

The Pastor

A Golden Motto for Every Christian.

The old Bible truths are the freshest, after all. They have a perennial grandeur, like the Alps, at every new view of them; they have a perennial sweetness, like that honey which is set before you every morning on your Swiss mountain rambles. Many of these truths are condensed into portable mottoes that may be carried in every man's memory. I find one of these golden watchwords in the twelfth chapter of Isaiah: "I will trust."

No word is interwoven more closely in the warp and woof of the Old Testament than this word "trust." It is connected with the name of God no less than eighty-six times. In the New Testament the Greek verb which corresponds to it is "believe," and the Greek noun which corresponds to it is "faith." These vital words occur more than an hundred times. There is no duty commended so often in God's Word as the duty of trusting; with none are linked more exceeding great and precious promises.

This act of faith lies at the very threshold of the Christian life. When the penitent inquirer cries out, "What shall I do to be saved?" the one invariable answer is, "Trust on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." The seeker's first duty is to renounce his own sins, and to trust the efficacy of Christ's blood to cleanse him, and to renounce his own strength, which is weakness, and to trust himself to the mighty arm of Jesus. I received a touching letter this week from one of the most wretched and apparently hopeless inebriates that I have ever known. He had fairly wallowed in drunkenness. He writes to me: "When I had become almost a wreck, both physically and mentally, and friends had pronounced my case hopeless, then it was that Jesus came to my rescue, and I gave him my heart. That saved me." This man has been for six months living sober and cleanly and happy. When drawing in his shocking sin and shame he had made his last clutch on the outstretched arm of Jesus, and this trust brought him divine help. He might well close his humble and grateful note by saying: "If you have any one in your congregation who is addicted to the use of intoxicants, please say to him for me that nothing but the grace of God can save him." This reformed man will be safe just as long as his watchword is "I will trust!"

The scientific skeptic laughs at the bare idea of such a divine interference with the physical phenomena of appetite and using strong drink; but will the skeptic please to account for the stubborn fact of my friend's conversion?

As trust in the sinner's Saviour lies at the starting-point of Christianity, so it is the key-note of the whole after Christian experience. The Christian life is a life of trust. As faith rays such an important part in human affairs, from the babe who takes just what his mother gives it, on to the full-grown man who takes for his daily toil the Government's paper promises as money, so faith is the central idea of our holy religion. The laboring man never saw "the Government;" but he knows that behind it lie all the vast resources of the Great Republic. The believer never saw his God; but he knows that in him are the resources of infinite wisdom, and wealth, and power and love. So he wisely says: I will trust!

This motto holds good for every decision we have to make, and for every duty we have to perform: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass." This means what it says: give the Lord the direction of your steps. Paul, when he felt drawn to Rome as a witness for Jesus, did not trouble himself whether he went there as a passenger or as a prisoner in chains. This trust must be a continuous process—the daily habit of our lives. When the Lord is driving us, we must not be all the time grasping the reins. The tourist who goes up the Matterhorn must not tell the guide the route, or what implements it is safe to carry. If he is not willing to trust his guide, he had better stay at the base of the mountain. For there will come many an emergency in which nothing but that guide's steady brain and stout arm will lie between him and certain destruction. My brother climbers, before you rise the rugged up-hill of self-denial and of duty. At the summit are Heaven's flashing glories. Can you grasp a stiff hold on the loving hand of your Guide and say, even on the dizzyest places: I will trust!

Remember that for what you entrust to God you and I are not responsible. What we leave to him belongs to him. He is our trustee. It is his "look-out" whether we fail or succeed. Paul was not responsible for the number of converts at Athens and Rome, nor whether there should be one solitary convert to the truth. He had but to preach faithfully and to live righteously, and leave results with his Master. All that I am responsible for is the honest employment of my faculties and my opportunities. God must look out for the rest. The Bible that lies on my pulpit bears the motto "I will trust."

When four rowers are in a boat, with their backs toward the bow, their simple office is to pull the oars. The steersman's office is to look ahead and work the helm. The moment that the rower turns steersman and tries to look over his shoulder or outpull his fellow oarsmen the boat loses headway. So you and I are placed with our backs to the future. In our hands are the oars of Christian endeavor. Let God steer the boat and let us attend to the oars. The sweetest thought to every true believer is this: my Master is at the helm. He knoweth the way that I take. My times are in his hand. It is not in me to direct my steps. His grace is sufficient for me. I will trust.

Here is a golden motto for the walls of our prayer rooms. The first duty when we come to the mercy seat is to believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. We must not always expect immediate answers; nor always just such answers as we most desire. Lodge your prayer in the bosom of Jesus, and then go away composedly, saying to yourself: "I will trust." How

many a poor, troubled Christian comes to the prayer-meeting with a perfect load of cares and fears, and desires and worries, and then carries them all away again. He has not learned to cast his cares on God. If he comes to Jesus, it is very much in the same temper that the disciples did when they shook up their sleeping Master in the storm and cried: "Carest thou not, Lord, that we perish?" His answer to such panic-stricken followers is: "O ye of little faith; wherefore do ye doubt?"

There is another place to hang up this golden motto. It is on the walls of a sick-chamber. Friend, let me put it up at the foot of thy bed, in full view of thine eyes when thou wakest: "I will trust." Look at it; no medicine can do thee so much good. Feed on it; there is strength in it, and marrow to thy bones. If you are restless, put it under your pillow and go to sleep on it. Get some one to read to you the fourteenth chapter of John. It will help you to get well; and if you are not to recover, it will help you to get ready to leave your bed, and go into the open door of your Father's house in glory.

In the abode of poverty this is a welcome text to write up on the scanty walls. It will shine there like a lamp. When the barrel runs low and the cruse is getting empty, then is the time to trust. If God has given his dear Son to die for your soul, do not think it presumptuous to trust him for your daily bread. This text will breed patience and cheerfulness. Nail it to the wall.

And so for every emergency in life, here is a watchword for every Christian. When temptation assails, trust. What time you are afraid, trust. My daily life is a march into an unknown future and I cannot see an arm's length ahead.

"So I go onward, not knowing,
I would not if I might,
I would rather walk in the dark with God
Than walk alone in the light,
I would rather walk with him by faith
Than walk alone by sight."
Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

Helpful People.

"Ask Deacon Ready; he can do it; he is always willing." This is a very current formula in a certain church that I vot of. If any special job of usefulness is required, he is the man on whose broad and benevolent shoulders the load is pretty sure to be laid. He has earned a good reputation for promptness, for unselfishness, and for never complaining of being made a pack-horse. He would no more think of declining to carry around a subscription paper, or to visit a poor family on a freezing winter night, or to act as usher at the church doorway when strangers require attention, than a big Newfoundler would decline to plunge into the water and save his young master when drowning. Blessings on Deacon Ready! He is the "joy and crown" of his pastor. He is the star of life to the prayer meeting on a rainy night, for he is always sure to be there. He is a prime favourite with all those who like to see things done, and are never mumble at doing them. In short, he is the pattern and patron-saint of the helpful people. Happy is that pastor who hath his quiver full of them. What is the secret of the usefulness of the Deacon Ready? It is not their wealth. Rich people are sometimes too much occupied with their own business to give time or personal attention to others. It is not their genius. The geniuses are often very dangerous characters in the pulpit, and they are often baulky and eccentric when harnessed in to the labours of a church. I am not sorry that the Lord creates so few geniuses. The helpful people are commonly men of moderate means, moderate talents, and modest character. Talking is not their forte, but working is. They have a knack at it. Philip, Aquila, Dorcas, Lydia, and Luke, all belonged to this guild. They left others to do the shouting; it was their province to do the silent lifting. Probably a large proportion of the best workers in the Apostolic churches are never mentioned at all in the New Testament. It is only now and then that a modest Harlan Page finds a biography to tell the world the story of his useful life. The great mass of the best lives and the best deeds that our Lord deigns to look upon, will never be put into print. But they will read beautifully when "the books are opened" on the last great day.

The secret of usefulness with the helpful people is that they are so unselfish. In this prime grace of Bible-religion they copy Christ. He pleased not himself; He came not to be ministered unto, but to wait on others; He was among His disciples "as one that serveth." Helper is not a name so often given to our kind Lord Jesus, but He deserves it as truly as that more frequent and adorable name of "Saviour."

This unselfishness of the modest helpful people makes them willing to do the hard work, and the obscure work, and the disagreeable work for the solid satisfaction of doing good. If they invite an unprompt friend to a prayer meeting, or talk with him about his soul, they are listened to with respect for their sincerity. When they say a few words in a social meeting, their words weigh a pound apiece, for behind their lips there stands a life. They are the main stay of the church in times of revivals; they are too solid to volatilize into mere excitement. It is not brain-power that gives them weight, it is heart-power. They love Jesus, and love their fellow-men, and this gives them a prodigious momentum. They move others by it. They constitute the real force in all our churches. The saddest tears I have ever dropped over a coffin were when I looked down into the silent face of one of my helpers, whose right hand was for the first time motionless.

The number of these helpful folk might be increased immensely. We pastors do not hunt enough after them, and call them out. Thousands do not ask themselves the questions, What was I made for? What can I do? Can't I help somebody? Where am I needed? If this article sets some Christians to this self-questioning, then it is not wasted. We cannot all be eloquent, but we can all be helpful. We can be "follow-helpers" with our Lord. We can help to lift up the fallen, and help to steady the feeble, and help carry the loads of the burdened, and help take care of the friendless,

and help some poor fellow sinners on the road to heaven. To prepare for such usefulness, the best prayer is that God would help us to kill our selfishness, and to consecrate what is left to the blessed life of living for others.

Blessed are the Dead.

Dr. Cumming, in a recently published scheme, mentioning the passage of Scripture "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord," relates the following: "A Roman Catholic lady I was the means of bringing out of that Church, told me that the words repeated by me, 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, that they may rest,' kindled in her heart convictions which she could not allay, and which on application to the priest he could not hush. She told me that she was once supposed to be on the point of death. 'I was giving up as dying,' she said, 'and a priest was sent for, a venerable man, to administer extreme unction. He did so; I had full possession of my mind, and I asked him, 'Now, tell me, my father, am I saved?' And he answered, 'I can pledge my own salvation that you will be ultimately safe.' 'Ultimately; what does it mean?' 'My child, you must pass through purgatory.' I said, 'I have had extreme unction administered. . . . What is the nature of that purgatory through which I have to pass?' My child, purgatory is a place where you must endure the torments of the damned, only of shorter duration." Such was the comfort with which she was left to die; but this text seemed to her to annihilate purgatory.

Too Late!

Last evening I went down to a steam boat to see a gentleman who had promised to carry a letter to a friend for me, and just got there in time to hand it to him as the captain cried out, "Let go!" and off went the boat. I am glad I was not late, thought I, when a gentleman ran past me crying out, "Hold on! hold on!" but the captain shook his head and cried, "It is too late." Upon the poor man looked very sad, bit his lip, and stamped his feet; but all would do no good—it was "too late." Perhaps he had friends on board, perhaps valuable baggage, perhaps he wished to go in that boat that he might see some sick friend before he died; but, alas! he was too late! Ah, how often is that the case! It is an old saying that "Time and tide wait for no man."

An old man was called upon by a young Christian friend, who, finding him very sick, began to speak to him about religion and his soul's salvation. "Ah! my young friend," said the old man with tears, "had I thought on those things many years ago, happy I might now be; but it is now too late!" And so he died, crying, "I am lost forever."

Impersonal Sermons.

A learned and pious writer has said: "That a sermon without a personal appeal is like a letter without an address." I have attended the preaching of God's word all my life, and have heard on an average two sermons per week, and my experience, as well as that of many older persons with whom I have consulted, is that those sermons which are closed without an earnest and affectionate appeal to each and every hearer to whom they are at all applicable, rarely produce the same serious and lasting impression as when they are accompanied by an earnest and pointed application that goes home to the heart.

The discourses of our blessed Saviour when on earth were personal in their character, such as:

- "Ye are the salt of the earth."
- "Ye are the light of the world."
- "If thou bring thy gift to the altar."
- "If thy right eye offend thee, &c."
- "Unless ye repent, &c."

Any number of quotations could be made, showing the direct, earnest and personal manner in which the Lord Jesus addressed his hearers.

It is well for ministers to deliver what are called brilliant, intellectual, and learned discourses on the leading topics of the Bible, such as Faith, Repentance, and Love, but unless those sermons contain a solemn, earnest and pathetic appeal, such as:

- "Dost thou believe?"
 - "Thou must repent."
 - "Give me thine heart."
- and are delivered in such a manner as to cause the hearer to feel that he is the one meant, they will fail to accomplish that end for which they were intended.

Such sermons may be much admired, and may be rich intellectual treats to worldly minds, but that minister who has so preached may go home assured that he has allowed one more golden opportunity to pass unimproved. Just at the very time when his unconverted hearer has been most interested, and is waiting to receive an earnest invitation, the sermon ends, and all serious thoughts are gone.

If ministers are in earnest to save souls, they must be so plain, pointed, and personal, that each hearer will feel that he himself is the one addressed. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."—N. Y. Observer.

The Bible True; Science Sometimes Wrong.

When science asserts that it has discovered certain phenomena which contradict the facts of the Bible, the first question we should always ask is: Is that phenomenon a fact, or is it a fancy which has sprung from reveries and mirages of imagination? Then, if it is a fact, is it Moses whom it contradicts or the reader of Moses? because the writing is one thing and your interpretation of it is another, and your interpretation may be entirely erroneous and mistaken. Where the Bible describes or alludes to natural phenomena it is always right, it has never been proved in a single instance to be wrong, and the more clearly things are investigated the more clearly will this be shown. The books of the Bible contain many wonderful facts, not

only as to man's moral nature, but as to the physical nature of the material universe which surround us. We find from our own observation that the earth is heavy with minerals, loaded with large stores of coal, reservoirs of oils and gases, so that a spark lighting on them would ignite and explode the whole globe into fragments. Now Peter was a fisherman and not a philosopher. He never studied at a University, his vocation was not accidental, but by Divine choice, and we see the result in the inspiration that guided his pen when he wrote the words, "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise; the elements shall melt away with fervent heat; the earth and all the works therein shall be burnt up." This is the language of the severest science, if we but look at it with that view; yet we are asked to put aside the teaching of the Bible in favor of crude and unauthorized speculations. No, build your faith on the works or writings of men and it will fail; build it on the fathers, philosophers, or divines, and it will fail; but build it on the Word of God, and nothing on earth will overturn or disturb it. Remember that not the least striking evidence of the inspiration of the Bible is to be found in the zeal of hearers: breathed into believers, and the sacrifices by which they evince it. Let us see, then, that we each do our part. Let us have no fear that the Bible wherever it is offered will not make its way. The hours may linger but the sun creeps on notwithstanding. So its blessed influence never ceases, but steadily advances. The Bible tells us what is the real disease of man's nature, and what is the real remedy; and from its pages we may cull balm for the sorrows that come home to the most sensitive heart.

Spiritually-Guided Ministers and Congregations.

It is not merely, or even majuly, by adherence to "the form of sound words," that ministers of the Gospel are manifested to be guided by the Spirit of Christ. Nor is it by vigilantly perceptive sensitiveness to orthodoxy that congregations are chiefly proved to be Divinely influenced. Nay, it may even be that preachers and hearers, so characterized, may be thus rendered the more easy victims of spiritual pride, of uncharitable dispositions towards others, and of various forms of undue devotion to their own interests and honour. For the guidance of Christ's Spirit consists chiefly in the communication of Christian dispositions to the soul. God's gifts of intellect and judgment, together with a diligent use of means and of educational privileges, will generally suffice for verbal guidance, provided that the heart be abiding in the Lord. But without the latter, all else will be comparatively in vain. The Scribes and Pharisees were very orthodox as to verbal utterances. Yet they were really directed by the devil into the commission of the greatest of sins—they crucified the Lord of life and glory. Judas preached in word—but also betrayed his Lord to death. Even the devil correctly quoted Scripture and the form of sound words, but—to tempt Christ. At the Last Day, many preachers will say to Jesus, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name?" and will even add, "And in Thy name have cast out devils." Yet the awful reply to many such will be, "I never know you; depart from Me."

Spiritual guidance can only be tested by its degree of exhibition of "the fruits of the Spirit," such as, "love, joy, peace," &c. A man may preach orthodox sermons and be very zealous for "soundness of doctrine," and yet if he preaches or writes in a spirit savouring not of love, not of joy, not of peace, not of humility, not of temperance, his idea of spiritual guidance is proved to be a delusion. At least the spirit which guides him is not the Holy Spirit, not the Spirit of God and of Christ. He must be guided by another spirit an insidiously evil one, if his words, his writings, or his actions, are qualified by dispositions other than those of Jesus, the Divine loving Father of all grace and charity. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are not mischievously sour or acid. Such do not grow on the trees of Eden and of Mount Zion. Hence bitter controversial words and writin s emanate from other and less celestial sources.

The test of the guidance of congregations also in their measure of Christ-like dispositions—of states of soul-sharing in "the fruits of the spirit, love, joy, peace." What an evil-spirited congregation that was of the verbally orthodox Scribes and Pharisees, who, listening to Jesus in the synagogue, "watched Him—that they might find an accusation against Him!" (Luke vi. 7.) Spiritual guidance is mainly a matter of the spirit and the disposition. A good heart, wherein Christ dwells, cannot convey much error by any words whatever; nor will it be likely, whilst thus cherishing His presence, to be led astray by any words. Nor, without Christ in the heart, can even His own words be of much avail, either to hearers or speakers. A body without spiritual life and warmth is spiritually—a corpse.

ONLY SLIGHTLY MISTAKEN—We are told a few days since of an Irish Catholic servant, late from the bogs, who serves in a Protestant family in New York, starting out early one Sunday morning in search of her church, and though well-directed by her mistress, lost her way, and stumbled into the High Episcopal St. Alban's, where she felt very much at home, performing her devotions according to true Irish style; returning to her mistress in great composure, who asked if she had found her church, to whom she replied, "Yes, ma'am." "What is the name of it, Bridget?" "It's the holy church of St. Alban's, ma'am." "And did it seem like home to you, Bridget?" "I could see nothing wrong, ma'am, except there were no holy water, ma'am."

LIFE has such hard conditions that every dear and precious gift, every rare virtue, every pleasant faculty, every genial endowment, love, hope, joy, wit, brightness, benevolence, must sometimes be put into the crucible to distil the one elixir—patience.

Random Readings.

He only is wise who is wise unto salvation.

We hear very beautiful sermons—well written and well read—but they are without any observation of the heavenly bodies.

When a mercy comes in the form of affliction, we often need time and grace to call it a mercy. Happy they who need not time to do so.

Mortality without religion is only a kind of dead reckoning—an endeavour to find our place on a cloudy sea by measuring the distance we have run, but without any observation of the heavenly bodies.

He who can look up to his God with the most believing confidence is sure to look most gently on his fellow-men; while he who shudders to lift his eye to heaven often casts the haughtiest glances on the things of earth.

Let no man be too proud to work. Let no man be ashamed of a hard fist or a sunburnt countenance. Let him be ashamed only of ignorance and sloth. Let no man be ashamed of poverty. Let him only be ashamed of dishonesty and idleness.

There is an old proverb of a rusty shield that prayed: "O sun, illuminate me;" but the sun replied, "First polish yourself." The Christian who expects to be anything honourable, strong and happy, must be in such a condition that the influences from God can reach him.

Every other faith but that which apprehends Christ as a purifier, as well as our atonement and righteousness, is false and hypocritical. He can only be received into the soul when He is desired for His goodness; and when He is there, He will not sit down idle.—Adams.

A MULTITUDE of business is a real martyrdom; just as sometimes travellers in summer suffer more from the teasing flies which buzz around than from the journey's toil, so a multitude of disconnected affairs is more wearing than troubles which might be really heavier.

Diamonds are found in greatest abundance among the tropic, where the sun shines the most. There seems to be the best place for the carbon to crystallize into the gem. So Christians grow into precious worth into Christ's kingdom, when longest in the enjoyment of Him as the Sun of Righteousness.

Had it not been an evil thing to suffer wrong, God would not have enjoined it upon us. Know you not that He is the King of Glory, and therefore He commands us to suffer wrong, and doth all to withdraw us from worldly things, and to convince us what is glory, and what is shame; what loss, and what gain?—St. Chrysostom.

Do not trust to your own industry for success, but lean wholly on God's help; rest in Him, believing that He will do whatever is best for you so long as you, on your part, are quietly in earnest and gently diligent. I say this because impotent activity hurts both our business and our souls, and is really a hindrance.

There are many who are melted under the Word who are never moulded by it. They have deep convictions, and perhaps joyous emotions, but the old form remains. They are delirious, or cast into another mould. (Rom. vi.) The soul is still encrusted with sin and worldliness. In the present day is special need to beware of a religion of mere feeling.—Old Truths.

God uses consecrated lips. Consecration is the secret of power with God. This is not for the few. All the Lord's people may be prophets. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. God sets high estimate on the speaking of His truth. He has pleased Him that men shall be saved by the foolishness of preaching. Power waits to be claimed.

Such is the influence of the Jews in the commercial circles of New York, that on the recent occurrence of the day of the Atonement, when they suspend all secular occupations, their absence from the stock and other exchanges, the retail marts of certain streets, and the cattle market, seriously interfered with the general business of the day.

A PREACHER named Maillard, in the time of Louis the Eleventh of France, was as bold as he was humorous, and launched his bitterest even against Louis himself with as much earnestness as point. A courtier told him the king threatened to have him thrown into the Seine. "Tell his majesty," said Maillard, "that even then I shall get to heaven by water sooner than he will with all his post-horses."

"Jock," said a farmer to one of his workers one Sunday, after the return of the latter from church, "whaur was the text to-day?" "I dinna ken," answered Jock; "I was over lang in gaun in." "What was the end o' it then?" "I dinna ken; I came yet afor it was done." "What did the minister say about the middle o' it then?" said the master, determined to have an answer of some sort. "I dinna ken, maister," replied Jock; "I sleepit a' the time."

An undergraduate at Cambridge, who found among the questions on his examination paper this: "Why will not a pin stand on its point?" elaborately explained the point thus: "1. A pin will not stand on its head; much less is it possible that it should stand on its point. 2. A point, according to Euclid, is that which has no parts and no magnitude. A pin cannot stand on that which has no parts and no magnitude, and, therefore, a pin cannot stand on its point. 3. It will, if you stick it in."

A MINISTER who was trying to raise money, to erect a house of worship in a very immoral village, is said to have approached a gentleman who lived at a distance, but owned large possessions in the village, with the question, "How much do you think real estate was worth in Sodom?" This simple question so struck the mind of the keen, calculating man of the world, that though he had made up his mind to give nothing toward the object, he changed his determination, and contributed largely. And we have no doubt that, in a pecuniary point of view, he was the gainer in a very few years.