

Our Young People

Christmas Bells.

ADVENT MESSAGES FOR CHRISTIAN ENDEAVORERS.

Topic for December 24.—“Our Royal Brother.”—Heb. 1:1-9; 3:6.

“Hark, the herald angels sing!”

The God-Man.

BY W. H. WITHROW, D.D.

The Christmas-tide brings sacredly near the thought of the humanity of our Lord. The Babe of Bethlehem is at once the Son of God and the Brother of all souls. The greatest need of mankind has ever been a revelation of the divine. Hence the fabled avatars and incarnations of false religions. With what infinite love does our heavenly Father meet this need of our souls! God, who in times past spake in types and symbols, and in the words of sage and seer, in these last days has spoken unto us by His Son. The Word was made flesh. The divine was revealed as man—with human tenderness and tears, with sacred helpfulness and hope.

With what impressive grandeur does the apostle set forth this infinite goodness and mercy of God! What sublime ideas he expresses, in what august words! He unfolds the very counsels of eternity. He adds clause to clause in sacred climax to set forth the dignity and power of the Creator and upholder of all things. Before all worlds He was, and when all worlds shall pass away—when the very heavens shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture be changed—He is the same, and His years shall not fail. “From everlasting to everlasting, Thou are God.”

But not God's might and majesty, not His power and glory, so speak to our hearts as does His love. This great Creator is also the divine Redeemer. “By Himself He purged our sins.” He stooped from heaven's loftiest heights to earth's lowest depths. He veiled the Chead in the garb of our humanity. He became subject to human limitations and infirmities. “He was made like unto His brethren.” He was an hungry and athirst, weary and wayworn, lonely and sorrowful, despised and rejected, denied and forsaken. He was crucified, dead, and buried. But, thank God, He rose from the dead, and brought life and immortality to light. He became “the first-fruits of them that slept.” He ascended up on high.

Our Royal Brother sits upon the throne of the heavens. But His heart of love is still unchanged. He is still the sympathizing Saviour. Amid the songs of the redeemed and the sevenfold chorus of heaven, He bends down His ear from the throne of His glory to catch the softest whisperings of His suffering child on the earth, the faintest lisp of prayer. “He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

What a sacred privilege is ours! What a divine fellowship—one so near and dear

and tender that the nearest and dearest and tenderest of earth but dimly shadows it forth. How softly should we talk before God! How carefully should we keep our garments unspotted from the world! How strong and brave and true should be our devotion to our Elder Brother in the skies! So of each, as of Sir Galahad, may it be true:—

His strength is as the strength of ten,
Because his heart is pure.

Henceforth no son of Adam is orphaned and desolate. No soul need feel lonely or forsaken. None can ever say, “No sorrow is like unto my sorrow.” Our Royal Brother has shared and knows it all. “For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.” He will save unto the uttermost, and to the end. He, as none other can, will remember the forgotten, will visit the forsaken, and lift up them that be cast down. None who came unto Him has ever been denied, none who called upon Him has ever been deserted.

“Deserted!” God could separate from His own essence rather;
And Adam's sins have swept between the righteous Son and Father.
Yea, once, Immanuel's orphaned cry His universe hath shaken
It went up single, cheolose, “My God, I am forsaken!”
It went up from the Holy's lips amid His lost creation,
That, of the lost, no son should use those words of desolation!

—Christian Endeavor World.

Our Royal Brother.

We all have an Elder Brother there. Nearly nineteen hundred years ago He crossed over, and from the heavenly shores He is calling you to heaven.—D. L. Moody.

Had Christ been born in the Temple, and reared in the Holy of Holies, there might to-day be more saints in Cæsar's household than there are; but would there not be many mangers and cabins and attics robbed of all that now makes them glorious?—J. B. Clark, D.D.

Thou, O elder Brother! who
In thy flesh our trial knew,
Thou, who hast been touched by these
Our most sad infirmities,
Thou alone the gulf canst span
In the dual heart of man
And between the soul and sense
Reconcile all difference,
Change the dream of me and mine
For the truth of Thee and Thine,
And, through chaos, doubt and strife,
Interfuse Thy calm of life.

—J. G. Whittier.

It will be wiser for us to catch the spirit of the season by a study of the chapters

in which Matthew and Luke tell us of Christ's birth than by loitering at the world's counters, where the season is significant only as it furthers the business of bargain and sale.—Rev. Willard G. Sperry.

He Takes Our Place.

A soldier, worn out in his country's service, took to the violin as a mode of earning his living. He was found in the streets of Vienna, playing his violin; but after a while his hand became feeble and tremulous, and he could no more make music. One day, while he sat there weeping, a man passed along and said, “My friend, you are too old and too feeble; give me your violin”; and he took the man's violin, and began to discourse most exquisite music, and the people gathered around in larger and larger multitudes, and the aged man held his hat, and the coin poured in and poured in until the hat was full.

“Now,” said the man, who was playing the violin, “put that coin in your pockets.” The coin was put in the old man's pockets.

Then he held his hat again, and the violinist played more sweetly than ever, and played until some of the people wept and some shouted. And again the hat was filled with coin.

Then the violinist dropped the instrument and passed off, and the whisper went, “Who is it? who is it?” and some one just entering the crowd said, “Why, that is Bucher, the great violinist, known all through the realm; yes, that is the great violinist.” The fact was, he had just taken that man's place, and assumed his poverty, and borne his burden, and played his music, and earned his livelihood, and made sacrifice for the poor old man.

So the Lord Jesus Christ comes down, and He finds us in our spiritual penury, and across the broken strings of His own broken heart He strikes a strain of infinite music, which wins the attention of earth and heaven. He takes our poverty. He plays our music. He weeps our sorrow. He dies our death. A sacrifice for you. A sacrifice for me.—The Christian Herald.

Hints for Talks and Testimonies.

What is Christ's kingdom?
Whom did Christ call His brethren?
What connection is there between the kingship of Christ and that of His brethren?
How does the extent of Christ's kingdom depend on His brethren?
How may we recognise Christ's kingship in our lives?
What does Christ's kingship mean for our future?
What does Christ's brotherhood mean for our daily life?
What does Christ's brotherhood promise us for the future?
What meaning does Christ's brotherhood give to the church?
What difference should our belief in Christ as our brother make in our thought of others?

For Daily Reading.

Mon., Dec. 18.—Born King. Luke 2: 8-20
Tues., Dec. 19.—Thy king cometh. Matt. 21: 1-11
Wed., Dec. 20.—Art thou a king? John 18: 38-39
Thurs., Dec. 21.—Who are my brethren? Matt. 12: 46-50
Fri., Dec. 22.—The adoption of sons. Gal. 4: 1-7
Sat., Dec. 23.—Joint-heirs with Christ. Rom. 8: 12-17
Sun., Dec. 24.—Topic. “Our Royal Brother.” Heb. 1: 1-9; 3: 6. (A Christmas meeting).