

us ideas compressed into this are—Substitution, Sacrifice, Salvation! Christ became our substitute and suffered for us. Christ became our sacrifice, and laid down his life to take away our guilt; the "Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all." Christ secures eternal life to every true believer and faithful follower.

The highest success in preaching lies just there. Paul's keynote struck amid the idolatries of Corinth and in defiance of Caesar's victors at Rome, has been the secret of converting power everywhere. Luther preached this Gospel of atoning blood to slumbering Europe, and it awoke the dead. Amid all his emphasizeings and defenses of the divine sovereignty, Calvin never ignored or betitled the atonement. Cowper sang of it in sweet strains among the water-lilies of the Ouse; and Bunyan made the cross the starting point for the Celestial City. John Wesley proclaimed it to the colliers of Kindwood, and the swarthy miners of Cornwall. Moody's bells all chimed to the keynote of Calvary. Spurgeon thundered his doctrine of vicarious atonement into the ears of peer and peasant with a voice like the sound of many waters. The heart of God's church has in all ages held to this as the heart of all Christian theology—"Christ Jesus died for our sins." This sublime central truth is no more obsolete to-day than yonder sun in the firmament. To every younger brother who is about entering the ministry I would point the example of the mightiest of all preachers—and would say to him—follow Paul, and plant your pulpit on Calvary, and let the uplifted Christ draw all men unto Him!—Watchman.

Some Things Sure.

It is surprising to those of us who have been taught the plain and reasonable gospel, how many of the illogical and grotesque religions find adherents. We marvel that any reasonable person can believe in spiritualism, with its rappings and ghostly apparitions that are so "adverse to the daylight;" or Christian Science with its vagaries; or Unitarianism with its Divine man and human Christ; and the more modest but persistent Faith Healing that cannot heal broken bones nor raise the dead. Many things disturb the peace of men's mind. Many problems arise to vex and defy the acutest intellect. Frequent discrepancies appear in the providence of God to befog the path of some, and science, ever discovering and declaring startling hypothesis, perplexes others. The young Presbyterian students were not too modest to inform the examining committee the story of man's creation in Genesis is a fable—an allegory—a mistake of Moses. The all-wise Methodist professor who has found out that most of the Old and New Testaments is allegorical, mythical and untrustworthy; are not sporadic cases afflicted with conceit and pedantry, merely—they represent a part of the vanguard of the "unstable in all their ways," the many "half-believers," whose lamps are not burning steadily and brightly, like the waves of the sea "driven with the wind tossed," ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth," confused and perplexed and doubting. Not so with true believer. He has something sure. Tempestuous waves foam and toss about him, but he is not afraid. They shipwreck others, but he says: "None of these things move me." No! this true believer in Christ is not ignorant of the pretensions of science, nor of its real achievements; neither does he close his eyes to all the fuller revelations of the truth of God. This is sure; science has not yet and never can discover "any other foundation than that is laid which is Jesus Christ." No interpretation, no monuments yet to be deciphered, or contemporaneous literature, language or truth now known or yet to be discovered can change the ground upon which he stands to-day. His faith is established in the Word of God and in his own experience, and all grounded in self-evident truth without which no other can be found.

What cares any believer for Darwin's conclusions! It must ever remain true that every effect has an adequate cause. Man must have no less than infinite wisdom and power and goodness from which to spring. The Bible declares this is God and he believes it. He finds that the natural man is at enmity against God; he has fallen either by his own sin or the sins of others into hopeless ruin. No human help can avail him. But, like Bunyan's Pilgrim, he sees a light as Paul saw it, above the brightness of the noonday sun and gets there a vision of his Lord, "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." The need of his soul is not reformation but regeneration, and for that achievement, Christ, the Son of God, is the only power. He believes that. Amid all the varying experiences of the day's "march," of sunshine mounting all the hills with gold, or sullen threatening cloud; of radiant spring, or sombre autumn, there is and must be in the Author of all things—in infinite wisdom and power and goodness an adequate and just administration of providence, and he reads:—"Cast thy burden upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." And he believes it, and because he believes in these sure things of God he is able to stand fast, radiant, hopeful and happy.—Commonwealth.

The Vanity of Riches.

By riches we mean material things. These are to be possessed by men, but the mistake men too often make is that of being satisfied with the possession of that which is simply material instead of putting their hearts and minds on that which endures.

God calls us to the acceptance of what is spiritual and eternal. We are told that what is seen is temporal, and that only that which is unseen is eternal. The natural man believes only that which he can touch and handle. Men are wrapped up in the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye and the pride of life. The little, petty things that perish with the using are the things which the world longs for with an unabated desire. Too few desire that which is eternal and which is needed for the welfare and life of the soul. But true wisdom prompts us to seek for the true riches found in peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Of course while we live in the world, we are to be busied with the things of the world. We are to eat and to drink and to be clothed. We must secure food and drink and clothing. We may trust God for these things, but we will work for them diligently if our trust is anything but a fanciful sentiment. Our Saviour tells us that our Heavenly Father knows we have need of these things. He created us with these needs in our nature. If we need them, we are expected to seek for them and work for them, only we must do it with the right feeling in our hearts toward God, and with the determination that they shall not win our hearts away from God. If we think only of material things, we become materialists. If we think of God and of our souls and of our relation to him, we become spiritually-minded.

Our bodies are not naturally sinful. Sin does not necessarily belong to our bodies or to the material universe around us. Sin is in our souls. If there were not sin in the world, we might almost consider ourselves to be already in heaven. Sin is in our souls, and we need to have our souls purified and saved. If we become pure in heart and soul, we shall be able to use the world as not abusing it and as not being abused by it. It was and is a false philology which teaches that sin resides in matter, and that only as we become separated from matter are we saved. It is a very great mistake. Some of God's saintliest children on earth are very busy with material things, and some very wicked people are very poor and idle. The question is as to the condition and attitude of the soul. Is the soul saved?

It is dangerous to be rich, no doubt. The position is one that tries the life. But is dangerous only as one allows himself to be engrossed and won away from God and into a trust of riches rather than of God. He who puts his trust in riches rather than in the living God impoverishes his soul, feeds upon worse than husks and is his own worst enemy. A little, with piety, makes one rich. A good name and character and relationship with God are better than the best riches the world can afford.—Rx.

Prayer Meeting of Great Worth.

BY REV. JAMES A. BROWN.

It has for a long time been my conviction that the prayer-meeting of the Christian church is of most exalted worth to man and ministers unto some of his deepest needs.

1. The truth considered in the prayer-meeting is of great worth to the spiritual life of man. In this meeting the supreme realities come before the mind such as the reality of man's social, moral and spiritual needs; the reality of God, of his grace, and of his glorious attributes; the reality of the Holy Spirit's presence, and the reality of the life that is to come. Are not such truths supreme in their inspirational power? These indeed are truths that have made the best men and women of the world. The prayer-meeting is great in its truth.

2. It seems to the writer that the exercises of the prayer-meeting are great in their power to benefit the soul and life of man. Reverent, intelligent, fervent prayer is one of the most ennobling acts of the true man. The supreme One prayed, and taught his disciples to pray. The school of Christ is the school of prayer, and when we think of Paul, Luther, Livingstone, Gladstone, does not the conviction deepen that the school of prayer is also the school of greatness? Are not the songs of the sweet hour of prayer the best we ever sing? For has man ever lifted his voice in a nobler song than this:

"Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!"

Or this:

"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all thy quickening power."

Moreover, the spoken words in this meeting are a witness for the dear Lord, language coming from the heart of those who love Jesus as Saviour, from hearts conscious of the Holy Spirit's presence. Prayer, spiritual songs and the witnessing of Christians, these are the uplifting, sanctifying, ennobling exercises of the prayer service of the church.

3. The achievements of the prayer-meeting are great

and worthy. In this meeting souls are converted, regenerated, born into the kingdom of God. It is the place of spiritual victories, triumphs over sin, decisions for Christ, devotion to duty and heroic enlistment in the service of God and humanity. These are the highest achievements, since they relate to the soul and heart of man.

I am convinced, therefore, that the prayer service of the church is of most exalted worth because of the character of its truths, its exercises and its achievements.

Do you desire to build up the spiritual life of the church? Then build up the prayer service. Pray during the week for God's blessing in the meeting. Study the Bible, read your Christian paper and magazines with the purpose of bringing living truths into your testimonies. If there be time in the meeting, let the Holy Spirit use you in prayer and testimony. Be spiritually alive in the meeting; listen intently to every witness for the Lord; let your heart say "Amen!" to every petition, and let every song be your own heart's praise and adoration of the Lord.—Christian Herald.

The Unbridled Tongue.

Perhaps no agency has wrought so much mischief in churches as the unbridled tongue.

Mr. Spurgeon once said: "Every church, and, for the matter of that, every village and family, is plagued with certain Mrs. Grundys, who drink tea and talk a trial."

You can never build up a church by talking it down. Finding fault with your neighbor is a wretched salve for a sore conscience.

The professing Christian who shows by his conversation that he has no confidence in his brethren is not worthy of belief.

Many a church trouble would soon die out if the members of that church had grace enough to hold their tongues. The fire of contention will go out of itself if no one shall stir or fan it with an unbridled tongue.

There is a tongue which is like the pen of a ready writer when making unfavorable comments, but it cleaves to the roof of the mouth when words of commendation and appreciation are in order.

It is not only a great sin to set in motion an evil report against a neighbor, but to take up a reproach which some one else has started and send it on is a clear violation of the law of the Lord.

One who speaks unadvisedly with his tongue cannot neutralize the evil effect of his speech by lowering the tones of his voice. Solomon says: "A whisperer separateth chief friends."

There is a time to speak and a time to be silent. How beautiful is silence in its time. One who has power to hold his tongue is greater than he that taketh a city. We are told that a young man once went to Socrates to learn oratory. On being introduced to the philosopher, he talked so incessantly that Socrates asked for double fees. "Why charge me double?" asked the young man. "Because," said the philosopher, "I must teach you two sciences: the one how to hold your tongue, and the other how to speak." The former is far more difficult and more of a fine art than the latter.

The abilities of a well disciplined mind are largely negative. It is a great attainment to know how to speak and how to hear, but it is quite as essential to know how to keep silence and how not to hear. Some one has written of a good woman who was able to sit beside a friend who discussed the characters and faults of her neighbors for hours and not hear a sentence. She had trained her mind to turn away from unprofitable gossip and give her thoughts to better things. Happy soul! Never did mortal display clearer marks of true culture and refinement. If the heart were well stored with grace, the tongue and the ear would be under the control of the Holy Spirit, and he is the spirit of truth and wisdom and love.—N. Y. Advocate.

Many have come to feel that the mere attendance on the services of the church is sufficient, though the mind be fully intent on far other matters than worship. They feel it a duty to take part in the exercise; they sing the sacred hymns—hymns which are the inspired outpouring of most consecrated souls—and repeat the words without a thought as to their deep import. In very much the same way as a child will repeat a striking jingle of words. The song means nothing to them, and five minutes afterward they could not tell you one word of what they had sung. Very different this mechanical and heathen repetition of words and rhythm from singing unto the Lord, singing with "the spirit and understanding," as Paul counseled us to do! Very different this from singing with joy and praising his holy name! very different this from the kind of service we are told the redeemed shall render in that day to him who sitteth upon the throne! And yet we profess to have begun this life of service and that life of praise here and now.—Sel.

Man can destroy himself, but life and holiness can only come from another and a higher than himself. While it takes only one to do evil, it takes two to do good.—A. H. Strong.