

Christian Worker.

"WORK WHILE IT IS CALLED TO-DAY."

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"HE LEADS US ON"

How does He lead them, this they cannot tell, They only know, He doeth all things well; Through fire and water, some where floods do meet, O'er briars and thorns, with torn and bleeding feet. Where tempests rage and storms burst overhead, And clouds portentous, all around are spread, But still He leads them, rough or smooth the way, And all His paths are peace, and lead to day.

And some where springs abound and pastures sweet, Go singing all the way with glad some feet; And some He leads so gently on the way, Guiding the wandering steps that faint would stray; Others go trembling on the road, for fear, With faith so weak that will not see Him near; But still He leads them, rough or smooth the way, Who follow on to know, He shows the way.

How does He draw them, some by coils of love, That sweetest cord to lift the soul above; But not all thus—so wisely doth He lead, Love would not answer to their need; And so by other cords, pain, fear, unrest, But always just the one must fit and best; And so He draws them from themselves and sin, Until they had their perfect rest in Him.

How does He keep them? 'Tis theirs alone, To whom the secrets of the Lord are known In perfect peace, though outward foes prevail; They stand upon a rock none dare assail. Though every human prop have given way, They rest in Him, their comforter and stay, And as He keeps them till their journey's o'er, They enter in where they go out no more.—[Selected.]

To the Editors of the WORKER. ONTARIO CO-OPERATION.

I am receiving of late a good many enquiries from different points as to the ability of the Ontario Co-operation to help places that need it.

We have a considerable number of churches that are struggling on bravely year after year with but little preaching ability amongst themselves, and so poor in this world's goods that they can only get occasional help, and that at long intervals, while other churches need more permanent help for a year or two at least to place them on a good footing. We have, too, as Bro. Barclay reminds us in last month's WORKER, failed to occupy to any extent the larger towns and cities and even some points where we have a few brethren which would form the nucleus of the church we have done nothing. It is from many such places that the enquiry comes, "Can you help us? And the answer in many cases is, "No, and the reason is, want of funds."

At the beginning of this year we made a suggestion to the churches that, if all who desired to help in this good work would

send in their contributions, it would leave the evangelists more at liberty to hold meetings and greatly lessen the cost of the whole work; only a few responded to this appeal. Last year, by a personal appeal from Bro. Sherman, a considerable sum was easily obtained. Now, will you not enable us to obtain an equal sum this year without the expense of a personal appeal? Surely if it is right to give when asked, it is also right to give without being asked. Think of this, brethren, think of your personal responsibility and act promptly and liberally. Send in your contributions to Bro. Law, Meaford, that some of these calls may be answered through your means. "Lay by you in store as the Lord has prospered you," and you will be astonished how large a fund will accumulate for the work of the Lord. I know that we have some brethren who are opposed to co-operative work of this kind, but I know it is the method and not the work to which they are opposed. Well, let me say to all such—has the Lord prospered you? Do you recognize your responsibility to Him? I know you do. Well, then, just spend your money and your time and your talents in any way that will please the Lord; "only spend it; choose your own channel for the distribution of your own gifts; only give, pray, work, sacrifice."

I have a further suggestion to offer to those churches who already employ a preacher. Can you not spare your preaching Brother, say one month or more in every year and send him out to help some church less able, or to preach in some new place? Erin Centre and Garafraxa churches sent the writer up to Manitoulin Island twice, without one dollar of cost to the brethren there. Let this good example be followed by others and a good work will be done.

May the Lord help each of us to understand our duty and give us grace to do it.

J. L. Ridgetown.

IS THE GOSPEL BY MAN?

BY W. M. C.

Even among professing Christians there are some who seem to look upon the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, in their giving us a record of the life, teachings and miracles of Jesus as little more than historical facts recorded for the same reasons that other histories are written, viz. to give to future generations some knowledge of the preceding ages. This is certainly to undervalue their record which has a higher aim, and that aim or object is expressed by John XX.31, that we might believe. Believe what? That Jesus is the Christ.

Historians are simply the acts of men recorded, but the acts of Jesus were written to prove a claim to a certain position or character which was to be the foundation of all the hopes of all men for their future well-being. Hence the apostle says, "Ye may have life through his name." This inherent power to bestow

life is not found in the histories and biographies of men. This power was established when the claims of Jesus to be the Son of God was fully established; but when we lose sight of this grand object that the apostles had in writing, the gospel loses its power over us, and is not then the power of God unto Salvation to us. "Is it possible then," says some one, "that our faith can change the power or effect of the Gospel of Christ?" Abstractly considered our acts do not change the Gospel but they affect our position to the Gospel and its effects upon us. And the benefits that we derive from it depend much more than many people think upon the manner in which we receive the Gospel. "It is the power of God to Salvation to every one that believes it," and not to the one that disbelieves it. "The power of God." It is therefore not of man but of God. And the first and grandest announcements of that blessed truth which stands as the foundation of the church that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, were made from heaven by the Father himself.

CRITICISM.

DRAN WORKER:

Your remarks and scriptural citations on the subject of posture in public prayer, together with your invitation to brethren to write on the matter, induce me to offer a few words in relation thereto.

And, firstly, it must be admitted that a variety of postures in the same congregation is very unnecessary, especially when one position is "sitting upright apparently looking on." This latter is hideous and utterly inconsistent with devotion and reverence.

Secondly—I observe that in your article you cite no scriptural precept, at least from the N. T., for any posture whatever whether in private or in public prayer.

Thirdly—Your examples from the N. T. are none of them cases which correspond to our public worship.

Fourthly—Your statement that "sitting during prayer (is) without a precedent in Scripture" is not in harmony with I Chron. 17:16, where it is stated that "David the king came and sat before the Lord," which declaration is followed by a most excellent prayer.

Fifthly—Your affirmation that "standing (was) a very rare exception" is refuted by Neh. 9.4, 5; Mat. 6.5; Luke 18.11, 13; Mark 11.25; I Sam. 1.26.

Sixthly—Your proposition that we "should kneel in prayer," if it be correct, would make it wrong for us not to kneel in every instance in which prayer is made in public.

Now, as a matter of fact we have no precept in the N. T. given either by the Saviour or His apostles enjoining any posture, either for public or private prayer, unless the Lord's words in Mark 11:25 contain such a precept, and if they do, then standing is the law, for the Saviour says, "When ye stand praying." No such language is used in reference to

another position, nor even to kneeling. But at the same time it is clear that those words were not intended to contain an absolute rule; for, as you set forth in your article, both Jesus and Stephen and Peter and Paul knelt in prayer.

But you will say, if we have not precept we have example. Let it be granted. Example for what? Let us see. The first case you cite from the New Testament is that of the Saviour in the garden; the record, of course, unequivocally says that he knelt, but that was private prayer, not public, and is therefore not in point when we are seeking to find what was the "apostolic practice in the worship." Stephen was not praying in the public assembly of the brethren when he knelt down and cried with a loud voice. So we can learn nothing on the question under discussion from his example.

When Peter "knelt down, and prayed" he was alone, not even a brother with him. No example for public worship yet. Neither were the brethren assembled for public worship when Paul "knelt down and prayed with them all."

So in Eph. 3:14, where Paul says, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father," he evidently refers to his own private devotions, and not to public prayer. Therefore we have no example here.

Then as to the Pharisee and the publican, what do we learn? That they stood while praying in the temple. Were they praying in public worship? Certainly not. So neither is that example of any force. But, by the way, what force would the example of a Pharisee, or even of a penitent publican have with a man who regards alone the example of the Lord and His apostles? Verily none. It would no doubt tell us what was one of the postures adopted by people in those days in their devotions and thus throw some light on the probable practice of the apostles, but that would be all.

I submit that O. T. examples do not teach us what was apostolic practice and therefore they are excluded; and I further venture to affirm that O. T. precept would not be obligatory upon the Christians; we are then confined to the N. T. What then is the sum of N. T. teaching on the subject?

1. No precept for either private or public prayer.

2. Examples of kneeling in private and social prayer.

3. No examples whatever for public worship.

It therefore, logically follows that we are permitted to decide for ourselves what posture is most becoming, most convenient, most reverential in our public prayer. As one would expect, opinions vary; some say standing; some kneeling with the face towards the platform; some kneeling with the face turned from the platform; some bowing forward upon the lack of the seat in front, while remaining seated. Which shall we choose? One might say, let each one adopt that position which enables him most fully to realize the objects of public

prayer. But some one might say, should we not have uniformity? Yes, it might be answered, if with uniformity we could have unanimity. But if uniformity would hinder devotion let it be dispensed with and let each bear one another's burdens.

But in writing thus one might be expected to give his views as to the posture which is best calculated to secure the desired results. Then, I offer my private opinion for public inspection. I would arrange the above mentioned positions as follows, according to my preference: (1) Bowing forward on the seat while remaining seated. (2) Standing. (3) Kneeling with the face towards the platform. (4) Kneeling with the face turned from the platform.

I have come to these conclusions after about ten years observation and experiment on the matter and have no hesitation in expressing myself as being decidedly of the opinion that (1) is by far the most conducive to a devout and earnest and sustained participation in public prayer.

Having said thus much I cannot trespass further on your space at present: "I pause for a reply."

CONCERNING MISSIONS.

The first Lord's day in March was appointed as the day of special collections in the churches in behalf of Foreign Missions. In looking over the acknowledgments given from week to week in the Standard, only five of our Canada churches are reported as contributing anything to Foreign Missions up to date, April 2nd. And as a reasonable time has passed since the time appointed for said collections for reporting sums collected, we take it for granted that the collections already reported, amounting in all to \$65.47, is the response which the Disciples of Canada give to a call for aid in carrying the "gospel to the whole creation." (1) This amount is something less than half a cent per head for those who are classed as Disciples of Christ in Canada. (2) It must be noticed that only about 350 Disciples out of at least 16,000 are reported as contributing the above mentioned amount. I am careful to say, reported because (3), it is well known that quite a large percentage of this number (350) did not contribute at all. They are reported, however, because they are members of the churches reported as contributing. (4) Suppose one-fifth of the membership of reported churches did not contribute, how much did the contributing members give per head? A trifle over 23 cents; not a very large amount. But let us consider (5), that instead of 23 cents, 25 cents had been contributed and further, instead of 230 contributing 16,000 had contributed in that case instead of \$65.47 we would have had \$1,000. It is but fair, however, to observe that other churches in Canada, besides those mentioned, as well as individuals have contributed to foreign missions during the year; yet this fact considered, we are safe in

saying we do not as a people contribute in Canada one tithe of the amount we should contribute to Foreign Missions.

Practically speaking, we have a good deal of anti-missionary literature in circulation among us as a people. How far this literature is responsible for our past and present short comings in the foreign field is not for me to say. This much I do say, the authors of such literature have an awful judgment before them, for practically they will neither enter the field themselves but are doing all in their power to prevent those who are entering to enter. However, we as individuals, must remember that we also must give an account of our stewardship. "He that waters sparingly, shall himself be watered." It has been suggested that we in Canada send a man into the foreign field and sustain him. Without stopping to discuss the advisability of such a course we ask, where is the man who judging from Canada's past and present liberality to foreign work is ready to enter into the heart of the "dark continent" for a term of years depending upon her for his support? Such a person competent for the work would be hard to find. What we ought to do is to endeavor to get as many as possible of the Disciples of Canada so interested in foreign mission work that they will contribute regularly to the fund in Cincinnati which is carefully and wisely managed with the least possible amount of machinery. The time has long since passed for sensible, God-fearing people to listen to the foolish objections to "ways and means" which have so persistently offered by the "do-nothing" party under the pretence that there is a Jerusalem plan in detail given for carrying on such work. When said party agree as to what said plan is and prove their agreement by practically operating it; then we will all turn in and work according to it. Let the Ministers and Elders and responsible men in the churches see to it that contributions are regularly taken up in the churches in aid of this the greatest of all works. We must remember that we are only stewards and not owners of worldly substance. All belongs to God and "will a man rob God?" Let us so live and act in this matter that we may be able to sing lustily that grand old hymn, "From Greenland's icy mountains," etc., all the way through with a clear conscience before God.

A SCOTT.

Many say, "If you think you are right, go ahead, but let other people alone." To this we would answer that we are not such jealous lovers of freedom that we would keep it all to ourselves; nor do we consider truth too precious a treasure to be scattered and given to all; nor even too delicate a flower to stand the storm of opposition.

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