

Yes there is such a thing as an unselfish affection, an affection which rejoices in loving and being loved for love's sake alone; and this is the glory of the redeemed and the joy of heaven.

III. We notice in the third place the sphere of Paul's life. I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. To many people this sounds as if it had no special connection with our common work day life here on earth. The next sentence of the Apostle guards us against this mistake. "And the life which I now live in the flesh"—That is to say my present life in this world, my life of toil and temptation, this is the life I mean when I speak of Christ living in me. Into this life I carry the spirit of my Lord. This life I turn into one long act of worship and service. Paul's idea of life then is, that its quality is determined by its inmost spirit. Leave out the love of God then no matter how beautiful it is of the earth earthly. But if the Lord Jesus dwells in the heart then our affection for him irradiate the least as well as the greatest acts and turns them all into love tokens which we lay at the foot of the throne.

Paul could say "to me to live is Christ," when stitching canvas in the house of Aquilla as truly as when preaching on Mars Hill. He did all for Christ.

As Christians it should be our aim to fill our common life with Christ. In proportion as we do so shall we rise into the liberty of the sons of God, and find in this world a foretaste of the blessed world to come. The moral state of Christendom is worse than it might be if Christian men would do their part. Too often we are ruled by the spirit and maxims of the world, not by the spirit and precepts of Christ. Hence late hours for social parties; the fashionable use of strong drink, the use of foul means to compass good ends. Hence tyranny and extortion on the part of the rich. Hence conspiracy and fraud on the part of the poor.

The one remedy for all this wrong and wretchedness is in our own hands now had we but the courage to use it and to use it first of all honestly and fearlessly in our own hearts and homes. Is there abounding wickedness? Is fashion almost irresistible? Is it so that you can scarcely touch these things even to reform them without contracting defilement? The louder is the call for courage and fidelity, the stronger the challenge of the powers of darkness, the clearer should be the response and the more vigorous the onset of the army of the Living God. There is no room for skulkers and cowards, and just as little room for the superfine religion which walks daintily apart from the busy haunts of men, and refuses to help God and the Lord Jesus Christ to save the vile and sinful lest it soil its own skirts. Bad as the world is now it was unspeakably worse when the Lord Jesus Christ lived in the flesh, wickedness and shame did not turn him from his purpose of mercy, nor dry up his infinite compassion for lost souls.

The Model Church.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

We must go back to the Bible, not only for the model preacher and the model Christian, but also for the model church. What were the characteristics of that first Christian Church that was found in Jerusalem under the immediate supervision and guidance of the Holy Spirit? We find them all described within the space of half a dozen verses. Here they are:

(1) The first characteristic was that the Church was based on sound doctrine. We are told that they continued steadfastly in the "Apostles' teaching" (Revised Version); that is in the fundamental truths which Peter and John had taught them. The Gospel was a fresh revelation from heaven, and its two cardinal principles were repentance of sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Those early converts were well rooted and grounded in vital truth; and no young convert ought to be admitted into any church unless he can "give a reason for the faith that is in him." One reason why so many church members are weak-backed is that they are not well vertebrated with Bible truth. They are not fed on strong meat. Phillips Brooks never said a wiser thing than that "the preachers who have moved and held men have always preached doctrine. No exhortation to a good life that does not put behind it some truth as deep as eternity can seize and hold the conscience."

(2) The second trait of that model church was their fraternal "fellowship." The demon of caste had not got in. They loved one another, became well acquainted with one another, and bore one another's burdens. I will warrant that no stranger ever came into one of their meetings without being spoken to and receiving a hearty welcome. It has been reserved for some of our stiff, stately, frigid, modern churches to allow strangers to come to God's house and go away again without even a nod or a civil greeting. If Christians practiced the hospitalities of God's house as they ought to do, empty pews would soon be filled and "outsiders" would become insiders. Nobody who wants to be warmed is ever drawn into an ice-house.

(3) Those early Christians made much of the ordinances which their Master had appointed. They continued steadfastly in "breaking of bread." Not only did they draw into close fellowship, but they had joint repasts and sacramental feasts together. Probably they celebrated the dying love of their Saviour by the eucharistic supper once in every week. We ought to make more of our communion seasons; they should be veritable love-feasts, full of a holy joy, and the spirit of thanks-giving and praise. The Master should find a guest-chamber in every heart. One of the most wonderful revivals ever known in Scotland began at a communion season on the banks of the Clyde.

(4) As the Pentecostal Church was born in a prayer-meeting, it follows as a matter of course that they continued to be men and women of prayer. It was their breath of life. No substitute can

ever be found for prayer in the pulpit or in the social meeting. Preaching is good, singing is good, but God's people cannot live and grow on either of them; they will starve to death without prayer. I suspect that in that model church at Jerusalem the "Week of Prayer" lasted through the whole year.

(5) Such a brotherly-minded band of Christians as they were did not allow their poor members to suffer. In order to supply the wants of the needy those who were well off sold as much of their possessions as was required to provide for those wants. There was no compulsory abandonment of property according to the reckless "Socialism" of these days; but as there was only "one heart and one soul" among them, the strong provided for the weak. Charity was the rule, not the exception. Money was given to Christ when the heart was given. That church consecrated its purse. What splendid giving it was, too, Brother Barnabas was the noble leader and model for all time in the Christly practice of systematic beneficence. Suppose that some one had come into one of those Jerusalem meetings and announced that the time would yet come when Christians would live in ceiled houses and ride in fine carriages while "Boards of Missions" were smothered with debt and missionaries were starved out by having their salaries "scaled down" to a pittance! Barnabas would cry out, "The Lord have mercy on their stingy souls!"

(6) The last stroke in the picture of that model church was just what we might expect. A brotherhood of true believers who studied the Word and provided for the poor and enjoyed their holy sacramental hours and abounded in prayer and copied after Christ, was bound to grow. They did not need to be revived; for they kept up to blood heat all the while. Conversions took place daily. In the family record of that church the column of "Births" was better filled than the column of Resurrections or of Deaths. We don't wonder that such wide-awake Christians praised God and found favor with all the people. The Holy Spirit has not changed; the Bible has not changed; human nature has not changed; the promises have not changed; and now, in the name of common sense we ask, why should there not be thousands of just such churches as that all over the country?

A Whistling Minister.

A successful pastor must possess the grace of human sympathy and brotherly love, as well as the gifts of oratory and eloquence. During a late conference in New York, the question of increasing church membership came under discussion, and the pastor of a prominent Presbyterian church in a neighboring city, was asked to give his opinion. With a humorous twinkle in his eyes, he related in reply the following episode of his own experience: While taking a morning stroll in the suburbs of Buffalo, he came across a bright-faced little boy of about five years, who returned his good morning greeting by taking his hand and chatting with the innocent candor of trusting childhood. He narrated among other matters that he had almost lost his pet dog the day before, because when he had gone out of sight he did not know how to whistle him back. "Not know how to whistle, my little man!" said the minister, "why, how does that happen?" "'Cause nobody hain't had the time to teach me," was the answer, given with quivering lips. "Well, well, I shall take the time to teach you," and in a few minutes the little fellow was seated on his kind friend's knee, solemnly engaged in mastering the mysteries of the great art of whistling, both teacher and pupil too much engrossed to notice that they were the centre of an admiring audience. "I had intended to use strong moral persuasion," said the pastor in conclusion, "to bring the godless residents of that portion of the city under the influence of the church, but that simple act of kindness through the grace of God worked out a highly favorable result. I was dubbed the whistling parson, and under the protecting shelter of that sobriquet was allowed the freedom of many homes which would otherwise have been closed to me and to the message I was bound to deliver."

The Lord's Supper.

At a former period it was supposed that only those of a mature age and who had a positive religious experience should come to the Lord's Supper. Very many, therefore, came to the communion first after they had attained middle life. Some persons in the congregation where I always worship, evidently of religious character, and who were punctual in attendance on all religious services, never came to the Lord's Supper. They feared the anathema upon those who should come "unworthily."

They thought there was some attainment they must make to entitle them to so grave an act. They should be able to tell of some special experience. One venerable man, who was always in his place in public worship and first among those who supported the gospel, never came to the Lord's Table. He was grieved when his pastor urged upon him the duty of coming. He could not find in himself that experience which he supposed qualified him. Another was troubled because he could not tell the time of his new birth, as if the time of the first pulsation of new life could be observed by the subject of it. It is more reasonable to suppose that in the families of God's people the first breathings of spiritual life may be in early childhood, and some time before observed by the subject of them.

It is not so much what we do as what we see and touch and taste. This supper is addressed to our sight and our touch and our taste; it is to quicken our faith and our love. We see, as it were, our Lord's broken body and blood shed. We are invited, as it were, to put our finger into the print of the nails.—N. Y. Observer.