

The Canadian Evangelist.

"GO . . . SPEAK . . . TO THE PEOPLE ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE."

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THE Canadian Evangelist

is devoted to the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ; and pleads for the union of all believers in the Lord Jesus in harmony with his own prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, and on the basis set forth by the Apostle Paul in the following terms: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."—Eph. iv. 1-6.

"Take heed what you Hear."
"Take heed how you Hear."
MARK AND LUKE.

"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." The order is, first, hearing, second, believing, third, eternal life, which is secured by a "faithful continuance in well-doing." Hearing, scripturally considered, means vastly more than a mere assent to the historical records presented by the sacred writers. It is possible to hear without having any perceptible impression left upon the mind of the hearer; hence the Apostle says: "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard lest we drift away." Hearing, therefore, in a scriptural sense, means to earnestly "heed"—to receive the ingrafted word which James says is able to save the soul. Hearing, then, evidently implies a hearty reception of all God has said to us or about us, seeing He has, in this last age, spoken by his Son; and Jesus says: "He that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath eternal life." In the Revelation we have this beautiful scripture: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock—if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and sup with him and he with Me." The writer of the Hebrew letter says of a class to whom the Gospel was preached, it did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth." If you do not believe it, however true, it will have no power upon you. The word of God is "living and powerful," but still the Saviour says: "According to your faith be it unto you." The most important message, though flashed over the wire, falls powerless on your ear if you do not believe it. But what about the telegram that brings the sad news of the death of one who is very dear to you? You say: "If I accept the message as true, I feel there is a power—an all most irresistible power in the short sentence: 'Your son, your daughter, or your friend is dead.'" There is a power in words, when believed. Let those who are engaged in preaching the everlasting Gospel pray that they may "so speak that many may believe." "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of

Heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in Heaven." "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine and doeth them, shall be like a man that built his house upon a rock." "But ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." James says, respecting those who hear and do not: "He is like a man beholding his natural face in a glass—he goes his way and forgets what manner of man he was." May God save us from cold indifference about eternal things. If eternal life depends upon "what we hear," or "how we hear," and upon what we believe and what we do—it is of the utmost importance and of eternal interest to us to "give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away." I mean the things which God has spoken to us by His Son. "This is life eternal," said our Lord, "to know Thee and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." Paul to the Philippians says: "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering being made conformable unto his death." "Faith cometh by hearing," and the faith thus produced by giving the more earnest heed to the things which God has spoken to us by His Son, will bring the sinner to repentance and reformation of life. Hence, to believe in God and his Son, Jesus Christ, is not merely to accept the evidence concerning Him historically, but to be brought into direct contact with Him—to be made partakers of the divine nature. To think of Jesus as one whom we know—"This is life eternal to know Thee, etc." To believe in Christ, then, in a scriptural sense is to receive Him in all His offices, and in all His personal glory. To trust Him in all the relations He sustains to us as our prophet, priest and king. To behold Him as our only hope and refuge, the Lord our righteousness. It will be readily perceived by the foregoing that hearing in a scriptural sense implies faith, and that the faith of the Gospel will lead to repentance, obedience, reconciliation, yea, complete sanctification. "If you do these things you shall never fall." "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." H. BROWN.
Ridgetown, Nov. 1, '91.

The Parable of the Talents.

This parable is probably one of the most familiar to the diligent Bible student. The preacher uses it often as a favorite theme. Its fulness is surpassed only by its simplicity. To sinner and saint alike its adaptability is incomparable. He who would find its treasures must search eagerly; for, like many other passages of scripture, this "grows the more by reaping." Let us study it a short time, in an introductory way, for at least all that can be said is morely a door of entrance, a prelude, a beginning. The man travelling into a far country is the Master; His return will be after His mediatorial reign shall end; the servants are the Disciples. To the servants were intrusted talents to be increased by profitable use, and each was to be "rewarded according to his work." The numbers five, two, one, have no

special significance; any other numbers might just as well be used. We are well acquainted with the talents of the parable, but what bearing has the parable, and especially the talent on the Disciples of today? We often hear it said that a brother has a talent for speaking, another for praying, etc., and that these talents are to be improved; the talents, in most cases, are made to refer to natural ability.

Now, while it is true that the word talent, by the accommodation of speech, has come to mean a special gift in some particular line, yet the interpretation of the parable as briefly given above, which is the commonly received rendering of it, while true in part, obscures or omits entirely the real application of it to those who have lived since the Saviour's time; for it is possible that a man may improve his talents or natural abilities to the utmost without doing good to any, thereby occupying the double position of the five and one talent man. The omission of the distinction as laid down in the text deprives the parable of its true meaning. Now, let me say, that the talents are not our abilities; for in the text talents, not abilities, were given. He gave to every man according to his several ability, are the words used. The number of talents given depended on the extent of the ability of each. The man with the most received five talents and the others were intrusted commensurate with their ability. Everyone in the kingdom has abilities, and those who have not are not fit subjects of it. All have talents just as certainly as they have abilities. Let no one say they have no talent, and are, therefore, as dead branches on a living tree. Abilities come by nature, talents by grace. When the Master calls us into His service the poorest as well as the richest in natural attainments can find "talent" all along their respective lines. Bear in mind, however, that the talent and ability are no way synonymous, the former is something capable of improvement; the latter being the power of improving the talent. This distinction must be constantly kept before us, or we will confound things that differ, and thereby be confused.

Whatever may be the real significance of the talent, and it may be many things, yet to my mind talents are our opportunities for doing good. Certainly these are always in proportion to our abilities. By improving them as they come to us by the moments or the hours we have great reward. These are our Master's treasures, and so they appear for the first time, rugged, crude, naked, they may not carry with them any value, but when we improve them, transform them by the power of a single act, they may have the worth of shining, glittering gold. It is by so doing that we lay up treasures in heaven. Opportunities and abilities are the Christian's stock-in-trade, and as we use one upon the other to-day we gain promise for the morrow. To the man with the most talents, and the man with the least, the "well done" will be said. They both did their best, and that is all the Master expects. We never do our best, however, until we do our all. The man with one talent might have had said to him well done,

his talent was in proportion to his ability, but he digged in the earth and hid his Lord's money. "Thou wicked and slothful servant," fell upon his ears ringing with doom. Alas! too many in the church to-day are hiding their talents, allowing their opportunities, as golden as the hours, to go unheeded, and to be lost forever. We can no more call them back than we can call a soul from the other world. How great are our responsibilities! Why stand ye here all the day idle! — E. B. D., *Bowmanville, in St. John Christian.*

When has a Person Eternal Life?

Jesus answers, "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii. 36.

Now certain schools of theology have taught—taking this answer as authority—that eternal life is a gift of God immediately bestowed upon the person believing prior to any act of obedience. Let us see if we can find out the meaning of the term or terms here used by the Saviour and translated "believeth not," then we shall know what the Saviour meant when using "believeth" as the condition of eternal life.

The word employed by the Saviour and translated "believeth not" occurs some sixteen or seventeen times in the New Testament. The word is *Apeitheo*, but in King James' translation is not uniformly translated, a fact which will be apparent as we proceed. In the following places the word (or some form of it) used by the Saviour in John iii. 36, can be found; the italicized words and the various translations of this word.

- (1). He that "believeth not" the Son shall not see life. John iii. 36.
- (2). But the "UNBELIEVING" Jews stirred up the Gentiles. Acts xiv. 2.
- (3). But the Jews which "BELIEVED NOT." Acts xvii. 5.
- (4). When divers were hardened and "BELIEVED NOT." Acts xix. 9.
- (5). Do NOT OBEY the truth. Rom. ii. 8.
- (6). All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a "DISOBEDIENT." Rom. x. 21.
- (7). In times past have "NOT BELIEVED" God. Rom. xi. 30.
- (8). Even so have these "NOT BELIEVED." Rom. xi. 31.
- (9). God hath concluded them all in "UNBELIEF." Rom. xi. 32.
- (10). May be delivered from them that do "NOT BELIEVE." Rom. xv. 31.
- (11). To whom sware He . . . to them that BELIEVED NOT. Heb. iii. 18.
- (12). Rahab perished not with them that BELIEVED NOT. Heb. xi. 31.
- (13). Which stumble at the Word being DISOBEDIENT. 1 Peter ii. 8.
- (14). If any "OBEY NOT" the Word. 1 Peter iii. 1.
- (15). Which sometimes were "DISOBEDIENT." 1 Peter iii. 20.
- (16). End be of them that "OBEY NOT" the gospel of God. 1 Peter iv. 17.

In the foregoing we notice that *Apeitheo* is translated ten times by "believeth not—not believed—or unbeliever"—the remaining six by "obeys not" or "disobedient." In examining

the marginal readings we find that four out of the ten read "OBEYS NOT" or "disobedient"—leaving but six out of the sixteen favoring the translation by any form of the verb *believe*.

The American Bible Union follows closely the common English version with the exception of Acts xvii. 5—*believeth not* is omitted and Rom. xi. 30-31 in *disobeyed*, and verse 32 has *disobedience*.

The Living Oracles—a translation of the New Testament from the original Greek—by Doctors G. Campbell, James Macknight and Philip Doddridge—and revised by A. Campbell—gives some form of the word *believe* with the negative in the five following passages—Acts xiv. 2, xvii. 5, xix. 9, Heb. iii. 18, xi. 31. In ten others is found "*disobedience*" or *obeys not*—and in John iii. 36 it reads—*He who rejects the Son shall not see life*.

The "revised version" gives WITHOUT EXCEPTION some form of the word "DISOBEY." So that John iii. 36 reads: *He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life, but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life—but the wrath of God abideth on him.* According to the evidence before us and much more at our command, we are justified in saying that a man receives eternal life when he OBEYS the Son and not BELIEVES. And to this agreeth the words of the inspired writer, "And being made perfect He (the Saviour) became the author of eternal salvation (or eternal life) unto all them that obey him. Heb. v. 9.—? H. C., in St. John Christian.

Bitterness of Unbelief.

Mr. Renan, the brilliant French author and infidel, in his youth was gladdened by the hope and joy of religious faith. He grew wise, however, with that wisdom of men which is foolishness with God, and turning from the Bread of Life prefers to break his teeth against a stone. What a hymn of despair is the following utterance of his:—

"We are living on the perfume of an empty vase. Our children will have to live in the shadow of a shadow. Their children, I fear, will have to subsist on something less."

This is only surpassed in awful sadness by the exclamation of the lamented Professor Clifford, out of the Egyptian midnight of his professed atheism:—

"We have seen the spring sun shine out of an empty heaven to light up a soulless earth; we have felt with utter loneliness that the Great Companion is dead!"

Said the great American apostle of infidelity, standing beside the coffin of his brother:—

"Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud and the only answer is the echo of a wailing cry."

"Without God" man has "no hope;" he is a fragment of a broken-up universe, and there is no one to put him in the place where he belongs. But when he knows the Lord then he finds a Father, a Saviour, a Comforter and a Friend, and his life finds its axis, and moves in harmonious order under the guidance of the gracious and ever-watchful providence of God.