

## Pastor and People.

### IN JESUS' HOLY NAME WE STAND.

(From the German of Samuel Preiswerk, A.D. 1799.)

In Jesus' holy name we stand  
Before the New Year's portal,  
He holds our times within His hand,  
The King of Life immortal.  
This world is but poor, fleeting dust,  
This Jesus' name, our only trust:  
He has the Life Eternal.

In these few years, so poor, so brief,  
What is there us allotted,  
But false desire, and anxious grief,  
With transient pleasure dotted?  
For, through them all, we are life's sport,  
And, then, its thread is broken short:—  
We seek a better portion.

His pilgrims to the land afar,  
Bound for the realm eternal,  
Led by the bright and morning star,  
Through shifting scenes diurnal;  
Through all the changes of the year,  
His name shines forth with radiance clear,  
The Wonderful, the Father!

Upon His altar do we lay,  
Along life's pathway lighted,  
Ourselves, again, this New Year's day,  
To Him by faith united.  
To Him its varied scenes we bring,  
The tears we shed, the songs we sing,  
In a new consecration.

—New York Observer

### ON PREACHERS AND PREACHING

BY REV. J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D.

#### IV—THE MINISTER'S WORK—THE SPIRIT IN WHICH IT SHOULD BE DONE.

How much is in the spirit in which an act is done! That, to a very large extent, makes it or mars it; renders it beautiful and attractive, or distasteful and repulsive. That if good, not only gives it a kind heart within, but also clothes it in beautiful garments without. It makes it such that it is more likely to secure a favourable reception. It arms it with a mighty persuasive force. We need not therefore be surprised to find that those who have wielded a great and far-reaching influence have been men of large and loving natures, sincere and earnest, believing and prayerful, bold and fearless. Men whose whole being was laid upon the altar of sacrifice. Men who had a definite message and who were constrained by the love of the Lord Jesus and the souls of men to impart it in the most effective way, and that with them is usually the most heartfelt way. It must be poured like molten gold out of the crucible of the soul into the open vessels of waiting hearts—that they may be changed. Here is a note ringing out of the olden time, from eighteen centuries ago: "Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. . . . I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Again: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Again, writing to the Philippians, he says: "For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ."

The spirit of Paul is that of the Lord Jesus Himself. For he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Paul was so thoroughly surrendered to Christ that he was the instrument of divine revelation to men. His epistles are pulsing with intense heart-throbs of desire, anxiety and urgent longing to save men. Who ever was, among men, more anxious, more devoted? More self-forgetful, and more self-sacrificing than Paul? He stands in the loftiness and purity and Christliness of His spirit on an high eminence. When he wrote to Timothy touching his ministerial work, he said: "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

"The grace that is in Christ Jesus" is the great conquering force in the minister of the Gospel. No other thing can make up for the lack of that. That endues him with power.

Philip Henry, whose name is precious even to-day to those who know him, was called "Heavenly Henry," in the early part of his ministry. We need not enquire why when we read such things as these of him in such a narrow sphere as Worthenbury, his first settlement, the greatest part of the parish being poor tenants and labouring husbandmen; but the souls of such, he used to say, are as precious as the souls of the rich, and to be looked after accordingly. His prayer for them was: "Lord, despise not the day of small things in this place, where there is some willingness, but much weakness." And thus he writes on having a handsome maintenance settled upon him: "Lord, thou knowest I seek not theirs, but them. Give me the souls." He was a painstaking man of God. He was in labours more abundant to win souls; beside preaching he expounded the Scriptures in order, catechized, and explained the catechism. He set up a monthly lecture of two

sermons. He also kept a monthly conference in private from house to house, in which he met the more knowing and judicious of the parish; and they discoursed familiarly together of the things of God to their mutual edification." His heart was set on the salvation of his flock. At Broad Oak he would sometimes ask: "Are there no families to be wept over?" and answering his own question, would say: "Yes, when there are none in a family, so far as we can judge, spiritually alive. As in Egypt, there was not a house in which there was not one dead, so there are families in which not one is alive. We weep over the body from which the soul is departed, and why not over the soul from which God is departed? There are families, too, in which God is not worshipped; and are not those to be wept over? There are families where worldliness prevails, where all are for the wealth of the world, and where there is no care for the soul. There are families where divisions reign, two against three, and three against two; and there the house is on fire, the house is falling. There are families where God's hand hath been by correction, and they have been sensible of it; but, the correction being removed, they are as bad as ever or worse. These are to be wept over." Ah, this is the true Christly spirit. What intense earnestness of soul there is there! What love! What zeal! Does it not remind us of One of whom it was said: "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up?"

While there is diligence in duty and faithfulness in the work of the Lord, yet there is a deep realization of the helplessness of man, and so there is a taking hold upon God by prayer that He may make the seed grow, and bring the beautiful blossoms to set in fruit and cause the fruit that is green to ripen. The feeling the apostle expresses in these words is that of every true minister: "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." So they cast themselves upon God. Of this the famous John Welsh is a notable example. We are told that from the beginning of his ministry to his death he reckoned the day ill-spent if he stayed not seven or eight hours in prayer." Ah, where are the Welshes now? It was he who used to rise in the night and go apart to plead for Scotland: "Lord, wilt Thou not grant me Scotland!" The heart of the spirit-inspired pleader is enlarged beyond his own narrow circle. It becomes big enough to take in the world. Has the statement of the apostles been duly considered as setting ministers an example for continuous imitation? "We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word." Prayer comes first. Prayer is the proper preparative. Prayer is the true posture of the soul in the service. Prayer makes the desert a fruitful field. He who neglects prayer cannot in the best and noblest sense succeed.

We discern the right ministerial spirit in Archbishop Tilton of whom it was said, that he chose rather to live to the good of others than to himself; and thought that to do an act of charity, or even of tenderness and kindness was of more value, both in itself and in the sight of God, than to pursue the pomp of learning, how muchsoever his genius might lead him to it. That reminds us of Paul's words: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God." Paul had been at the university; he was a learned man, he was well acquainted with the wisdom or philosophy of his time, as well as with the rhetorical studies of the masters of eloquence, but he subordinates everything to the setting forth of Christ Jesus and Him crucified—lest the preaching of the cross be made of none effect. He did not want to dazzle the minds of men with his vast knowledge and skill so that they should wonder after him, and lose sight of Christ, but he lifted up Christ in all that He is and has done—and this is a true exercise of faith: it crucifies the flesh and our grand thoughts of ourselves—and this was, we are told, "in demonstration of the spirit and of power." Signs followed. God gave the increase in converted men and women. Who, sent of God to preach the Gospel, can be content to go on year after year without some fruit of this kind? That is the end of the preaching of the Gospel "to save some"—to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified through faith that is in Jesus Christ. Nothing short of this can satisfy the God-sent minister. What are all the honours men can bestow compared to the joy and blessedness of leading souls to Christ? The great John Howe when made, by Cromwell, court preacher was far from being satisfied with the high position, and chiefly because he saw no fruit of his labour. He was there like a voice crying in the wilderness. He longed to return to his obscurity in Great Torrington in Devon, and this is the reason he gives to his friend, the famous Richard Baxter: "I have devoted myself to serve God in the work of the ministry, and how can I want the pleasure of hearing their cryings and complaints who have come to me under conviction," etc. Ah, the most musical note that ever rings in the ear of a minister of the Gospel is the cry of a soul under conviction and seeking rest in the Lord. To win this is the primary object of his preaching. To obtain this he bends all his energies. He devotes himself to his work and he delights in it—it is his meat and his drink. He thinks, he prays, he labours in earnestness and zeal and love to lift some into the light of the divine favour, and into the enjoyment of the divine mercy. And there is profound truth in what Cecil observes, that the spirit and manner of a preacher often effect more than his matter.

### SABBATH SCHOOLS AND THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT.

BY REV. A. E. WINCHESTER, BERLIN.

(Concluded.)

What, then, was the cause of the immediate and powerful progress of the Gospel in the apostolic age? They were filled with the spirit of Christ. "For me to live is Christ." "Nevertheless, I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," etc. "For the love of Christ constraineth us . . . that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto Him that died for them and rose again."

In heaven, not on earth, was their citizenship, their treasure and their affections. "They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims." They looked not upon the things that are seen but upon the things which are not seen. To them the spiritual kingdom of Christ and its service were realities, and the earth and its affairs a passing show. There was harmony between their profession and their practice.

They were firm believers in prayer—especially united prayer.

They also worked—each worked—all worked. Their word was: "This one thing I do." A spirit of entire devotion to the service of their Lord characterized them. It did not require a special call to be a missionary or worker in those days. There was not one rule for a few to give up all, and another for the many to dole a pittance out of their abundance. They went everywhere preaching the Word.

The weapons of their warfare were not carnal but spiritual—therefore were they mighty to the pulling down of strongholds. They realized that the arch-enterprise of Christianity was the moral renovation of the world, therefore there was a mutual fitness between the instruments used and the design. "They wrestled not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

They would as soon have attempted to excite motion in inanimate matter by moral suasion as to have engaged in this spiritual warfare with such weapons as "doubtful artifices," "pious frauds" and "specious mummeries," howsoever diligently employed and wielded by the "energies of the flesh."

This is the picture of the Church when Christ by His spirit dwelt in her richly in all wisdom—when His love was the constraining motive, the governing purpose of her life.

But the question will be asked: "Is not the spirit of Christ embodied in the Church of to-day; and, if so, is He not the same fountain of life and energy as in the days of the apostles? And does not 'every seed bring forth after his kind,' and will not the indwelling Christ produce the same fruits in the Church—which is His body—to-day as in the early day? It was pointed out in answering these questions that man is differentiated from all other forms of life. That herein lay the paradox, the enigma, the tragedy of all human life. Man is made in the image of God and therefore is conformable to that divine type; but as the very characteristic of that image is in the free will, he must of course voluntarily and consciously conform to that type. Hence it is that we can 'frustrate the grace of God' and that we can 'quench the spirit.' As in these days, alas! we fear we have done—at least so far.

How, then, shall we develop (i.e., to unfold, to reveal, to uncover) the missionary spirit," etc.? Not by playing upon the sympathies of the children, not by asking them for their pennies, not by stimulating their inventive faculties to plan tableaux, tricks and trinkets for money to carry on the Lord's work and applaud their efforts in such form as to make them feel that the Lord ought to be greatly obliged to them if, indeed, they are not sometimes made to feel that they have earned indulgences to put over against future transgressions. The Church is not wanting in effort to-day, but perhaps if we test it by the principle upon which I have been insisting, three-fourths of the "labours abundant" are less than nothing and vanity. Therefore it is that a large part of the globe lies sterile and dead. To develop the missionary spirit, then, uncover the spirit of Christ, instruct the children that it is their reasonable service to give themselves, not alone their pennies, to the Lord and His service, that not a few but every Christian is, or ought to be, a missionary, and except as detained by Providential restraints is to "Go and preach the Gospel," and if Providentially restrained they are to yield an adequate compensation as God shall prosper them. Do not teach the children that they are their own, but Christ's, that success is not attained by becoming rich, or famous, or honoured or beloved in the world but by doing the will of God; that they were created for this purpose, that they were purchased by the precious blood of Christ to this end, and that the main quest in life is to "apprehend that for which they were apprehended of Christ Jesus," that being filled with the spirit of Christ it is a greater work to win one soul to righteousness than (if that were possible) to alleviate all the sufferings of every poor and sick and destitute one on earth—greater than to free a nation from bondage, greater than to restore reason to the insane, yes, greater than to raise the dead, for all these might be but a temporary good, but "they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

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