

The Home Mission Journal.

A list of Missions, Sunday School and Temperance work, and a list of church and moral activities, and general news, should be addressed to the Editor.

All communications, except money contributions, are to be addressed to

THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL,
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All money letters should be addressed to
REV. J. H. GIBBS,
Carlton, St. John.

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The Lord's Supper.

WE best interpret the Lord's Supper when we put ourselves imaginatively back into the events of the evening on which he instituted it. The feeling with which he came to the upper room, where His disciples had made ready the Passover feast, were those that arise in our hearts when we know that we are to take a last meal with those who are very dear to us. The disciples did not know what was to take place during the next twenty-four hours, but He knew, and His soul was filled with the affection and pathos that any sensitive spirit would associate with such an occasion.

He wanted to have His friends remember Him, and with singular originality He proposed that His disciples, after He had gone, should gather about the table and, as they ate the bread and drank the wine they should consciously remember Him. His followers caught the spirit of His suggestion, and from it has come the ordinance we know as the Lord's Supper.

There has been but debate as to whether we are commanded to keep the Supper, whether it is obligatory upon Christians. It seems to us that those who raise that question have so far missed the inner spirit of the observance that it is impossible for them to keep it in any worthy sense. The Lord's Supper is not instituted in the realm of law, but in the realm of love; and those to whom the suggestion and wish of Jesus make no appeal have nothing to do with it. They are so alien to its spirit that any observance of it on their part must be a meaningless form.

A kindred judgment must be passed on most of the disputes that have arisen about other features of the observance. How men miss the living sentiment of the institution when they press our Lord's metaphors into a mathematical equation, and query whether He meant that the bread and wine were literally His body and blood! Those who believe that are not thereby precluded from an acceptable observance, but the essential feature of a worthy observance is not the interpretation of a phrase, but the spirit of loving remembrance of the Lord, an appreciation of what He is and what He has done.

In almost all of our churches, much more could be done to make the Lord's Supper yield its power and blessing to those who partake of it. Making it a formal ceremony robs it of its distinctive elements. Discussions as to the kind of bread or wine, or individual cups, and other matters, are utterly alien to its spirit. It is a sacrament of love, and, while things are to be done decently and in order, discussions of method are as unbecomingly as how a babe shall kiss its mother, or how friends, whose hearts are one, shall greet each other after long absence.

The main thing is to remember the Lord, and to do this worthily we need to realize afresh His character and work, His suffering and death and

triumph, and the promise of a reunion with Him in the city of the vision. The hurried observance of the Supper, after a morning service, when members of the Sunday school are watching the clock for fear the school may be late; the discontinuance of the old-fashioned preparatory service or covenant meeting, anything that makes the Supper a formal ceremony or an observance the value of which consists in doing it, and not in the spirit we bring to it or take from it, misses all its best and highest features.

The following communication, criticizing some of the articles which have recently appeared in *The Messenger and Visitor* on the Fatherhood of God, has been sent us for insertion in this paper; and while we would much rather that the discussion of that subject was confined to the paper in which it was begun, yet we give space to this one because of its brevity and general correctness. But we do not wish to open our columns to controversial articles of any kind. As we have said before, we have been deeply interested in this discussion as it proceeded, and believe that each writer has had no end in view other than to apprehend what is truth, yet we cannot endorse all that either party has written; nor do we admire the spirit in which some have indulged while giving their views. We claim brethren; give us Scripture, and sound logic rather than vinegar and satire. We think there is a misapprehension of the meaning of certain terms used in the Scriptures, by some of our brethren. For instance, the phrase, "children of the Devil," is strained beyond its true meaning by some. It surely has reference to character more than to relationship, not paternity nor posterity, for Satan is not the father of any creature. We may be the father of lies, as he is of all evil in God's universe. Again, "The Father," as used by our Lord and his apostles, is used by our brethren we think too literally. We believe it has a larger figurative meaning than that of paternity. If there were in the vocabulary of human language a term that would adequately express the deep affectionate solicitude, and overflowing emotion of the divine heart for the fallen race of the pair he created in his own image, that term would have been used instead of "Father." God's relationship to humanity is not so much "Father," as it is creator, supporter and Saviour. And only because of the paucity and inability of language to fully convey to the human mind the intensity of the divine interest and loving kindness toward his erring creatures the endearing term of Father is figuratively employed to set him forth in his relationship to them. But He surely is more than "Father." The economy of grace is not so much the product of "Fatherhood," as it is the provision of love. See John 3:16. But the term "Father," is used in a larger figurative sense in reference to those who are "born from above." To the regenerate soul God is Father indeed; for such are partakers of the divine nature, and have the spirit of adoption crying "Abba Father." They have a relationship to God that is nearer and dearer than that of children; and he a relationship to them, that is nearer and dearer than that of Father. They are born of the incorruptible seed, and can never perish for his seed remaineth in them. They are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

But we have no desire to discuss this subject, and while we do not believe that any of our brethren who have written on this matter have any fellowship for either Universalism or Unitarianism, yet to our mind the idea of the universal Fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man smacks a little of those doctrines.

"The Fatherhood of God."

"For as much as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us," concerning the Fatherhood of God—"it seemed good unto me also most excellent" Editor to write you the views of a layman.

The *Messenger and Visitor* having allowed four letters to appear favouring "Universal Fatherhood of God" since Bro. Bynon wrote his

last, now closes its columns.

I will not ask to notice those who have written, and have been ashamed to sign their names, but would notice that wonderful production of Rev. D. H. MacQuarrie's.

Mr. MacQuarrie calls our attention to Luke 3:38. My view of that verse, is, that Adam was assuredly a son, and that in the very same way, every other saved man is a son, viz.—through belief in Christ, for if Adam's sonship had been by creation, then would our Lord's genealogy have come through Cain and not through Seth. Rev. D. H. MacQuarrie tells us the paternal character of God was suggested to Moses, and refers us to Deut. 32:11-12. The 9th verse of that chapter informs us that those verses refer to God's people, having nothing whatever to do with "Universal Fatherhood." If Mr. MacQuarrie revises his "theology" here "the world will sustain the shock." He also calls our attention to Eph. 2:18. That verse reads "For through him" (Christ) "we both have access by one spirit to the Father." This verse teaches that the only way Jew or Gentile can have access to the Father is by Christ. We are glad it is no calamity to wonder, for who can help wondering that he should refer us to a verse that so flatly contradicts his position viz.—that sonship is through Adam, and so plainly asserts our position that *sonship is only through Christ*. He next refers us to the parable of the "Prodigal Son" and says, "to cross Father from that parable would certainly leave it without a foot to stand on." Having carefully read every word that has appeared in the *Messenger and Visitor* on this subject, we are compelled to state Mr. MacQuarrie is the only man who hints at erasing "Father" from the parable.

Why does not some one answer Bro. Bynon's question—"If the younger son represents unregenerate sinners who is the elder son?"

To whom did the Father say, "Son thou art ever with me and all that I have is thine?" How could an unregenerate man know God as "my Father" since God's Word asserts—"Neither knoweth any man the Father save the son and he to whomsoever the son will reveal him?" Matt. 11:27. How did the unregenerate man know there was "bread and to spare" in his Father's house since the natural man discerneth not the things of the spirit? 1 Cor. 2:14. Why does not some one show how a man begotten of God in generation could be born into a higher life than that which he possesses seeing that theory makes him divine.

English has not proved good enough to reveal this. In Mr. Bynon's last letter he gave these words from Rev. J. A. Gordon, "By no process of evolution, however prolonged, can the natural man be developed into the spiritual man." Mr. Freeman says "The winning of men's affections constitutes the new birth." Who are we to believe?

My Bible speaks of saved men being born of incorruptible seed, 1 Peter 1:23; of them being made partakers of the divine nature, 2 Pet. 1:4. Mr. Freeman also says "No new faculties are imparted in regeneration." Jesus Christ says that unless a man is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3).

Paul also says "powers of discernment are given to the regenerate unpossessed by the unregenerate" 1 Cor. 2:14. The prophet Ezekiel says a new heart and new spirit will be given, Ezek. 11:19, 20, 26. With Gordon, Ezekiel, Paul and Christ himself against Mr. Freeman we leave him and turn to note further Mr. MacQuarrie who says Scripture supports his position.

Having read every reference in the Bible on the "Fatherhood of God" we assert fearless of successful contradiction, there is not one verse in English Bible that asserts or implies that God is Father of all men, we challenge our opponents to produce just one.

On the other hand we have Christ's direct answer to unregenerate men who said, "We have one Father even God." "Jesus said unto them, if God were your Father you would love me." "Ye are of your Father the Devil, John 8:41-44. We have also Christ's plain teaching how men may become sons. "As many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name," John 1:12-13.

There is no word in the English Bible about