

## Our Weekly Sermons By Celebrated Divines.

Written for the LADIES' PICTORIAL WEEKLY.

### Love Abounding in Wisdom.

BY REV. O. C. S. WALLACE.

Phil. 1, 9, 10: "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; so that ye may approve the things that are excellent."

The prayer from which our text is taken is comprehensive and striking. It touches life at many points. To the study of a part of it let us give our earnest attention now.

#### LOVE FUNDAMENTAL.

Love is at the foundation of all true character. Love is forever pouring life into the plant of Christian faith and works. Upon love depend spiritual growth and power. As without the sun there can be no heat, so without Christian love there can be no Christian life.

The love referred to now is not narrow, but broad as the world; it is not a love for a single person or object, but is diffusive like the light. The sunbeam does not hold itself to a narrow course, but radiates on all sides. So this love, radiant, light-like, sends its rays in all directions. It goes out to God, and to the godly, and to all that is of good report. It goes out to the wretched with encompassing pity, to the poor with enriching charity, and to the sinful with winning zeal.

This love is expansive, and increases. "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more." It does not wither from age, or dwindle in earthly stress and need. It finds no winter of discontent. Within it there is perpetual warmth, and greatness and strength and attainment.

This love abounds intensively and extensively. Simultaneously it grows stronger and wider. When the mountains pour their waters into the Nile, a double effect it produced; first, the river moves more swiftly, and then the broadened, rising stream overflows its banks and covers the valley far and wide. And this is the effect in the abounding of Christian love. There is added intensity. First of all the current is swifter. God is regarded with new fervor, and all good things are loved more and at the same time more good things are loved. The abounding love flows across this world as the swollen Nile across the Egyptian valley. Many fields are refreshed which before were parched and neglected. Causes are helped which were not helped before. The current is broad as well as swift.

#### THE METHOD OF LOVE'S ABOUNDING.

There are loves which are vagrant and wild. They glow with fervent heat; they have in them passionateness and waywardness; they are full of unreason; they are imperious and reckless; often they are fatal to peace. Not so this love. It is fervent, but not wild and furious. It is full of holy passion, but never imperious and dangerous. This love abounds "in knowledge and all discernment." Its abounding is like the abounding of the living plant, which never violates a law of God. However much the sap may pour into the tree from the roots, its abounding scorches no leaf, breaks off no bough, destroys no fruit, but luxuriance of foliage is added to the tree in all its parts, and abundance in all its fruitage. So in the abounding of Christian love. It obeys the laws of knowledge and discernment. It does not lead to a furious and foolish zeal, to deeds of good intent, perhaps, but of terrible effects. As this love abounds discretion abounds; and a better knowledge of human relations to God and man's relations to his brother; while discernment will flourish. Mark how this contrasts with some human ardors and passions. How often they are full of folly or weakness and guide to sin and misery! Even parental love does not abound always in knowledge and all discernment, but is unwisely indulgent or kindly weak. But this love, drawing its force and fire from God, draws wisdom from him also, until all of life is ordered more justly, prudently and safely.

#### A CONSEQUENCE OF LOVE'S ABOUNDING.

A consequence of Christian love abounding in knowledge and all discernment is stated: "So that ye may approve the things which are excellent."

The approval referred to here includes two ideas: First, the testing, or making trial of; and secondly, the approbation which follows a satisfactory test. The proving first, then the approving. David had proved the "five smooth stones out of the brook," and therefore he approved them in a critical hour. In the world about us there are some things which have been proved and approved through the Christian ages. They are the things which are excellent, and the things which are put to the proof according to this are these things, the things which are excellent, that is, the things which excel. If you are guided by this wise love these are the things which you will test, and you will test no other.

Let us make this very direct and specific now in a faithful application.

The man who has this abounding love will not prove or test or taste the things which are vicious. He will not drink poison, for human experience has already shown that poison kills, and he will not drink the cup of vicious indulgence, for human experience has shown already that this cup corrupts and destroys. Why should men in every generation taste the poisons and experiment upon the devastating corruptions which myriads of debasements and yawning mumbering miseries, have a thousand times declared to be the seductions of perdition? Here are things which are excellent, fragrant, rich, joyous; taste and prove these, and show thereby that you are under the sway of that love which abounds in knowledge and all discernment.

The man who knows this love will not prove or test or taste the things which are injurious. There are many things which are not to be classed with coveting, or lying, or stealing, or committing adultery, or murdering, or dishonoring parents, or breaking the Sabbath, or swearing profanely, or idolatry, or atheism which yet are injurious to the body or mind or soul, or all of these. For instance, a man may read frivolously, with the result that his mind is either unfilled or filled with trash; or he may read skeptical and infidel literature, till his faith is weakened and his mind ill at ease. In this case the man is not testing or proving the things which are excellent, but the things which are most surely injurious. Welcome into your house fools and atheists until every chair is occupied, and then where will you seat wise men and believers? Without only! So if you fill your mind with folly and infidelity, wisdom and faith will be forced to stand without knocking, and waiting there in sorrow and dishonor. Where love abounds in true discernment, the injurious things, whether they tend to work harm to the body or the mind, to the imagination or to faith, will be left unproved and untasted. It will seem sufficient to see the marred souls which have found harm or ruin in the proving of them already. Heart and soul and enthusiasm will be given to the things which are excellent.

Again, he who knows God in a wise and holy love, will not prove or test or taste the things which are questionable. In regard to some things the world of Christian believers is divided. Of certain worldly amusements, for instance, a few say, "They are good;" others say, "They are not bad;" still others say, "They are partly good and partly bad;" while great numbers declare, "They are injurious and tend to become vicious." These things therefore must be called questionable, and to test them or taste them, is to depart from this rule of proving only the things which excel.

But what then? Will not barrenness of joy result if this rule is observed? Surely not. God's universe is not so poor. The heavens and the earth are full of the things which are excellent, and these are waiting to be proved and approved. Occupations, pleasures, objects of desire—these abound among the things which are excellent. There are excellent occupations; why not choose one of these for your best energies? There are excellent pleasures, about which hangs no odor of suspicion; why not find delight in these? Why take the way of the quicksands when the path of substantial rock is before you? Why drink the cup whose mixture you do not know, or have reason to fear, when the pure waters of God's springs are at hand? Why test, or even taste, what is vicious or injurious or even questionable? "I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; so that ye may approve the things that are excellent."

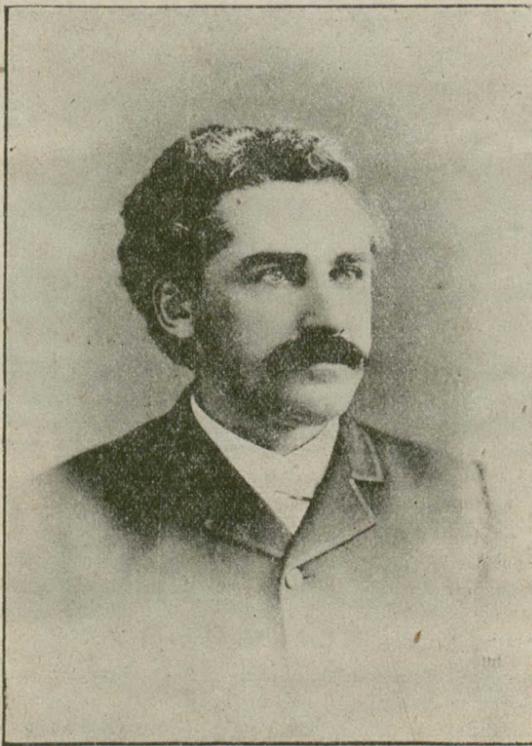
And we notice now that this wise love gives both the disposition and the competency to approve the things which are excellent. Where this love is lacking there is no disposition to approve or even to prove the excellent things. Living vines creep upward; dead vines droop and fall. As life in the vine leads it out in life lines, so holy love in the heart leads it out along holy lines. When men lack that love they have a disposition to seek other than excellent things. Some seek the questionable; others the injurious; and yet others the vicious. We do not expect to see a wicked man seeking the things of virtue; nor the worldly man seeking the things of faith; nor a selfish man following the path of self-denial. He has not the disposition. He goes to his own kind, he seeks the things of his father the devil.

Competency to approve the things which are excellent depends upon this love. A man who has no Godly love will not approve the things of God. They are foolishness to him. "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned." Those religious exercises which are delightful to the devout, are irksome to the frivolous. "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him,"—who could have believed the words of the prophet? And yet how terribly they were verified when Christ appeared. His beauties were not discerned. Multitudes lived in that day who were not competent to approve him. And multitudes are alive to-day who equally fail to approve him. When men turn to the world, to sinful or questionable pleasure, or to deeds and ways which are wrong, refusing to follow the things of Christ, the excellent things, they thereby declare that they are incompetent to approve the excellent things. Some find no delight in the worship of God's house. We cannot wonder, for they have no love for religious things. Many turn to human institutions for fraternity, and to amusements for liberty, and to worldly inventions for charity. We cannot wonder, for they have not that absorbing love for God which abounds in knowledge and all discernment. They approve less excellent things because they are incompetent to appreciate the more excellent. And now concerning you to whom this message comes to-day, "this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; so that ye may approve the things that are excellent."

*O. C. S. Wallace*

Rev. O. C. S. Wallace.

The Rev. O. C. S. Wallace was born in Canaan, King's County, Nova Scotia, in 1856. The process of his education was as that of other earnest young students long and laborious. At fifteen years of age the boy-pupil became the boy-teacher and the public schools of his native province were the scene of his labors for the



next two years. Even at this early age his spiritual nature asserted itself and the divine summons to the service of the ministry called him from his work of teaching. The marked ability which made him a teacher so very early in life, soon showed itself in his work preparatory to the ministry. He entered the Worcester Academy at Worcester, Massachusetts, there to prepare for the University. His after-career at Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, was a brilliant one. When he graduated in 1883, he took honors in his

classics, and philosophy. Then came further educational training. Almost immediately after graduating he entered the Newton Theological Institution at Newton Centre, Massachusetts, and there further prepared himself for his chosen calling. He was ordained as pastor of the first Baptist Church, Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1885, and there remained for six happy and useful years. Then came the call to Toronto. He was invited to take charge of the Bloor Street Baptist Church, and in January 1st, 1891, he entered upon his duties in this pastorate. Although he has been only a year in this congregation his influence is already widely felt. The Rev. Mr. Wallace is no mere pale-faced student, he is vigorous, manly, can enter into and sympathize with the best athletic spirit of the times. He has a warm place in the hearts of the young of his congregation and is increasing rapidly the membership list of his Church. Mr. Wallace is well-known to the American press, both sacred and secular, and is a pleasant, thoughtful writer. In 1889 he received his M. A. degree from his *Alma Mater* for an essay on Egyptian archæology. He frequently delivers lectures in his Church, that attractive little edifice at the corner of Bloor and North streets. We feel sure that a brilliant and useful career lies before the Rev. Mr. Wallace.

### The Latest in Stationery.

THE tyrant fashion grows more despotic and exacting each year, and the unfortunate blase young lady finds '92 hard to keep apace with, but the dear little debutante grasps eagerly each new fad. She is surely one of fashion's most ardent slaves.

Much thought is given to the paper on which she sends her dainty notes. The young lady who is partial to violets will welcome one of the latest fads in the stationery line. It is in the shape of a fine quality of bond paper, tinted a faint violet, with a dark-purple monogram and border of the same shade. It is something new. Violet ink is often used. In the box with this paper comes a small violet satin bag filled with the perfume which the paper so plainly suggests.

The most fashionable tints at present are on the blue sapphire; yachting-blue and a delicate paper of a turquoise tint, with the monogram done in white, are favorites. Silver crests, or the address in silver, are very effective on this shade. Mazarine-blue is a striking paper. Monograms in gold or silver show to good advantage on this tint.

A sample just out is decorated by a wreath within which you find a monogram. The paper being a delicate blue tint, will have a silver wreath at the top, the monogram inside being done in dark blue.

Many papers at present have the plain script initials.

For mourning a fine white paper, with black border, the initials done in black script, makes a stylish paper, the envelopes being marked in the same way. The very last thing in mourning stationery is something startlingly unique. The paper itself is of a fine quality, the border being a broad band of dark purple, just edged with black, while the monogram or address just as the fancy may choose, is done in purple also.

The rose tints are very popular just now, and a pretty paper is of a delicate rose shade, with the monogram done in black. The initials in script look well with this combination of color.

Fashion, with its continuous longing for something new, yet seems partial to the times of long ago. We find quaint little figures dancing the minuet in the most stately fashion on a corner of our writing paper. Sometimes these little dames, with their diminutive partners, are exquisitely colored, but often are just outlined in black, gold or silver.

Many people consider the plain white paper very much the best form. On white paper the egg-shell is something new, though after writing a lengthy epistle upon it one would welcome receive the Japanese bond, which is smooth and much easier to work on. The repp paper is stylish though rather coarse. The kid finish is a delightful paper to use. A plain white paper, with its own special marking, can be made very characteristic of the person using it.

The economical young woman need not be deprived of writing letters for economy's sake, as note paper can be bought at five cents a quire, and the address put on in any color, not using the bronzes, for nine cents a quire.

### Things A Woman Can Do.

She can come to a conclusion without the slightest trouble or reasoning on it, and no sane man can do that.

Six of them can talk at once and get along first rate, and no two men can do that.

She can safely stick fifty pins in her dress while he is getting one under his thumb nail.

She is as cool as a cucumber in a half-dozen tight dresses and skirts, while a man will sweat and fume and growl in one loose shirt.

She can talk as sweet as peaches and cream to the woman she hates, while two men would be pounding each other's heads before they had exchanged ten words.

She can throw a stone with a curve that would be a fortune to a baseball pitcher.

She can say "no" in such a low voice that it means "yes."

She can appreciate a kiss from her husband seventy-five years after the marriage ceremony was performed.

She can walk half a night with a colicky baby in her arms without once expressing the desire of murdering the infant.

She can do more in a minute than a man can do in an hour, and do it better.