

able for us to believe the statement of Peter, that, when he prayed on the housetop in Joppa, there was vouchsafed to him a heavenly vision.

I heard a voice, v. 7. In the city of Edinburgh at one o'clock each day, a cannon in the castle overlooking the city booms out the hour. In the colleges and shops and pleasure gardens, people set their watches by the cannon. The cannon itself is connected by an electric wire with the observatory, so that it simply announces the time determined by the sun. Conscience is like the cannon, giving the time to our duties and pleasures. But conscience receives the time from God. It is when we are acting under His control and direction that we shall be in the right path. "Conscience is the voice of God in the soul of man."

What God hath cleansed make not thou common (Rev. Ver.), v. 9. Apply these words to daily life. Think of your food as the gift of God, and every meal will be a sacrament, calling out gratitude and love to the generous Giver. Accept all the joys of life as expressions of the Heavenly Father's love, and they will be doubly sweet and satisfying. Remember that the ills of life are sent to develop and strengthen character, and

querulous murmuring will give place to sweet submission. Take up all the duties of each day as assigned you by Him, and instead of being mere routine drudgery they will become a divine mission. Look beyond all second causes to the great First Cause and view your life as part of His great plan, then nothing in your life will appear common. It will reflect something of the divine glory and express in its own measure the character of God.

Making no distinction, v. 12. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a universal Gospel. Its blessings are intended for all mankind. His horizon was not limited by the boundaries of race or country, and He sent forth His apostles with a Gospel for all men, of every color and country and degree of culture. And this Gospel proved itself to be fitted, as it was intended, for the whole world. It checked the vices of Rome, it gave civilization to the Teutons. In modern days it has opened the vast regions of the East to Western thought and enterprise. There is scarce any land in which its triumphs have not been chronicled, in which its enduring monuments have not been built in the lives and institutions of the people. It has reached the uttermost parts of the earth.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

Love gives point to logic. v. 4.

The fresh breeze of honest discussion purifies the church from prejudice. v. 4.

Prayer brings visions of duty and enlargement of heart. v. 5.

God hates nothing that He has made. v. 6.

It is natural for Christ to command; the man is Christ-like who obeys. v. 7.

The grace of God shows its power in overcoming prejudice. v. 8.

Man's certitude rests on God's certainty. v. 10.

There are no missing links in the chain of God's purpose. v. 11.

The presence of the Holy Spirit produces unity. v. 12.

The angels are "ministering spirits" (Heb. 1:14). v. 13.

The Gospel salvation is a household salvation. v. 14.

The two parties in this discussion were those "of the circumcision" on the one hand, and Peter, on the other. The former may be called "the small-hearted." To them the church was a Jewish society founded on the law of Moses, with Christ as its head and King. They would have none among them who did not observe the Mosaic laws, as they interpreted them, even to the matter of eating and drinking, and they were angered at Peter eating with a Gentile and bringing him into the church. The large-hearted Peter stood alone against these narrow minds. He was the spokesman of the larger love of Christ that embraces the world. He uses the only solid and enduring argument for missions and all aggressive Christian work, when he appeals to God and His will. His reply to his critics was: