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Preaching to Win Souls.

By Rev. T. L. Cuyler, D. D.

"How far do your chief teachers aim at the conversion of souls?" This question, once addressed to me by that master workman, Charles H. Spurgeon, is pertinent yet it shows his estimate of the highest purpose of the Christian ministry.

Certainly, the chief aim of our Divine Master was to seek and to save the lost: His first text of which we read was the word, "Repent!" To win souls to Jesus Christ by the aid of the Holy Spirit was the main purpose of the Apostles. Paul struck the keynote when he declared that he was determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and he ceased not to warn sinners night and day with tears. The great reformation in the sixteenth century was far more than a protest against prevailing errors; it was a direct bringing of souls to the Lord Jesus Christ. When a spiritual famine prevailed in Great Britain, the Wesleys and Whitefield rose at once to the demand of the times; they addressed their fellow-countrymen as exposed to the "waste to come," and their own aim was to lead souls to the Saviour. Out of those wise labors grew the mighty Methodist church, with its world-wide labors and philanthropies.

"How far do you aim in life at the conversion of souls?" No minister is likely to succeed in what he undertakes with only half heart; certainly he can never do what he never attempts to do.

If your whole heart is not bent on the glorious work of converting sinners by the help of God, you will never accomplish it. You may produce many able discourses freighted with valuable thought; you may wax eloquent over social evils, and plead for reformatory measures and philanthropies; you may say many good, true, and helpful things; but if you suppose of leading immortal souls to Christ, your ministry in one vital point will miss its mark.

There is much talk about "saving the masses;" but people are not saved in the mass; they must be reached and persuaded Christward.

ONE BY ONE.

Men may go to meditation by the regiment; they must be led to Jesus individually. A single soul was audience enough for the Master at the well of Sychar, and in the "iniquity room" with Nicodemus.

Aim, therefore, to make your preaching *personal*—*Christ-centered*. You are not to be a pulpit's slave; but you may so present God's truth powerfully and lovingly that every unconverted person in your audience may be made to feel, "That he means me!" "Thou art the man," sent David's arrow into Nathan's heart. Pray God to help you face every sinner before you so fervently, that you will tell him plainly that if he does not repent of his sins and accept and obey Jesus Christ, he will be lost forever! The too common assertion that the faithful, tender and solemn presentation of the Divinely revealed retribution of sin is an attempt to "scare people into religion," is utterly preposterous. As "ambassadors for Christ," it is our bounden duty to "declare the whole counsel of God," and we have no right to conceal or to blittle any great revealed truth. If Noah had not been "moved with fear" of a predicted deluge, he never would have prepared an ark for saving himself and his household. It is a criminal cruelty to conceal from the transgressors of God's law and of God's love that "the wages of sin is death."

The Ecotblack's Story.

Going from the office one evening last week we were stopped on the second floor of the building by a wan-faced, sad-eyed boy. He says he's seventeen, but in size he doesn't look it by a half dozen years. He hadn't had enough to eat since he came into the world. Hunger is a law of his

life. Despair peeps from his sad little eyes, and premature sorrow has been cut into the cheeks which God intended should bloom with roses of youthful joy. But joy is a stranger to this young star. He lives in hell—the hell created by a drunken father. He was cursed before he was born, and the saloon led it.

"Let me give you a shine for mother's sake," he said. The appealing tone in which he spoke must have stung the heart of God. It was more than an appeal; it was a live coal of prayer from the white altar of the Eternal.

As his slender little hand moved swiftly to and fro across the shoe, he said: "Say, can't I handle a brush, Mister?"

"You are, indeed, my boy."

Seeing that he was disposed to talk, we asked: "Are your parents living?"

"Yes," he answered quickly, and a flood of bitter memories seemed to look through his eyes. "Yes, but you see, Dad—he don't live with us any more."

"Doesn't he?"

"No, we had to drive him away. He'd steal mother's hard-earned money and mine, and spend it for beer."

"Too bad, boy; too bad."

"But say, Mister, he like to get us before he went." Here his eyes sparkled as he recalled their narrow escape. "Policemen were just in time to save us."

"Save you? How?"

"Why, man, he had a big butcherknife, and was about to kill mother and me, when the cops nabbed him."

This boy is worse than fatherless. Why? Ask the saloon. While brutalizing his father it also robbed him of the money with which he could have built a home.

This boy has not an equal chance in the world with other boys. Why? The saloon makes him shine shoes, when his place is in school.

This boy goes home every night to a crushed, broken and husbandless mother. Why? Because the saloon has taken away her husband.

This brave little warrior goes forth every morning to the streets to fight the wolf for mother, himself, and five still smaller ones who are unconsiously saloon victims.

The institution which will make a thief and a murderer of a father will destroy a nation, if given time. The one remedy is: Destroy the institution.—*Kingslow Citizen*.

THE OL' TUNES.

You kin talk about yer anthems,

An' yer aris an' sich,

An' yer mad in choit singin'!

That you think so awful rich;

But you orter heard us youngsters

In the times now far away,

A-singin' o' the ol' tunes

In the ol'-fashioned way.

There was some of us sung treble

An' a few of us growled bass;

An' the tide o' song flowed smoothly

With it's complement o' grace;

There was spirit in that music,

An' a kind o' solemn sway,

A-singin' o' the ol' tunes

In the ol'-fashioned way.

I remember oft n'standin'

In my homespun pantaloons—

On my face the bronze an' freckles

O' the suns o' youthful junes—

Thinkin' that no mortal minstrel

Ever chanted sich a lay

As the ol' tunes we was singin'

In the ol'-fashioned way.

The boys 'ud always lead us,

An' the girls 'ud all chime in,

Till the sweetness o' the singin'

Robbed the list'nin' soul o' sin,

An' I used to tell the parson

'Twas as good to sing as pray,
When the people sang the ol' tunes
In the ol'-fashioned way.

How I long ag'in to hear 'em
Pourin' forth from soul to soul,
With the treble high an' meller,
An' the bass's mighty roll;
But the times is very diff'rent,
An' the music heard today
Ain't the singin' o' the ol' tunes
In the ol'-fashioned way.

Little screechin' by a woman,
Little squawkin' by a man,
Then the organ's twiddle-twaddle,
Jest the empty space to span,
An' ef you should even tank it,
'Tis n't proper for to say
'That you want to hear the ol' tunes
In the ol'-fashioned way.

But I think that some bright mornin',
When the toils of life air o'er,
An' the sun o' heaven arisin'
Glads with light the happy shore—
I shall hear the angel cho'us,
In the realms of endless day,
A-singin' o' the ol' tunes
In the ol'-fashioned way.

From LYRIC OF LOWLY LIFE, by Paul Laurence Dunbar. A Negro Poet. (*Chapman and Hall*.)

The Divine Comfort.

By the Bishop of Ripon.

Comfort is a word which in its common use has lost something of its original robustness. Comfort is regarded as something which calms the agitated and storm-swept heart. It is regarded as soothing rather than stimulating, but in its true meaning comfort is much more noble than the mere consoling of the troubled spirit. No doubt the mother comforts the child when she takes the little weeping one on her knees and kisses away his tears as he lies in her soft, warm, sheltering arms. There is something analogous to this in divine comfort: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort thee." But the outlook of the divine comfort is even wider than imagery suggests. With the earthly mother pity and sympathy for the child's distress prompt her to embrace the crying child. With the divine comfort there is always the look beyond the sorrow of the passing hour. There is the desire to fortify as well as to console, to strengthen the heart as well as assuage the grief, to put the soul in the way of victory over sorrow rather than in the way of escape from it. In all the divine comfort there is a ministry of power to bear as well as consolation because of trouble. The divine Comforter binds up the broken heart, but He seeks also to make the spirit brave to endure.

There is a bracing energy about divine comfort, then, which lifts into a higher range than the mere pale negative soothing of soul which is commonly associated with the word. True comfort brings fresh courage to the soul. It stimulates, arouses invigorates, besides consoling the sorrowing heart.

"There is a brewery in Jerusalem.
"There is a distillery on Mt. Lebanon.
"There are American saloons in Damascus."
The saloon is the church's greatest foe in its foreign missionary work. The missionary goes to Christianize, while the rum shop follows in his steps to destroy his work—even to hurl the people back into worse than heathen darkness
The barroom is the church's deadliest enemy at home. It is the spawn-shop of infidelity. It is the hot-bed of anarchism. It is the inexorable enemy of both church and home.