

the Bible more precious than this one. It is the promise of the Father's love and of the indwelling of the Father and the Son in the believer.

But is not this promise of the Father's love contrary to the general tenor of secular teaching, which makes God's love to us the cause and note the consequence of our love to Him. "We love him because he first loved us." No. There is perfect harmony between these two aspects of the love of God. The love of God to the world is different from His love to His people. God loves the world with the love of benevolence, He loves His people with the love of complacency. Was not the first kind of love in the love of Jesus for the young ruler and for Jerusalem, the city over which He wept; we see the second kind of love in the love of Jesus for the Disciple John and for the members of the home at Bethany. The love of which Jesus speaks in the text is the love of complacency. It is the love of which Zephaniah speaks, when he says, "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in His love, he will joy over thee with singing."

The promise "We will come unto him and make our abode with him" is much the same as the previous one, "I will love him and will manifest myself to him." Both promises have reference to the actual experience of the believer in conscious fellowship with God. The connection between the two clauses of the text teaches us that our enjoyment of salvation is the result of our loving obedience. There is a difference between salvation and the enjoyment of salvation. Salvation is secured by faith alone; the enjoyment of salvation depends upon faithful obedience. After David's grievous fall, he lost the joy of salvation, though he still had salvation itself. And so he offered the prayer, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." Sin deprives us of the light of God's countenance and plunges our souls in darkness.

In the 15th and 16th verses our Lord connects keeping His commandments with receiving the Holy Spirit. He says, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments. . . . And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you forever." In these few verses then as the reward of obedience, the spirit dwells in the believer, the Son manifests Himself to the believer, the Father and the Son come and take up their abode in the believer's soul.

The measure of the Spirit's indwelling and the richness of the manifestation of the son to the believer's soul are in proportion to the measure of the believer's consecration and obedience. We might refer to Fletcher and Rutherford and other saints, who at times had such manifestations of the power and love of God that they had to cry to Him to stay His hand. These saints had a brighter experience than ordinary Christians, because they were more faithful in their obedience to Christ.

Let it be our great aim to have the Father and the Son make their abode with us. And to this end let us watch unto prayer and let us be faithful in our obedience.

The Evil of Dislocated Truth.

One of the characteristics of the church life of the present is the importance attached to smaller matters. The less important truths are defined and illustrated with painstaking care. The less weighty duties are infused often with motives sufficiently powerful to secure the discharge of duties the most weighty. The age is that of the microscope, the scalpel, the hair balance, not only in the sphere of the physical sciences, but also in that of morals and religion.

This is as it should. It is well to attach importance to smaller matters. Every truth, even the least significant, is sufficiently important to repay the energy expended in its discovery and illustration. Every duty is sufficiently weighty to claim the attention of those under obligation to discharge it. The Lord Himself having in view the scrupulous care with which the Pharisees tithed mint anise and cummin said: "these ought ye to have done." It is the habit of entering into detail of examining the unescrip in both material and vital phenomena that has made modern science such a power in human affairs. The same habit adopted with care by the church in expounding truth and in enforcing duty will not go to lessen its influence among the forces that go to improve the moral and spiritual condition of the race. This habit, however, this characteristic, of church life, is not without its dangers. Less important matters may so engross the attention that the more important are in danger of being ignored and so cease to exert their due influence. This possibility had some years ago become actual in modern physical science, and it has not altogether ceased to be so. Science was so occupied with the particular that it lost sight of the general. Its gaze was so fixed upon the individual of the material world that, at last, it could not see the universal of the spiritual world. The great truths of philosophy and religion were displaced by the lesser truths of physical science. And this, owing to the habit of examining a part as if it were the whole, of attaching importance to lesser matters that is due only to the greater. The same possibility has become actual more than once in the history of the church. It did so in the days of our Lord, especially among the Pharisees. They allowed themselves to be so occupied with the minutiae of the one law that they lost sight of the great matters of the Mosaic law such as mercy, justice and faith. They thought so much about their ministrations, the washing of cups and platters, that they overlooked, in large measure, the need of spiritual cleansing. They were so diligent in assuming the true posture in worship that they forgot to enquire if the spirit was right. They exerted themselves so much to keep the people ceremonially pure

that they had no energy left to devote to their eternal salvation. Smaller matters, right and useful in their own place, were made so prominent as to displace the more important; and with what results is known to every reader of the story of the Gospels. There are not wanting signs that go to give warning to the effect that this evil in church life may reappear in our time. The discussions carried on in the religious press, the published records of church courts, conferences, councils, associations, as well as the congregational services, reveal the fact that much time and energy are given to the discussion of unimportant matters should be devoted to these questions of greatest human concern. Last summer for a month or two the pages of a prominent American Presbyterian weekly were burdened with communications in reference to the "Individual Communion Cups." About the same time it was reported that at a ministerial meeting in one of the States of the Union considerable time was occupied in *deliberating* on the suggestion that a plate of *clean* straws passed to the communicants through which they could sip the wine, would be an improvement on the "Individual Communion Cups." The reports of conferences show that it is not an unfrequent occurrence to have the discussion of weighty topics sidetracked for the discussion of matters comparatively trifling, matters quite in place in the nursery and kindergarten, but out of place in conferences, avowedly intended to secure more rapid progress in the work of human salvation. In the pulpit service it frequently appears that the more profound truths have to give place to less important truths, and that the profound truths are taken in hand the desire is to discuss them in a manner that will entertain rather than in a manner that will exhaust the theme and give the hearer a thorough understanding of it. With such facts in view it does not seem too much to say that there is danger at the present of overlooking the weightier matters of the law in the close attendance that is given to those of less significance. This state of matters indicates a lack of depth in experience, a defective comprehension of the truth. Those who have had a deep and searching experience will not be allowed by that experience to displace the more important by the less important. Their experience has shown them what is of the greatest worth. It will thus prove a safeguard when there is danger of overestimating the lesser and underestimating the greater. Those who have received a proper comprehension of the truth, and have allowed truths great and small to exercise the full sweep of their influence upon heart and life, will know the relative value of different truths and will thus be prevented from dislodging the great by the small, the deep truths of God by maxims of human prudence. The fact that any do so goes to evidence that their experience has been far from deep, and their knowledge of the truth far from comprehensive.

In addition to its being a symptom, this state of affairs is a mighty cause. It goes to reproduce itself in still more aggravating forms. There is no more subtle form of error than truth out of its proper relations and perhaps there is no form of error that inflicts greater injury. For instance, a teacher may give such prominence to the life of Christ as to throw into the background the influence of His death, he may in discoursing of His death give such prominence to its moral influence as to overlook its substitutionary character. In so doing he teaches error, and error that will lessen the spiritual vigor of the church and hinder its growth. Then too the fact remains that it is weighty truths, after all, that prove the weighty motives in influencing human conduct. The knowledge of human sin and divine redemption, of human needs and divine provision for these needs are the mightiest elevating forces that can be brought to bear upon human life. If through any cause these lose their due prominence the result will inevitably be a church life far from vigorous and very ineffective. The good of the church and the salvation of the world demands that the great truths of sin and redemption with their associated duties be kept in the front while lesser truths are allowed to fall into the rear.

The Development of Talents.

Every man must have some sort of "start in life," as every building must have a foundation. And as upon the foundation of the building the superstructure is erected, so upon one's natural endowments are built those capabilities and accomplishments which make a man useful in the world.

The beginning in life may not be very promising, and yet one's talents, which are God-given, may be developed almost without limit. This is the whole of education. No man can give to himself a talent which God withheld. It is his business first to discover his own natural endowments and then to develop them for special or general uses, according as he determines the direction in which his duty lies.

These natural endowments are like diamonds. They must first be mined: those materials which have a baser use must be cleared away until the gems are exposed. Even when found they must be subjected to the grinding and polishing process which we call education.

There may be few of "the richly endowed" men, but every man has some gifts; and these are his capital: these are his "start in life." This capital may be increased by judicious use, or it may decay in idleness.

A man's wisdom is shown in the way in which he develops his natural endowments.

We want not time to serve God, but zeal; we have not too much business, but too little grace.

We promise "loyalty to our church." Do you attend the Sabbath morning and mid-week prayer-meeting regularly?