

The highest courage of Jesus is found in the revelation of the cross (see Matt. 17:19). "Amid all the variations and vicissitudes of Jesus' life, with all its lights and shadows, He walked undeviatingly in one straight path from the Jordan to Calvary. Expediency found with Him no place with her beseeching subtleties. The consideration of consequence exercised no guiding or repressive hand."

In Calvary we witness the fulfillment of the most heroic life the world has ever seen. Our churches and social organizations are asking for volunteers. One reason why we have not more young people offering themselves for religious work of various kinds is that the progressively materialistic age has blinded the spiritual vision. Our young people are not sharing the spiritual heroism in our churches because they are too much engrossed in the material side of life. Missions and social service will not appeal to our people till they see the vision of universal brotherhood, and are impressed with the conviction that we are our brother's keeper.

Questions—Are our young people looking forward to becoming church officers, deaconesses, missionaries, and ministers? If not, why not? Do you shrink from these because they cannot make as much money, or it involves more self-sacrifice? Why do so many refuse to take the active members' pledge in our League, and shrink from performing their full duties as Christians?

WHAT DOES COURAGE DEMAND?

1. It demands a perfectly controlled life. Our emotions must not prevail, but be controlled by a will that is trained and intelligently guided. Courage is reduced to recklessness and foolhardiness, unless properly controlled. Courage is often best shown by non-resistance and restrained passions. Jesus recommends this attitude in Matt. 5: 38-42. Courage does not imply the absence of fear, but the conquest of it. Many people have no sensibility of fear. The bravest person is the one that knows the danger, and trembles at it, but faces it heroically.

Courage is not simply for great occasions. The mother in the home can show the highest courage unseen by the world. The boy, alone with his own soul, may fight out a great battle, and manifest the greatest courage.

2. True courage is found only where we have consistency and transparency of character. Only the truthful, just and kind can be courageous. Cruelty and injustice are the product of cowardice and fear. We may have the strength of ten because our hearts are pure. In Luke 12: 1-5 Jesus associates hypocrisy with fear.

3. Faith is a pre-requisite of courage. "Hope and aspiration, belief in the supremacy of good in spite of all obstacles, are necessary inspirations in the life of virtue. The good can never be demonstrated to the senses, nor be proven by calculations of personal profit. It involves a radical venture of the will in the interest of what is unseen and prudentially incalculable." It was such a faith that Joshua needed, when he took the leadership of Israel (Josh. 1: 1-9). He required faith in his own ability, divinely trained and developed; faith in the Divine purpose that called him; faith in the unseen power of God that enabled him to go forward unflinchingly. It demanded great courage to lead a nation into an unknown country with a minimum of equipment. Courage many times demands a faith that waits God's time and means of achievement.

4. The highest courage is the product of love. It is love that casts out fear and cowardice. Love is always victorious. It is only love that enables us to "overcome evil with good," and be

"sanctified for their sakes." The courage of Jesus was not manifest in fighting his enemies, but in being the friend of the publican and the sinner in spite of bitter and even tragic opposition.

We close with the following quotation: "Here is the opportunity and call to courage. It is the call to every religious soul to have done with compromise, and to venture all upon a great personal experiment of union with the will and work of God. It is a call to every professing Christian to take up the New Testament afresh, read Christ's promises, and the apostolic confession, compare these with his own life and belief, and ask whether this which he possesses as worth Christ's passion, or the martyr's testimony. It is a call to orders of men to make great renunciation of riches, fame and self-interest. These are the things necessary if we would hear again the emphatic word, feel the spiritual power and seize the hour of opportunity. Christ calls for volunteers. The terms are, as ever, absolute denial of self, devotion to the death, the yoke which alone brings rest. This is the opportunity. All that is needed is men who have seen Christ, who have been crucified with Him, and who have his risen life the centre of their own."

Giving to God's Cause

1 Cor., 9th Chapter.

TOPIC FOR THE FIFTH MEETING IN MAY.

REV. R. DUKE, TORONTO.

GOD HAS A "CAUSE" IN THE EARTH.

As the final objective it is the renovation of the earth in righteousness. As the chief instrumentality to bring this about He has organized an institution which is called the Church. When then we speak of His Cause we mean His Church and the work He calls it to do. What is the greatest scientific, educational and commercial movements of nations are to receive impetus and direction from the Church, and yield their great contributions to the advancement of the Kingdom of God among men, they yet are to be regarded as without the Church, and not containing in themselves the potency and promise of the building up of the city of God here below. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Here is a distinction of ownership, drawn by Christ himself, which justifies the phrase, "God's Cause." God's Cause is purely spiritual and religious.

Now God has given great honor and privilege to His people in that He has called them to sustain and spread His Cause on the earth by contributing of their means.

The water of life is free, but the vessel that contains and carries it must be bought. Nobody questions the duty of giving. All giving who go to church, as many give who do not go. The need is manifest and pressing, and nearly all respond. When we were yet children—before we earned money for ourselves—our parents, to show us the way of duty and train us to the habit of giving, placed coins in the realm in our hands that we might deposit in the offertory plate, in the house of God on the Lord's Day. Now, as earners of money for ourselves, we still give; and we have no other thought but that we shall continue so to the end of our lives. But what is the exact question, with an ever-increasing number is, "Is what I give what I ought to give?" Few, I take it, are apprehensive that they give too much; rather, it may be surmised that, in the case of many, there is an underlying question that they do not give as much as they should. The question in their hearts, in

respect to this duty, is, "What shall the Lord?" The appeal must be to God.

No one can say, authoritatively, to another how much of his income he ought to set apart for the service of the Most High, neither can any body of men, however wise, learned and godly they may be. The answer to the question must, of necessity, be a matter of revelation. If it was necessary that it should be a matter of revelation to us as to what proportion of our time we should dedicate to God's service, it is clearly of equal necessity that it should be a matter of revelation to us as to what proportion of our substance we should dedicate to God's service.

Our Maker has given us but two things, outside our own personal talents, to deal with, namely, time and substance. He has called for a seventh of the former; Would He not say how much he requires of the latter? The position into which we are thrown, in regard to the duty of giving, if there be no Divine rule to guide us, is presumptive evidence that such a rule exists.

We are thrown back upon our private judgment. But private judgment is apt to be warped by the love of money, or the dread of future want, or by the selfishness of the present. It is almost certain to be. This fact unfits the judgment for the office to which, in this instance, it is called. Moreover, very many are not blessed by Nature with the ability of forming sound conclusions, and those who do seldom do so when private interests, on the one hand, and the claims of God's Cause upon the other, form the subject matter of judgment. Besides, persons of equally sound mind often draw diverse and conflicting conclusions from the same premises.

Again we are asked to trust to our feelings of gratitude to dictate the measure of our giving. But, then, all are not equally capable of being moved by a contemplation of the mercies of God, therefore, giving would be a very haphazard thing, those having the same income and the same financial responsibilities. Besides, those who take a large survey of the Divine goodness, and are naturally generous, will give more than is met; while those who have very inadequate views of their obligations to God, and who are by nature stingy, will give very much less than they ought, if their gratitude regulate their giving. Gratitude, like judgment, is a variable quantity, and is less fit to decide the measure of our offerings.

Others say, "Be guided by the principle of love to God." Love is hardly a principle, it is a passion, and as a religious passion is often a burning, fiery furnace. If holy Love alone is to bring the offering, she will lay all upon the altar—the last cent. But this is not required. Love may prompt to give, but Love does not know how to decide what proportion the offering should bear to his ability to give, who makes the offering. Love is the most noble—most divine—of all the impulses of the human heart, yet is it blind, and needs a rule to regulate its own expression. Men love God with different degrees of intensity, and this, in many instances, because of differences in the basal qualities of their spiritual nature. Therefore, lovers of God, of equal financial ability and equal financial responsibilities, who give solely from love, will be found to give to His cause unequal amounts, when, it is clear, they should give alike.

Again we are advised: "Give till you feel it." If I am of a generous disposition I will give a great deal before I "feel" it; and if I am of a miserly disposition I will give a pang every time I put a copper on the plate in church. Feeling, therefore, can be no guide in giving.

And we have heard a rule proposed in these words: "Cut off your luxuries, and give their value to the cause of God." But what are luxuries to some are very commonplace gratifications to others. And