

THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN

THE INDIVIDUAL CUP.

(Rev. E. Minter in Lutheran Observer.)

An article in the Observer of August 7th, concerning the use of the "individual cups" in our holy communion, suggested a query to my mind, namely: Are there any just grounds for argument on this subject?

Both logical and scriptural ideas produced by the writer in the article above referred to remind me of a discussion at a German Baptist conference where a difference of opinion between the doctors of that denomination was discussed of whether the corner of the women's bonnet frills should be out round or square. Concerning the cup which our Savior used in ministering the wine to his apostles we have no description, but I doubt very much whether it was of the same shape and material which the cup now in common use for that purpose is, and to my mind, it does not matter in the least. The idea of the writer that the use of the individual cup is unscriptural and "separates fellowship" in the communion by not all drinking from the same cup is laying a premise which is impossible to follow out according to his logic. The wine of necessity must be separated to each communicant as he partakes of the cup, for all cannot drink the same wine unless he assumes to be a priest and drinks it all himself, which is not Lutheran. I have seen instances frequently where four cups have been used to minister the wine prior to the introduction of the individual cup, and no objections have been raised on any such grounds as disuniting fellowship.

To my mind, too much stress is laid on the material things and the true idea of our Holy Communion is lost sight of. Jesus says, "This is my body; This my blood." The wine and cup are material things, but the holy sacrament is spiritual, the mystical body of Christ, and is received through the elements of bread and wine which the vessels contain. But the efficacy is found in the words of the institution, "Given and shed for you," etc. The law of sanitation decidedly favors the individual cup. Where from a dozen to a thousand partake from the same cup, there are always those who are diseased in some way or other among the number who may leave a germ in the cup which may be disastrous to the one who receives it. Furthermore, men who wear long moustaches saturated with tobacco and dust, from the street and from their horses, who drive in from the country—these being dragged through the wine in the cup and a delicate woman next to receive it, I could not blame any one under such circumstances who would refuse it. Since the cup has nothing to do with the sanctity of the sacrament, sanitation and convenience are of next importance to be considered.

We are frequently called upon to minister the communion to the sick in their homes where the family and friends also partake of the cup. This I think is a very dangerous practice, to say the least, if only one cup is used. According to my understanding of this subject, there is but one side to it, and that is in favor of the individual cup.

We admit that the cup used in the sacrament is a sacred vessel set apart for sacred purposes only. But since we cannot have the same cup which our Lord used, there must be of necessity somewhere a distribution of cups from different denominations, and yet there is but one church and one communion in God's sight. This being true, I can see no good ground for argument against the use of the individual cup from either a scriptural or any other standpoint.

No man is ever defeated until he surrenders.

HEAVEN AND HELL.

In the Bible we have the same scriptural grounds for believing in hell as for believing in heaven. Many people want to believe in heaven but not in hell, and yet they have no more reason for one than for the other. Jesus holds both places up in contrast in nearly every reference he makes to either one. In Dan. 12 : 2 and other places in the Old Testament we have the two presented in contrast. In Matt. 18 : 8 and 9, also chap. 25, verses 34 and 41, we have the same contrast. And in Matt. 25 : 46 the contrast is as close as language can make it. "Eternal Life and Eternal Punishment." The first makes very plain that there is a heaven, a place prepared, and that that place is eternal. We accept this as true. We do not question its certainty or its eternal duration. And yet we have the very same language used with reference to the fact of hell and its duration. The Greek word "Aionion," here translated Eternal in each instance, means the same in each instance. It means that life or heaven shall be eternal in duration, and it means that hell or punishment, including place of separation, shall also be eternal. If, therefore, there is a heaven, then there is a hell, and if the one is eternal, then the other is eternal. Oh! let us make sure of the one and shun the other. Let us also try to win as many as we can from the way that leads to the place of punishment to the path that leads to life and glory.—Rev. P. A. Tinkham.

GOLDEN GRAIN BIBLE READINGS.

(By J. A. R. Dickson, D.D., Galt.)

The Range of Prayer.

"Whatever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you."—John xvi. 13.
Deliverance, Acts xii. 5-10.
The Holy Spirit, Acts viii. 15-17.
Power to witness of Christ, Acts iv. 31.
Life from the dead, Acts ix. 40.
Guidance, Acts xxii. 10.
Length of life, 2 Kings xx. 3-6.
The favour of God, Psalm iv. 6.
Protection, 2 Kings xix. 15-20.
All temporal and spiritual blessing, 1 Kings viii. 25-53.
Salvation, Acts ii. 21.

THE COMING OF CHRISTIANITY.

Christianity asks no favors of the world or of its enemies. It came unheralded. It was established upon its own merits, and has fought its way, from age to age, into recognition and power, in spite of human opposition, ridicule, contempt and opprobrium. It carries with it its own commendation or indorsement. It answers a felt need in the individual heart and in the social organism. It wins the day ever presenting a record of noble, self-sacrificing, beneficent and grand achievement on the part of its followers, while blessing and prospering the communities where it gains a foothold. We have no fears for its triumph. It is of God, and it can not fail. It is a necessity to man, and he must have it.—Selected.

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS.

To be near Christ is to be near One who in a land of light and shadow is full of feeling for us, and able to save. To those who learn by His Grace to lean upon and to love Him, He becomes Guide and Comforter and Friend, the support in life's struggle, the resource in life's darkest disaster, and when life is over, by His tenderness and pity, their exceeding great reward. There is indeed "Shadow" in the great fact of the grave, but here as ever there is also Light in Christ. Deep is the Valley of the Shadow, but Christ Himself has passed before us;—we have His sympathy, we have His supporting love.—Canon Knox-Little.

LIFE LESSONS FOR ME.*

God—what is he?
Give some great lessons from the life of Joseph.
How may we become like God?

In the beginning—God. God first. These opening words of the Bible are illustrative of its unlikeness to all other books. They are books that put man first. The Bible puts God first, and keeps him first. Otherwise the opening words would be only profanity. But from the first to the last the Bible is the book of God and of God's government of the world. If there are mysteries, as there are, the Bible refers them back to the greatness and mystery of God. He knows their meaning, and must have some noble purpose which he is fulfilling through them. All those who believe in the great spiritual principle of the Bible will put God first. All authority and power are his, and we can trust him to the end.

The original law of life after the creation was "each after its kind." Each tree brought forth fruit after its kind, and the seed thereof reproduced the tree. And men saw at once that in the moral life the same law was to hold. The hate of Cain brought forth its fruitage after its kind, and from generation to generation the heritage of evil came down. It was the blessed law of good also. Love produced love, and goodness yielded goodness. From the outset of human history we see the school of God set up and the discipline of God working on men's hearts to teach them to serve and to obey, and to chasten their selfishness and disobedience with all the tender severity of a Father. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

The patriarchs were great because they were the first men to believe in God, and to walk with him in simple personal faith. They witnessed by their lives to the rule of God over all life. They discerned for themselves, and began to teach men the principle of right living,—namely, the law of living to God. Whether the patriarchs were better men than their neighbors or not, they had found the true basis of life, and sooner or later their lives and the lives of their successors would show the influence of their discovery. Living by a true law will make the life lived a truer life.

Genesis shows us God at work in his world. He is still at work in it. He did not create the world and then withdraw from it. The same power that created it is needed and is available to sustain it. God is ever creating it. All life is his doing. In the seasons, in the laws of nature, in all good without and within the soul, in all true genius, in all worth and love and truth, God is working still as at the beginning.

Are we as wise as the patriarchs to discern this?

Are we working with God or against him?

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

Mon.—Temptation (Gen. 3 : 1-11).
Tue.—Faith and works (Gen. 6 : 13-22).
Wed.—The great surrender (Gen. 12 : 1-7).
Thurs.—The suburbs of Sodom (Gen. 13 : 5-13).
Fri.—Isaac, the sacrifice (Gen. 22 : 1-19).
Sat.—Jacob, the unforgotten (Gen. 28 : 10-22).

Obstinacy and stubbornness are rather unlovely twins. Persistence is their popular cousin.

*Y. P. Topic, Sunday, Jan. 24, 1909—Life lessons for me from the Book of Genesis. (Gen. 1 : 1-3, 26-31)