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The Canadian Evangelist.

"GO . . . SPEAK . . . TO THE PEOPLE ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE."

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THE Canadian Evangelist

Is devoted to the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ, and pleads for the union of all believers in the Lord Jesus in harmony with His own prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, and on the basis set forth by the Apostle Paul in the following terms: "I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling where with ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."—Eph. iv. 1-6.

Dead Creed vs. A Living Faith.

It is becoming more and more evident as the months roll by that the old creeds by which different denominations tried to bind their members down to certain forms of theological thought and belief have lost their vitality. They have no longer the power to constrain men's consciences or to prevent them from thinking as individuals, and consequently, there is no longer unity of belief on the part of the members or even of the ministers of any one of the larger denominations. If men are required to accept a specific creed they do so under such mental reservations as leave them practically free to believe so much and no more of the doctrine which it contains as shall agree with the views which they may have already formed or which they may in the future accept.

It is right that each man's conscience should be free and it is not desirable that any one should be required to accept a creed which does not exactly express his own belief. The practical result of such a course must be to give men the habit of saying something a little different from what they mean.

That is bad enough, but it is not the only evil effort of the attempt to restrain freedom of thought and of speech within the bounds of a humanly devised statement of truth. That attempt produces in many minds a spirit of revolt which leads them farther astray from the truth than they would otherwise go, and strengthens the conviction on the minds of unbelievers that the doctrines of Christianity are losing their hold on the professional followers of Christ.

If the Divine Spirit had seen it to be best that men should be tied down by a formulated system of theology, He would undoubtedly have led some one of the inspired writers to give us an authoritative creed which like the creed of St. Athanasius would have been declared to be binding on every conscience. The Spirit has not given us any such systematized statement of truth, but has left us to study the various utterances of Christ and of the inspired writers, each for ourselves. By this means He would have us to become impregnated with the truth so

that it shall be to us not a mere creed but a living and life-giving reality. It must necessarily be a dangerous thing for us to attempt to exercise an authority over men's consciences which the divine Revealer Himself conspicuously retained from exercising.

It is not orthodoxy but spirituality that is the essential thing; and while it is true that correct views of truth are a great help to the attainment of spirituality, it is also true that the man who worries himself over creeds and formulas and definitions is very apt to lose hold of the truth as a sanctifying power to his life. For, while studying the sacred Scriptures for arguments and proofs in support of any particular doctrine, it is difficult not to lose sight of the fact that the purpose for which these Scriptures were given was to carry a message from God direct to the soul of each believer in every time of need. In other words, when we make the Bible a text-book on theology we lose the direct revelation of God himself which under the vivifying power of the Holy Spirit it is capable of bringing to us.

What our churches need to day is not a more ready acceptance of their creeds but a more earnest desire to know God and a more abiding confidence in the power of God's truth to hold its own ground against all the assaults of infidels and the doubts of believers.

In any case, divine truth can not be of any real help to a man except it be received willingly. The one essential thing is that the heart should be submissive and anxious to understand more and more of the knowledge of God. Each individual must study the Bible for himself independently if he desires to grow strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, and he must constantly seek the aid of the Holy Spirit in order to find out what messages of love and what instructions for service the word of God contains for him personally.—*New York Witness.*

Change of Views.

A late Los Angeles, Cal., paper contains the following under well displayed headlines:

"Rev. J. M. Hervey and Rev. W. C. Stevens are pastors of the recently organized Gospel Tabernacle congregations at Temperance Temple. The former gentleman was the first pastor of the United Presbyterian Church, and has since been actively employed in city missionary work. Mr. Stevens was in time past the pastor of the Third Presbyterian church.

"Since these gentlemen have become interested in 'full salvation lines,' they have changed their views on the subject of baptism. A few weeks ago on a Sabbath afternoon, accompanied by about fifteen members of the Gospel Tabernacle, they assembled in the Temple Street Christian church. After a brief preliminary service, the two ministers descended into the baptistry, and each in turn immersed the other. The pastors then immersed the other members of their flock who were present.

"Rev. Messrs. Stevens and Hervey do not require immersion on the part

of all who unite with the Gospel Tabernacle congregation, but recommend it to all who seek their advice."—J. H. ROSKERANS, in the *Christian Courier.*

It is a little strange those Presbyterian brethren did not get some baptized person to administer the ordinance for them. There is nothing strange in their dissatisfaction with sprinkling and pouring and their desire to submit to the baptism commanded by Christ. In the year 1639, Roger Williams and Ezekiel Halliman repudiated assuasion and baptized each other, and thus the Baptist church began in America. Are such baptisms valid? If not, why not? If a person should find it necessary to baptize himself, would it not be valid? The Lord knows, and I think it would!—*Church Mirror.*

Trust in God and Do the Right.

NORMAN MACLEOD.

Courage, brother I do not stumble,
Though thy path is dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble—
Trust in God and do the right.

Let the road be long and dreary,
And its ending out of sight;
Foot it bravely—strong or weary—
Trust in God and do the right.

Perish policy and cunning,
Perish all that fears the light;
Whether losing, whether winning,
Trust in God and do the right.

Trust no party, church, or faction,
Trust no leader in the fight;
But in every word and action,
Trust in God and do the right.

Trust no forms of guilty passion—
Fiends can look like angels bright;
Trust no custom, school, or fashion—
Trust in God and do the right.

Some will hate thee, some will love thee,
Some will flatter, some will slight;
Cease from man and look above thee—
Trust in God and do the right.

Firmest rule, and safest guiding,
Inward peace and inward light;
Star upon our path abiding—
Trust in God and do the right.

Sermons.

At one time the pulpit was in peril from essayists. Orations have also been its bane; so have long, lecture-like treatises, discoursed ponderously, arithmetically progressive and soporific in their effects. At the present day addresses which neither expound the Word nor inform the mind are, in certain quarters, very much the fashion. The most successful preachers we know, or have ever known, preach sermons. They may be short sermons, or long, or medium; but they are carefully thought out and filled with corn—not with flour or starch or fried bread-crumbs or crackers or magnesium powder, but corn. And they preached naturally. The other day we heard a great theologian preach. We also heard him talk at a tea-table, and in a garden. He is not a popular preacher, nor specially gifted with the arts of rhetoric or oratory; but he has two excellencies, nay, three. He gave us something to think about; he talked in the pulpit precisely as he talked elsewhere; and he tried his level best to make good people better and bad people good.—*London Methodist Recorder.*

The Influence of Hymns.

Do we realize, I wonder, how great is the influence of the treasure we possess in these sweet pilgrim songs, that cheer our earthly way? I wonder how many times a year we pause in life's journey to think how dear to us are the sweet old hymns, familiar from our very babyhood.

One of my earliest and pleasantest recollections is that of sitting upon my father's knee, in the Sunday twilight-time, and being delightfully trotted to the words and tune of "Where, O, where are the Hebrew children"—I love it yet, worn-out and hackneyed as it is! How real they all seemed to me, "Daniel in the lion's den," "Elijah and his wonderful chariot of fire," the "Weeping Mary," and "Martyred Stephen." It was, indeed, the oratorio of my childhood!

Looking backward I see that two hymns have specially been the tonics of my spiritual life, just as invigorating sea-breezes have given tonic to my physical being; they are the world-renowned, world-loved hymns, "Jesus, lover of my soul," and "Lead, kindly light." The favourite hymn of a certain friend was, "My Jesus, as Thou wilt;" so many times, in so many ways his will was crossed that his soul craved the strength that lay in the words of exquisite submission. Our Great Physician knows our hearts, and gives what is best; in a short time this friend developed into one of the noblest characters I have ever known; his earthly work was early finished; the "As Thou wilt," has led him from earth to the blissful satisfaction of Christ's "Ye shall know."

One time, while away on a visit, something occurred in connection with the subject of hymns, which nonplussed me deeply. It was Sunday evening, the parlor was full of people, most of them entire strangers. Presently some one asked me to sing I never felt so much like declining, but upon being asked again I sat down at the piano and sang "Jesus, lover of my soul," after which, at my suggestion, we all sang three or four familiar hymns. When I returned to the sofa I had left, a gentleman, to whom I had been introduced half an hour before, said in a loud voice: "You don't know how glad I am that you sang that first hymn; I wondered what your choice would be. That hymn was my salvation; you will be surprised when I tell you that once, a number of years ago, I was so miserable and unhappy that I was just on the verge of suicide, when from somewhere I heard a man's voice singing 'Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly.' I stopped to listen, for words and voice were sweet, and then and there felt that God had sent the singer to save me from my desperate deed."

A hymn to me seems a prayer with wings. What, for instance, could be more uplifting, more consoling than the dear old evening hymns, "Glory to Thee, my God, this night," and "Softly now the light of day"? Could any breath of prayer be sweeter? We need to learn more of them, and to keep their rhythmical melodies, endeared by many memories, warm within our hearts.—MARY G. WOODHULL.

Faith and Chloride of Lime.

There are many persons who put faith in the place of works, and some who would put works in the place of faith; the results of the transfer always being disastrous.

There are cases when persons live in such a way that they make themselves sick, and pray to be healed; when if they had taken proper care of themselves they would not have been ill, and if they had ceased to do the things that made them ill they would soon have got well of themselves.

John Haberton tells of a preacher who visited a sick man, whose house was filled with poisonous gases from a neglected drain. Talking of faith the preacher said to him: "You don't need to use more faith, but you do need to use some chloride of lime on that drain, if you want to get well."

We have great faith in prayer, but prayer does not clean out drains, or dissipate poisonous gases. The Lord taught His ancient people to pray, and He also taught them to be careful about their food, to keep clean, to take baths, to tear down unhealthy houses, to wear suitable clothing, and deny ungodliness and worldliness, to rest from their labors at the appointed times, to behave themselves in their homes, and to treat their wives and children as they should; and He would not accept prayer as the substitute for any of these things; indeed, He would not allow men to come into His presence, or approach His altar, until they had attended to these necessary things; and it is probable one-half of the people who now appear in worshipping assemblies would, under the Jewish law, have been entirely shut out from public worship of God, as unclean, and would have been sent home, to take a bath, wash their clothes, govern their passions and clean up generally, before they would be allowed to enter the congregation of the Lord, or engage in public worship among His people.

By all means pray for health, wealth, and every good thing; but don't neglect to watch as well as pray, and to work as well as wait; and be sure the Lord would have you do what He commands, if you expect Him to do what you request.—*The Christian.*

The first principle of true greatness is to be greater than self. The ideal child is so unconsciously; we must become so intentionally. Nebuchadnezzar counted Babylon a part of Nebuchadnezzar. True wisdom would have taught him that Nebuchadnezzar was only a part of Babylon. The loss of this perception makes us little.

GEO. W. CARLE.

The only joy we have on earth is to love God and to know that God loves us. Oh, when I think there are some who will die without having tasted even for an hour the happiness of loving God!—*Vianney.*

No one of us is able to live on without help from his fellows. There are times when we need sympathy or assistance from others. It behooves us to consider the right way of seeking and securing such aid.