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EDITORIAL.

THE CONSTRAINING LOVE OF CHRIST.

(Synopsis of a discourse delivered by the editor at New Glasgow, P. E. Island, Lord's day, July 31st.)

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all therefore all died; and that He died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again."—II Cor. 5:14, 15, R. V.

It was no ordinary power that completely changed the affections, purposes and life of a young man of the honesty, intelligence and determination of Saul of Tarsus. When it was known that with over-increasing earnestness he now preached the faith which he once destroyed, Saul, like David, was a wonder unto many. No visible advantage could he gain by the change, but the very reverse. He was a Roman citizen, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a religious Pharisee of the strictest kind, and profited in the Jews; religious above his equals, far exceeding them in zeal for the traditions of the fathers. He had the applause of his religious countrymen whom he led in what he considered the service of God. Why would he count all these advantages loss, throw them overboard, and joyfully accept a life of poverty, reproach and bitterest persecution? The easy and popular solution was insanity. "He is beside himself. No sane man would make such a choice."

I. Paul here gives his reasons for changing. He was particularly anxious that all men might know why he was what he was. There was enthusiasm in his case, but there was also sober philosophy. God knew his enthusiasm, he wanted his brethren to consider his philosophy. "If we are beside ourselves, it is to God; if sober, it is for your sakes. The love of Christ constrains us, and this is why we so judge. If one so high and holy as the Son of God died for all those who were under the sentence of death for their sins, then it is the same as if they all had died for their own sins. Justice is as well satisfied, law as highly honored as if all had died. His death was for that purpose, and answers that end. We conclude then that those who live by Jesus' death should not, as formerly, live for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose and now lives in heaven to perfect his work. Jesus showed Paul how great things he must suffer for His name, and He showed him how to suffer by making him a partner. To suffer with Christ was so grand that he as much desired to "know the fellowship of his sufferings" as to "know the power of His resurrection." Wherever his sufferings for Christ abounded, so did his consolation by Christ. "He loved me and gave Himself for me." This is a love that never faileth. It constrained Paul to sing praises to God in the stocks at Philippi. It cheered him in his Roman prison, and filled his soul with triumph as he passed on to martyrdom.

II. Others have since Paul's day been constrained by the love of Christ. William Carey, a shoemaker, born in England in 1761, was constrained by the love of Christ. Without education and without money, he felt a desire that nothing could overcome to go to India to preach Christ where Christ had not been known. He was vigorously opposed by his brethren and ridiculed by worldly men in what was considered a mad adventure. A famous British statesman expatiated in glowing terms upon the absurdity of "the cobbler converting the millions of India." He was publicly rebuked by a grave Baptist minister as "an ignorant enthusiast" for asking if the Lord's commission, Go into all the world and preach the gospel, etc., was not binding upon the church.

Still he travelled and lectured and preached on heathen missions until many of his brethren were aroused in its favor. In a public meeting Andrew Fuller said, "There is a great mine in India reaching nearly to the centre of the earth. Who will go down into it?" "I will," said Carey; "but you must hold the rope." The two men pledged themselves to each other and to God, the one to go into the deep mine of India to gather souls as jewels for the Master's Crown, the other to labor till death to raise money to support him. By the grace of God both proved faithful, and God gave the increase. Just one hundred years ago Carey preached his famous sermon before the Baptist Association at Nottingham, founded on Isaiah liv. 2, 3—"Enlarge the plan of thy tent," etc., etc. In his application he made two points, viz.: "Expect great things from God." "Attempt great things for God." These two have been the motto of the Society ever since. That year the cobbler offered himself as a missionary to the Baptist churches, was accepted, went to India, and then learned their languages, and in less than 50 years he and his associates had translated the Scriptures into over thirty languages and dialects to be read by India's millions in all future time. What but the love of Christ constrained these two men—one to go into the mine, the other to hold the rope. Christ had a work for each. One hundred years ago that missionary society began with less than one hundred dollars. This year they expect to raise one million dollars. "Expect great things from God, Attempt great things for God." It is only those who expect great things from God who will attempt great things for Him.

Adoniram Judson, pioneer of Burman Mission, was constrained by the love of Christ. He felt an intense desire to tell the heathen of Jesus and His love and must be a missionary, cost what it will. Every thing tended to discourage him, but at last he reached Burmah. His labors were abundant, his sufferings intense, among the people he came to lead to Jesus. Two years he suffered severe imprisonment, chained like a felon to a block of wood. One year he wore three pairs of fetters, the other year he wore five pairs. He must have died of hardship were it not that his wife, though in feeble health, came every day to the prison, and like a ministering angel attended to his wants and also the wants of his fellow prisoners. Those fetters left on his body till death the mark of the Lord Jesus. But he worked and suffered, expecting great things from God and attempting great things for God. One thing he did was to translate the Bible into the language of Burmah, and that great nation can read in their own tongue the wonderful works of God. He is among the blessed dead who die in the Lord and his work do follow him.

The Disciples have missions in different fields which are occupied, we trust, by men and women constrained by the love of Christ.

E. T. Williams and wife, Carrie Loos Williams, who died on Feb. 11th, 1892, were serving a large influential church five years ago in Cincinnati. They were universally esteemed and beloved. But they so felt for the heathen who never heard of Christ that they offered to leave all the endearments of home and friends and go to China, there to toil and it might be suffer death as other missionaries have done. What but the love of Jesus would urge them to such a sacrifice. But they gladly accepted such a life in China on half the salary they had in Cincinnati, practising the most rigid economy that there might be means for more missionaries to be supported.

Additional missionaries are now offering to go to Japan, where the Lord is opening an effectual door for the gospel of His grace. The same love that constrains men and women to go into these fields constrains His people to support them in the work and at "the manifestation of

the sons of God" many deeds of noble self-sacrifice will appear where the friends of Jesus have toiled, economized and suffered want that His cause might be supported.

A few years ago in the City of New York a laboring man called on the agent of Bishop Taylor's African Mission saying, I want to pay money to Taylor's mission. Very well, said the agent, How much? "Seven fifty," he replied. While the agent was preparing to give him the receipt he was surprised to see him drawing out a number of large bills. "Did you say seven dollars and fifty cents?" asked the agent, "No," he replied, "but seven hundred and fifty dollars." "Can you afford to pay so much?" said the astonished agent. "I can do anything for Jesus," was the answer. "What is your occupation?" asked the agent, "I drive team at ten dollars per week," said the man. "And you can afford to give that sum for Christ." "Yes," he said, "and I have some left."

While the giver and receiver faced each other with moistened eyes, a man standing by remarked to the young man as follows, "Jesus must have done much for you." "Yes," he said, "Jesus has done much, very much for me." "You do not give much to the saloon I presume," "I never was in a saloon." "Nor to the theater?" "I never was in a theater either," he said, and walked away leaving the men to talk about, and wonder at the constraining love of Jesus. The agent's own feelings on receiving such a sum from a laboring man helped him to estimate the feelings of the giver when he remembered the words of the Lord Jesus how he said "IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE."

I believe that the reason we do so little to support foreign missions is because we do not sufficiently consider the matter, don't read, and think, and talk enough about it, rather than our hard-heartedness to refuse money to our needy brethren, when they are laboring to bring the lost to the Saviour. Like ancient Israel we "do not consider." All thinking persons must see that the men and women who leave friends and home and all they possess to labor among the heathen have no means of living of their own, and are entirely dependant, under God, on what is raised by the free-will offerings of the friends of Jesus. These are the ones who hold the rope, and if they let it go their brethren in the mine must fall and die. What friend of Jesus can consider the matter and then say in his heart and by his life, "I will not hold the rope," and virtually address the missionaries thus; "You have so far survived the many dangers in your course, you have escaped the axe of martyrdom and the assassin's dagger, but you shall not receive my money, and so far as I am concerned you will be left to suffer and die of neglect." Brethren I hope better things of you. We must hold the rope.

There are many excuses which oppose Christian liberality. We are apt to feel poorer than others when asked to help, and imagine that others can give to the Lord's cause and not feel it, but we cannot. Others think the same of us and so that cause is neglected. We are asked to give not because money is abundant with us and we can give without feeling it, but because the Lord's money is passing through our hands, be it ever so little, and His cause hath need of it. What respect can we have for a cause that we will not support unless we can do it without feeling it. There is no constraining love in such giving. Jesus gave up everything, and then gave Himself to the death of the cross for us, and what sort of heartless trifling is it in us to say we will give to Him only that which costs us little or nothing? Is this the way to serve Him who loved us and gave Himself for us?

Again we are apt to think that the money we handle is our own. God calls it His. He declares