

## THE GREAT GIVER TEACHING TO GIVE.

BY REV. A. A. BONAR, AUTHOR OF "MEMOIR OF M'CHEYNE."

Believing men are to be not merely cisterns, but springs. "He that believeth on me, out of him shall flow rivers of living water." (John vii. 38.) One of these rivers which the Master declared should not fail to flow from his believing ones is delight in giving, or the gladsome habit of using all we possess as being stewards for the Lord, and not as proprietors of the same. When an Israelite had offered the sacrifice of atonement at the altar, he must orthwith bring MINCHA, or meat-offering, an offering in which he symbolically gave up to the Lord the possession of all his property. But we should not have said, "he must bring;" for it was all privilege—he was PERMITTED to bring his property, to give vent to his gratitude, to exhibit practically, "What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits?" So did Zaccheus at Jericho; so did the Pentecostal Church at Jerusalem.

Many do not seem to notice how often the Lord Jesus inculcated truth regarding this matter. His sayings on the point are very many; nor do we wonder that it should be so, considering that selfishness is in us a root of bitterness ever springing up to trouble us.

### I. HE STATED THE DUTY.

And when He did so, it was done in startling terms. We read in Luke vi. 30: "GIVE TO EVERY ONE THAT ASKETH OF THEE." Have we read the words aright? Yes, the words are plain. Is there no other translation possible? No, they are too plain and downright to admit of any doubt. Is there no various reading, then? No, none; the words stare you in the face, "GIVE TO EVERY ONE THAT ASKETH OF THEE!"

Disciple of Christ, you are to be a light, ever dispensing its rays; you are to be a well, affording something to all who come. As you are to "Pray WITHOUT CEASING," and to "Give thanks IN EVERY THING," (1 Thess. v. 17, 18), so you are to have

an always giving heart and hand—a realization of that well over which was written:—

"Christian reader view in me,  
An emblem of true charity,  
Who freely what I have bestow,  
Though neither heard nor seen to flow,  
And I have full returns from heaven,  
For every cup of water given."

While another, who is not a disciple, may be grumbling, "So many calls!" you are to reply, "Yes, very many; but they are all calls in providence to teach and cultivate in me a giving disposition." The Master had "many calls" upon Him for healing all disease, and helping all want, and "GAVE TO EVERY ONE."

Let us understand the context of this passage, Luke vi. 30. In the preceding verses, Christ inculcates, "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you," (Luke vi. 27-28). This is the very mind that was in Him; this was what the Cross exhibited to the full; this is the heart of the Gospel, telling us the manifestation of God's love to enemies in the Beloved Son, who was made a curse for them that He might bless them. And surely this is the holy mind that disciples are expected to copy from their Master. Then in ver. 29, we see the meekness and calmness of Christ; "Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also." We, his disciples, are expected to possess a meekness of spirit and a self-control that would carry us this length, whenever circumstances required. And so ver. 30 comes in; "GIVE TO EVERY ONE THAT ASKETH OF THEE;" followed by the clause: "And of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again." Surely, these are words that call for a GIVING MIND, and a readiness to let go the things that are lawfully ours! Can less than this be the meaning?