

ing off a right hand. But it turns out that there is no self-denial in it to a soul fully imbued with the mind of God. To such a soul, "IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE." We do no one a favour by giving; we bless ourselves, that is, we, in the very act, break open the alabaster box which pours on us its own fragrance and refreshing.

The grand illustration of this blessedness is to be found in the Godhead. Man likes to get, God lives to give; and it is God that is "blessed for ever." In the plan of Redemption, we find THE FATHER counting it "more blessed to give than to receive." He develops (so to speak) His own bliss by giving that immense, that infinite gift, His own Son. This is the rate at which He who is blessed in giving, delights to give. Here is a gratification of His giving heart; He bestows on man the unspeakable gift, the Beloved Son, and to Him He grants the gift of a multitude that no man can number, a countless flock of ransomed souls for their Shepherd's glory, while to each of the flock He gives not only the Beloved Son, but also the Holy Spirit with all His train of graces and joys. Then, also we find the Son's rate of giving to be in no respect less liberal. He gives Himself, "God manifest in flesh" for us, Himself with all His obedience, all His suffering and death, all His merit, and all that all these purchase and make sure. The price of the purchased blessings must not be forgotten; for He gave not only service, but anguish, woe, death, in short whatever justice sought—all in order to present us with grace and glory, without money or price on our part. O what giving is this! O my soul what giving is here! And the Holy Ghost also (who in Psa. li. 12, is called "THE FREE," i.e. the princely, or generous, or liberal Spirit), He comes in the name of Jesus, and makes a gift of HIMSELF and thus in one sum we are made to receive, "Love, joy, peace, goodness," in short, all holiness, all excellency, and all that is contained in Eternal Life. What giving! we again exclaim. The full sea of Godhead-bliss flowing in upon man! And this giving is one of the forms of Godhead felicity. "IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE." Men and Brethren, who would not taste something of this peculiar joy? "It is not your money I want" (says a man of God), "but your happiness."

III. HE STATED THE MEASURE, AND RULE.

"FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE;" (Matthew x. 8.) Ye have got from your Master without His looking for requital in any shape; give ye to your fellow men without regard to the probability of requital from them. This is so far the force of "FREELY;" but then we must also remember the amount of what we received freely from Him. Who can forget how full, how frank, how generous He was! The pattern of our giving as to measure is to be THE LORD'S OWN measure; and in regard to that we know that He gives as prompted by His own loving,

kindly, generous nature, not stinted by regard to the likelihood of getting thanks, or meeting with a return of benefit. Let none, therefore, excuse in himself an un-readiness to give by saying, "Possibly, it may be turned to little advantage by the person who gets"—that word "FREELY," enjoins you to copy the Saviour's example; to open wide your heart and hand even though your kindness be ill-requited, or never owned at all. Neither say; "I have stopt giving in the meantime, because others, equally able, are not giving up to their measure." What hast thou to do with what OTHER MEN GIVE? We ask again, what hast thou to do with what "OTHER MEN GIVE?" Thy part is to remember and to look upon WHAT THOU HAST RECEIVED; yes, what THOU THYSELF (leaving others out of view) HAST RECEIVED AT THE HAND OF GOD. Look at the largeness of that amount, and how it was given unstinted and ungrudged, in spite of His knowledge of selfishness in thee, which (like the sand drinking in the rain) would so quickly appropriate all and exhale upward almost nought. McCheyne quotes the saying of an old Divine: "What would have become of us if Christ had been as saving of His blood as some men are of their money?"

And farther. When Jesus says, "ASK AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU," (Matt. vii. 7. Luke xi. 9.) does he not suggest much as to the measure; especially when he adds; "What man of you is there whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?" The measure here is simply the VERY THING REQUIRED. Christ gives not merely something but up to the supplying of the want; if we copy Him here, then as far as lies in our power we shall aim at giving as much as will meet the exigency, as much as will come up to the demand. You know we are only STEWARDS of all we possess; our money is not our own.—"Occupy till I come," is the superscription on every coin.

But reverting again to Matt. x. 8, "FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE," let us notice that the first application of that counsel was in reference to the preaching of the Gospel, the imparting to other men what they themselves had received. Go and tell your fellow-men these good news, however ungratefully the hearers may act toward you; for you yourselves were undeserving of such a blessing when the Lord sent it. Shew your estimate of what you have received by your efforts to impart it to others far and wide. Do this by personally telling it as opportunity occurs, faithfully, frequently, prayerfully.

But since you can do it very effectually, and far more extensively than your personal influence can reach, by HELPING OTHERS TO PROCLAIM the tidings of great joy, you must not, you cannot, fail to avail yourselves of this means of "FREELY GIVING." What, then, is the rate of your giving for the support of the Gospel ordinances at Home? Is it such that you can say: "You may fairly estimate my sense

of the value of the Gospel by the measure of my giving?" We do not ask, Do you give ten shillings annually towards the support of the Ministry, or do you give ten pounds? but we ask, Is your giving such in its measure that God could point to it and say, "See! here is one who gives freely, because he feels that he has received freely." As to our spreading the Gospel among the Jews and the heathen—what a melancholy calculation that is which was recently made in regard to the Communicants of two of the most numerous Presbyterian bodies in this land, viz.—that the yearly average for every Communicant amounted to somewhat like one shilling and no more! As if each communicant said, "I value my share in the Gospel at this rate. I give at the rate at which I received!" Shall the Lord judge any of us by this measure? Has He deserved no more than this at our hands?

IV. HE STATED SOME OF THE BENEFITS RESULTING.

These are His words: "Give and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down and shaken together and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." (Luko vi. 38.) Here is a promise of recompense, ay, of recompense for doing what is in itself most blessed! For such is the Lord's manner. How like Him who said: "Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward." (Matt. x. 42.) "Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble." (Psa. xli. 1.) It was the same Lord who by the mouth of David said; "I have not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread; he is ever merciful and lenient, and his seed is blessed"—where (you see) the giving characteristic of the man thus blessed is unmistakably held up to view—it is the generous, the "lending" righteous man. And how truly in keeping with His own manner was that saying of the Master to the Young Ruler, "Sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." (Mark x. 21.)

In point of fact, men and brethren, "giving well," is as needful to our soul's prosperity as "doing well;" and on the other hand, as surely as "the doer of the work is blessed in his deed," (Jas. i. 25,) so surely is the willing giver of his substance blessed in his giving. Hearken, beloved brethren! "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up as a memorial before God." (Acts x. 4.) Hearken yet again; "Not that I desire a gift, but I desire fruit that may abound to your account." (Philipp. iv. 17.) is the language used respecting the giving of the jailor at Philippi, the givings of Epaphroditus, Lydia, Euodia, Syntyche, and the rest who had ministered of their substance to Paul.

It was the experience of a godly Glasgow merchant in other days, that the