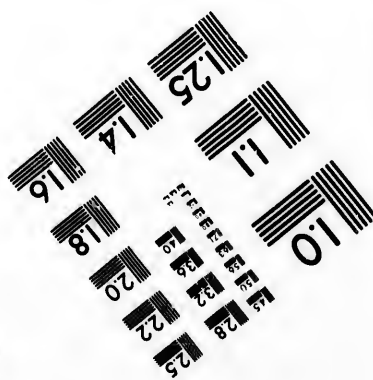
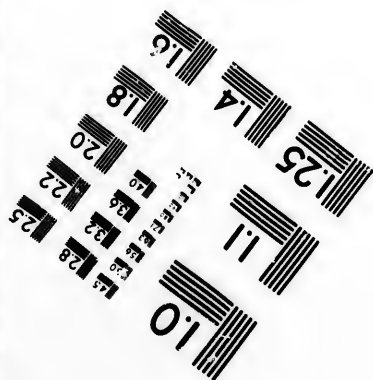
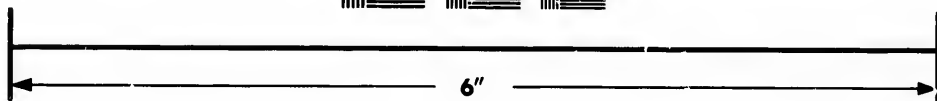
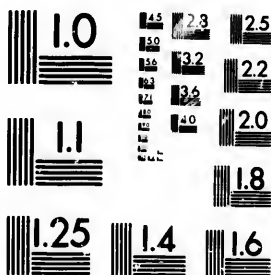


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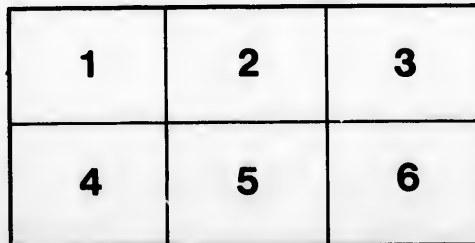
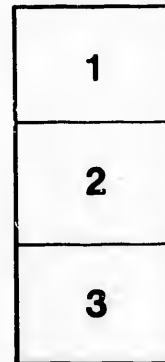
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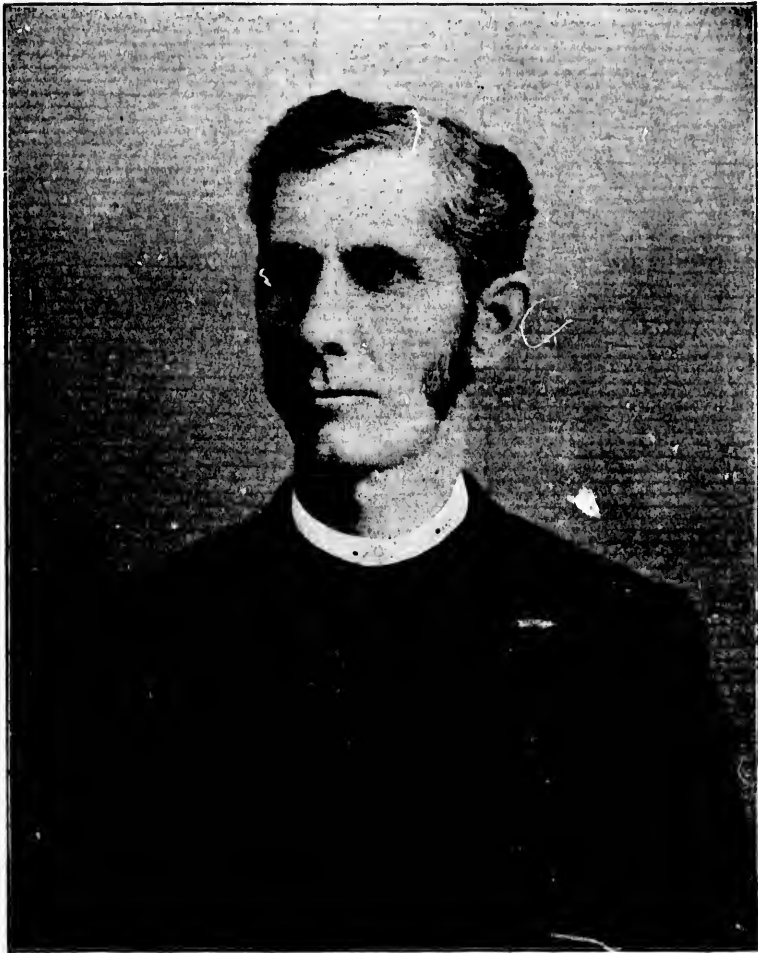
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The Pulpit.

VOL. XI., No. 4.

FREDERICKSBURG, PA.

APRIL, 1896.



REV. J. E. LANCELEY, D. D.

HUMAN QUESTS.

A Series of Six Sermons Recently Preached
By Rev. J. E. Lanceley, of Brampton,
Ontario, Canada.

WHY?—Sermon 1.

TEXT: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world; that I might bear witness unto the truth." John xviii. 37.

I LIKE these words. There is a form of speech here which is very uncommon, and to me, I confess, very fascinating. It is so seldom that men give big reasons for doing things. Where is the man among us who, if arrested in the midst of to-morrow's activity and asked the "why" of all this energy and industry, would respond with solemn responsibility: "I was born on purpose for this and I do it for that reason?"

Indeed, I might ask: Are there many of us so living as to feel satisfied that we are fulfilling the end to which we were born, and for which we came into the world? If we could go out to-morrow and lay our hand upon the shoulder of each of our fellows and ask: "Is this what you were born for?" what a sudden start would be given to the thoughts of men's hearts; and how few but would sound the depths of their being and answer: "I believe I was born for higher ends than these."

And yet, cannot we see at a glance that unless we are consciously doing the will of God, and toiling at that work which "He hath given us to do," we cannot possibly have satisfaction in our pursuits, nor can we work out our true destiny—our real Divinely-given glory of being.

The words of this text were uttered by Jesus Christ. At first thought we are disposed to call this a disadvantage. We wish they had been the words of a fellow-mortal like ourselves. We think they would have a closer relation to us if an ordinary man said them. I think our feeling is right; but our conception of Him is wrong. An ordinary man must say them to make them applicable to the many of us. In that we are correct. But that Jesus was not an ordinary man is our mistake. He was the most ordinary man we could pick out. He was the most commonly human. He was not governed by any special features that

would justly separate Him from His brethren. He was the race man, the only real, fair representative of common humanity. He was "Neither Greek nor Jew," only; "Barbarian or Scythian," only; "Bond nor free," only; He was all in all. We do not know Him as we ought. It is not His fault. He has made every advance to meet us, and to reveal Himself both to us and in us.

Let us first look at this utterance as it referred to the personal Christ, and then we will seek to know its application to us "Whom He is not ashamed to call His brethren."

In our day and age the whole life of Jesus is before us. We have traced it from His babyhood to His cruel crucifixion. The lessons it was designed to convey have made their impression upon the world. They are worthy His being born, they are worthy His coming into the world, they are worthy His living even that hard unsympathized-with life, and dying that ignominious death.

It is not my purpose at this time to ask your attention to the great end or purpose for which He came into this world, nor even to the fact of His fulfilling it. I want to emphasize the one idea, at present, that He had a purpose of life, one which at all times He realized and endeavored to carry out, one which He never allowed to vanish from His immediate vision, one from which He therefore never deviated, because a deviation would only be loss and delay to the great achievement. Very early in life He was found saying, "I must be about my Father's business." At any time, or any place thereafter, He might have been accosted with the inquiry as to why He was found doing what He did, and His answer could have been given consistently in the words of our text, "For this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world." But while I am talking thus about him, you are digging a great gulf between yourselves and Him. You are saying: "It was all easy for Him. He knew before He came to earth what He was coming for, and to accomplish it. And we are different; we do not know." And in this way you are trying to work up an unlikeness. He "was made like unto His brethren." He came down to our conditions. He entered our ranks. But you would crowd Him far away, saying, "He never stood where I stand; He never came down so low." Well, I must ask you how far He came? Show me the distance over which He traveled not. Point out to me the spot where His down-coming ceased. Then, I insist, He must come again! He must come all the way to where, in my feebleness, I lie. There is no way of getting from where I am to where He is. If I could get the first part of the way, I could more reasonably scale the rest. But He came all the way—from the very highest to the very lowest—that, from the very lowest, He might lift us up to stand in the midst of the highest.

Whatever He may have known and purposed in His original, essential wisdom, He came to a sphere in which He must learn like His brethren, "like unto whom it behooved Him" to be made. He came as one "sent," and lived subject to law—the law of essential humanity. He did this to magnify that law, to show that it was good, to show that it could be obeyed unto profit; that disobedience is not necessary to the glory of God, as some poor students of the Divine will would seek to make out. Some bewildered ones, not content to wait a little till knowledge grows apace, would tell us that unless man fell he could never rise; that his sin was the greatest advantage to Divine glory the Great Being ever had; and the final doxology of redemption should have a place in it for the glory of man, in that he opened the way by transgression for all this unfolding of the Divine. I don't believe it at all. I believe in Christ and His revelation. I believe that by obedience men are made right. I believe that Christ came to show us, in the wilderness of temptation, that it is better not to fall, that is better for a man to just keep to the law under which he is made, to live to the end for which he was born, and for which he came into the world. To have done so in the earlier day would not have required the cross, it may be; but what if did? What if the early tempter had threatened with death the early man? Christ shows us that no death can harm the innocent, nor could it ever so have done.

This is, perhaps, just too subtle a feature of this subject to dwell upon at present. I want you to know that by coming to Christ you will certainly find out, as He found out, the end to which one must live. He witnessed to the truth of His whole life and its purpose by each day witnessing to the truth for the day, the hour, the moment. The law of obedience was the method of the evolution of the Divine purpose in Him.

Now, you must take as a dogma, for the present, what I am trying to teach, because it is not possible for me to explain it to you. If you each come to Christ for a solution of your own life's problem, He can show it to you. He only can do it. To follow any other is but to be an imitator. To follow Christ is to find your own real life. This idea I have developed recently in an interesting study, which I think you have not forgotten.

I shall now take a view of this subject from an entirely different standpoint. Some of you cannot start with the Christ who uttered the text. Let us start, then, with you where you are, and by faithful examination of human life, as you know it, we will find ourselves not far from the Christ standpoint at the end. Now, mark the fact where you are, that before each human mind among us there does lie some end, more or less distinct, to be attained. And mark also the fact that

man has come to look for a purpose or end in everything he finds. The child turns his inquiring face at every object and asks, "What is this for?" And every living thing has a purpose seemingly declared. The seed shows the "why" of its existence in the blossom and fruit which it finally reaches; but reaches only on the conditions of its nature being carried out by cultivation, attention, care. The same may be declared about other orders of creation.

And when man comes upon this scene of activity, he sets right to work to learn the meaning and purpose, and, therefore, the value of the things animate and inanimate about him. He then learns that it is in his power to help them to the end for which they have a being. He proceeds to the very business of training—nay, indeed, he goes farther back than that—he undertakes the breeding of plants and animals, and studies closely by their habits, or the laws of their being, to the end of securing the best of their kind. You see this upon every side of you. Here is a horse-lover; he takes a colt—the greatest possible care having been exercised in the breeding of it—he reads every book he can get upon horse culture, every item in the farm column of the paper, to see if there is any idea to be gained on training horses. Now, all this information he uses to help him to bring this colt to its own perfection. There is no use trying to get into it anything unhorselike. That would be no advantage to it. He wants to give the colt every chance to be all that lies hidden in its possibilities. He simply wants it to be what it ought to be—to be that for which it was "born."

I use this illustration to show you how there is a common thought to all human observation, that perfection—and, therefore, beauty and desirableness in any object—is just simply being what it ought to be.

And just here I have a very serious complaint to enter against humanity in its dealings with itself on this point. It has studied almost every other creature's end and design and perfection more than it has studied its own nature and design and labored to secure its true dignity and glory. Especially is this the case in individuals.

Your men know better how to train a horse than they do a child. You know men who will pay a jockey to walk round with a colt and give him every possible care, and study all his points, and have every one of them developed to the highest degree—heartily willing to spend any amount of money to bring their object of care and interest to perfection—and at the same time will allow their children to run wild and uncared for about the streets, and will grumble unceasingly at the taxes being so high for school rates and other enterprises kept up for the culture and development of men. Do you think I underrate this breeding and cultivation of the noble creations of God? Never! I love

it ! It is the incoming of the days of redemption for beast and man from the curse that fell upon both.

But I vow to you that man errs when he neglects his own offspring to cultivate other offspring. So fast as man himself rises in the scale of being will he lift up all beneath him. I look forward with sublime anticipation to the time when all creatures shall love and worship man, and all mankind one God and Father ; and I shall give all the help I can to bring in the happy day. But I do not believe that the man who neglects his children's culture and puts all his care upon horses, or cattle, or sheep, is doing anything to hasten on that day, any more than that mother who pays a servant to wheel her baby round in a perambulator, while she herself is carrying around a full-sized poodle dog in her arms. Have you never heard how the Saviour of men cried aloud : "How much is a man better than a sheep."

The complaint I have to urge against humanity on this point is that it does not plan to teach its children the true reason for things. It sets no great purpose of life before them. Even its schools do not do it. I have never yet heard even a school teachers' convention take up the question as to what is the end of education—the distinct purpose, or intent, or why of it. They study the methods of it. They change the text-books often enough. They seek to get the most convenient houses for study and the most capable teachers to impart the instruction, but they never—so far as I know—teach what it is all for. Indeed, I fear the wrong idea prevails as to its meaning. I wonder if a large mass of humanity do not think of it to-day as a help to get money, or at most a better livelihood. Doubtless this is as high as a good many ever go. The many look upon education as a help to get money ; the few look upon money as a help to get education. And I do not mean by education, book-learning, as they call it, only. I mean trade education, professional education, business education. I say the many look upon trades, professions, businesses, as means of livelihood, or as means for the accumulation of wealth, or it may be of worldly honor or fame. Now if such be the real purpose of education, why is it not definitely taught ? Indirectly it is, no doubt, by some. And now I would like to ask those young men who are just finishing up their school days, or those who have just begun to learn a profession or trade : "What is your object in spending so much time in that particular ?" Do you answer : "It is to get a comfortable, or honorable, or respectable, or remunerative method of livelihood ?" Then I appeal to the teachers of humanity : Is that the end of your teaching ? Your man has got his good, comfortable, honorable means of livelihood. Now, what is this livelihood for ? Has the most important of all questions been overlooked ? Is a man exempt from criticism because he manages to earn a good

livelihood for himself? Is the great end of life accomplished by all that throng of tradesmen and women who issue from our factories and shops at the ring of the evening bell each day, till another bell tolls to announce that they have ceased their work forever here to be laid away to rest? Is life all labor here and all rest some other where? Is earth a great tread-mill and heaven a vast play-yard? Or what does that mean which we are taught to pray: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven?" Oh, my toiling, earth-worn, travel-stained brothers and sisters, there must be a better form of life than this for you all! It was not unto such an end you were born, or for such a cause came you into the world.

When we look at the missionary or the minister in his sphere of teaching the truths of God to the needy hearts, there is a kind of feeling that his form of life may be considered a worthy end of existence. And because of this, by some strange yet admitted law, he must be the creature of a special Divine call to that manner of life. We, as a church, do believe in a special Divine call to the work of the ministry. We ought to believe in it stronger than we do. That there is a call cannot, probably, be denied. That there are God-made ministers none of us will dispute. That there are self-made ministers we can hardly escape belief.

Every year there are men coming up to the threshold of active life, standing in the presence of a hundred avenues of trade and profession, waiting to choose one out of the many as a means of livelihood. With Christian hearts and honorable ambitions they desire to make an honest living and give good return for what they receive. They may desire that their energies should move in the line of the greatest usefulness, and may choose as most congenial any one of the many spheres of righteous service. But, an honest desire, a wish to be useful in any particular sphere, a strong liking for one above many, is not a Divine call to such an occupation. And just here the question arises: Is there a Divine call to spheres of labor other than the ministry? We think there may be; we think there is. I would like to establish this point to-night. If I can only make you to see and feel that all spheres of honest and useful labor are under the guardianship of God, just as much as the one singled out as His favorite, it will give a becoming honor and dignity to all the toilers that are His called ones, laboring according to His mighty and glorious purpose to bring in the Paradise of earth regained.

Now let me say that I believe every man should be so conditioned as to feel conscious that he is doing what it is the will of God he should do. I believe further that if all were taught to look for a Divine call to a sphere of life, more would be found at His feet ready to receive their orders for life's occupation. But there is one important criterion

by which to judge a Divine call. Whenever such is given, be well assured of this—it never comes to the chosen one as the means of getting a livelihood. A Divine call to business life, or to the life of a poet, or an artist, or a musician, or a teacher, or a gardener, like the first man, or of a preacher, is not that voice which says: "Work at this to live;" but that which says: "Live to work at this." The Divinely called in all these spheres are they who have proven by their life-long devotion to their pursuit, that not for money, not for fame, not for the comforts of a well-furnished home have they labored, but for the advancement of their art, or science, or industry, or gospel have they laid their life down at its feet. They may, or they may not have had the money and fame and home comfort. These are contingencies. But one thing they will have had—*i. e.*, the constant satisfaction that they were doing the work given them to do in building up the glorious end God has in view for earth.

And now, let us see how such a form of service would work out for society, and so for us all as members of society. If men lived with a conscious call to their daily forms of labors, as doing it—as the Scripture saith—not unto men but unto God, how all labor that is serviceable would be lifted up to a level with the Divine. Everywhere we should be able to say: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." If the farmer said: "I live to redeem the earth, to repeal the thistly curse, to find and do the Father's will toward making glad the waste place, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose."—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." If the baker said: "I live to do the Father's earthly will. His children must be fed. He makes the rains to fall, the grain to grow and ripen in the farmer's hands, I take it, then, to mold it into shape, and send it to the doors where outstretched hands await, and hungry children cry."—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." If the sailor and the railroader said: "I seek to bring the brotherhood of earth together, to spread the news of earth's welfare, as sounded from the heaven above, to all the distant isles of ocean long estranged."—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." If the teacher, and the poet, and the preacher, and the literateur, said: "I write—I speak, to tell the wondrous words that on my ear have fallen from above, and which my heart hath proven and would fain repeat to every ear and heart that they might know the blessing I have found therein."—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." If the physician and the chemist said: "I have been called and sent to seek the soothing anodynes and healing oils that have their hidden place among the plants that grow, and in the stones that hide beneath the crusted earth on mountain-side, that I may bring them forth to stay the infant's cry and antidote the fatal poison in the blood of fellow man. Employment

choice indeed is mine for which I thank my Lord."—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

But ah! You see the scene is just unfolding before my gaze, and you cannot trust me to go too far into the glories of so sublime a vision. "Vision," you say; "Yes, visionary enough," says one of my very practical brethren. "Very visionary!" Yes, I answer yes, but none the less true because visionary. All our facts of to-day were visions yesterday. We see our ideals first and work them out afterward. The vision is the Divine call. If you do not have the vision you have no Divine call.

Tell me now before I close, what is the matter with my vision? Is it not desirable? Is it not proper? Is it not as it ought to be? Is it not the end to which we were born and for which we came into the world? Is it not the truth to which we are to bear witness? If so, look upon it as such! Teach it, oh, teach it to the children of men. Do not hold back from them the honor which is their birth-right, and send them forth to be slaves to a base and vulgar lord. Tell them that God wants workers, that there is a diversity of talent given and required, that the work needs all tastes and all gifts, that there is a sphere where each may work, not as a quarry slave, but as a fellow-worker with God, in a universe where no work is wasted and no effort goes unrewarded. But tell them to seek their counsel from God, to lay their plans at His feet, to learn the path where their "labor becomes rest" by the constant, conscious conviction which sweetens every toil.

"To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world that I might witness to this truth." "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

WHEN? AND WHERE?—Sermon No. 2.

TEXTS: "Tell us, *when* shall these things be?"—Matt. xxiv. 3.

"They answered and said, *Where*, Lord?"—Luke xvii. 37.

LAST Sunday we turned our minds and hearts toward human inquiries, and tried to ask and answer one of the great questions which affect all mankind. To-day we stand before other two. On the former occasion we asked, "Why?" On this occasion we ask "When?" and "Where?" We found it to be a great and worthy exercise to ask the meaning,—the purpose, the intent of things; and we pressed our exhortation upon you all to ask and to answer truly the "Why" and the "Wherefore."

All questions are not really of equal value, though they may be asked with equal earnestness and intensity of desire. To-day there are more people asking "When?" and "Where?" than there are asking "Why?" The moment of time in which we now live, and the immediate locality which we call "here," are both so small that our self-interest is greatly locked up in the other "When" and the other "Where." We have a personal relation to all the expected or promised good and ill; and when mention is made of any glory or any calamity which is to come, we are eager at once to know whether we stand within the ordered area of time and space in which it is to appear. For this very reason the children of men have always had a peculiar reverence for the man who professed to peer beyond the mysterious veil which hides the morrow from our view. For this very reason astrologers in ancient days, gypsies in later days, and the vulgar spirit-rappers and clairvoyants of our more recent days have traded upon and reaped rich harvests from this passion to know about the future time and the unknown place.

And even in the Church of Christ, made up of the same curious humanity, we have the demand and the supply for this commerce of the hidden. We have those who are always asking, and those whose express business seems to be to give answers to the inquiries "When" and "Where" shall these things be?

By such persons the prophets of the old times are looked upon as a series of inspired men making puzzles for the Church of God to solve. And it is believed that surely a special prophet^{ic} inspiration or insight is now required to ascertain the original meaning of the prophecy and whether or not it has ever been, or will be fulfilled, and where is the place of that fulfillment.

These modern wiseacres used to issue their almanacs with the date and place all fixed for the coming of the Son of Man or the end of the world; but their genius for adjustments has failed, and their thousands of disciples are driven to look for the truth at some fount of wisdom whose word "cannot be broken."

And I think we can see this very school of prophetic interpretation represented in these questions which we here find presented to our Lord by His disciples and by others.

His answers are important. They should be our instruction as to how all such inquiries ought to be held and answered. They should help us to know the true way of dealing with all prophetic utterance inspired to show us "the things which shall be hereafter."

Let us confine ourselves for a moment to the immediate circumstances of our Lord and His disciples in the context. Two occasions are represented, in both of which He has been speaking words of prophecy

relating to what was called by them the coming of the Son of Man.

In the one case, Jesus had been sitting on the brow of Olivet overhanging the city; He had wept over the vision of sorrow that was stretched out before His omniscient forecast. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wing, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto ye desolate." Such was the outburst of His own loving grief. Sad and depressed as He was, he was departing from the presence of the temple, when His disciples called His attention to the greatness and firmness of the stones of the temple. They sought to charm away His grief by showing Him something with which to be pleased. But He said: "Ye see all these stones ye think so enduring and strong:—Verily I say unto you: There shall not be one stone left upon another which shall not be thrown down." An hour afterwards as they sat together in the olive groves, the disciples came to Him privately saying: "When shall these things be?" and "what shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world?" And the readers of this chapter will remember how He said: "Let no man deceive you," while He rehearsed all the kinds of things that should take place before the event they had in mind, could come. Then He concluded His words by saying: "But of that day knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven—but My Father only."

The other occasion was one where He was approached by the Pharisees asking when the kingdom of God should come; and He answered them: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation;"—Neither shall they say "Lo here" and "Lo there," for the kingdom of God is within you. Then said He to His disciples, "The days shall come when ye shall desire the same information and shall want to see one of the days of the Son of Man and shall not see it."

Now it will help us to remember that there was in that day a prophecy in the books, about which there was much of expectancy. The "day of the Lord" as some called it, was looked upon as a day of sublime victory, and of terrible defeat. Of course—naturally, the Pharisees and Scribes, and the Jews in general looked upon the victory as for the Jews, and the defeat as for their enemies—the Gentiles.

But actually, the very opposite was what Christ foresaw. For the Jews had been, and were, their own enemies, and the enemies of Christ; while the Gentiles gave Him a reception and became His medium for the future evangelization of the earth. So that, actually the words of Christ were not fully understood at the time. They were not understood as to the *when* and the *where* of the great judgment and overthrow which was to come. In fact, as we can see, He put His basis not on Jewish or Gentile ground, but on the broader spiritual

ground on which His Kingdom was verily founded. Accordingly, therefore, it becomes worthy of our notice that He refused to locate either time or place with any definiteness. At this time, and at a time further ahead, after all the turmoil of the cross and the resurrection, when they came to Him with the question: "Wilt thou now restore the Kingdom to Israel?" He said: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power, but the power shall come to you by the Holy Ghost coming upon you." That is, a spiritual power will give you a place in the victory which is to come, and deliver you from the defeat which is foreshadowed.

This *when* and *where* he refused to answer after the manner of their desires. The question of our former discourse may come in here again; and we must ask "Why?" There are a great many what I might call secondary reasons for this withholding of day and hour and place which human inquirers are so anxious to know. It is a study worthy of our fondest thought how "it is the glory of God to conceal a thing, and the honor of kings to search out a matter." And there is no doubt that the hiding of the circumstantial destiny of each of us has much to do with the development and perfection of all our latent powers. And it is, no doubt, a wholesome discipline to man to be led to feel the true dependence of his nature upon the Lord God, that the benefits of his trust and fellowship demanded by that dependence shall be his daily portion of succor and strength and delight.

But now, I think that there is a first reason for this withholding of the *when* and *where*. God does not reveal the future to satisfy our curiosity. He does not unfold the visions of good or ill for the purpose of paralyzing our efforts. He does not say "You may talk as you like, and work as you like, and walk as you like, and pray as you like, it is all fixed—unchangeable."

There is a reason why God reveals to us a coming joy or sorrow. It is that all our known powers may be exercised or prepared for it, and our prayers be active concerning our personal relation to it. Regarding the scene of destruction so plainly and so deliberately pictured in the chapter before us, there was room for prayer and for the exercise to advantage of all God given powers. Room for attention—for watchfulness—for petition. "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter" was the counsel of Him who told his friends the tale of the coming woes. He did not say "Pray ye that ye may know when and where is the great danger to appear."

And so we must learn, that, while God is pleased, and man is benefited, in the work of forecasting the future, yet, there is some basal reason of large import why the times and the seasons are kept in the "Father's own power."

It is a generally held truth of theology that there are no measurements of time or season with God; that He is not limited by the bounds of time,—that all to Him is one ever present vision—one eternal now. This is rather hard to understand, and whether we accept it or not, one thing is very certainly taught, and is “worthy of all acceptation.” That one thing is, that there are great principles on which God’s government is posited, which are revealed to us without definite relation to time and place. They are not confined to time and place; neither are they separated from time and place.

It would be a literal truth, if the time and place for God’s appearing in the glory of His judgment were set before us. But the literal truth would be really a larger or spiritual error. It would localize in our minds God’s ministrations of justice and mercy. To-day would be uninteresting because our minds would be called out to the morrow. To-day would be empty of God, because His greatness and importance would be placed upon the distant day. This would be a great calamity; for the human soul must surely know that “now” is the hour of greatest need, for personal duty and divine help. And “this place” would be an unhallowed spot; because yonder in that other-where, we would be looking for the expectant glory of His feet. And this would be unfortunate; for the presence of God in mercy and judgment is needed *here* as much as anywhere, and it would belittle the God of all, to make His ministrations remarkable in any one locality by any particular choice of His own.

The infinite wisdom of this hiding of time and place is seen, then, in the making of every hour of solemn import, and in the hallowing of every spot with “surely the Lord is in this place.” And it is seen with regard to all prophecy, which seems to us to have been fulfilled and yet not fulfilled. Ah, indeed, we are beginning now to learn that the fulfillment of all prophecy, in its perfection, will only come when love abides in every hour and every place; for “this is the law and the prophets.”

Look again at the words of the chapters before us. Some say they referred to the *when* and *where* of the destruction of Jerusalem; others say they are spiritual, and referred to the coming of the Lord to each individual heart; others again say they referred to a day still distant, spoken of as the day of the coming of our Lord a second time. Which is correct? All of them! Yea, and more than they all! They were fulfilled in their literalness at the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70, by Vespasian and Titus; but we must ever remember that Jerusalem was only one sinning city, and shared, at that day and hour, only its portion of the righteous judgment. There is still an inquiry due to the cities of our earth: Rome, Athens, Antioch, Ephesus have all gone

down under the same law and in fulfillment of the same prophecy. London, New York, Chicago, Toronto, etc., will all go down if they follow in the way of the Jerusalem and other sinners. We must still ask, "When and Where?" These scenes are past—and yet not past.

And as they are true in their literal fulfillment upon Jerusalem, so are they as to every sinner's heart—when the Lord comes thereto. He comes to make great overturnings. He shakes it by earthquake tremblings, and takes away the "sun and moon" of its past illuminations, and drives its idol worship out and razes its Temple to the ground. And then He sends His angels to gather up all the good elements and cement them by His Spirit, and make up a new man—so making peace; and then sends him forth a child of the kingdom. The whole heart is swept by the whirlwind of His wrath against sin; and then revived by the breath of His Spirit of Truth and Love. As the lightning rises in the east and sweeps over to the distant west, so is the coming of the Son Man into the individual heart.

And, just as true are these words in regard the "end of the world." Christ says they always were true, and they always will be so. He says they were true in Noah's day, and in Lot's day, and so shall they be at the end or unto the End of the World. From the first day that lightning shone upon the earth to the day when the sun and the moon shall no longer be needed, shall there be this coming of the Son of Man in judgment, in victory, and in defeat.

Perceive then, how Jesus Christ gives enlarged meanings to the very questions themselves. See how He loads those little words with big significance, and answers them for the race for every time and place.

The disciples approach the Lord and ask, "When?" He answers, "whenever," or "every-when." The Pharisees approach their judge with the question, "Where?" He replies, "wherever," or "every-where." Question: "*When* shall these things be?" Answer: "*Whenever* ye shall see the abomination of desolation;" be ready—He comes to bring the impending judgment. Three times at least is the "abomination that leadeth unto desolation" mentioned in the prophet Daniel, from which our Lord here quotes. It referred in every case to the symbols of heathen rule exalted in the place of the Holy, where God's presence was wont to be recognized in the glory of the Shekinah. Its local meaning was similar at the destruction of Jerusalem. Under Cestius Gallus the Roman sceptre was seen in a temporary occupancy of the city before the final great siege of Titus began. Those who remembered and believed the words of Jesus escaped from the city in the interim when Cestius Gallus withdrew his forces, and beheld from their Jordan retreat, the demolition of their home of sacred memories, under the siege of Vespasian and Titus.

And so, in the larger application which Jesus Christ gave, we can see that the warning comes to us to-day, that whenever we see the enemies of the Lord—the symbols of worldly rule or ungodly pleasure—lifting their influence in the holy place and staying the sacrifices of God's people acceptable on high, whenever we see this—the abomination that leads to desolation—then look for judgment following close in the train.

Similarly applicable are His words to the Pharisees: "Whosoever the carcass is there will the eagles or vultures be gathered together." What is a carcass? It is an organism which once possessed life, but from which the life has gone. So long as there is any life, be it ever so little, the vultures do not come upon it. They may hover around watching the exit of the vital spark. Then they swoop down and disintegrate the body.

I know you can see the application. We have our organizations with a life vigorous and safe, or decaying and in danger. The life of home is love. So long as love is there, life is healthy and active. When love begins to fail, watch and beware; for when love passes out, the vultures come and tear to pieces what is now only a dead form. The life of a church is holiness. So long as the Holy Spirit is in the church and the members move in a holy energy to the glory of the Father, there is no fear of decay or destruction. But when the life of holy awe and conscientious service goes out, and only the organization is there, the body, without the spirit, is dead. Not all the orthodoxy of creed, or perfection of organism, or the music of a well trained choir will save it then from the vultures of judgment. The Jewish church was dead, even when multitudes thronged her temple "whose gilded roof rose glittering in the sun while the feet of those that should carry out the nation to judgment were even at its doors."

It is the same with the nation or community which is organized for a life of human prosperity. The true life of a nation is justice—fairness toward all the members of the organism. The golden rule is the life of society. Where this obtains the community is safe, safe amid poverty or plague, or fear. Where this fails—where this regard for the larger welfare ceases, the nation or community dies. Then come too quickly and too sure the disintegrating forces—internal strifes, the poor warring against the rich, the servants against the masters, the people against the rulers, and all forms of evils arise to reduce to ruin the structure which mutual love and the spirit of true justice and brotherhood had erected as a praise in the earth. "They that sow in unrighteousness shall reap in judgment."

Because of this unfailing law of divine proclamation, I am called to exhort you all to be not weary in well-doing, "for in due season ye

shall reap if ye faint not." In due season! that is not a fixed "when." It is the due time—the time when the work has wrought its due result. It may be nigh at hand for some. For others it may be more distant. Not all will receive the visitation at once. "Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken and the other left. Two men shall be ploughing in the same field, the one shall be taken and the other left." But to all in some "when" and some "where" the Son of Man will come. And "who may abide the day of His coming?"

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

"WHO?"—Sermon 3.

TEXT: "Who then can be saved." Matt. xix. 25.

WE find ourselves once again in the presence of the world's Christ asking the serious and solemn questions of the human heart.

We asked "why?" and studied the intent and purpose of human life. We also heard His words of promise and warning, and asked "when" and "where shall these things be?" We come again, and this time bring a personal inquiry and ask "who?" Who is to fill out the sublime destiny we have studied? Who is to share in the triumphs "when" the Son of Man shall come? Who shall be found in that all glorious place "where" He shall establish His throne? This divides up the little band of inquirers into separate individuals. And so likewise does it break up our congregation to-night into individual listeners.

This solemn question has been asked more times than one. In another interview it was implied in the inquiry: "Are there few that be saved?" Would to God that we should all feel the solemnity of the question, and of the hour of its consideration sufficiently to lead us to ask: "Lord, is it I?—Lord is it I?"

In our last study you will remember how the Lord Jesus enlarged the views of the inquirers by the use of the adjunct "so ever." "When" was answered by "whenever;" "where," by "wheresoever." If we look closely into the Saviour's answer to our present question, we shall see that "who" was answered by "whosoever." This was indeed a very common term with Him. And following His "whosoever," we shall find the conditions of life and of character which form the successful

candidature for everlasting honors in the Kingdom of God the Father. Many are the changes rung upon this "whosoever." "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that *whosoever* believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "*Whosoever* hath the Son hath life, and *whosoever* hath not the Son hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

The Father having thus manifested the Son that we might believe upon Him, and have Him, and follow Him, let us hear that Son as to what He means by believing on Him, following Him, and having Him.

Once upon a time, a great multitude believed on Him in a way satisfactory to themselves; and sufficiently believed upon Him as to follow Him in the presence of many enemies whose frown they despised—whose sneer they repudiated for His sake. And it is recorded that He turned His face round upon His followers, and so spake to them that the great many were staggered and turned away from Him. Only a few remained. That many could stand the jeers of the Pharisees and the taunts of the unbeliever, but they could not hear the words spoken unto them by Christ Himself. They sought the gifts He was able to bestow; they looked for, and longed for, a place in the kingdom that would be beyond the cares and burdens that now bewildered their unmeaning and unprofitable lives. But evidently His words placed before them some conditions that made their hearts sink, and forced them to abandon the hopes they had even built up for themselves in Him.

And it is so still. Often in our own day we see an eager and enthusiastic people choose for themselves, a teacher or a leader who could and would lead them on to a nobler destiny; but the tasks he sets before them are too hard,—the way he would lead them is not their way,—his thoughts are not their thoughts; and so the one around whom they rallied yesterday, they abandon to-day. Yesterday, they cheered him, to-morrow they will jeer him. Yesterday, they would gladly share his life, to-morrow, they would spit upon his grave for a fee.

I say—It is so still. There are many who are seen by the outer world as the followers of Christ. They are not ashamed before the scoffing multitude to be called Christians. They meet where Christians meet. They speak the language and sing the songs of the Christian. The world's jeers do not disturb them. The unbeliever's sarcasm they do not heed. No outside foe can scare them, no outside charm can coax them from the position they have taken toward their Lord. But let Him speak out His full conditions of membership in His Kingdom,—let the authority of His solemn words be asserted before them,—let them be called to pursue the path marked out by His own wise Counsel; and these followers will demur. They will assert that to such conditions they cannot subscribe; and so they fall out from the company of fol-

lowers to pursue their own meandering path into the despairing gloom.

It is worth our while to ask, what where those words of the Master's which caused such a retraction in the multitude which followed Him. They are recorded in the chapter we read as a meditation (Luke xiv. 25), and Matthew records them in his 16th chapter thus: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

Now I think you will all agree with me that the answer is the theme worthy of our study at this time. It is very emphatic. It is so plain and unqualified that we cannot escape from it. There is no use cherishing other words in place of these. We must meet the problem of these. There is no use trying to evade any path or shirk any duty laid down by our leader to Immanuel's land. We do not know the way; we do not know the truth; we cannot create or foster the life. Let us be taught.

It must be considered as the first step in a true Christian life to accept the guidance of Christ. It is not to be supposed that we are to stop and question the propriety of His every command, for if we had wisdom enough to judge of his commands we would have wisdom enough to go without His guidance. It is here comes the common term—a "full surrender;" an "unreserved consecration."

The true followers do not stipulate. They stand not on terms. They accept the will of Christ, should it bring poverty, defeat, disgrace.

The first disciples had to be brought to that very threshold. Death stared them in the face. All forms of opposition were plainly manifest before them. They had to settle their discipleship on the basis of these words of the Master.

This Christ following is a peculiar undertaking. I know no other like it. This very announcement of Christ's seems to come up squarely against the usually held opinions of us all. It demands a surrender of our beliefs. It seems inconsistent in its very utterance. But this is not an isolated expression. It is just one of the many which He gave to impress this peculiar law of life upon them. Here are other kindred sayings:—"Come unto me, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you,"—a rest by the use of a yoke. "He that would be chief among you let him be your servant." "Give, hoping for nothing, and your reward shall be great." "Except a corn of wheat die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth fruit." "Whoso loveth his life shall lose it; and whoso loseth his life shall keep it unto life eternal."

A word to Christ-followers here! Have you proven the truth of these utterances? You who have been 10 or 20 years a Christian, can

you witness that you have proven them and testify to their meaning? Sometimes I am at a loss for witnesses upon these great sayings of Christ. Tell me, when the earnest inquiring student stands outside seeking to enter, and seeing us wearing the badge of Christian citizenship asks us, from our life, to explain this first principle of the doctrine of Christ—how do we go about it? What do you testify about it? Sometimes I have heard the inexperienced one trying to answer the inquirer by supposing that two lives are here meant; and how, if we throw away this earthly life we shall have the life of heaven when we cease this one. But surely this is but the poor effort of ignorance to endorse as true what it does not dare to deny, but cannot at all explain.

The text means simply what it says. It is not the giving of one life to gain another. Man cannot distinguish between lives. It is an error to try and disintegrate his being in this way. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Peter, John, Paul, Luther, Wesley, all had a life, the one we know as a worthy and honorable one. The one life, on earth too, was all we know anything of. We do not know anything of their career beyond the grave. And so far as the world's knowledge and experience is concerned, that life unknown, is no better than lost. But our text refers to the one life which every man has and every man values, and every man is seeking to save, and yet so many are not saving but losing every day. It refers to this daily unfolding life with all that pertains to its possibility—its good of every kind, with its final satisfaction, where we can look back upon it as a success.

Now, at the outset, the Master says, "Whoso seeketh to save his life shall lose it." We must have some idea of what this really means, for we all have a great life which, in the end, we want to find as large and glorious as it possibly can be in the will of God our Creator and Saviour.

Now, if I were pressing upon you such a precept as this from my own wisdom, you would ask me, "Well, how do you live yourself, and have you any proof from your own life that your counsel is worthy and wise?" That is reasonable. Let us approach our great teacher with the same question, and seek to prove the principle from the life of Him who speaks the guiding words.

Let us briefly but tersely look at the life of Jesus Christ. Was it a successful one? From our point of vision, I think we can now say that it was. He accomplished the purpose He had in view. It was said concerning Him that He should be a great King above all kings, that he should be a Priest above all priests, a Prophet in advance of all prophets. He came to be Redeemer to the Jews and Saviour to the Gentiles. In Him all types and symbols of Jew, and pious Greek as well, were to have their fulfilment. He was on the route to the throne of wisdom and power, and of affection and worship of man.

This was the end to be achieved. How now was the work undertaken? To be a king, He came not through royalty. To be a priest, He came not through the priesthood. To be a philosopher or prophet, He came not through the schools of Athenian wisdom or the Counsel of Hillel. He did not take a leader's place. He filled out precisely the measure of His own teachings. He became a servant to attain the prophesied greatness. He gave, "hoping for nothing," that His reward should be great. He took the heavy yoke upon Him that He might be able to sit down and rest satisfied.

He became poor. He laid aside the honor of the schools. He sought no office. He occupied no throne. He lived a short life indeed. He might have lived a 100 years, because He lived a pious life and indulged in no evils to shorten His career. He seemed to throw all these things away. Nay, not quite that. He did not seem to need them. They followed Him, He never followed them. And when He came down to the close of His early career, He hadn't done a thing that was promised as among His great achievements. As we would say: He hadn't made a point. He had not made the Jewish types and sacrifices give way to Him as their antitype. He had no worship from the world's kings. He had not called the Grecian philosophers to sit at His feet. He had not saved the souls of men. His life was a failure. His best friends had forsaken Him; He died a malefactor; His sun set in a cloud. He lost His life.

He saved it thereby. All is done that He sought. His name is above every name. Before it kings and nations have bowed and do bow. All the schools of thought are sitting students of His wisdom. The Jewish rituals have departed, and at the name of Jesus the millions of earth rise and fall in grateful homage, and hail Him and "Crown Him Lord of All."

And thus Christ Jesus proved His own words wise to win. And did He not press them into the faith and practice of His followers? Did He not verify His "whosoever?" Has there been any exception to His rule laid down in the beginning. I charge you search into this matter closely. Eternal truth demands it. Eternal life for you is hinging right upon it.

I see in my search that His first disciples had to go out and follow Him in sheer, unproven faith; and their own lives were lived after the same manner. They never sought to save their lives. They never went about saying, "I must live,—I must have food and a house to live in." And yet they lived—lived well—lived grandly; and their names are the highest names to-day upon the scroll of history. And you may read any record you will of the followers of Christ, and you will find them "not counting their lives dear unto themselves," but

always delivered up to death, or to anything less than death, for Jesus' sake, that the life might be manifest, and losing their life they might therefore find and manifest it.

And by the word of Christ proven in His own life and those of His followers; this is the law of human advancement. There has never been an exception to His rule. "Whoso seeketh to save his life shall lose it." I can see so to-day! Those born aristocrates whose parents plan a notable life for them, and who themselves stalk forth to assume the seats of honorable distinction and ask the homage of all the sons of men around,—these are not the ones who win such places and such honors. I say "win!" For such places and such honors are won. And they are won by service. They are given to those who do not seek them, but who eschew them—who put their lives at the feet of their fellows and bravely think and plan for the general good. Let it be said that a certain man is working for honor, position, rulership over his fellows, to be lord over their heritage, and such a belief concerning him would rob him at once of public support and favor. But let it be said, he seeks only to serve, to help, to render what assistance he can to the general good, he has no selfish aim or purpose; and that very life will be gained in all the splendor of the things not sought at all.

Ah! This great problem of a successful life is puzzling many brains to-day. Many of you are chafing, and fretting, and fuming because your ends are not achieved by all your toil and care, while another cometh quietly along wearing the wreath you coveted and receiving the applause you struggled hard to attain. Then, when your indignation rises and you speak to demand your rights, some silly one (in your estimation) replies: "You have no rights in this sphere, the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong." I hear the tramp of the feet of the time-servers and self-savers, going to set the world to rights by their easier way, clamoring for the taking from those who have abundance to give to those who have not. And the multitude say, "That's easy and that's right!" But the speaker in paradoxes says to their consternation: "To him that hath shall be given and he shall have abundance, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." And they sneak to their retreats saying, "Never man spake like this man."

Now, I want you to take this solemnly to your hearts. I must insist that no other truth will save the soul and make the Christian and save this world to brotherhood and love. I said to you the other night that the man who struts through this world demanding his rights and declaring his independence will soon have no rights to demand and will soon have to confess his dependance upon all.

Let me say here, for it is not incongruous that this wild cry of "My

rights and your duties" must change before men get the blessings that would be desirable for humanity's children. They cannot come to us by seeking them for ourselves.

We must come to believe the Christ in His words, and in His deeds; and we must really come to seek each other's good and not our own; else we cannot ever hope for saved lives and matured good for the distressed race.

We have come to it, and we ought to thank God for this solution of our life-problem, and take His counsel and prove its glorious truth. Our trouble is: We are ready to organize under any flag but the standard of the cross. We are ready to hear the bray of any earthly ass, and follow the wake of his leadership, if he only tells us to seek our own welfare, and fight for it.

I tell you in the name of the immortal God of all life—in the name of Him who knew what was in man, and spake no words but truth, and proved his words by living them to the very letter:—I tell you in the name of the Christ who shall stand judge of all at last, and point you to His words of wisdom which he declared would bring peace to earth and good will among men; I tell you amid the din and bustle of the strife for mastery:—Our motto must be changed.

We must organize under another leader. We must make our tocsin: "My duties and your rights." We must declare our spirit and life to be to do good, to serve faithfully, not stipulating, but looking to God, the truth, for our reward. If righteousness is ever to come, it will come this way. If brotherhood and justice are ever to crown the efforts of man, it will be in this way. No wiser legislator ever stood upon the sands of this earth than He who is to be made unto the obedient ones—"wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption."

To them that believe not, of course this is the way of foolishness. But oh!—to us who believe this is the power of God. Brothers, let us not contend against it, lest it grind us to powder as it will. Let us link in with it, and run with it, and it will lift us from the brooding care and fretful anxiety of earth's ways to the peace which the world cannot give nor take away.

And now, to all inquirers after a life of true success here, that form of life which shall produce a heritage incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away;—to all who have heard of the peace that passeth understanding, of the hope that maketh not ashamed, of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, of the glory of the kingdom above, of the joy forecasting the seeing God in an eternal fellowship, of the victory over sin, of the triumph over the ugly grave, of the renewal of lost friendships, of the re-union of loved ones forever, of all that is locked up in the kingdom of Christ for those who follow Him, of Sal-

vation—in all that the keenest and most far seeing eye can discern, and all that the most penetrating heart can feel and tell about it, and are now asking, “Who then shall be saved?”

Receive the only reply worthy your thought and worthy the import of the solemn hour: “Whosoever seeketh to save his life shall lose it, and whosoever loseth his life for my sake shall find it,” and bide the command to each of us alike impressive. “Strive to enter in at the strait gate for many I say shall seek to enter in and shall not be able.”

WHAT?—Sermon 4.

TEXT:—“What shall we have therefore?—Matt. xix. 27.

In pursuance of the study of these inquiries it has been deeply impressed upon my mind that a summary of the questions asked of Christ by His friends, His enemies, and His critics, would stand out as one of the strongest of evidences that in His own day all came to look upon Him as an acknowledged or assumed authority on the most important issues concerning the conduct and destiny of man. They seem to cover all the great inquiries of humanity. Just a glance over the chapter before us and the one preceding, shows them to be full of questions and answers. “Master, who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?” “Master, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive Him?” “Master, is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?” “Master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”

I must confess to you that I have been much helped by this line of study. Jesus Christ met each inquirer so wisely and so kindly that it has become easier for me to unroll my own personal perplexities before Him.

The question we ask to-night is a very practical one, perhaps the most so. “Why?” “When?” and “Where?” we ask about things; but “What?” brings us to the things themselves. It asks what are they, and what is their relation to us and to all things?

“What?” is an interrogation very freely used. It asks many kinds of questions. You can weigh the character of people by the questions they ask with this little inquirer. Among those who came with it to the Saviour, there was a great variety. Some asked, “What shall we have?” and others asked, “What shall we do?” and others again

inquired, "What shall this (the other) man do?" And you are quick enough to see in these few an illustration of the variation of temper and thought in the petitioners.

I have not chosen the greatest of these on which to speak to-night, but I have chosen the one most commonly asked. For the purpose of our addresses is to study the real inquiries of the ordinary man, and especially as they were asked of the Son of Man—man's way, truth, and life.

The verse reads: "We have forsaken all and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" "We have left all." If anyone had a right to ask "what shall we have?" it would seem to be those who spoke these words at this time. Had they inquired, "Say, Master, if we leave all and follow Thee, what shall we have?" it would have been a much different case indeed, as you will easily see.

This is a question of peculiar importance. It is the life or death of its possessors. It becomes so deep seated as to determine human character between God and man. It killed and damned Judas. "What shall I have?" begat in him the other inquiry made to the enemies of Christ: "What will you give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?"

And yet, within limits, it is a proper question. It is right that we should forecast our deed and ask what result will follow. And when we thus inquire to know the quality of result, it is well. To such an inquiry the "soever" adjunct can be used and the apostolic answer comes in truthful response: "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

But this proper question has its limits of usefulness. Beyond these, it becomes a question of unlawful ambitions, and seeks to know the quantity, and stipulate on quantity rather than quality as a basis for service.

This is really the "forbidden fruit" of Nature's paradise. Nature, most reliable as she is in always bringing the same fruit as the seed sown, never promises any definite amount to her most earnest and honest toilers. Indeed, some who have toiled hard have had least return, and some who toiled least had bountiful return.

And so you will find that when our Saviour listened to the questions of His disciples on this occasion, as they asked Him, "What shall we have?" He gave them one of those broad and comprehensive answers, such as in our last study He gave to other inquiries—an answer which, to a right spirit, would be very satisfactory; but which, to a mean and selfish spirit, would be far from sufficient.

"Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." (28, 29 v)

Broad enough, large enough, comprehensive enough, surely ! And yet the very kind of an answer most men dislike to get when they are asking "What shall we have?" A regular Christ-like answer. A regular gospel announcement. Plain, yet confusing ! Plain to the disciple meek and lowly, confusing to the self-seeker and the critic. Look at it ! What a wonderful sweep in that promise of 28th and 29th verses so all-inclusive ! I can well imagine the pleasure of the disciples at Peter's utterance of a question that had oft times filled the mind of every one of them, but which they had not found courage to express. And now what a gratified look would be exchanged, as the Master was unfolding His wonderful answer of hundredfolds and everlastings !

But that 30th verse ! Ah, that seems an unfortunate utterance to come in just there. "But many that are first shall be last and the last first." That pricks the bubble of any vaporous enthusiasm, and brings every man down to the ground of life's common daily tread and the individual contest for the individual reward.

I often think that we need those words quoted to us in our religious ecstasies. When we congregate together, and spend the hours rehearsing the promises, and singing the hymns of the triumphant, and counting up the treasures of the inheritance and surfeiting our souls with a vision of our eternal wealth, and are wonderfully happy as the children of the King ; it would be a heavenly visitor who would follow up the chorus of our most joyful hymn with the Saviour's words : "But, remember, there are first that shall be last and the last first."

If we look closely into this incident between Christ and His disciples I think we shall see that Christ was not prepared for any stipulation. It was not the attitude of mind to which He could give His blessings, nor is it the attitude of mind now to which the Divine gifts can come for earth or heaven. The stipulating, calculating spirit of the age is making a mean class of service and a mean kind of man.

I have a good example before me. Not long ago from one of your families a youth went out to one of the mercantile establishments of the city and sought an interview with the proprietor, with the purpose of getting a situation in the house.

To the youth's earnest question : "Do you want a boy, sir?" The master gave a kindly response, and, looking first around him and then at the boy, he answered : "Well, there is plenty of room around here and plenty to do ; I suppose we would not be overcrowded with another boy. Would you like to come here and work, sir?" "Yes, sir," the boy replied. "Do you think you would like to be in this kind of

a business?" the merchant prince inquired. "Yes, sir," said the boy. "Do you think you could give up everything else—home, school, play, and make this the first thing of your life?" was the merchant's trying question. "Yes, sir," the boy firmly replied. "When could you come to work?" said the merchant. "Any time, sir," was the youth's ready response. "Very well then, come along on Monday," was the merchant's final commission. The boy stood a moment with anxious look, and ventured to ask, "What will you give me, sir?" "Oh," said the merchant liberally, "It is all yours, it is all before you, we will withhold nothing. I came in here a boy like you and began at the beginning, and now my name is on the sign. The privilege and opportunity are before you." But the youth looked both bewildered and disappointed. Again he ventured to speak: "How much a week will you give me, sir?"

Poor boy! that the greater vision should be so obscured by the less. "How many dollars a week?" Ah! there is the folly of this day's calculating and stipulating spirit! You taught your boy that! You know you did! Two dollars a week would be wealth; the opportunity of an inheritance of business capacity and wisdom—a phantom! To make two dollars a week the end for which he labors, is a cataract in the eye of one who should have a clear unbleared vision of a kingdom to be attained and a mastery to be secured.

Or take the illustration the Saviour himself used in the parable immediately following His utterance to the disciples.

"For," said He, "the kingdom of heaven is like" the man hiring laborers. The parable we read as a Scripture lesson, and you are familiar with it. It refers to two classes of laborers, those who stipulated, and those who did not.

It is stated concerning the first ones hired that they covenanted—bargained—"agreed with Him for a penny a day." They worked for a penny a day. That was the object before them to be won, and to win which should bring them perfect satisfaction. They worked on that basis. The other class coming in at different hours worked on another basis:—"Whatsoever is right, that will I give thee." They worked for what would be right. True, the master should be judge, but they sought no favors, and knew that the best way to be approved, even of a worldly master, is to show an interest in his work. Instead of working for a penny, they worked for a character as workers, and worked in confidence toward their Master's word: "I will do the right thing by you."

And mark the result. "Call the laborers and give them their hire, and begin at the last." Why so? The first need no consideration. They made their own terms. We have but little interest in them. Not for

us, but for a "penny a day" do they work. But these last ones must be dealt with on the basis of righteousness. They have done their best and have trusted me ; I will reward their labor and also their trust. Those earlier ones would not trust me, in fact would not be my servants, but would be their own masters and name their own reward. Give them their own too ; but give to these others first a penny. And you remember how when the stipulators heard that these had received a penny they went back upon their own mastership, and wanted now to be put on the plain of the others. But it was too late. The very ones who had fixed their own rate were the ones who grumbled. It is always these tinkering reckoners that get left. In all branches of life it is the same. The stipulators—the fixers are the dissatisfied. This parable is told for the express purpose of showing this distinction between the rewards for service. It is not told to declare all toilers equal, and to receive an equal reward ; but precisely the opposite.

Its conclusion—its lesson is "There are first that shall be last, and there are last that shall be first." Its special purpose is to impress the disciples that stipulators are of no use in the Kingdom of heaven. They will always be at the tail. And this Kingdom of heaven refers to every sphere where the rule of God—or righteousness is sought ; on earth and beyond its time and space.

Let us go back now to the immediate promise given in answer to the disciples' question. Jesus said, "Ye that are followers of me." This was their own term. They had said, "We have forsaken all and followed thee." He meets them on their own ground ; "Ye shall be with me." In my glory ye shall have glory, as in my shame ye shall have shame, and in my suffering ye shall suffer too. "Ye that are followers of me,"—follow me. If ye suffer, sacrifice, endure loss for my sake, I will suffer, sacrifice, become poor, that ye may be rich, do any—all things, for your sake. If to be with me is your delight—be with me—you shall. "Where am I, there shall ye be also." "When the Son of Man shall sit in His throne, ye also shall sit upon thrones." "But," He added, "there are last that shall be first, and the first last." Oh, why does He open that chilling draught upon their hopes in the promise just rehearsed in such soaring numbers? Why? Because it is a truth He would not think of hiding from his loved ones. They would have to meet it. They must prepare for it. It is true to life for us all. We too must be taught to look for it. It would have been better for most of us, had we heard of it earlier in life.

I well remember some twenty years ago, when I, with twenty-six others, stood before the altar-rail, as candidates for ordination into the Christian ministry. We were tenderly and faithfully addressed by one of the fathers, and cheered by the prospect of reward to those who gave

themselves to the life of ministration. We stood entranced before the prospect, and all, I believe, went into our covenant with equal earnestness and devotion. But it would not have been at all amiss, had some one of the aged ministers arisen at the end of the climax and calmly uttered: "But there are last that shall be first, and the first last." For so it has proven. Those who began their career with seeming poverty of spirit, and who, at the time referred to, had very inferior appointments, and ranked as among the "humbler brethren," have not failed to send some of their numbers to pass by those who were of more enviable repute. The very first places to-day are filled by those of little promise in the early day—and some who stood far in the van, and who were looked up to by the meeker plodders on the way, have fallen back in the ranks, and have added their witness to the truth spoken by the Master, "the last shall be first and the first last."

But you ask why did not Jesus let them find that out when it came. Why destroy the hope of the occasion by bringing in this apparently disturbing element. It was precisely the opposite from a disturbing element, if rightly received and understood. It was told on purpose to prevent jealousy and envy finding a place among them. It was as though He said: "Remember that some who come after you may pass you in the race. It must always be so in this world. It is right. So cheer them on. They are on our side, and strengthening our cause. Let no envy rise up in your breast; do your best and your reward is as sure as theirs. Or, it may be that you shall advance and supersede some who have always been before you. Be not high-minded, but cheer on your toiling brother and make the way easier by your advancement. Say unto him, "Come on, brother, I go to prepare a place for you."

Let me once more emphasize this lesson as against the spirit of stipulation involved in this "What will you give me" or "What shall we have?"

No kingdom where God rules can be entered by him who stands upon the threshold to stipulate. Think of the kingdom of friendship. Does some one come to you offering his friendship? Does he bid you count upon him in your hour of coming need? Does he say draw upon me when your resources are feeble? Does he say, trust me as a friend in every hour.

Such seems indeed a worthy one to open your heart's door for admission. But supposing he should halt and add to all his former words: "Of course I shall expect to count on you in my needs; I must have access to your resources when mine fail;" and many words of a similar nature. At once you recoil. You say to yourself: That is no language of the friend; that is not the voice of faith. It may be

business, or fair play, or anything else you choose to call it, but it is not the voice of friendship.

The gate of the kingdom of friendship is not open to such a seeker. Nor can the kingdom of love open its golden portals to such. Lovers do not stand on measured terms. That young woman who halts in presence of the important question and demands a certain quality of home, a certain quantity of material comfort, a certain instalment secured in her own right, a certain amount of amusement guaranteed for the first few years of married life—that poor creature can never cross the threshold and enter the kingdom of love. Never for her do the hinges turn—

“Of the ivory gate and golden.”

The language of love is plain. It says: “I will follow thee withersoever thou goest,” “neither tribulation nor distress, nor famine, nor peril, nor sword, shall drive me away.” I will share your fortune, be it much or little. I will share the toil as you may give me my portion. I will enjoy the dainty dish, if it is ours. I will sweeten the crust with kisses and share it without a chiding word.

Except a man be born of this he cannot see the kingdom of love.

My time has past. You ask me to night, ye followers of the truest and best—“What shall we have?” It can not be told us; it could not be understood. What happy life was ever foretold by loved ones when they swore fealty to one another? It could not be told now. “What I do thou knowest not now.” It could not be given now. “Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now.”

It cannot be declared at the beginning, but it shall be unfolded. Let us be content with the promise and with the revelation which the Spirit gives; for eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man—what God hath prepared for those who love Him.”

“Dost thou desire to know and see
What thy mysterious name shall be?
Contending for thy native home,
Thy latest foe in death o’ercome
’Till then thou searchest out in vain

ARMENIA.

The Turk will yield to nothing but fear and force, and that force should be applied from some source as soon as humanity can mass its forces and poise its cannon. It is sheer criminality for the governments of the earth to wait for one another. The people are mightier than any minister or court, and will support any nation that will go into the field to end these nameless atrocities.—*Rev. M. W. Hayes.*

HOW?—Sermon No. 5.

TEXT: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation."—Heb. ii. 3.

We are still finding big meanings for little words. There is perhaps none more wide in its sweep of investigation than this one. If great things stand before us in the splendor of their achievement, we pursue the inquiry, How came these? If we stand before some great want where an aching void must needs be filled, and some wondrous work must needs be wrought, we ask, How can this be accomplished? If some great demand of established law, unalterable and defiant, stands pointing us to some task essential to life and its complement of good, we ask, How can we do else than this?

We good, orthodox people do not find it at all difficult to believe that there was a time and occasion in the history of our race when the great inquiry came from a hopeless pondering over a great ruin. When the light of innocence had fled from the face of the human; when they hid among the trees of the garden; when the thorns began to prick the hand that sought to pick a flower; and when subsequently the fallen pair were marched, with drooping heads, from the garden to the wilderness, where, with sin-stained hearts, they should breed the awful progeny of evil thoughts, fornications, murders, false witnesses, blasphemies, and all the things which the Christ afterwards said defile the man—here stood out in awful importance the inquiry, "How! how can man be just with God?" And every where, and ever since, the same weird, wild, woeful wail has been on every winged wind that sweeps the ocean or sighs through the vales of human dwelling places, the universal cry of the unhinged and hence unhappy soul, "How can the possible be brought nigh?"

I shall not spend time to add to this study of the vast outer realm of principalities and powers in heavenly places over the human problem as indicated in the apostle's significant saying: "Which things the angels desire to look into." Let us simply be convinced that the time was when the great *how* of the human heart was uttered in bewilderment over the incongruities of the soul's conditions, in perplexity over the sorrowful variance between what might be and what is.

The answer to the soul's cry has come. The heavens have opened—opened to send forth a Saviour, opened to receive the prodigal mankind. The way, the truth, the life, the *how* has been declared. It is proclaimed that the great salvation must be announced in the wide area commensurate with the cry of the soul of man. In every place where the glad gospel is announced witnesses come forth to its saving power and testify that a new life is begotten within, and from that new life is elaborated a new unfolding of wondrous beauty and strength.

The inquiry that now speaks in solemn caution is not why came we

into this world ; this we have studied with deep satisfaction. It is not when or where shall God visit his people with his answering rewards of good and evil. This we have seen is now and always a part of his administration of impartiality. It is not who shall be partakers of the heritage of God ; for this has its answer in the "so ever" of consecration with which a profoundly interesting study made us somewhat familiar.

We cannot pronounce a criticism upon the glorious work of God on human redemption. It would be presumption in us to think of it. There is no plan to be discovered by the keenest penetration of human sagacity. It saves the soul. And the soul saves all the rest.

But there seems to be yet a question left for the inquiry of the Spirit introduced by the curious "How?" Did I say a question left? Oh, no! It comes into being because of this great salvation and this reasonable service to God.

Surveying the sin, the sorrow, the sinking degradation of the lost ones on the one side, beholding the holiness, the hope, the heavenly elevation of the saved upon the other, and then, o'erwhelmed with the mighty and all-glorious work of redemption which stands in its majesty and victory in the midst, the soul is swept with that unanswerable conviction which cries in the words of the text, the one conscience-stricken inquiry of the age of this enlightenment, "How, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

We cannot study this question to-night in an abstract and unprejudiced way, I fear. We are solemnized by the thought—by the fact indeed, that there are some of our fellow beings who do neglect this great salvation. We are, therefore, studying a question of immediate life and death with some of our friends, who stand out in strange fantastic idiocy—careless of heaven's mightiest effort on human behalf. We study therefore, with a heart-beat of honest interest in your loftiest welfare. We ask this question with you in our very thought.

Moreover, it would be a legitimate and profitable work to study the broad question of how shall the general good of mankind, the redemption of the race, the perfection of human relations, the peace which is sought in every prayer, be attained and enjoyed if we embrace not this great salvation? We could well study the cruelty of those who oppose it with the powers of mind and heart which they do possess. We could ponder the calamity of delay which is resultant upon the refusal of others to lend their latent talents to its promulgation.

We could profitably sit and listen to the theories of emancipation announced on platform in heated enthusiasm and poured out in fiery word painting in magazine and newspaper amid the strikes of labor and the stubbornness of capital, all the while neglecting to offer in the name of Jesus Christ the divine theory of eternal life.

All this as lovers of society—peace, and national harmony, might well lead us to ask in the broadest sense “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?”

But somehow I cannot be very broad to-night. The subject thoroughly admits of it, but I cannot get away from the personal worth of it. I feel that its most awful force comes upon those who, with all the light of this gospel day, put off the fulfillment of their own personal relations to it.

Salvation for the individual is the recovery of the soul to the dominion of God, and thereby from its lost condition and estate. As to the plan, method, means of this great salvation; the work appears in many parts as taught by Christ and His apostles. Some of these are relating to God's part therein, others to the part needful for the acquiescence and acceptance of man. It has been unfolded in its work through many ages, and much variety of circumstance; and the history of that elevation is well known to all who have this sacred book in sufficient reverence to read it.

Let our words be peculiarly practical. The inquiry is: “How shall we escape, if we neglect.” Now take this home to heart. It is not “how shall we escape if we oppose it,—or if we denounce it—or if we refuse it.” From all these we might succeed in excusing ourselves. But few have strength enough of self-assertion to oppose it; fewer still to denounce it.

To neither of these do you belong. Nor yet are you at all satisfied to be classed with those who refuse it. You do not refuse it. But you shrug your shoulders at the text and must admit that you put it off, you do neglect it. You are caught, and must be tried on this count.

What is it to neglect this great salvation? Oh! it is easy to answer that. It is the same as to neglect one's education; the same as to neglect one's body, to feed it and keep it clean; the same as to neglect one's business. We ask for no strange meaning to the word “neglect.”

To neglect this salvation means in effect to be without it. And to be “without” it means certainly all that the terms “without God,” “without hope,” “condemned already,” “under the sentence of death,” and all such terms of sacred utterance imply. And it is a significant feature of this attitude of mind that instead of spending time and thought on the line of attention to the way of salvation, it will put forth great efforts to find if there be not some way of escape in the face of a life long neglect. But where have they ever found an answer to their inquiry?

This is indeed the unanswerable question. There is no response coming to us from the realms of the finite or the infinite. If we could be favored with the wing of omnipresence and fly to the depths of hell or

heights of heaven, neither the dark intelligence of the one nor the radiant wisdom of the other would answer our solemn quest. Nor should we pursue our way to the secret chamber of the wisest or the kindest of human philanthropists or students of the mysteries of being, would there be any reply offered to our eager inquiry. Hell beneath us, earth about us, heaven above us, and God Himself enthroned—all stand aghast and unmoved by our cry and let only the echo come back upon us of our own unanswered and unanswerable language: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

Amid the varying follies of sinful men, we do sometimes find them studying out a way of escape outside of the God they have neglected. But none has ever been offered. It is however a fact that they have taken God into their plans now, and are endeavoring to declare that there is—there must be a way of escape in the "boundless love of God." They become wondrously eloquent over the "wideness of God's mercy like the wideness of the sea;" and they say "somewhere beyond our ken, sometime beyond our calculation, somehow beyond our power, there will be a way of escape." They say: "The wisdom of God is not exhausted, the means of God are not all made manifest; the love of God is sufficient and His power is commensurate with His affection. There is the realm of our hope and a wide one too it is."

But we must stop and consider. Had God—who dwells in the Infinite and deals out to us His thought and will as fast as we can bear it, had God, I say, not broken that impenetrable unknown, and come into our realm of being, and put Himself into a form where we could know His will concerning us;—we might be faultless if we flung out our hope to some other way or means of human help.

But He who in ages past appeared by prophets in "sundry times and divers manners," came Himself in these last times bringing the whole reserve of Divine power and might to complete this great salvation. It is distinctly declared that "last of all He sent His Son." It is plainly announced, "All power in heaven and earth" is now entered in Him. Tho' in a thousand instances a victim and a priest might symbolize before this the will of God repeated, it is now solemnly pronounced: "There remaineth now no more sacrifice for sins, but a fearful looking for of judgment." Why! The Christ of Nazareth and the tragedy of Calvary are the great reserve out into which the very "neglector" has been looking for hope. The Lord is even more merciful than you had supposed. You have been hoping in the mercy to come. It is here now before you asked for it. But oh, what a terrible loss if even your own hope for escape you had neglected.

The Gospel plan is God's love plan. "Hereby we perceive the love of God." "Herein is love made perfect." Had the Messiah been less

than the very God, we might perhaps have looked for a reserve with hope. But there can be no more than "He laid down His life for us." "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

There are a few who cherish a hope in hell. They have no ideas of righteousness and think that God's heart is tender and his love is weak. Their wailing will conquer Him and hell will triumph over heaven. It is a poor, weak human plea. The divine does only and always the right, and cannot but glory in all he does and needs not to repent of his deed.

And why in the light of all that is reasonable should men go down to hell to look for a hope. Certain it is, there is one everywhere else. And as certain is it also, that there is none there; for it is declared to be the time and place beyond hope.

This text in full is a strong implication that if God vindicated His law, He is bound to vindicate His Gospel. If He was strict to judge upon the little light, He must be just to judge upon the larger light. It is stated by Christ that the men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment against this generation. It is said that it will be better for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for us if we neglect. "If the word spoken" through the messenger or "angel was steadfast," true, abiding, and "every transgression" was treated fairly by the law, and had a "just recompense of reward," "How shall we escape if we neglect" so clear a light—so great a salvation?

God says that "love is the fulfilling of the law." Love is not lawless, but lawful. Be assured, then, God will fulfill His own law, as in His estimate it is the highest deed of love. He has made what He calls a lawful salvation—not a reckless or unmeaning one—not one regardless of character, or regardless of fitness and the harmonies of His perfect sphere. It is a great salvation, and a lovely one because lawful. Its glory is climaxed in the utterance "that He may be just" (right), "and yet the justifier" (the champion of righteousness) in the case of "him that believeth in Jesus" unto that righteousness which is the legitimate, lawful fruit outcome of such a faith in such a being.

Oh, neglecter, how shall you escape? I hear no answer from you. To such a question I never can. It strikes the sinner dumb and leaves him at the trial "speechless." But another day of mercy is still before you. To-night I may offer you salvation. I have no power or authority to say you can have it again. There is no promise of it for to-morrow. But, oh! it is better to-day. It is needed to-day. "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Be convinced that neglect is death; that unbelief is condemnation; that "without salvation" is *Lost! Lost! LOST!*

WHITHER?—Sermon 6.

TEXT.—“Lord, whither goest Thou ?” John xiii. 36.

We have come in our studies to that inquiry of the human spirit which is asked with the most of pathos by the bewildered suppliants, and, before which the wisest of earth's sages betakes to himself the temper of meekness. We find ourselves in an atmosphere where pride cannot dwell, and where a common mystery begets a common equality.

As I sat with head in hands wondering how to introduce this subject to your thought, I was led to say to myself: “They have all been in the same sad bewilderment as yourself, and need but little introduction to the theme.”

Soon I found myself asking how would the artists give shape to this thought. A vision of a gallery of pictures fell upon me, and one title was written beneath each and all of the pictures:—“Whither ?” The artist's name on no two sketches was the same. Therefore the pictures differed. They differed in the foreground, at the point nearest to the individual life of each. The background seemed much the same in all. From amidst the figures of loving comrades filling, in variety of manner, the foreground of the scenes described, there could be seen some one passing out into a deepening mist which characterized the background of them all alike.

I saw an Elijah passing out and up into the realms above, the clouds covering him from the gaze of a wondering Elisha standing on the plain. I saw what looked like a Columbus leaving the shores of Spain and putting his vessel's prow toward the shoreless side of the sea and waving a farewell to wistful eyes which peered from the shore into the deepening mist above the waters. I saw “two little children weeping sore” who had seen the black carriage bear away their “sleeping mother” and come back empty, leaving no message but that which made them sing :

“Tell us, oh tell us, where mother is ?”

And other scenes akin to these filled up the mind, filled up the heart, filled up the eyes ; and forced me to lay down my pen awhile and sigh with the all of human kin ; “Whither goest thou ?”

Standing as we all do upon the threshold of this mystery, and watching with a wonder which wears wearisome with waiting long, we are grateful indeed for any ray of light, or any word of truth that may relieve the sigh of the situation. And we are glad to have it from One whose answer would not be for a class, but for us all.

It is not a geographical “whither” that we seek. It is not a map, which we must all study, of continents and isles like these ; else we should puzzle ourselves over means of navigation, and we should lose

hope for those whose means of embarkation are a coffin and a darksome tomb.

The great human heart seeks only a few items of information to gratify its hope, and bear its burdened spirit up. It asks, shall I be? and shall others be? and shall we meet and know each other? and shall we love and be loved? It will matter little what else is or is not there if these be made secure. Our life is locked up in these and our interest will be there.

There is a beauty about the way in which Jesus Christ talks about this other where. He speaks with no faltering tone or mystical speech. He speaks of "going away" as if He would simply pass into another portion of His Father's great domain, as if He had business to perform in spheres a little wider than the place in which we dwell.

It were better that He should thus speak. Into that eternal life which had begun, He could not well introduce the phraseology of death—that death He had before declared a believer in Him should "never see."

And, moreover, to these loving disciples it was indeed a trial of faith and hope to have Him go away from them at all. And so, unto them as the representative followers after Christ and seekers of the Father, He would give such answers as an increasing life, and love, and wisdom would more and more explain.

Then mark the answer to this world-wide "whither goest thou?" The poor, bewildered children of sorrow, as well as the most joyful poets of human hope, have found it, and repeat it over and over as the best words ever said: "Let not your heart be troubled . . . I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, and where I am, there ye may be also."

You know it well. You learned it among the first Gospel words you committed to memory, and have cherished it fondly even while you sinned. To-day you are all fastening your hopes to it. This passage always commands an audience wherever spoken or read. Indeed, there are more of you sitting around it, drawing comfort and hope out of it, than are found around other passages quite as needful to a life of peace as this one. And what does it mean to you? You can hardly tell; but one thing is sure, you say:

"It satisfies my longings as nothing else can do."

True enough; and I know of no occupation more interesting than to sit and listen to one another's interpretation of these words. For, you know, it is with interpretations as Paul says it is with bodies. There is a natural interpretation, and there is a spiritual interpretation; and the glory of the natural is one, and the glory of the spiritual is another. And that interpretation is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual.

And so, I think we must infer that as we become more spiritual, our interpretations will become so. For there is the first view, which is the natural, and there is that afterward view which is the spiritual. Let us all strive to attain to the larger views of this truth, which is the Saviour's answer to the disciples' "whither?" We have all seen the "first" view—the "natural." It is the simple, unexplained, undeveloped picture. There is a house—the father's house—rising into view upon the heavenly hills. It is colored and shaded entirely according to our own ideas of extent and beauty. It is cathodized by our imagination, and shows halls, corridors, parlors, and suites of rooms, just according to the extent of our ideas upon such things. Then, as our thought gathers up this great dwelling-place before itself, it sees the robed Immanuel leaving our earth and entering the distant portals, and moving to some part of the colossal palace to set about the preparation of some spot for us in that eternal abode. This being secured, He is seen coming back to take us by the hand and lead us to the place prepared, there to abide in close proximity for evermore.

Such is the "natural" view which is "first" in order to all of us. Not one word would I say to mar the glory of it to you. And yet, if I could lead you forward from that which is "first" to that which is the "afterwards," I should feel that I have been a useful guide for a human soul from the fleshly to the spiritual, from the earthly to the heavenly, from the human to the Divine. "Master—Lord, whither goest Thou?" Answer:—"Be not troubled in heart; My Father's house has many apartments; this is not the only place for his children to dwell. I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come again."

Let us find the largest meaning we can for these words. For wherever we have faithfully studied the dealings of God with men we have found Him leading them forward thus from the small to the great, from the natural to the spiritual. And in this study we have come to see how there is a spiritual law of progress, and how one good man opens up the way for another; and how, in a great world like ours, with beings in almost every stage of development, there is a great difference as to just where men are living in relation to the Heavenly Father. In His spiritual house there are many departments. Some of His children live in a narrow sphere of association with Him, while others live, as David says, "in a large place."

And then, it will be noticed that the most noble and faithful are always moving forward, and opening up the way for the following ones. Thus Abraham went forward in the will of God and prepared a place for Isaac. His life made Isaac's life possible. Isaac found his faith and hope and love in the truths and experiences into which his good father had led him. And in the same way we see how Isaac prepares

a place for Jacob, and Jacob for Joseph, and Joseph for Moses, and Moses for Joshua, and David for Solomon, and John the Baptist for Christ. And then Christ says, "I go to prepare a place for you," and by so much as Christ is greater than each and all of his predecessors, will the place he prepares be greater than any that preceded. And in this way of looking at it we come to apprehend how there is a great spiritual sphere to which the Saviour would lead the thought of His children,—a sphere beyond the "literal" or "natural," and a sphere, too, in which the truth seems to be alive and grow.

And now, let us come with this wider way of thinking and apply it to the Saviour's words given in response to the disciples cry. We should not crowd out the natural, but include it among the rich unfoldings. Nay, we must needs begin with it, for it is "first" in God's order of sequence.

Looking back, as we can, at the outcome of the Saviour's words, we conceive how the disciples could not possibly have realized beforehand the meaning of His sayings. When Jesus spake to them, "I go—to prepare a place—for you," His meanings could only be learned by patience having its "perfect work."

"I go," said He. And whither went He? Well, actually He went to the cross, and the grave, and the resurrection. And He had said already:—"If any man come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Hence, he went to prepare a cross, and a grave, and a resurrection for them. He said:—"and I will come again." And come again He did. He came from the cross, and from the grave, and with the resurrection, that He might lead them forward to the same—that where He was, they might be also.

He came to lead them into a place prepared; a place they had never before known. A place of death! yea, more; a place of resurrection. A place of defeat! yea, more; a place of triumph.

His words had a larger meaning in "I go to prepare a place"—a risen place for you—a place of immortal hope, a place of victory, a place of power. Ye shall be there with me, and be able to exclaim in the fellowship of my sufferings and glory combined:—"O grave, where is thy victory! O death, where is thy sting!"

Or, move a step further along in the history. From the hill of Olivet, nigh unto Bethany, He made another departure. Up, high, he ascended into the heavens from which he had before descended. He had finished his appearances. They were narrow and confined. He himself is now about to fulfil the very law of which we have been speaking. He had made the "natural" revelation—the revelation in the letter, in the flesh. He must needs make that "first"; but afterwards must come the "spiritual."

He goes upward "to fill all things," to reign, to assume the role of a King. And He will "come again" in the spirit and bring them into the spiritual, so that henceforth they will know their Christ no more after the flesh, but after the spirit. They had known Him "first" in the "natural"; and now "afterwards" they shall know Him after the "spiritual."

Behold then, how all the promise of Christ's reply finds its rich fulfillment,—how in the sublimest sense he received them into his fellowship, so that where He was there were they also. What a place He had thus prepared for them, and to which he had truly brought them! A place of such rich, large life! A new place in nature, a new place in self, a new place in others, a new place in history, in heroism, in greatness of soul, in fellowship with God. And thus you see he was always "going," and always "coming again"; going "to prepare,"—coming again "to receive."

"Whither?" The place! I go to prepare "a place." First, let me say to prepare places. Places in this sense is less than "a place." He prepared places of suffering for them—the records are many and various. He prepared places of service for them—they unfolded the sublimest utility that earth had ever known. He prepared places of loving, and objects of love, to which the hearts of men never before warmed. He prepared places of dying for them, giving the world a history of martyrdoms new, wonder-working, awe-inspiring, grand! But not only so. He prepared for them places of rejoicing—the rewards that ever accompany His sufferings. And he prepared for them places of being served, the rewards that follow a faithful service. And places of being loved, beautiful reciprocal affections for the loves they had first bestowed. And places of living—rich, broad, high, deep, living, which came of their being "always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake;" the "life of Jesus was made manifest in their mortal body." There it was, you see! Where he was, there were they also! And so, we say, Christ went and prepared places for them, and then came again in spirit and brought them into these places to appear with Himself. And all these places combine to make a large place—the place he went to prepare. Too large! too comprehensive for any single definition! Who can tell it? A place in the annals of all future history, in the history of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth; a place in the records of the redeemed, a place in the eternal existence and the supernal enjoyments which the everlasting heavens shall provide.

And it is a place with Him. "That where I am, there may ye be also." See the spiritual fulfilment of this utterance! Some would call it literal, but it is larger. Wherever He is, there are the disciples to whom this promise was made. It has been so all along the history.

John saw them in the apocalyptic vision of the unfolding kingdom: "These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." And we see them from our two thousand years distant point of view. Wherever Jesus is to-day, there are they! Wherever His record and life, there also is their own. The gospels recording the life and work of Jesus prepared a place for the "Acts of the Apostles," and wherever the one is, the others appear also.

There is a rich, wide, unfolding for all these responses of Jesus, which only a spiritual life can ever bring to us. And, as the Christian church becomes more spiritual, does it find these larger meanings in the truth? Do not allow yourself for a moment to believe that you know the full meaning of the promises of Christ your Lord, or of the answers to your inquiries of deep intent. His truths are living ones. They will grow. Your interpretations may be correct as far as they are complete. They may be sound, as far as they are mature. Do not kill them by trying to keep them always in their present form. Let them free to exfoliate the life God has put into them.

And now, to the cry of your own heart after those who have gone on before, "Whither goest thou?" let the answer of Christ come to you as an inspiration and a hope. He has gone to prepare for them and for you a place. Not a grave to be buried in, to be lost in, to be hidden in. A place with Him! There may be a cross, a grave, on the way to it, as there was with Him; but there was also—and there will be—a resurrection and a renewed life and glory. Your place prepared! Think of it—in society a place, in history a place, in the living kingdom of Christ a place. O, what a place of attainment is yours, ye followers, ye devotees of Christ Jesus the Lord. Are you in readiness of mind to feel it? Listen!

There has always been "a place" set before the pilgrims of this life. We cannot abide. The day passes; the morrow comes. We all journey; we all ask "whither?" A promised land, a place of rest, a heaven of attainment—all these are set before us to cheer us on.

Behold the journeying Israelites!—lasting types of all journeyers since. You know their history. Many failed to reach the place prepared. "Let us fear lest a promised being left us of entering into that rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

The place set before them was pictured in most glowing terms: "A land flowing with milk and honey," with vineyards they planted not, wells they digged not, olive trees they reared not! But out of all the number that marched up to its threshold, but few indeed entered into it. Why? They hadn't the spirit to go up and take it. It was not armor they wanted, not equipment, but spirit. Joshua and Caleb went up because of their spirit.

All this teaches us that not only is there a place prepared for us, but that we must be prepared for the place. To reach the larger place, we must grow larger. This literal, formal, material, natural must be insufficient for our longings. This corruptive must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. We must cling to the eternal, and be unsatisfied with what time can give.

Oh, for the larger soul that is restless for the larger whither! Master, Lord, we are followers of Thee, "Whitherto goest Thou?" To prepare a place for us? Where Lord? Here in this world as Thy witnesses of power, and heroism, and purity, and victory. And when this is done Lord,—then whither? Where Thou art that we may be also? Where art Thou Lord? Help us to sense Thy presense every day in the pilgrimage. May the pillar of mist that hides in the day, and the pillar of light that reveals in the night be our constant portion now, as they content us with the thought that Thou art with us always. And when the channel of life's river widens toward the shoreless sea and the untried ocean of eternity; when we have no measuring lines and no chart, may we likewise have no fear because we are moving to the place prepared where Thou art, and where we must be also.

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me,
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems asleep
Too full for sound and foam,—
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell!
And after that the dark.
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark.

For tho' from out our bourne of time and place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.—*Tennyson.*

PRAYER.

Prayer is not of the lips, nor of the intellect. If there is any reality in prayer it grasps the whole being in its appeal to God. Prayer takes hold on life, and the life that cannot be prayed is defective, and the prayer that cannot be lived is defective.—*Rev. Robert Meredith.*

SUNDAY, HOW IT IS SPENT, AND HOW TO SPEND IT.

By REV. WALLACE NUTTING.

Preached in the Union Congregational Church, Feb. 16, 1896.

TEXT: "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man, that Thou visitest him?
For Thou hast him but little lower than the angels,
And crownest him with glory and honor."—Psalm viii. 4, 5.

SUNDAY is God's compliment to the dignity of man. It was made for him. It was supposed that he had the faculties to value it. God did not cast this pearl, the rest day, before swine. He had made men of such an order of intelligence, of such a dignity, that they needed the day. It is one of humanity's crowns of glory and honor. He is the greatest man who can see most meaning in the works of God. The more a Sunday means to you the more you understand God.

Few want a "good time." Sunday is twenty-four hours of the best time there is in the week. How much do you get out of Sunday—how much do you put into it? The average life is poor enough. Life needs enriching. What is the difference between twenty-four hours in the life of Moses and the same length of time in the life of an idler? In twenty-four hours Jesus Christ was arrested, tried, crucified, dead and buried. In one day He fed five thousand men, cured many sick and preached at length. In one day a man may travel from New York to Chicago. In about five hours, according to history, a part of General Jackson's army marched more than 30 miles. In two or three hours Beecher, on an English platform, changed the sentiment of England concerning America, and enlisted a nation in the cause of freedom and against slavery.

In a single day the entire New Testament was telegraphed from New York to Chicago, and appeared in print the next day. In a few seconds a check for twenty-five millions of dollars was written in payment for a railroad in New York. By a few strokes of the pen, men in a position to do it, have brought about a peace between the most powerful nations of the earth.

All in the flash of a moment the mightiest mind in the early church was changed from a persecutor to a Christian, and received the impetus by which he wrote half of the New Testament.

How far may one leap in a day? How many friends can one lose between the business hours of nine in the morning and four in the afternoon? You can leap from the highest respectability to the lowest shame; from freedom to thralldom; from life to death. How much is there in a day? A short eternity. A Sunday contains sufficient time for an uplift so great that in the man of Monday morning you would

not recognize the man of Saturday night. The Sunday is the period in which God calls a halt to the swirl of the life current, and says to man: "This day you may climb from the blackest, deepest canon to the sunny plain thousands of feet above."

We all know that a Sunday with Abraham, or a Sabbath, as they called it then, when the Lord talked with him, told him of the future, and gave him to see the day of Jesus—we all know that day held more of life, of thought, of revelation, of glory, of dignity than the entire three score years and ten of a tramp, a loafer, a sport, a glutton, or a hypocrite. How much was a day to Moses who

TALKED WITH A MIGHTY SPIRIT

Face to face and received the law of heaven for the government of the world—commandments which this very day form the basis of administration here in Rhode Island! How many days would you give out of your life for the single hour during which the Lord discoursed on the Mount of Olives and was received up into heaven?

Long before Tennyson wrote "Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay," an eminent seer, peering into the effulgent future, with a vision of rapture shouted: "A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand!" But in the light of a better glory, I would be ready to say, I would be happier to be capable of the thoughts, the emotions, the nobleness that was in Christ for one hour than to experience all the joys of all the men who have ever lived unrighteously.

I believe in the capacities of a day, and especially of a Sunday, for putting a new life, a new beauty, a new power into a human soul. But how does the young man of Providence spend Sunday? The 40,000 males in this city who have arrived at man's estate, do you estimate that about 15,000 of them drink? They say a man is "the worse for drink" when he is about half drunk. But who will agree to prove that he is not the worse for a little liquor? Are 10,000 of these men in church once during the day? That would allow an average of 100 men in each of 100 churches, large and small, or an average congregation of 300 persons in these churches, for two out of three have been found to be women. And

THE OTHER THIRTY THOUSAND

Who did not appear at church? Were 10,000 of them just thinking about rising to dress while the bells were ringing for morning service? In another city I had the members counted who during one hour of Sunday evening went into the six most popular saloons and dance halls and the six largest churches. It was a dangerous thing to do, and I deem it wisest not to attempt it in this city, for I fear it is a wicked city, and I have no inclination to prove how wicked it is. The human

animal when he tries to be an animal is a great success. It seems a foolish thing to be debating about the existence of a personal prince of darkness, because it is the intensely important fact that numerous human creatures who know to read the Sermon on the Mount are living in the nineteenth century like animals, and not even domesticated animals at that.

The Sunday is given this human organism that we may win back the poise, the buoyancy, the power of endurance, the heavenward impulse which is proper to a normal human soul. If, then, the day becomes a sinking, instead of a rising time, it is very easy to make a curse of it. Pearls are of no benefit to swine if they eat them. Time for thought, for rest, for prayer, for the sprouting of the æsthetic, the humane and the devotional ideas, is a large need in life, for which God has provided in this day.

The life of many of our citizens consists, as nearly as I can learn, of a rather poor Sunday. Before morning service, if they attend it, there is very little time for the weary business or professional man. The half of the entire male population which is

NEITHER IN CHURCH NOR IN LOW COMPANY,

That half which endeavors to be fairly respectable, without making any pretensions to Christianity, breakfasts late, and feels no condemnation in taking an easy morning, for is it not a rest day? The remaining morning hours are passed looking through a great paper filled with much of all sort like the net that was cast into the sea, which gathered of every kind. This poor citizen, even if he desires to read the cream, will find his time fully occupied in skimming it.

If the paper would only gather its account of noble deeds, its inspiring ideas, its most elevating contents into one place, there would be a great gain. But it is not so, and a man who may never have read the classics of choicest sort in our literature is compelled, if he would make sure of the news, to give something like two hours to mining after it, and casting aside a large quantity of dirt before he can separate the ore. I freely confess that I will not consent to this for seven days in the week. If I am not to be exempt from this drudgery for one day in seven at least what is life worth? I hail the Sunday as a day of rest from the paper. But the citizen of whom we are speaking amuses himself with it, because that it is the thing so many do, and it is nearest his hand. And after dinner he lounges, smokes and makes plans for the future. Many men take Sunday for casting up their accounts; they talk business by the hour, as if six days were not enough. They bemoan the hard times discuss the chances of the Presidential candidates; revile the weather; and in short fill in the day with

VARIOUS PETTY MATTERS

That are very likely harmless in themselves, but are entirely useless as food for the hungry mind of man.

So goes the Sunday, and so goes the week, when there is leisure of the great body of men made in the image of God ; made in dignity but little lower than the angels crowned with glory and honor, herded together in narrow tenements, amply housed in wide and secluded homes, or scattered afar on the earth. Led by a thousand passions, spurred by unspoken ambitions, cankered by secret sins, saddled with old lies, repenting once a year, and lapsing as often, like the Grand Army man who told me that he always attended church on Decoration Day, or the business man who says he invariably goes at Easter. This soul, capable of almost anything, yet accomplishes almost nothing of Christian culture, of conscience search, of divine hopes, of growth in moral ideas, of fellowship with the Eternal.

This man claims to be tired. I should think he would be, for he does not rest. He may ease from the round that he follows in week day, but that is only half resting. He does not turn his face toward anything new or different from the winning of bread. Made a little lower than the angels he never looks up to see the angels. He does not pray. He has lost from his mind the central glories of the word of Jesus. He does not ask himself what manhood is ; what will differentiate him from the animal. Is this life? Is it rest? Is it an ideal Sunday? Suppose you abolish dissipation, gross sin and all degrading acts, still a man cannot rise simply because he does nothing. The average man is

CAPABLE OF MAGNIFICENT HEROISM.

The hero is made of common men. He is not your man of culture any oftener than he is a plain workman. He is not a prince among men, not always is even an office holder a hero. But all the materials for heroism are in this average man. In time of war he is found to make a good soldier. Half of the men would die for their country, at a low estimate. What a pity it is they will not live for it! This man is not a coward. He would refuse to surrender his arms under ordinary circumstances. He is capable of denying a burglar who asks for his money. What reason is there that he cannot deny himself to cheap men, cheap thoughts, and cheap living. You cannot dare this man to do anything but he is willing to waste himself by passing through seventy years, unaware of the world of spirit, unthankful, blind, dark in mind, and never having reckoned what a great day one Sunday might be for him.

Three-quarters of the community, churchless or worse. Godless, pure heathen, without worship, without even a claim to immortality.

And thence downward. Little lower than angels, he tore from his brow the crown of honor, narrowed his life to the life of those whose God is their belly and whose glory is their shame; who change the blessed uses of human endowment to the service of the devilish, and worship, and serve the creature rather than the Creator.

O! how little we can be, if we only permit ourselves! Life constantly sinks to the satisfaction of two or three appetites, and the rolling years find the man more and more of the earth, earthly.

HOW SHOULD A RATIONAL SUNDAY BE FILLED?

At the moment of waking turn your thought to that great power that never sleeps. Undeniably God takes cognizance of every man. Shall I think of bread three times daily, and not learn in forty years to remember the Hand that holds the world together? Be self-respecting. Consider that nobody will ever be of consequence unless he takes his bearings by great-fixed points. An ignorant landsman cast afloat in a sloop would judge merely by the eye, of his surroundings. A sailor would take the stars, the sun. On waking get your bearing toward the center of the universe. Learn to address your Maker. You have come upon a day wherein is unknown moral slump or uplift according as you meet it. Find then on rising, a great thought, one the greatest. Take it as a basis of cogitation.

Longfellow bade us daily see a great picture, read a great poem, or hear a great piece of music. The average man has one of these things open to him, and the best one. The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life. A single glorious idea at the beginning of a day transforms it. Then go out. Honor this day. Make yourself pure outwardly. Have nothing too good for the Sunday. Honor God and men with it. Go where men worship. If your soul is dull hear a hymn that can stir the deep nature, and make the day different from other days. Put yourself in the way of people who need fellowship. The best way to call out what is in you is to take it among men where good qualities are respected and noted, not where a sneering infidelity would freeze the genial current of your soul. The grand mistake of some men is that they

LACK A SYMPATHETIC ATMOSPHERE

Where the divine impulses of a man are stimulated rather than checked. There is much company called respectable that is not genial toward moods of gratitude, thoughts of duty, and aspirations after God, and all those incipient graces exist in every man. The chief advantage of a church is that it furnishes an atmosphere kindly toward the upper nature. Respect the manhood with which God crowned you. The thing that makes a man above a beast is that he can recognize God. The false, lying suggestion to a soul makes him fearful of indulging in

the act of worship. When you hear a man pray, bow down. Go to church hoping for good. Wish all men well. Think manly thoughts. Speak convictions. Be a hopeful inquirer after facts, and you will find a place in any church, in any city, and life will begin to mean something to you. Good society always costs less than bad. Good society is the most profitable investment in the world, and if the people who have lost money in business or stocks would take their grumbling time to come into acquaintance with the best men, the best ideas, the best work, they would soon lose consciousness of any loss.

Go out of the church door smiling on the world. Bless it wherever it touches you. You are a son of the Divine love. Diffuse God through your look, your touch. Let your breath, your step, your voice remind men that you believe in an incarnate Christianity and have not left your religion in the pew.

Insist on a home that is suggestive of the things

A word to Christ-followers here! Have you proven the truth of these utterances? You who have been ten or twenty years a Christian, can you witness that you have proven them and testify to their meaning? Sometimes I am at a loss for witnesses upon these great sayings of Christ. Tell me, when the earnest inquiring student stands outside seeking to enter, and seeing us wearing the badge of Christian citizenship, asks us, from our life, to explain this first principle of the doctrine of Christ—how do we go about it? What do you testify about it? Sometimes I have heard the inexperienced one trying to answer the inquirer by supposing that two lives are here meant; and how, if we throw away this earthly life we shall have the life of heaven when we cease this one. But surely this is but the poor effort of ignorance to endorse as true what it does not dare to say, but cannot at all explain.

The text means simply what it says. It is not the giving of one life to gain another. Man cannot distinguish between lives. It is an error to try and disintegrate his being in this way. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Peter, John, Paul, Luther, Wesley, all had a life, the one we know as a worthy and honorable one. The one life, on earth too, was all we know anything of. We do not know anything of their career beyond the grave. And so far as the world's knowledge and experience is concerned, that life, unknown, is no better than lost. But our text refers to the one life which every man has and every man values, and every man is seeking to save, and yet so many are not saving but losing every day. It refers to this daily unfolding life with all that pertains to its possibility—its good of every kind, with its final satisfaction, where we can look back upon it as a success.

THAT MAKE FOR PEACE.

Make all its interior speak to you of that which is good for thought.

There are hospitals. Have you seen the inside of them? There are persons of your acquaintance to whom life is the life of a horse—doing his work, getting his oats. Take that life to you, and make human company an evidence of the truth of Christianity.

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