

## The Christian Helper.

A BAPTIST MONTHLY JOURNAL.

"Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy." II. Cor. 1: 24.

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### FIRST WORDS.

THE CHRISTIAN HELPER goes forth upon its cheerful mission. That it may be a mission fruitful of much joy and blessed results to all is the earnest prayer of its promoters.

As expressed by them in the prospectus issued a few weeks ago: "Their highest aim will be gained in stimulating to nobler aspirations, deeper piety and intenser zeal for the cause of Christ, those for whose spiritual advantage the *Helper* is intended."

As first attempts at service of any kind are not usually the most successful; so, it is not to be expected that the first issue of this Journal is in all respects a criterion of the excellence to be expected in future numbers. Our motto in this respect will be, *to go on unto perfection.*

Our object will be to further the cause of spiritual religion,—our care to avoid every thing that may hinder it. Our aim will be to heal and to edify, not to hurt or destroy. If, therefore, at any time, any brother, moved by chagrin or from some disappointed ambition, should seek the columns of *The Christian Helper* as a medium by which to vent his wrath, he will find that any correspondence indulging in ill nature or personality will certainly be rejected.

Nevertheless, where abuses of any kind really exist, and are shown to be detrimental to the growth and spirituality of the Church, they shall receive that firm but kind treatment at our hands, that loyalty to Christ and His cause demands from all those professing allegiance to Him. We believe our duties in this respect will be exceedingly light.

We have to thank our many friends, ministerial and lay, for the cordial expressions of good will and promises of assistance already extended. And, with the blessing of God upon our efforts, we hope to enter upon a long career of extensive usefulness, proving to all who come in contact with us a TRUE CHRISTIAN HELPER.

### PREACH THE WORD.

"PREACH THE WORD."—Wrote Paul to his dearly beloved son Timothy, and though to many of our modern pulpit orators this advice of the old apostle may seem as "foolishness," still we think the more it is followed by our clerical friends, the more abundant will be their harvest of souls.

We do not think that any modern preacher has had more experience or greater success in the ministry of the word than had the apostle Paul, and when he writes to Timothy, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; *preach the Word*;" we take it that he meant what he wrote and that this was the deliberate summing up of his life long labor.

"*Preach the Word*," is a motto which every minister of the gospel should have constantly before him, because it is by the preaching of the "*word*," itself, and not by man's eloquence that lasting good is to be effected. Many of our modern preachers think and act as if the "*word*," were too much behind the age for the expanded intellects of this go-ahead generation. As a result of this, their sermons, or properly essays, are directed more to the intellectual pleasure of their hearers than to the conviction of their judgment. Their pulpit utterances are faultless in style, beautiful in their periods, and perfect in their grammatical construction, in fact they are fine examples of what a cultured intellect can produce in order to please the taste of the educated and refined. Their only fault is that they are entirely out of place in the house of God, because they do not contain anything which will help the Christian to keep the faith, or the weary soul to get rid of its burthen of sin. Such sermons are like intellectual rockets, which soar aloft through the boundless realms of thought, they dazzle their hearers by the magnificence of their rhetorical display, while they leave them still in the dark. Like the rocket, their object is amusement, and they accomplish that—and nothing more. Paul's ideas of preaching, even to a refined and educated audience were totally different from this. For instance, when preaching to the cultured Greeks, instead of talking philosophy or metaphysics, he

says of his utterances, "And I, brethren when I came to you came not with excellency of speech or wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. *For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.* And I was with you in weakness and much trembling. *And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.*" Here we have the secret of Paul's marvellous success as a preacher, small in stature, contemptible in speech, and having none of the adventitious surroundings which belong to many of our modern pulpit orators, he by the simplicity of the word which he used on all occasions, far transcends them in simple eloquence and masterly persuasion.

*Paul was thoroughly in earnest*, when he preached the word. He strove to impress upon his hearers truths which he himself believed, and which had sunk deep into his heart. When a man himself believes what he is saying, he is in a fair way to make other people believe it, but a man whose voice and look betray the fact that he himself doubts the truth of his utterances, can never succeed in producing any lasting impression upon his hearers. We know eloquent preachers whose sermons fall perfectly harmless upon their congregations, simply because they have not a sincere earnest belief in what they themselves preach. So far as they are concerned, they are but acting a part, and that not well enough to deceive their audience. Such men would be better out of the ministry, for they take up the room that ought to be occupied by a real preacher of the word. Said an English Bishop once to a celebrated actor, "How is it that you can make an audience believe in the reality of your acting, while I, with a far grander and nobler theme than yours, fail to make any impression upon them?" "My Lord," replied the actor, "*You preach the truth as if it were a lie, while I act a lie as if it were the truth.*" We would be glad to believe that this lack of sincerity was a failing only of this solitary Bishop; but even in the course of our short experience we have been forced to listen to more than one preacher who conveyed a similar impression to our minds.

We trust that the ministerial brethren