," Dr. Hodge in his commentary says: "The words do not mean to lay by at home, but lay by himself. The direction is nothing more definite than, let him place by himself, i. e. let him take to himself what he means to give. What he was to do with it or where he was to deposit it is not expressed." The Dr. is of opinion that the place of deposit was some common treasury. Remembering that the laying by in store was done on the Lord's day, that it was done as an act of Christian worship, that the Jews had been accustomed by divine appointment to bring their offerings with them into the temple of the Lord and that the early Christians had a common treasury into which they threw their contributions, we are warranted in the conclusion that the house of public praise and prayer was the place where the public offering of gold and silver and copper should be made. If our Christian people would but thus associate their giving with their praying, we would not have an empty Church treasury nor would there be so many fruitless prayers and so much solemn mockery in our Sabbath day services. We would not have men singing—

"Were the whole realm of nature mine
That were a present far too small"—

and at the same time giving one, five, ten or twenty cents for the Home or Foreign Mission, when they should give one, five, ten or twenty dollars.