

but whithersoever they went, to subsist entirely upon the charity of those willing to entertain them; at the same time threatening eternal damnation on all those declining to permit themselves to be overrun by these peripatetic charity-seekers, those itinerant thaumaturgists? (Matt. x. 9-15; Luke ix. 3-5).

Was not the whole life of Jesus, from the inception of his ministry to his arrest in Gethsemane, spent in this manner, and is such a life a pattern for us? Must we follow in the footsteps of the Master, Christ,—renounce our friends, wives, children, houses and lands, as Jesus commanded, and, gathering together a chosen band of ignorant proselytes, with a feeble comprehension of the grandeur and extent of our missions and our teachings, full of worldly ambition and intent upon gaining the highest position at our (supposed) command, as in case of James and John (Mark x. 35-37); or waiting expectantly for a good round reward in the way of possessions, houses, lands, etc., as did Peter (Matt. xix. 27-29); or as in the case of the same disciple, when convinced that those expectant possessions will never be realized, deny, with oaths, all knowledge of us; or, like Judas, willing to betray us to torture and death for a handful of silver,—shall we, with these chosen bands of *unselfish* followers, go prowling about the country, without a penny in our pockets, billeting ourselves and bands upon whatever charitable and kind-hearted people we may encounter; and, at the same time, consign to the lowest hell all those refusing to receive and feast these wandering vagrants, these circumforanean tramps; and, all those cities and towns unwilling to believe in the divine mission of ourselves and lands, denounce in unmeasured terms as hell-deserving, reserved in wrath for fiery indignation? (Matt. xi. 20-24) We think that even the most infatuated Bibliolator must confess, that in this particular, Jesus cannot be taken as our guide, as a pattern.

Again, Jesus, although engaged in teaching some very useful and practicable precepts, laboring, as best he could no doubt, to induce his people to accept the higher teachings of his day and thus lift themselves to a more elevated moral plane, yet so conducted himself,—was so far carried away by fanatical zeal,—as to incense the authorities against him; having, through his imprudence and that of the enthusiastic multitude, suffered himself to be hailed as the King of the Jews, thus making himself a political offender: this being the more flagrant on account of the great publicity attending his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the capital city of the kingdom, attended by a tumultuous mob of his partizans, heralding him as their king; thereby placing himself in conflict with the regularly constituted authorities of the country,—incurring the charge of sedition, insurrection, treason. This very unwise conduct on his part, this placing himself in antagonism with the Roman authorities, was followed, immediately upon his entry into Jerusalem, by the violent disturbance created by him in the temple,—the Holy of Holies of the Jewish religion, regarded as of peculiar sanctity, as the abode of Jehovah himself. This sanctity Jesus outraged by his forcible expulsion from the temple-courts of those engaged in legitimate traffic,—their business being indispensably requisite for the proper observance of temple service.

Coupled with this uncalled-for, extravagant, and fanatical proceeding, he daily, in the temple and public thoroughfares, leveled fierce tirades against the rulers and leading classes of the Jews, full of reproachful sarcasm and bitter invective; thus placing himself in deadly opposition, not only to the Roman Government by his arbitrary assumptions of regal dignity and power, but to the authority of the Jewish Sanhedrim,—the Scribes, Elders and Chief Priests. The natural resultant thereof followed hard upon. In a few days after his triumphant (it) ride into the Holy City, he was arrested both as a political and ecclesiastical offender, guilty unto death by both the Jewish and the Roman Law; and, being speedily condemned, was put to death, thereby through his foolish fanaticism, bringing to an untimely end his, in some respects, promising career.

Had Jesus displayed more forethought and discretion in his sayings and actions; restraining the impetuosity of his ardent temperament; keeping in check the fiery zeal over threatening to burst the bounds of moderation and dispassionate sway,—had he

done this, he would undoubtedly, have accomplished much more good than really attended his brief ministry. As it was, his success among the Jews was feeble indeed, he and his claims as their Messiah having been almost universally rejected by them from that day to this.

Jesus' life being an example for our guidance, we should, accordingly, violently and abusively denounce the existing rulers in church and state on street-corners and in the busy marts of trade, in church and cathedral, chapel and meeting-house; take forcible possession of the places of religious worship of those differing from ourselves, drive out the pawholders and stockholders, and set up, instead, our authority as Heaven-appointed teachers and judges of the world. We should also proclaim ourselves sovereign rulers of the countries in which we reside,—in America, Presidents; in England, Kings or Queens,—and by this means alienate from us the esteem and confidence of all respectable, law-abiding people, and bring ourselves in conflict with the governmental authorities; being very lucky if we do not thereby end our days in the State-prison or on the gallows. Surely, in this matter, our Christian brethren will hardly assert that we should regard Jesus as our Great Exemplar.

Besides, if Jesus be the guide of humanity, not a few alone, but all persons should walk in his footsteps; ergo, to follow his example, the entire human family should constitute themselves mendicant preachers and miracle-workers, with bands of chosen disciples accompanying them; but as each person would be himself or herself a preacher, it would be impossible for anyone to obtain disciples,—all those whom it would be desired to secure as followers being themselves Masters and Teachers in person. Moreover, if all persons were engaged in the business of parable-preaching and in the practice of sacred thaumaturgy, there would be no one to whom to preach or upon whom to work miracles; unless, indeed, it were done to and upon each other. A pitiable condition then, would the world be in, truly! All science, all art, all industry, all civilization and culture, would cease, and the blooming earth be speedily transformed into a howling waste and a desert wild. So much for making Jesus our model in the conduct of our worldly affairs.

We have thus seen that no portion of the life of Jesus can be taken as an ensample for our imitation or emulation. His life previous to his public ministry was wasted, so far as the rendering of any assistance to mankind was concerned. His life during his public career was wholly foreign to that necessary for us to lead in the nineteenth century, and was suddenly brought to a standstill through his having provoked his own death. How then can Jesus be truthfully characterized as our prototype, our guide, our pattern? No one, in sooth, has ever really attempted to follow him in his mode of life; save, occasionally, a few pious, deluded souls, all of whom are invariably classed as insane, lunatic, demented, by all sensible persons. The world has never seen a true follower of Jesus and never will. No two persons ever have lived or can live, precisely the same life. Each one must be true to his or her own individuality; hence, the absurdity of setting up any one person as a perfect pattern of a perfect man, by whom our lives should be moulded and fashioned.

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No one can give the history of the early Christians a careful and impartial study without perceiving that the whole stupendous fabric is built upon fraud and imposition. This is glaringly apparent, even though the whole combined efforts of the different sects, and all outside believers, who found their faith upon the bible, have been turned towards destroying all evidence possible that goes against it, while they each and every one, collected and carefully made use of all they could adduce in its favor. But it has had its day. Its downfall is sure and certain. Science is battering at its old, time-worn walls, and already breach after breach has been effected, and the whole tottering edifice trembles upon its baseless foundation.—Mrs. E. D. Stenker.