

and to be lead, when they believe it, where it will lead them. Again, Jesus says "This is the work of God, to believe on him whom he has sent." So prominent does he make this belief that he says it is the work of God. That man can do this is evident in that he is commanded to do it. The doctrine has long been taught that man, because of his depravity, is unable to believe the gospel, and we have reasoned on cause and effect and from evidence to faith until we are in danger of leaving the unbeliever about where the doctrine of depravity leaves him. Jesus says to every man to whom the gospel comes, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," and "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." Then men must resolve to hear and then believe the truth. In this they are not passive, but possessed of power to choose and to act. Moreover, the person who resolves to do the will of God cannot cease with faith. Faith alone is dead, and a dead faith is not faith. Faith leads to a confession of Christ and baptism into his death. He who knows the truth and resolves to obey it will thus submit to Christ.

3. *His submission to the will of God has lead him to know of the teaching that it is true.* Step by step he has left the region of unbelief, with all its unrest, and has come into the realms of faith where he can say "I know in whom I have believed." As he honestly heard the truth, he found in it evidence of its divine origin and superior worth; as he believed it he was conscious of its transforming power upon the heart; and in his further obedience to Christ he had the assurance of sins forgiven and the spirit of adoption. What was at first but a conviction of mind has grown into the assurance of faith. Then, by a continuance in well-doing, the knowledge thus gained will be perpetual. If it is ever lost it will be because he has ceased to do the will of God. If some have lost their faith in Christ it is because they neglected to "walk with God," which is the only condition on which it can be maintained. Unbelief was Israel's greatest sin, and because of it "they were broken off." "Be not high minded, but fear, for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee."

THE MINISTER AND HIS CALLING.

R. W. STEVENSON.

It is as reasonable to expect doctors, lawyers, or professors to make a success at their respective vocations and spend every day at the mechanic's work-bench, or on a farm, if they have one, as for a minister of the gospel (except he be inspired and need not to think what he shall say) to preach the gospel and spend his time at the work-bench, or on the farm. They might succeed in making one or two passable sermons on first principles, as is sometimes the case, but a fiddler with but one tune soon ceases to be interesting. Paul commanded Timothy to give himself "to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." And again, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." He was to "study" to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Foolish and unlearned questions he was to avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. "Preach the Word, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when man will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables."

A PRACTICAL QUESTION.

E. C. FORD.

On page second of March *CHRISTIAN*, the office editor says: "People are becoming dissatisfied with denominationalism, and we are glad of it if they are led to give up their divisive names, creeds and practices for something better. But it is better to belong to a denomination and serve Christ, than to give up the denomination and at the same time the service." Also in the *Christian Evangelist*, March 11, in a short article on "The Life and the Name," written, presumably, by the assistant editor "H," we find the following: "Is it not also true that men who have the spirit of Christ are Christians. Yet, owing to other differences, some are appropriately called Methodist, some Presbyterian, some Baptist, etc." Now granting that the position taken by these two writers is true, and who will question it, it follows that in those denominations men may "serve Christ," "have the spirit of Christ," be "Christians." Or as "H" expressed it in another part of his article from which I have quoted, "an orange is an orange whether it grows in California or Florida." By which he means that a Christian is a Christian whether he grows in a Methodist, Presbyterian, or Baptist church. Admitting all this to be true, my question is, what will a man gain by leaving any of those denominations, and by taking his stand with the Disciples on what we believe to be undenominational, hence unsectarian ground? And again, what do those lose who leave such unsectarian ground and unite with those denominations? Again I ask, if men are Christians and serving Christ in the denominations, why disturb them and make them "dissatisfied" with their religious environments? And why not encourage our isolated brethren to unite with those denominations rather than to encourage them to stand alone, sooner than to take on them a human name? These are live questions which some of us have to answer quite often. The writer has been approached different times during the last year for an answer to this question. In some cases letters have been requested to unite with such churches, and in other instances advice has been asked as to the propriety of taking such a step. We should be able to give sound reasons for asking our brethren to come out from those denominations in which we admit they may be Christians, and for discouraging our own brethren from uniting with these religious bodies, though we do not believe

they would unchristianize themselves in so doing. We are glad to know that there is as much of the spirit of Christ and consecration to his cause among these brethren, as is manifested among the Disciples. In piety and liberality, in many instances, they would provoke us to emulation. But, notwithstanding all these admissions, there are yet weighty reasons why we should be true to our plea for the unity of the faith, and why we should continue to make people "dissatisfied" with denominationalism and help them away from its environments. And for these same reasons we should see to it that our own brethren are so well instructed in the principle of the gospel that they will not fall into the error so common these days, that "one denomination is as good as another," and thus unite with that one the most conveniently situated.

But, lest my article grows to too great a length, hence, will not be read, I must reserve what I have to say on this subject for another short paper. I want to show that we are consistent and true to the word of God when we, on the one hand, lead men out of the denominations, and when, on the other hand, one discourages our own brethren from uniting with such sectarian churches.

OUR NEEDS.

H. MURRAY.

Having a personal knowledge of the different fields of labor and mission points in our provinces would render us, *pro tanto*, capable of judging as to the importance of the work and the special immediate demands.

Halifax, the metropolis of our province, being a strategic point, creates at once an interest in her behalf. Those who are acquainted with the struggle of the brethren there years ago to maintain the cause against every conceivable opposition, are more than happy to-day over the gratifying success already attained. A fine home of their own, frequently well filled, and a devoted, active church, are enough to inspire everyone with a deeper interest for their continued success. Reports concerning Bro. Blenus' labor show that the people are getting the gospel pure and plain, and in inimitable brilliancy. We feel confident that a greater degree of success will be realized if they can have the support of the brotherhood.

There is the enterprising town of Pictou. One needs only to see the devotion, courage, faith and benevolence of the little church there to become enthusiastically and completely interested in their behalf. The sacrifice that Bro. Fullerton and sons have made to secure a place of worship, and to sustain preaching, need not be repeated here, as it is already known. Suffice it to say, that their lives are walking, living sermons, and establishes in every heart a confidence in their Christian integrity that calls loudly for our best endeavors to sustain and advance the cause of Christ in that town. Bro. Stevens is doing a faithful work there, and is also preaching in other places in the county, and calling and inviting the people to the New Testament name, and to the New Testament creed, and to the New Testament practice; and, as another has said, "If they don't find him there, send for him and he will come there as soon as possible." Their zeal and enthusiasm has already kindled a fire in that town that no earthly power can extinguish.