

science of botany, and another from mechanical processes. Hence it is said we are rooted in Christ.

The roots are the part of the plant which secures its nourishment and stability. It draws its food chiefly, but not exclusively, from the soil through the roots. They are invisible, and make no noise or display to the ear and the eye of man, but they are most essential to the life, the growth and fruitfulness of the plant. They serve also to fix it securely in its place. They fortify the plant against the action of winds and tempests that would otherwise lay it prostrate in the dust.

So the living trust, the bond of faith and of the Holy Spirit, by which we are in Christ, serves both to nourish our souls and to make us steadfast and memorable in the services of God, as well as brave and triumphant—for "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

But the same idea of stability is conveyed by a mechanical metaphor. *Bring built upon Jesus Christ.* In this case He is the foundation and we are the superstructure. You recollect His own picture of the two buildings—both probably equal in beauty and stately architectural proportions. But when the testing time came, when the wind blow, and the rain descended and the floods came and beat against the one, it fell with a ruinous crash. Why? Because it was built upon the sand. While the other stood firm and unmovable, commending increased admiration the more it was battered by remorseless tempests. Why? Because it was built upon the rock. And what is the Saviour's own explanation of His parable? Here it is. "Every one therefore which heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock." It is the hearing and doing of the words of Christ that gives immovable stability. Hence it is added in the text, without a metaphor, "Established in the faith as ye have been taught." Your faith rests not upon ignorance, but upon knowledge; it is not a dark pious superstition, but the highest exercise of intelligence and loving trust. "According as ye have been taught." But what were they taught? We are not told in detail; but we may be certain that no essential truth of the Hebrew Scriptures or of New Testament revelation touching God and man was kept back from them.

And what is worthy of special note is, that the stability of their faith and conduct is urged and made dependent upon the breadth, the fulness and completeness of the teaching they enjoyed. This is a lesson which needs to be pressed home in our day, because we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that there is a strong and strange indisposition on the part of many to receive instruction in fundamental truth. They almost regard it as intolerable impertinence in ministers to bore them with lessons in doctrine. The days for such, they allege, have passed away! Some go even the length of regarding ignorance of doctrine meritorious, and a sure sign of culture, liberality and superior piety, as if, forsooth, the study of God's redemptive purpose and work did not involve the deepest thinking and highest culture.

We do not say how little truth as man may know and accept in order to be saved. It may be very, very little. We read of one man in the Gospel who was healed, and yet wist not who it was that healed him. And infants are saved without knowing any of the truth of revelation. Nay more, thousands upon thousands were saved before a single page of the Old, or the New Testament was written.

But while all this true, it is equally certain that there is no merit in believing little or nothing. To have a meagre, shabby creed, with a few vague and ill-defined articles, is nothing of which to boast; but something of which to be ashamed. The faith that grasps but little truth is undeniably feeble, uncertain, and little worth. It may be suddenly surprised and overthrown by some skilful adversary who transforms himself into an angel of light for this very purpose. While the faith that is sustained by careful and accurate instruction, and which rests upon a broad and comprehensive basis of Divine truth, is that which has strength and resources to meet emergencies.

For steady reliable work in the rank and file of the Church, as Sunday school teachers, or as wise parents and rulers of households, as honourable tradesmen and merchants, as missionary visitors, as energetic deacons, as spiritually minded elders, give me those persons who are moved not simply by impulse or passing sentiment, but who are established in the faith as they have been taught. We come now to the last step in the development of spiritual life in the soul of man.

**Thankfulness.** "Abounding therein with thanksgiving." To be unthankful is a work of paganism and not of Christianity. Paul in writing to Timothy ranks the unthankful man among the most degraded and desperate of human creatures. Listen to his words:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, *unthankful*, so where the word comes in—*unthankful*—"unholy, without natural affection, traitors, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." (1 Tim. iii. 1-5). No wonder that he added the command "from such turn away."

Now then, just as unthankfulness deserves to be classed among the basest vices, so thankfulness and thanksgiving take rank among the highest Christian virtues. How so? Is not thankfulness a feeling of sentiment? Certainly. But all sentiments are not necessarily useless and destitute of moral significance. What begins in sentiment has its outcome in action, in practical courses of conduct of the most commendable character.

We can sing our thanksgiving, and we can do our thanksgiving. We can tell God in secret prayer, or in the public songs of the sanctuary how thankful we are, and, if we are telling the truth, it is all right, and we can show God and man by our deeds and gifts, our sacrifices for the causes of truth and humanity, how thankful we are. This is far better, for it is not mere words, the service of the lips, that God demands. "Not every one," says Jesus, "that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven."

Now then, brethren, passing by all that is general, all that we enjoy under the government of an infinitely wise and beneficent Father, let us ask, what special causes of thankfulness should we recognize at this moment? Recall, in epitome, the line of thought we have pursued, and the question is sufficiently answered.

Have you received Christ Jesus the Lord? Is this your experience? Then you are forgiven. You are quickened by the Holy Spirit. You have the life of God, eternal life, in your soul. You are a temple of the Holy Ghost, and heir of God and joint heir with Christ Jesus—destined to sit with your Redeemer upon His throne. Is not this enough? O give thanks.

Are you walking in Christ Jesus consciously, advancing in knowledge of divine things, in faith as it grasps the truth of God, and as it clings to Jesus with loving and unwavering trust? Is He becoming more and more precious to you as your soul is being filled with the power of His love? Have you, through faith, gained victories over temptations and lusts and enemies of which no one knows anything but God and yourself? Have you, again and again, when in straits and at your wit's end, proved the truth of the Blessed Saviour's promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee, and My strength is made perfect in weakness?"

O give thanks unto the Lord for these things, for they are better than your whole earthly estate.

Are you established in the faith? Built upon Him, not upon conjectures, negations, and uncertainties, but upon Him who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever? O give thanks!

Uncertainty does not make strong men, warriors, or heroes. It weakens and renders utterly useless those over whom it gains control. Why then should Christians think it a token of superior wisdom to regard the foundations upon which they rest as feeble, defective and untrustworthy? They do not thus honour God and His truth, or promote their own safety and the good of others. We can only be strong in the Lord, strong for service or suffering, when we feel that our feet are set upon the rock, that our goings are established, and that we have a new song in our mouth, even praise to our God.

As children of God, therefore, let us go through life with this song upon our lips, singing it louder and more joyfully as we get nearer home, until we join the innumerable company, the general assembly, and Church of the first-born in Heaven, saying, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and the Father, unto Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." Amen.

#### Presbytery of Ottawa.

This Presbytery held its regular quarterly meeting on Tuesday, the 7th inst., in Bank Street church, Ottawa. It was an all day meeting, beginning at 10 o'clock in the morning. The Rev. Chas. A. Doudiet was in the chair. There was a very large attendance of ministers, all being present save four. The first business was the call from Knox Church, Ottawa. In the absence of Mr. Herridge, the moderator of session, Mr. J. McMillan, clerk of session, reported what had been done. The call had been given to the Rev. Robert Johnstone, B.A., of Lindsay. It was signed by 290 members and 54 adherents. The guarantee of stipend was \$2,500. Dr. Armstrong moved that the action of the Moderator be sustained. Mr. Scott seconded and it was agreed. After hearing the commissioners, Mr. J. McMillan and Mr. J. McJanet as to the heartiness and practical unanimity of the call. Dr. Armstrong moved that the call be sustained as a regular Gospel call, and that the clerk be instructed to forward it with the necessary papers to the Presbytery of Lindsay with the request that they bring the matter to a speedy issue. The reasons of translation were read and ordered to be forwarded along with the call. Mr. Herridge and Mr. Hay were appointed to represent the Presbytery in this matter before the Presbytery of Lindsay, and in case Mr. Herridge might not be able to go, Dr. Moore was appointed to act in his place. The committee appointed to examine students, exercises reported very favourably as to four of these. It was agreed to sustain and to certify these students to college. Various reports of visitation of augmented congregations were received and those who had visited thanked for their diligence. In connection with a very short report on Home Mission Work it was stated that Mr. Wilkie, a third year student, had accepted the appointment to Plantagenet for a year under the Assembly's rule that instead of attending the third year at the Hall he be ordained to the field for a year. It was agreed, therefore, to ordain Mr. Wilkie on Tuesday, the 28th inst., at Plantagenet, Rev. J. Bennett, B.A., of L'Orignal, to preside and address the people, Rev. W. M. Tuffe, M.A., of Hawkesbury, to preach, and the Rev. J. H. Beatt, of Cumberland, to address the pastor. The station of Leslie was placed under the care of the session of Bryson with the Rev. R. V. McKibbin, B.A., as moderator. The resignation of Mr. Durie as Treasurer of Presbytery was laid on the table, and on the motion of Dr. Moore was accepted and the thanks of the Presbytery tendered to him for his long and faithful services. His son, Mr. John S. Durie, was appointed to succeed his father. It was agreed, also, to present an address of welcome to Lord and Lady Aberdeen on the occasion of their coming to reside in the city at Rideau Hall. A motion of condolence was passed with Mr. J. J. Byrnes, a member of Presbytery, whose son died just after entering Queen's University, Kingston. The consideration of the new hymnal was the only other item of business, and it occupied a great part of the afternoon and the whole of the evening session. The only question considered was what place the Psalms ought to occupy in the New Book. Dr. Armstrong moved that in order to meet the wishes of the Church the Book of Praise should be prepared in two forms, one with the entire Psalter, the other with selections as recommended by the committee. The Presbytery adjourned without a decision having been come to. The next meeting will be held in St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, on the first Tuesday of February, 1894, at 10 a.m. Closed with the benediction.—JAS. H. BEATT, Clerk.