

nature is called into exercise; Your heart is partially discharged of its remaining selfishness; your mind is braced more for christian activity; your sympathy causes you to feel afresh your alliance with man; your beneficence enables you to rejoice in your union of spirit with Christ, and adds a new bond to that power of affection which binds you to his cause. And while other duties bring you nearer to Christ, this may be said alone to place you by his side, and to exalt you into a real, though humble, imitation of his divine benevolence." (Harris).—"Sufficiency" is everywhere else in the N. T. translated "contentment" (1 Tim. 6: 6; Phil. 4: 1). It is literally "self-sufficiency" in a good sense, "Having enough of everything always." "God is able to cause your riches to abound, that ye may have abundance." (Hodge). And therefore much to give away in good works literally, "that ye may overflow" (Phil. 4: 18) "have an overplus for." (Alford). Enough and to spare. Much wealth is not a necessary condition of great liberality (ch. 8: 2). A contented mind, a grateful heart and a loving spirit will "overflow" in good works.

9. As it is written. He hath dispersed abroad; (R. V. scattered) he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth (R. V. abideth) forever. This is a quotation from Ps. 112: 9. It proves the apostle's assertion that "he who is liberal, who disperses, scatters abroad his gifts with free-handed generosity, as a man scatters seed, shall always have abundance. This the psalmist expressly asserts. The Bible is full of similar declarations. (Prov 3: 9, 10; 11: 24, 25; 13: 7; 22: 9; Mal. 3: 10-12; Mark 10: 30). These passages were not designed to be taken literally, or applied universally. They teach three things. 1. The tendency of righteousness. It is the tendency of righteousness to produce blessedness, as it is the tendency of evil to produce misery. 2. The general course of divine providence. God in his providence does, as a general rule, prosper the diligent and bless the righteous. 'Honesty is the best policy,' is a maxim even of worldly wisdom. 3. Even in this life righteousness produces a hundred-fold more good than unrighteousness does. A righteous man is a hundred-fold more happy than a wicked man, other things being equal. A good man is a hundred-fold more happy in sickness, in poverty, in bereave-

ment, than a wicked man in the same circumstances. It is therefore, according to Scripture, a general law, that he that scattereth increaseth; he that gives shall have where-with to give." (Hodge).

The word for "dispersed abroad" means to scatter in every direction (John 10: 12; 16: 32), as insowing seed, "without anxious thought in what direction every grain may fall" (Bengel). A vivid picture of the good man's generosity. The "poor" here is literally those who work for their daily bread, who have the bare necessities of life and not always enough of these. Our liveliest sympathies should be aroused on behalf of such. In these days of keen competition and "sweet shops" there is ample room for proving our righteousness after the fashion admired by the psalmist. The word "righteousness," in Scripture, is often used in a comprehensive sense, including all moral excellence, and in such cases it depends on the context which particular form of goodness is intended. (Hodge). Here it means high moral character as manifested by liberality. Such conduct shews an abiding righteousness, a soul filled with the love which comes from God and makes like God. It is implied that if the character continues, its manifestation will continue and therefore that he will be supplied with the means for displaying it.

10. Now he that ministereth (R. V. and he that supplieth) seed to the sower, both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown (R. V. shall supply your seed for sowing) and increase the fruits of your righteousness. This verse is not a benediction but an affirmation, as in the R. V. Paul reiterates and applies the principle he has stated and proved, namely, that no man is the poorer for being liberal. The words are quoted from Isa. 55: 10. where God is described as the giver of seed for the sower and bread for eating. The apostle says, in effect, that there is something in the economy of grace analogous to the economy of nature. God's methods in the latter are a type and pledge of what he will do in the former. He who gives seed will make it grow. "Therefore your seed," your gifts for Christ's sake, will return you an increase in kind. The more you give the more you will have from which to give. "The fruits of your righteousness are not the rewards of