

# The Home Mission Journal.

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## Why you, a Baptist, Should Join the Local Baptist Church.

1. Because it is an evidence and expression of your loyalty to Christ and your denomination.
2. Because it increases the effectiveness of Christian work. (a) Through the concentration of effort in your own community. Non-residence dissipates energy. (b) Through the increase of power and efficiency of Christian forces in your own community. Localization of effort leads to this. It means the union of the many instead of the few. Non-residence is a source of weakness in church life.
3. Because it removes certain difficulties due to or accompanying non-residence. (a) That of time and expense, which are increased by non-residence. (b) That of proper support of the "home" church; made almost impossible by non-residence. (c) That of trying to support two churches, the "home" and the "local." (d) That of spiritual declension and often as a result loss of membership in the "home" church. Non-residence offers a real occasion to backsliding.
4. Because it aids the Christian life. (a) Through the opportunities for Christian service it offers and the Christian activity it makes possible. (b) Through the occasion it supplies for the immediate application of personal power. It is easier to work near by than far away. (c) Entrance into active work in the "local" church will make it less hard.
2. It is difficult to become acquainted with the members of the "local" church. (a) Meeting them half way will diminish this. (b) Constant attendance on church services will obviate this. (c) Active work will entirely remove it.
3. It is troublesome to transfer one's membership. Not so, for the officials of the respective churches take full charge of that.
- Trusting that God may guide you into a realization of the importance and necessity for such a step as is here advocated, and that you may be led to come in among us and work with us for the glory of God, I am,  
Your would be pastor.

## Beer for Christians.

Mark was a hard-working blacksmith, accustomed to the daily use of beer. He thought he needed it to assist his digestion, and to give him strength for his daily tasks. He was a young convert, but he had not learned the truth about beer. He thought it was good, and so his conscience did not tell him to give it up. His pastor reasoned with him, and other friends pleaded so far in vain. But doubts of its value crept in, and then conscience reproved him, and he became restless and irritable. He even went so far as to return a sharp reply to his pastor on the subject, as they walked together to the prayer meeting.

There were great searchings of heart that night, and he became convinced that it was the indulgence of his appetite, and not the need of the beer, that stood in the way. Before the close of the meeting there was a season of silent prayer, and while on his knees at that solemn moment he resolved to give up the beer. He lost no time in telling his pastor, his wife, and his fellow-Christians of his vow, which he faithfully kept. Often since that time we have heard him say: "My brethren, I am now convinced that I cannot be a true Christian and yet indulge in a glass of beer."

We do not say that no true Christian drink beer. So great is our infirmity and so many are our imperfections that we fear very many of our practices are not pleasing in the sight of a pure God. But because He bears with us, that

is no reason why we should persist in a bad practice. It is our duty to find out the truth about beer at once, and act upon it. If it poisons and debases and injures others, it will do the same to us. It is never a help to Christian life, and it will be likely to lead our hearts away from God if we persist in it. Through such practices many are weak, many are defiled, many make shipwreck of faith, and those who rise to the higher walks of Christian life feel constrained to practice total abstinence from all that intoxicates. Certainly in this favored land, where temperance and Christianity go hand in hand, and where the true nature and effects of the use of beer are so clearly explained to all the people, each one of us might join with Mark and say "As for me, I cannot be a Christian and drink beer."

## The Cross of Christ.

By John Humpstone, D. D.

Salvation is both a deliverance and a discipline. But it must be the former before it can be the latter. The primary purpose of the death of Christ is our redemption from sin. Any other operative result of that death is sequential. Only as this principal purpose, this constitutive intent, of that offering, is realized, may its other and subordinate results be expected. Deny its efficacy as a sin-offering and you destroy its power as an example of life and duty. Dilute and weaken men's appreciation of it as a satisfaction on account of their sins and you diminish, in proportion, the energy by which alone it can separate them from the world into God. In man's recovery from a physical disease it is the active principle of the administered remedy to which the physician must have solicitous regard. If that has been adulterated, recovery is imperiled, and with it all the possibilities of action and reaction which depend upon a cure for their realization. Salt saves from corruption unto use, but if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? So of the death of Christ. Its active principle is redemptive. Minimize that and you imperil all. Every other efficiency of the cross depends upon its efficacy as a sin-offering. It must be recognized in its God-ward operations with reference to sin before it can be felt as a force separating men from the world. The cross has first to do with broken law. It procures the removal of penalty by making a satisfaction. It secures the pardon of the sinner by the payment of a price for his ransom. The cross constitutes a sacrifice or it is nothing. We must begin here if we would begin scripturally. We cannot effectually look to the cross as an example of the denial of self, unless upon it Christ, in the denial of Himself, gave Himself up for our sins. Men will never be constrained to a new life of the love of God by sufferings that are merely exhibitiv and not procurative. The death of Christ is the price paid voluntarily by Him for our deliverance from the penalty due to our sin. We have done what made His death necessary if we are to be forgiven, and saved from the death indeed. The sins are ours. He has done what has made our new life possible. The offering that sets us free is His. The final purpose of his ministry, both in life and death, was so to identify himself with us that he might, not as a fictional arrangement, nor yet as a transactional device, but in the very exercise of his vital relation with us and ours with him, receive upon and within himself the deadliest consequences of our sins and thus free us from both sins and consequences forever. Without the full and undiluted declaration of this fact Christ is not lifted up; is not set forth crucified among men. We speak of the cross as a magnet to draw men to God. That is what makes it magnetic. Without this the attraction of the cross is wanting. A cross that merely proves an example but does not furnish therein a saviour is not the cross of the New Testament. It may be the cross of literature, of art, of personal

adorment, but it is not the cross of Christ. It is not the cross that is signified in the symbolism of the baptismal grave. It is not the cross that is set forth in the broken bread and the poured wine of the memorial supper. It is not the cross of Him who said in connection therewith: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins;" it is not the cross on which the God Shepherd gave his life for the sheep; it is not the cross whereon, as upon the altar of the ages, was laid "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world."

God forbid that I should speak as if there were no mystery here. Rather is it all a mystery in the highest, holiest sense. As that celestial cross of the southern heavens hangs radiant in the depths of the fathomless sky, so does this cross reveal itself against the background of the impenetrable dark. Into its essential secrets we cannot look. What our Lord saw on the cross none knows but He. What he felt on the cross he alone understands. None of our theories can exhaustively define, nor all of them together explain, the cross. Is it not time to have done theorizing about it? As our theories multiply is not the cross itself losing power? Preach the mystery of the cross, the power of our deliverance from the mystery of iniquity which binds our race into a dismal unity of guilt and weakness. There is power in mystery. God is so much to us, because even when we are most intimately conscious of his indwelling, he so far transcends our thought and its expression. Life is so sacred because both as existence and experience it is so inexplicable. The strange power of the overarching firmament to bring a hush upon man's spirit, and to evoke in him the feelings of responsibility and reverence—a power most felt by the men who have ranged farthest after the ultimate truth; such men as Kant and Carlyle—in what does it lie but in the suggestions of the infinite, as the worlds swim in their ethereal ocean, myriads of mysteries in an illimitable sea of it. The telescope only reveals, never resolves this mystery. If it did the sky would become at once trivial and commonplace. What makes the Bible the most vital of books is this same penumbra of the unexplored about the book itself and the truths it conveys. Continuously it is a revelation. We never exhaust nor overtake it. Even so is it with the cross. It must ever baffle our analysis but it will ever win and hold our hearts. An old Greek manuscript explicates our Lord, so I have read, "By Thy known and Thy unknown sufferings, good Lord deliver us." And must not the unknown ever exceed the known? Herein is the love that passeth knowledge. When we would reach its height it is as high as heaven and we cannot attain to it. When we would sound its depth, it is as deep as hell and we cannot penetrate it. We seek its length, and it is as illimitable as the life of God, which who can know? We ask for its breadth and it is immeasurable as man. Knowledge falters, understanding fails. But here, exactly here, devotion and self-surrender begin:

"Love so amaz ng, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

## Too Much "Sitting Capacity."

Moderator Sample, of the Presbyterian General Assembly, has in his make-up a streak of quiet but keen humor.

Years ago, in a clerical gathering in New York, a quaint remark of his went further than some labored and learned arguments. A good brother had been advocating a very literal interpretation of the book of Revelation, and when it came to be Dr. Sample's turn to express his thoughts, he brought down the house (figuratively) by saying: "Brethren, I am afraid of this literal theory when applied strictly. For instance, take the woman who sat upon seven hills. Taken literally, this statement calls for a sitting capacity beyond all precedent." There was an attempt at reply.