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HINTS AND HELPS

FOR THE

INQUIRY ROOM

BY

FRANK HAVEN HINMAN

PRICE, TWENTY CENTS

HINTS AND HELPS

FOR THE

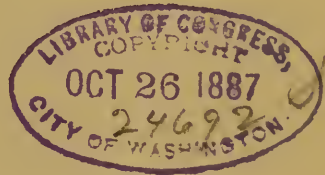
INQUIRY ROOM

BY

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17
AUBURN, N. Y.



A HAND BOOK FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS, DESIGNED TO AID IN OBTAINING A KNOWLEDGE, THROUGH THE WORD, OF SUCH PARTS OF THEOLOGY AS ARE IMMEDIATELY ESSENTIAL IN POINTING OUT THE WAY OF LIFE, AND TO TEACH HOW TO APPLY THEM.

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INTRODUCTION.

ACTUATED by a desire long ago formed, heated into fruitage by strong articles in the New York Independent, last fall I called a meeting in my study of all those who would willingly consecrate themselves to the study of His Word, with special reference to dealing with inquiring souls. I had expected to see from five to ten, but God was better to me than my faith, and twenty-six earnest Christians assembled to consecrate themselves to greater usefulness through prepared channels. The first evening was occupied in self-examination with reference to spiritual life and knowledge of the Bible. At the close of the hour's conference we all knelt and many short prayers were offered for God's blessing. The next week my study proved too small and we went into the parsonage parlors, where we continued to meet one hour each Tuesday evening for seven weeks, until God stopped us for a still greater work. The line of study pursued was quite similar to that in the following pages.

Immediately in harmony with the above action I instituted an inquiry meeting after every Thursday and Sabbath evening service. At once souls began to be saved, and in a short time we were compelled to give up our inquiry study and care for the souls God gave us. Our prayer-meetings became too large for the lecture-room and for four months were transferred to

the auditory of the church. The auditory became too small for the audiences which assembled at the preaching services, and the lecture-room was opened in connection with it. At the inquiry services many times, above three hundred would remain and as many as forty would request prayers. It soon became necessary, because of our lack of room and the number of unsaved and Christians who would remain, to dismiss the inquiry service after listening to many testimonies, and hold another service, as informal as possible, for the benefit of the inquirers. Upward of four hundred requested prayers during the winter, many of whom gave abundant evidence of conversion.

At the conclusion of the special services I convened the Bible Inquiry Class in the lecture-room of the church for the purpose of continuing the special study of the Word, and for the instruction of the newly saved. I was extremely gratified to find at the first meeting about one hundred and fifty present. We continued the studies until the middle of May, when we numbered over two hundred. We then adjourned to meet again the second Tuesday of October.

In previous work of a revival character I have felt the need of a band of workers, learned in the Word, to supplement the preaching of the truth. Upon such a band rest the eternal destinies of immortal souls. No pastor or evangelist can instruct personally all those who would seek the way of life, especially in times of refreshing. Such instruction is absolutely essential. Who shall do it? In every pastor's congregation, be it large or small, there are those who can and would do it if they but knew the way. And not only is this essential for the sake of the inquirer, but for the inquiry worker as well. Many members of our churches have never made any progress in the christian

course because they have had nothing to do. But once get them thoroughly awakened, not only to the necessity and opportunity, but also to the Heavenly pleasure of leading souls into the light of Christ and peace with the eternal laws of God, and your church is no longer dead. It is alive! Quickened into holy zeal by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and by work accomplished, until your membership is one moving magnet, a tremendous power in drawing all people unto "the mountain of the Lord's house." Such work accomplished, brings forth inspiration for more work as nothing else can do.

This brings before us the benefits of and demands for, a Bible Inquiry Class in every church, until, in place of the weary feet of one minister of the Gospel, himself burdened with the cares and sins of the masses, there shall be scores to carry the light of Heaven into the darkness of the night of sin, and to cause the hearts of men and of angels and of God to leap for joy.

The above are some of the reasons for this book. It is published to meet the demands of my own Inquiry Class. I am indebted to every source from which I could possibly gain information, for the subject matter. It is simply an outline from which each lecture is given.

That souls are dying, while there are Christians enough in our churches to save them, is the apology for its publication.

Can there not be organized in every church a training class for Christian workers?

FRANK HAVEN HINMAN.

Auburn, N. Y.

October 1st, 1887.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR THE INQUIRY ROOM.

CHAPTER I.

THE BOOK.

THE first thing essential for the Christian worker is a Bible. Let it be a good one for at least two reasons. One, its lasting qualities. Your Bible should grow more and more valuable with age, because of added notes and marked passages. Then the longer you have it the more readily you can find passages. Another reason is, the more valuable the book the more likely you are to study and carry it. I remember, together with a class-mate, presenting to the Rev. Mr. Tamura of Tokio, Japan, one of the most beautiful Bagster Bibles I have ever seen. Mr. Tamura was then a student in the Auburn Theological Seminary. The effect on him was remarkable. He read scarcely anything but that Bible for weeks, and in a short space of time he learned more Scripture than he had ever known before. It was the same Book but it came to him with new force, dressed in substantial binding and gilt edges. I have seen a similar effect a score of times. Through the beauty of the cover and the glitter of the gilt there may come, in time, the flashes of divine

truth, until the mechanical finish will be lost in the splendor of the better revelation. Do not get a Bible too good to be used. Procure a Teacher's Bible if possible; that with Cruden's or Youngs Concordance and Smith's Bible Dictionary, is sufficient for all practical purposes. Know your Bible so well that you can find books, chapters and verses readily. You will lose much of your influence with the inquirer if you look for The Epistle to the Romans in the Old Testament, or, for the book of Isaiah in the New; or if you spend a long time in finding passages with which you should be familiar. Carry your Bible with you. Make it your companion, your friend. Do not be afraid to mark it. When a verse stimulates some helpful thought put that thought on the margin for reference. When some one presents a useful hint on some passage, mark that in some way over against the passage. I have in my Bible on the margin against the verse, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil," the name of Hall, and in the verse I have underscored the word "shadow". This reminds me of a little incident once related to me by George A. Hall, of a certain person exclaiming as he read this verse, "Who is afraid of a shadow?" As I read the twenty-third Psalm this incident always comes back to me because of the name in the margin and the marked word, until now the shadow of the valley seems but a kindly veil, some day to lift and show me the Master's face.

If you do not become at once as interested in the study of the Word as you ought, take your Bible into your closet (this you ought to do daily), and kneeling down ask the Father to throw His light upon it and make you love it. After His resurrection it is written that Christ opened the understanding of the disciples

that they might understand the Scriptures. So He will open your understanding if you ask Him, and then you must soon love His Word. I remember once telling my congregation to take the Bible and ask God to show them its beauty. At the next prayer-meeting a grand christian brother arose, and opening his Bible, exclaimed, with a heavenly smile on his countenance, "It is true! It is true! God has shown me His Word as I have never seen it before." And then followed an exposition of a portion of the Sermon on the Mount which I shall never forget. Try it! God will make you love it.

This Bible is to be your text-book and your weapon. It is "the sword of the Spirit." It is "quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword." The inquirer may not listen to your words but he must to it. If he does not listen to it, he will not to you. You can not bring him to Christ by your own arguments or devices. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." "The seed is the Word."

Study the Word. There are many Bible readers; there are few Bible students. *Study* the Word. Do not try to read so many chapters each day. There are many whose greatest ambition seems to be to read the Bible through each year. That is not the proper motive for reading the Word of God. What has He said to me, should be the question. Study to find out what the Bible has for you personally, and then tell others the story. It may be you will have to study one section of Scripture for a week, or even weeks. I once heard Mr. Moody say that he had been studying the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah for five days and he did not know but he should for five weeks yet. Study the Word. Study it by books! Study it by chapters!

Study it by sections! Study it by themes! Study it on your knees! Memorize it! Then God's thoughts will come to you "as a cloud and as the doves to their windows," and the burning energy of the Spirit will force from you a Pentecostal sermon to the salvation of precious souls.

Read and mark what the Bible has to say concerning:

Its study,—Deut. 6; Joshua 1:8; John 5:39.

The Spirit's help,—John 14:26; Luke 24:45.

Its advantages:

Wisdom,—Ps. 119:98-100.

Cleansing,—Ps. 119:9; John 15:3.

Power,—Eccl. 8:4; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12.

Blessings,—Deut. 6:3; Joshua 1:8.

Penalty for not heeding it,—Prov. 13:13; Is. 5:24.

Teaching it,—Luke 8:11; Ez. 3:4.

Results,—Is. 55,10-13; II Chron. 17:9, 10.

"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"—Jer. 23:29.

Revival of Bible study,—Under Jehoshaphat, II Chron. 17: under Nehemiah, Neh. 8: under Christ, Luke 24.

CHAPTER II.

SALVATION. WHAT IS IT?

IN studying together some of the very essential doctrines of the Word, we will not look so much at the stereotyped definitions of systematized theology, as at what the Word itself says on these subjects. Not that those definitions are not accurate and definite, and the very best that might be formulated, but in conversation with the inquirer your influence over him will be far greater, if in answer to his question you can point at once to those Scripture references which will sharply and definitely answer him. Always keep these thoughts before you. It is not what you say but what God says which is to influence the inquirer. God alone is responsible for what He has given in His Word. What He has written, He has written, and He asks no apology for it from you or me. If the inquirer does not listen to Him through His Word he will not listen to you. I do not mean that you are not to open that Word by explanation or illustration, but the Word is of primary importance to him who would know the way of life. "Go and speak with my words unto them."

What is meant by being saved and how are we to be saved?

I. What is the condition of the unsaved man before God? Turn to Rom. 3:23, "For all have sinned

and come short of the glory of God." Here we find that man's condition before God is that of a sinner, that all have sinned, and that because of those sins he has come short of the glory of God. Turn to Rom. 5:12, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Here we find the same thing stated with the additional thought that to come short of the glory of God means death. One word of caution right here. Many times the question comes up in this connection, how can it be, and why is it, that all sinned in Adam? There is no need for you to enter into this discussion with an inquirer; indeed it would be injurious for you to do so. Not that it is not true, but as soon as you enter into such discussions you take the attention of the inquirer from himself, and you are lost in speculations without profit. Tell him the question for him to settle, is not whether we all sinned in or through Adam; or whether the heathen who never heard of the Word of God are sinners and responsible; but, am I a sinner? Such questions as the above are continually coming up. Bring the attention of the inquirer right back to himself, then show him God's Word for his condition before Him. I have never found a person yet who would not admit freely that he was a sinner.

We have seen that we are sinners and that consequently we have come short of the glory of God; also that because we have sinned, death has passed upon all men. Let us look a little further at the penalty attached to this transgression of God's law. At Rom. 6:23 we read, "For the wages of sin is death;" at Matt. 25:46, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment;" (also at John 5:29,) at Jer. 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked,"

Summary of the testimony we have received :

We are all sinners. Our hearts are deceitful and desperately wicked.

We have come short of the glory of God.

We have all become guilty before God.

Death has passed upon all men.

This death is the wages of sin.

This death is everlasting.

The passages of Scripture I have given can be greatly multiplied ; these simply indicate the line of Scripture statement for the condition of the sinner before God. It is better, however, to have a few pertinent passages, well known, than many forgotten.

There are two facts brought out in the above texts concerning man in his unsaved condition, which run all through our study concerning salvation, and of which we must not lose sight.

1. Man is guilty before God.

2. His heart is impure.

Therefore he is lost.

II. What is essential for salvation ?

1. That this guilt should be removed.

2. That this impurity should be cleansed. Hab. 1:13 ; Matt. 5:8 ; Heb. 12:14 ; Rev. 21: 27.

Whatever will accomplish these two things will save the lost man.

III. Man can not save himself. Eph. 2:8, 9.

1. He can not remove his guilt. Rom. 3:20.

2. He can not cleanse his heart. Prov. 20:9.

We are all then guilty before God, impure of heart, and therefore subject to a death that never dies, and we are helpless.

IV. How then is salvation possible ?

Turn to Acts 16:30, 31, where this question is asked and answered. The keeper of the prison was convinced that he was a sinner,—he wanted to be saved. The question burst from his lips, “What must I do?” Notice carefully the answer of Paul and Silas, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” Not *do*, but *believe*. It did not take the keeper long to accept that simple condition, and he “was baptized, he and all his, straightway.” Man’s question has always been, “What must I do?” God’s answer to man is, “Believe.” Turn to Eph. 2:8, 9, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” Here it is made most emphatic that salvation is not of man, neither by works, but, “by grace, through faith.” Through the door of believing on Christ you are to enter the kingdom of Heaven. This is the way of escape.

V. What are we to gain by this salvation ?

What is it to be saved? Rom. 8:1, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” Without Christ we found all the world guilty before Him; in Christ “no condemnation.” Rom. 5:9, “Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” Rom. 5:1, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Rom. 8:14, 15, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” John 5:24, “He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life (not will

have), and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed (not will pass) from death unto life." John 5:29, "and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life." Matt. 25:46, "But the righteous (shall go away) into life eternal." John 17:22, "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them." II Cor. 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Summary of testimony concerning salvation.

Saved by grace, through faith, by
Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ,
And have received through salvation :

In place of guilt, no condemnation ;

In place wrath, forgiveness ;

Peace with God ;

Adoption into the family of God ;

Everlasting life ;

And are changed into the image of the Christ, in which we are to enjoy His glory.

CHAPTER III.

FAITH.

In the statements of Scripture concerning how we are to be saved, the words "believe" and "faith" occur. Inasmuch as on this element of faith rest our eternal destinies, let us examine it very closely.

Turn to the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and notice what a mighty lever faith has been in the hands of God's people. Your salvation and your work for the Master will be wrought through the same channel. "By grace are ye saved through *faith*." "*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "He that *believeth* on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." This faith spoken of is not a simple mental assent that Christ is the Son of God; or that the Bible is true; or that the Gospel scheme of salvation is the true one. There are thousands that believe that the Bible is the book of God; that Jesus is the Son of God; that the Scriptures reveal man's true condition before God, and the proper way of escape; yet they are out of "the ark of safety;" they are going down the way to death, and the darkness of their future life will be all the more intense inasmuch as they knew their duty and did it not. Jas. 2:19, "The devils also believe and tremble." But the faith that saves souls goes beyond simple assent to the truth. It has a moving power. I may believe that

that car on the Central-Hudson *can* carry me to New York, but if I never board the train it *will not* carry me. Faith goes beyond this. You desire to go to New York ; you believe that car can carry you ; you trust yourself to it ; you reach your destination. You believe the Lord Jesus Christ came to save you ; you believe He *can* save you ; you trust Him to save you ; He does save you. All this is in that element of faith mentioned in Eph. 2:8,—“By grace are ye saved through faith.” Analyzing this you have the mental assent to the mission of Jesus, the Christ, and to His ability to save ; you have that trust which leads you to put your case into His hands ; you reach those results which only faith put into operation can secure.

Change the illustration. You are very sick, and in danger of death ; you are told of a physician who has healed some friend of the same disease ; as the facts are related to you you admit their truthfulness. You believe he can save you ; you determine to trust him ; you send a prayer to him to come and take your case and attempt a cure ; he comes ; you trust yourself to him—you can not cure yourself—he cures you. Now transpose the case from the physical to the spiritual realm, and you need make no other change. Your soul is sick unto death ; you read in the Word, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” A friend tells you he has been sick of soul unto death, and that he gave his case over to the Lord Jesus Christ and He saved him according to the promise ; you believe the facts related ; you also determine to trust Him ; you send a prayer to Him to come and take your case ; He comes ; you trust Him—you can not save yourself—He saves you. *In just so far as faith is essential to your salvation in the one case, in just so far is it necessary in the other.* If you can understand what

it means to have faith in an earthly physician to the salvation of your body, and if you can exercise that faith in an earthly physician, you can understand what it is to have faith in a heavenly physician and you can exercise that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember that as no mental assent to the ability of an earthly physician will save you in your physical sickness, unless you trust yourself to that physician, no more will a mental assent in the ability of the Lord Jesus Christ to save your soul from death, save you, unless you trust yourself to Him.

In the analysis of the above illustration, not only the element of trust in the sense of confidence, but also in the sense of yielding, enters into it. For the time your will is given over to your physician, you yield yourself wholly to him ; so you must yield yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ ; your will must become His.

Now notice the process and elements of faith that bring salvation :

1. Mental assent to Christ's ability to save.
2. Asking Him to save you.
3. Trusting Him to save you.
4. Yielding yourself fully to Him.
5. Being saved, as the result of the exercise of faith.

All of this enters into the faith that saves.

And now, lest the above analysis may discourage some honest skeptic, let us change the illustration a little. You are sick unto death ; you have no confidence in the power of any physician to heal you, only a faint hope ; you decide to try his skill ; you send for him ; you yield yourself to him ; he cures you : complete faith in him is the result. You have stripped your faith of the element of assent to the ability of the physician ; you exercised a faint hope in its stead. Christ said, "Believe me for the very works' sake."

Practical demonstration has proven that Christ saves those who believe in Him "for the works' sake."

I once approached an infidel concerning his soul's salvation. He was in a desperate strait, being, as he and I also thought, on the verge of delirium tremens. He said he did not believe in Jesus Christ. He did not even know as there was a God. Knowing something of him and how he had been educated at home, I felt that he was honest, and so I told him that the Master had not sent me to demonstrate to him the existence of a God, or the trustworthiness of the Scripture, or the reality of a future life, or even His own divinity; but He had sent me as His ambassador to him as a lost sinner; that all He asked of him was to "come and taste," that he might see that the Lord was good. He replied that he was lost anyway, and nothing could save him unless there was something in religion. We knelt on the side-walk, in the middle of the night. I remember his prayer,— "O Heaven, if there be a Heaven, O God, if there be a God, can you save me? I am lost! lost! O Heaven save me! O God, if you did make those stars you can save me." Over and over again he made his appeal to that God who never forsakes a helpless child. He arose from his knees a saved and changed man. He knew nothing as to Christ's ability, yet, with a hope bordering upon despair, he trusted, he came, he yielded, he was saved. One of the wonders of such a salvation is that in his case, as in every such case, infidelity vanishes with conversion, and a full-orbed faith is the result.

"But how can I yield myself to Jesus, the Christ, whom I have never seen?" Can you yield yourself to truth and righteousness? At Rom. 6:16 you read, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey;

whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" You have yielded yourself to sin long enough, now yield yourself to righteousness. Kneel down and ask the Father to aid you. Tell Him you have yielded yourself at last to His truth. Ask Him to put the new heart within you, that you may desire to do His will: soon the light of His presence will dawn upon your soul.

Steps to conversion.

Repentance.

Mental assent to Christ's ability,—or hope,—perhaps faint.

Trusting

Asking.

Yielding.

Saved.

Faith is the pathway which leads from darkness to light, from wrath to "no condemnation," from death to life, from shame to glory, from being an alien to sonship, from earth to Heaven, through Christ.

CHAPTER IV.

GRACE.

Looking again at Eph. 2:8 we notice another element which enters into the plan of salvation, namely, that of grace. "For by grace are ye saved through faith." What is this element of grace which plays so important a part in the future welfare of humanity?

Grace originally meant that property of a thing which causes it to give joy to the hearers or beholders. Grace in its common application means any endowment or characteristic fitted to win favor, or confer pleasure or benefit. But grace soon came to mean not only the characteristic or quality of a person or thing, but the person, or thing, or act itself; so that we came to speak, not only of the qualities of a person which gave joy to the beholder, but of the favor which one bestowed upon another which brought about joy, as grace. From being applied to such favors bestowed by man upon man, it came to be applied to the favors which God bestows upon man. But man is unworthy the benefits which God bestows upon him, and thus the word came to mean a favor bestowed by God upon man, of which man is not worthy. Another element enters into the term which was given it in classic Greek, namely, that of a favor freely done, without any expectation of return. So that the term "grace,"

as we find it in the verse quoted above, signifies the favor bestowed freely by God upon man, "without money and without price," and of which man is not worthy. By such a favor as this are ye saved through faith.

This divine favor of salvation is freely bestowed upon man, "without money and without price," and excludes :

1. All idea of indebtedness. God does not ask of us any return for the favor bestowed, in the sense of payment for that favor. Rom. 4:4, 16, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace."

2. All idea of works. Rom. 11:6, "And if by grace, then is it no more of works : otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace." Salvation is the free gift of God, and can not be purchased or obtained by any work of man. It is excluded by the very fundamental idea of grace. Eph. 2:9, "Not of works, lest any man should boast."

3. All idea of fulfilling the law that it may be obtained. Gal. 5:4, 5, "Christ has become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law ; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." John 1:17, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

4. All worthiness in the recipient. Rom. 5:20, "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." II Cor. 5:19, "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." The law became the looking-glass into which man might look and real-

ize his imperfections. It became his school-master to teach him his sinfulness and helplessness, and thereby turn his attention to Jesus the Christ, who came "of grace" to save him. And then grace came and took him in all his sinfulness and helplessness and offered him salvation, and where his sin was great, grace was greater still.

Let us recapitulate. Grace, we have found, is the favor of God in offering salvation to man freely, "without money and without price," and of which man is not worthy. It is therefore,—

The undeserved favor of God, freely bestowed.

In receiving this salvation it excludes forevermore the idea that salvation is to be obtained by the payment of any price as for an indebtedness, by keeping perfectly the law, by our good works, or by a righteous character. Salvation is "of grace," and therefore a free gift, and we can render unto the Lord for all His benefits nothing except to take, as did the Psalmist, "the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord."

Grace finds man a sinner, perhaps the vilest of the vile, without the ability to pay any of his indebtedness to the Lord, without power to keep His law, or work out his own salvation. It takes him as he is, pays his indebtedness, saves him from his sins, and gives him the ability to do good works. Wonderful grace of God! coming not to impute trespasses unto man, but to reconcile him unto a loving, forgiving and compassionate Father.

By grace are ye redeemed. Eph. 1:7.

By grace are ye justified. Rom. 3:24.

By grace are ye saved. Eph. 2:8.

By grace we have everlasting consolation and good hope. II Thess. 2:16.

There are many who seem to think that grace operates up to conversion, but after that we are to be saved by our works. To such I would commend the book of Galatians. The converted sinner, as well as the unconverted sinner, is to be saved by grace and not by keeping the law, Rom. 6:14, 15, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." This ought to come to the saved and the unsaved alike with all its weight of promise and glory. We are led to exclaim over and over again, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Discouragement follows discouragement, as we try to do the whole law, but we can exclaim with the apostle, exultant with the thought of deliverance, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." We shall at last be delivered, for our salvation is not through works, but by grace. "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief."

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." Is. 55:1. "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:23. "And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." John 1:16.

CHAPTER V.

REPENTANCE.

“Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.” Mark 1:14, 15. This text from the lips of the Master introduces us to another element in the plan of salvation, namely, repentance. There are certain conditions in the plan of salvation, which man must meet that he may obtain peace with God; they are the human elements of salvation,—Repent and Believe. Whenever man accepts and fulfills these conditions, God will do His part. The groundwork of justification has already been laid by the Lord Jesus Christ. It now becomes necessary for him to repent and believe, that salvation may be applied, and completed in regeneration and sanctification. We have already examined the element of belief, we will now find what the Scriptures say on this other human element of salvation,—repentance.

In the first place notice that there is a repentance spoken of in Scripture that is not a repentance unto salvation. At Matt. 27:3, 4, we read, “Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying,

I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.” Then in the fifth verse of this same chapter we read, “ And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.” Surely such repentance as this, which only leads to self-destruction, is not that repentance which leads to salvation. Again, at II Cor. 7:10, we read of a sorrow of the world that worketh death. So there is very plainly a repentance which is not a godly sorrow unto salvation, but which leads away from God to the realms of despair.

Repentance is not, therefore, the sorrow of this world. Looking at the case of Judas we discover the cause which led to his repentance. We read, “ When he saw he was condemned, he repented.” We have no record that Judas was sorry that he had betrayed his Master, but he repented because he saw He was condemned : not godly sorrow for sin, but human sorrow because our sin has led to disaster. If we examine the case a little more closely we shall find something of an explanation in the word from which the word repentance is translated. It is an entirely different word from the one which is translated repent, as used by the Master in His call to repentance. In its New-Testament usage it seems applied to cases where there is only sorrow for what is done, “ a disliking of a thing with its consequences and effects ; ” so that if the same thing had not brought about such sorrowful consequences there would have been no repentance. So we might justly paraphrase the repentance of Judas by saying, When Judas saw He was condemned, he was grieved in his mind that his betrayal of Jesus had brought Him into such condemnation, and he threw down the silver, and went and hanged himself. Repentance is not, to be sorry because of

the consequences of sin, to regret that we are found out in our sinning. Such repentance is simply worldly sorrow which leads to death. True repentance goes deeper into the soul than this.

Turning to Matt. 3:8, we read John the Baptist's exhortation to the Pharisees and Sadducees: "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance," showing that there are certain fruits by which such true repentance is known. Let us examine the words translated repentance, in their fullness of meaning, and see if we can discover what some of these signs are. At Ezek. 18:30, we read, "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin." Here the word translated repent signifies "to turn," or "to return;" the remainder of the verse denotes from what we are to turn, namely, "from all your transgressions." So that in this case the "fruits meet for repentance" would be, turning from sin. At Acts 20:21, we read of a "repentance toward God," so that a complete repentance is turning away *from* all your transgressions *toward* God,—to turn *from* sin *to* righteousness. The word translated repentance, in the verse last quoted, signifies, to have another mind, which shows that there is a proper cause for turning from sin to righteousness. That the change is not made while the mind is the same, concerning sin, but that there is a new mind concerning sin, and then a change from it to God. It has been tersely said that man naturally stands with his back toward God, and that repentance is right about face. The word translated repent in Mark 1:15 means literally, "to know afterward." The word translated repentance in Acts 20:21 means the change of mind which is the result of knowing afterward," coupled with a regret for the course pursued, and a determination on a new line of

conduct for the future. All this enters into that repentance to "salvation not to be repented of," and is quite different from that repentance which, like that of Judas, is simply sorrow for the disastrous results of our line of conduct.

At II Cor. 7:10 we read that godly sorrow worketh repentance, so that we have the following elements which enter into true repentance, and by which it may be known :

1. A change of mind concerning our line of conduct.
2. Godly sorrow because of our sins,—our past line of conduct.
3. A turning from our transgressions.
4. A turning to God, or a new line of conduct.

This is that repentance to which the world is summoned, and which leads to the heavenly home.

It may be well to add, by way of caution, that the word translated "repent," wherever it refers to God who repents, is neither of the words referred to above ; rather, a word which means pre-eminently, to be grieved. I mention this because it often comes up when talking with inquirers on the subject of repentance.

Thoughts.

God desires all to repent. II Pet. 2:9.

Christ came to call sinners to repentance. Luke 5:32.

The goodness of God leadeth to repentance. Rom. 2:4.

Death confronts us if we do not repent. Luke 13:5.

CHAPTER VI.

JUSTIFICATION.

Rom. 3:24, "Being justified freely by his grace Rom. 5:1, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." In these texts we have still another element which enters into the plan of salvation, namely, justification. Justification as applied to sinful man, is first of all, pardon. No man can be accounted justified before God, unless forgiven for the sins which he has committed. But justification is more than pardon. Pardon simply waives the claims of the law. A man is taken for a theft, he is convicted and cast into prison; the governor extends to him pardon, i. e.: he waives the claims of the law in his case, but this act does not justify the criminal. It does not meet the demands of the law. It remits the penalty, but looks no farther; its basis is mercy. God in his great plan of salvation looks farther than to pardon the sinner. He is the judge of man, and as his judge He seeks to justify him upon righteous grounds. In pardon, the claims of the law are waived; in justification they are satisfied. So that in the case of the man arrested for theft, if proved innocent, the judge or jury declares that the law has been kept and that the man is not a criminal, but just.

The difference between the justification of a man arrested for theft and acquitted at the hands of an earthly judge or jury, and the justification of the sinner at the hand of God as his judge, is that in the first case, the man is not a thief, and he is accounted just because he has not transgressed the law, while in the latter instance the man is a sinner, he has transgressed the law ; but such is the wonderful plan of salvation, that God, as man's sovereign, can pardon the sinner and release him from the penalty resting over him ; and then, as his judge, can pronounce him just, on the ground of the law satisfied. What a scheme of salvation ! Sinful man pardoned from all his sins, and then not considered in the light of a pardoned criminal, but as a man who has never sinned.

Justification goes a step farther. It not only pronounces the sinner just on the ground of the law kept, but it declares him entitled to all the advantages and honors due those who perfectly keep the law. Sinner, this is your justification if you will accept it. As justified, the penalty for your transgression no longer hangs over you ; in the eyes of God you are considered just, and entitled to every consideration due the perfect man.

How is this justification possible ?

1. Not by any virtue seen in us, nor by any works done by us. Gal. 2:16, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law." Rom. 4:6-8, "Even as David also described the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Rom. 4:2,3, "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory ; but not before God. For what

saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." We all realize that no man can be justified on the ground that he is not sinful, "For all have sinned;" and the above quoted passages teach us that we are not justified because of anything we have done or may do. In what way then can a just God pronounce the sinner just?

2. The ground of this justification is the obedience—fulfilling the law,—and suffering of Christ. Rom. 5:18,19, "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Isa. 53:5, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Also I Peter 2:24.

3. Our sins were laid on Christ and He paid the penalty for us. Isa. 53:6, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Gal. 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." I Pet. 2:24, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness."

4. Not only have our sins been laid on Christ, but His righteousness is imputed to us. Rom. 4:5-8, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also described the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works," etc. Phil. 3:9, "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of

Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Rom. 3:21, 22, 24, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; * * * * Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." II Cor. 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Thus we see in what way a just God has made provision for justifying the sinner.

The basis of this justification is the obedience and suffering of Christ.

Our sins have been laid upon Him.

His righteousness is imputed to us. The thief has been captured, convicted and sentenced. Here is a man who has always obeyed the law; he offers to suffer in the thief's stead and the offer is accepted on the part of the judge. The guilt of the sinner is transferred to the innocent man and he pays the penalty, while the thief goes free. So Christ takes the sinner's place. Are all the world then free from the guilt of sin, and justified before God? The work of Christ in the justification of the world is completed, but there is one condition upon which rests your personal justification, namely, that of faith. Rom. 4:9, "For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness." Rom. 5:1, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Faith is the means by which we grasp that justification made possible for us by the work of Christ. It rests with you whether you will accept it, or reject it.

CHAPTER VII.

REGENERATION.

ALTHOUGH the sinner may be justified, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, he is by no means fit for that heaven into which no sin can enter. Justification does away with the guilt of the sinner and renders him judicially righteous, but he is still deceitful in heart and desperately wicked. The guilt has been taken away, but the heart needs cleansing. And this leads us to another element of salvation, namely, regeneration.

At Jer. 17:9 we read, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." At Hab. 1:13, "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." At Matt. 5:8, "Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God." Here we find the following statements :

1. The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked.
2. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil.
3. The pure in heart shall see God.

How then can sinful man ever expect to stand in the presence of the holy God? Either God must change or man must be changed. But God is unchangeable in His holiness. Man must be changed then from his sinful condition to one of holiness, if he expects to live in the presence of God. This conclusion we find verified at Heb. 12:14, "Follow peace with all men, and

holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Is such a change provided for, and if so how is it brought about? Turning to John 3:3, 5, 7, we read the language of Jesus to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Here we find the demand made upon man for a complete change,—a new birth. Without this regeneration no man can "see the kingdom of God," he can not "enter into the kingdom." Does it seem stern and arbitrary for a God of grace and loving-kindness to demand of weak and sinful man a complete change of his sinful nature, as the condition whereby he may see Him and enter into, and enjoy His kingdom? But is not this natural and necessary?

Let us first of all turn our attention to two facts taking place continually around us, which may give us a little light. At the gateway of every government of any degree of civilization, there is written a condition of citizenship, namely, that of naturalization. "You must be naturalized," is the voice of our government to those coming within her borders from other governments, and who would become her citizens. She demands that they shall throw off allegiance to their former governments, and take the oath of allegiance to her. Is there anything stern or arbitrary or unnatural in this demand? No one, except those who are too far down the scale of humanity to appreciate government, will say there is. It is the nation's safeguard. This fact is taking place in the field of government, and everyone says it is just. At the gateway of the heavenly kingdom, just as much a government

as this government of these United States, the voice of the King, eternal, immortal, and invisible, is heard demanding of all who have been citizens in the kingdom of Satan, "Ye must be naturalized, if ye would become citizens of the heavenly kingdom." You must throw off allegiance to sin and Satan, and take the oath of allegiance to righteousness and to God.

The other fact is taking place in the field of nature. It is the one brought out so clearly in its relation to the second birth by Prof. Drummond in "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." We have been taught that there are two great kingdoms in nature, the inorganic and the organic. How can the inorganic be transferred from its kingdom to the organic? It can not change itself. No earth can transfer itself into the beautiful flower or stately tree. From the organic kingdom there goes the demand to the inorganic. "If ye would enter my kingdom, ye must be born again," or "from above." In accord with this demand, when you desire to transform the lifeless matter of the inorganic kingdom to the life of the organic, you place a shell containing a point of life, as the acorn or a morning-glory seed, down into the inorganic matter. The life of the seed soon comes into contact with the lifeless matter, and the lifeless matter becomes transformed, under proper conditions, into the living tree or vine. No one thinks strange of this demand of the live kingdom upon the lifeless. But there is another kingdom, namely, the spiritual,—a holy kingdom. From it there comes a voice to the kingdom of sin saying, "If you desire to be transformed to the spiritual kingdom of holiness, you must be born again," or "from above." Is there anything unnatural in the demand when we read it in the light of similar demands which are being made around us? Surely God's de-

mands upon man are reasonable and just. God makes this demand upon man because it is necessary ; but in making the demand, He immediately says that such a change will be wrought from above by the Spirit. Weak and sinful man has no more work to do in this change of heart than the lifeless earth in being changed into the beautiful flower. So while He says it is necessary, He says, "I will do it." We can not call such a demand, accompanied with such an offer, unjust, especially as we realize the meaning, "*Ye can not see the kingdom of God*" without it, i. e. *according to the very nature of things*, and not because of any arbitrary command,—without regeneration we can not enter into the kingdom of holiness. The new heart, the new life, the new man, is from above. Weary souls, cease your struggling and yield yourselves to the Father who, through His own spirit, will transform that heart of yours ; though it be red like crimson it shall be as wool.

We see glimpses of this doctrine in the changes of names in Scripture. Abram becomes by faith, Abraham ; Jacob prevails in wrestling with the angel and becomes Israel, Simon is called into discipleship and becomes Peter ; Saul of Tarsus has his blinded eyes opened and becomes Paul.

We find the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament emphatic in their demand concerning it. At I Sam. 10:6, we read Samuel's words to Saul, "And the spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man." At the ninth verse of the same chapter, "And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart." At Ps. 51:10 we read the pleading of the Psalmist, "Create in me a clean heart, O God ; and renew a right spirit within

me." At Is. 1:18, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." At Ezek. 36:26, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you : and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." At Matt. 18:3, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." These are a few of the passages of Scripture which show forth the demand made.

Let us see, now, just how the case stands with man as a sinner. He is here a rebel against God, a transgressor of His law, his heart deceitful and desperately wicked, a subject of the kingdom of Satan. Yonder is a kingdom of holiness whose king is the mighty God, whose face he can not behold in his sinful condition and live. But that mighty King sends a messenger to the man of sin. The messenger informs him that the King offers him pardon for his transgressions, and the citizenship of the kingdom of holiness, upon certain conditions :

He must repent of his sins.

Trust himself to His hands.

This being done He promises

To take away his heart of stone and give him a heart of flesh ; to remove the heart of sin and give him one of purity through the second birth, and thus putting him into harmony with the kingdom of holiness. For by pardon unmerited are ye saved through believing, and by means of a transformed heart, made pure from above, by the Spirit.

CHAPTER VIII.

SANCTIFICATION.

WITH the guilt removed and the heart regenerated, the work is not yet completed. Man is not yet ready to mingle with the pure of a sinless Heaven : he does not yet measure up to the fullness of the stature of his Master. Regeneration begins a work which another element of salvation, namely, sanctification, completes. This element we will now consider.

The phrase, "to sanctify," is used in two different senses in the scriptures : (1) to set apart from a common ^{use} to a sacred use, (2) to render morally pure, or holy. It is sanctification in the latter sense we are to consider.

The work of sanctification is not immediately the result of any good works on the part of man. Rom. 14:17, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." I John 3:7, "He that doeth righteousness is righteous." Righteousness of heart does not depend upon outward works, nor forms and ceremonies; but righteous works are the result, of which a pure heart is the cause. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," is the command of Paul, but he immediately adds, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:12, 13. That is, we are to work out what is worked in us. Good works then become the sign of a

good heart. But while sanctification of heart is not the result of good works done, we must bear in mind that every time we perform a righteous act, we are so much the stronger in our tendencies toward righteousness.

Sanctification, like regeneration, is a work of God. I Thess. 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Eph. 5:25, 27, "Even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Rom. 15:16, "Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." I Pet. 1:2, "Through sanctification of the Spirit." Here we find each member of the Trinity engaged in the work of sanctification, but it is especially the work of the Spirit, whose office it is to apply the grace obtained through the mediation of the Son.

The means employed in carrying on the work of sanctification are,

1. Faith, through which salvation is begun and completed.

2. The truth revealed in the Scriptures. John 15:3, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." John 17:17, "Sanctify them through the truth: thy word is truth." I Pet. 2:2, "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." The word teaches us what truth is; by embracing its promises, following its commands, and carrying out its directions with the aid of the Holy Spirit, we grow strong in the Lord.

3. Prayer. The soul grows strong in righteousness by communion with God, and He has promised to aid those who call upon Him. Matt. 7:7, "Ask, and it

shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

4. By what may be termed the means of grace, — the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, active religious duties at public meetings, leading souls to Christ, serving the Master whenever, wherever, and in whatever way the Master shall call.

5. Chastisement at the hand of a loving Father. Heb. 12:10, 11, “For they (that is our parents) verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure ; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous : nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”

In these various avenues the Spirit operates, making us day by day more like our Master. The above points may be called the positive means of sanctification. We will now notice the negative means. These have been tersely stated by a recent writer as, suicide, mortification, limitation, and refer to our dealings with the various temptations of sin. Let us notice them separately as given in the Scriptures.

1. Suicide. Matt. 18:8, 9, “Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee. * * * And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee.” There are certain tendencies and appetites to sin which must be completely conquered, and at once ; they must never be allowed to grow by being gratified. You can not overcome them by a gradual process. One of the best illustrations, and the one given by Prof. Drummond, is that of the drunkard. He has at conversion a tremendous appetite for intoxicants, but total abstinence is the only effectual remedy. Suicide of the appetite

by cutting off completely that upon which it thrives, is the sure process toward cure and final sanctification.

2. Mortification. Rom. 8:12, 13, "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." In contrast with the above point, "mortification implies a gradual, rather than a sudden process." There are certain tendencies to sin which it is well nigh impossible to overcome at once. This is not to be construed as an excuse for allowing them to remain. The fight must be continuous, though the advance to complete victory may be gradual. Such tendencies are those which lie within us and are not created or fed from without. Suicide of an appetite for alcoholic liquors becomes possible by cutting off the supply upon which the appetite thrives. But there are certain tendencies, like a liability to be easily angered, etc., which we can not overcome by cutting off any outward supply. The difficulty lies wholly within and must be overcome by constant watchfulness and prayer. The pathway to complete triumph may be slow in such cases, but it must be an advance and continuous. We grow strong by resistance.

3. Limitation. Many things enter into our lives which are not sins in themselves, but become sin by abuse. Prof. Drummond gives as an illustration the love of money, which is the root of all evil. "The love of money," he says, "up to a certain point is a necessity, beyond that it may become one of the worst of sins. Christ said, 'Ye can not serve God and mammon.' The two services at a certain point become incompatible, and hence correspondence with one must cease." Here might be classed such amusements as, in their place, are evidently harmless, but which carried to an excess become plainly items of sin.

Here might be catalogued also, those cases where an enjoyment or practice which is not sin to those engaged in it becomes such to others. A game of cards might be perfectly harmless in thousands of pure homes, but it might awaken in the reformed gambler suppressed tendencies which would prove his ruin. Fermented wine at the communion table might be a means of grace to thousands of pure hearts, but to the reformed drunkard it might prove his destruction.

We are bidden to come out from this world and be separate from it, and yet this has its limitation. Up to a certain point contact with this world and conformity to its practices, become a necessity, but there is a limit beyond which such contact and conformity stop the progress of sanctification, dull the sensibility of the soul to spiritual things, and perhaps ruin the soul forever.

It is not necessary for us to discuss here the question when the work of sanctification is completed. To those who are discouraged at the seemingly slow progress of the annihilation of sinful tendencies, the words of St. Paul ought to come with comfort. Phil. 3:12-14, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." But Paul was pressing on toward the mark. We must be advancing. Though you may not notice it from day to day, the months and the years in contrast ought to show marked improvement. Be assured also that satisfaction is sure to come and we shall awake some day with the Master's likeness.

CHAPTER IX.

PRAYER.

How shall this great salvation which is by grace through faith, and which promises to deliver my soul from the guilt and power of sin, be obtained? Shall I wait, being sorry for my sins with a godly sorrow, until God shall come and shall work this work of grace? God is already near. "Ask, and it shall be given you." The key in the hands of man which will unlock the gate of heaven, is prayer. God has placed salvation at the call of man. He has only to meet the conditions and "ask," and the salvation is his. Not only has God asked us to ask Him for salvation, but being saved, He still asks us to call upon Him, in days of trouble, for deliverance, in days of weakness for power, in days of loneliness for companionship and comfort. He bids us call upon Him not only for our own salvation, but for the salvation of our friends, our neighbors, the world. Prayer is pre-eminently a Scripture teaching. The Old Testament breathes the spirit of prayer in all its chapters, in all its examples of power and faith, in all its Psalms. Christ taught His disciples to pray. It is recorded of Him that He spent night after night in prayer. If it was essential to that Life how much more to us. Matt. 7:7, 8, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh

findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” John 14:13, 14, “ And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.” The best men of all ages, the men of the greatest power in the Christian church, have been men given to much prayer. We might say, with certain limitations, that a christian’s power and his exercise in prayer increase in equal proportions. Prayer is talking to God in adoration, in confession, in thanksgiving, in petition, in self-surrender. But is prayer not an endeavor to change the plan and purpose of the unchangeable God? No! Prayer is a part of His plan. Three hundred and thirty-four times we find the words “prayer” and “pray” in Scriptures, to say nothing about their equivalents, “ask,” “seek,” “knock,” etc. It seems as though God had been wonderfully in earnest and wonderfully faithful in teaching the world to pray.

Prayer is always to be offered in the name of Jesus. It is only because of Him that we have any access to a throne of grace. John 16:23, 24, “ And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name ; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”

But there are certain hindrances which prevent us from reaching the ear of God and obtaining our requests, which we will notice :

1. Seeking temporal things first. To many of us the words of Christ to Martha (Luke 10:41) are most applicable. We are forever getting our temporal things first ; first in our thoughts and first in our prayers, forgetting that the Master has given us a rule

to direct us in these things. Matt. 6:33, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Instead of following this direction, we too often make our temporal things the chief burden of our prayers. God wants us first of all for Himself, and when our affections are so set upon Him that other things naturally take the second place, as of secondary importance, we shall find more of our requests for both spiritual and temporal things granted.

2. Regarding iniquity in the heart. Ps. 66:18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Is. 59:1, 2, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." The reason why our prayers are not answered of God, is not that He can not hear our petitions, neither that He has not the power to save us, but our sins and the cherishing of sin in our hearts have prevented Him from answering us. The trouble is with us and not with God.

3. An unforgiving spirit. Matt. 5:23, 24, "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Matt. 6:14, 15, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matt. 6:12, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." The forgiving spirit is the one which is successful at the throne of grace. The

measure of such forgiving spirit is as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you. Eph. 4:32, "And be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

4. Selfishness, a failure to make all our prayers subject to the will of God, praying for something which in itself may be right, but to gratify ourselves. If I should ask God to send His Spirit upon us, that there might be a revival of religion, the prayer would be right in itself; but if I should ask it, that I might be glorified by the result, the motive would be selfish and wrong. John 14:13, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." Our motive should always be to glorify God in the Son, and never to gratify self. Every prayer should be modeled after the prayer of Christ. Matt. 26:39, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." God knows best whether our prayers should be answered or not, and many times the drinking of the cup of sorrow will prove the only path to the resurrection. Every prayer should close with "Not my will but thine be done," if not in words, that should be its spirit.

5. A failure to supplement our prayers by our efforts to have them answered. Mark 14:38, "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation," is the injunction of Christ. To watch is as essential as to pray. Very many pray rightly, but never watch, and are consequently continually entering into temptation and are overcome in sin, and they wonder why their prayers are not answered. They pray earnestly for the conversion of loved relatives or friends, and never speak to them about it, when God may be waiting to use them as the very instruments through which that

conversion may be accomplished. Mat. 28:19, 20, "Go." and "Lo, I am with you always."

6. Unbelief. Mark 11:22-24,, "And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea ; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass ; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Heb. 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him : for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

7. Too easily discouraged. Luke 11:8.

Such are many of the hindrances whereby we do not receive an answer to our prayers. Let us begin rightly before God, meet those conditions upon which the fulfilment of His promises rests, and then asking, our joy shall be made full.

CHAPTER X.

ASSURANCE.

Is it possible to know that we are the children of God? Is it possible to know and realize that we are saved? Can we know, this side the gate of pearl, that we shall have an abundant entrance? Is it not presuming on God to say that I am saved from my sins? It is not only not presumptuous to claim a knowledge of sonship, but it is a decided dishonor to the testimony of the Word and of the Spirit not to claim it and to know it, if we have yielded ourselves to Him, in conversion. If an earthly friend had told us anything one-half as plainly as God's Word and the Spirit have told those who have accepted Christ that they are the sons of God, and we would not believe him, we would be dishonoring that friend by not honoring and trusting his testimony. Not only is it dishonoring God, not accepting His testimony, but it is one of the chief reasons for the lack of power in the church. How can one be "rejoicing in hope" if it is simply a hope that *some day* God will save him? How many close their prayers with the sentence, "And save us at last!" I remember Dr. Upson of Auburn Theological Seminary once saying to his class in Homiletics, "Young gentlemen, do not close your prayers with 'Save us at last.' If you are not saved now, you have no business in the ministry." And so I say to anyone engaged in the Lord's work, you have no

business in the Master's service unless you are saved. There are tens of thousands of the Lord's children who might be of tremendous service Godward, if they would only grasp with zeal the fact of their salvation. But when you approach them on the subject they simply say, "I hope so," or "I suppose so." That is not the testimony of power. It is refreshing to meet the man of power and hear his testimony to the knowledge of his salvation. No Christian worker will ever be efficient in the inquiry room, until he grasp the knowledge of his salvation. If you should sit down by the side of an inquirer and tell him that you hoped if you were faithful you would be saved sometime; and then should ask him if he did not want that hope, you would probably meet with a negative response. Knowledge is always a means of power in earthly matters, how much more in heavenly.

How can I know that I am saved?

1. By the Word of God. John 7:17, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." The object of the Gospel of John is to lead the sinner by the Gospel, through the door Christ Jesus, by believing. John 20:31, "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." The object of the first epistle of John is, that the sinner may know he is saved. I John 5:13, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." Thus by the testimony of the Word, we see that God intends we shall know that we *have* (not *shall have*), everlasting life. There are only two conditions given to man, upon which his salvation

rests, "Repent and believe." These we have considered at length elsewhere. If you have met these conditions, you can claim your salvation now. John 3:36, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John 5:24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, *hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*" I can conceive of no stronger language on the subject of assurance than this; "Hath everlasting life," not will have; "shall not come into condemnation;" our works will come into condemnation (see I Cor. 3), but we shall not, we who believe on Christ stand justified before God, and a justified man can not be condemned; "but is passed from death unto life." "But," says some one, "I have been a very great sinner, and how can I know that He will receive me?" Read John 6:37, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." If you have come to Christ, you have His promise that He will not cast you out. Only believe His Word. Isa. 48:18, "O that thou hadst harkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." The reason why so many of us are despondent and gloomy, is that we are looking within at our feelings, and not outwardly to God's Word. We know we are saved by what God says in His Word, and not by our feelings. Feelings may vary from day to day, but "the word of our God abideth forever." Trust His Word and your peace of soul will be constant; trust your feelings, and it will be as changeable as the clouds.

2. By the Spirit. The Spirit testifies to us that we are God's sons. Rom. 8:14, 16 "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” Paul and all the other writers in the New Testament, seem to have no doubt of their sonship. This is one of Paul’s reasons, Now the Spirit witnesseth first of all to our spirits through God’s word, but there are many times in our experiences, and they multiply as we grow in grace and knowledge, when we have a blessed assurance in our very souls by the Spirit witnessing with our spirits that we are the sons of God. These are blessed moments and foretastes of Heaven, but this communion with the Spirit is not always the same. For some reason there are times in the lives of all of us, when if we should look within, we should find nothing upon which to base our assurance of salvation. Then look to the Word. Drive away all doubts with John 5:24.

3. By the fruits. At Gal. 5:22, 23, we read what the fruits of the Spirit are. At I John 1:7, “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” Walking in the light of God is a sign of fellowship, and both are results of our hearts cleansed by the blood of Jesus. I John 2:3. Here, the fruit of salvation is keeping His commandments. I John 3:7. Here, doing righteousness, is the sign of a righteous heart. I John 3:14. Here, loving one another is the sign that we have passed from death unto life. But in hours of temptation and trial, all these signs may at times fail us. It should be a warning to us, but at the same time, lest we should be discouraged because of too great a lack of these evidences, the Spirit gives the beautiful language of I John 2:1, 2, “And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not

for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." He has justified us, and on the ground of that justification we shall be saved. These signs are all evidences that the Spirit is working in us the work of sanctification. Our principal ground of assurance, however, and the abiding one, is the Word of God. Let us cease dishonoring Him and believe His Word, and assured of our own salvation we shall be prepared to teach others the way.

CHAPTER XI.

CONSECRATION.

CONSECRATION means set apart for a sacred purpose. That we may become efficient in the harvest field of the Lord, we not only need this consecration, but we need also to realize that we are set apart for this purpose.

1. What is the position of the church of Christ on earth? God is gathering to Himself a people from the world but He does not take them at once out of the world. At John 17:15 we read, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." They are left here for two purposes: one, that they may grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Christ; the other, that they may seek to save that which is lost. These two purposes go hand in hand. No one is really growing in grace who is not also being filled by the Master's spirit and is sustained by that spirit to seek the lost. And, on the other hand, no one is seeking to save the lost who is not, by the very nature of the work, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus. Let us not make the mistake too often made, that these two purposes are separate, not only as to their nature, but also as to time. God would have His church *all* set apart for this holy purpose, and this is His intent in leaving us for a time in the world. Deut. 14:2, "For thou art a holy people with the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are

upon the earth." Here we have the fact that God's people are chosen to be a peculiar people. The people do not choose themselves or set themselves apart, this is the work of God. John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." At Deut. 26:17-19, we read in what God's people are to be peculiar: in walking in His ways and keeping His commandments; not in physical peculiarities of dress or posture, but in life. At Titus 2:11-14 we find the same things stated with the additional thought of how such peculiarity of life is attained, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Redeemed by Christ from the curse of the law and purified, that they might be peculiar in life and be zealous of good works. Read also II Cor. 14-18. These passages are referring to the church of the living God, and not to any one class in the church, as priests, ministers, Y. M. C. A. secretaries, etc. God has called the *entire church* out from the world, and set it apart for a holy purpose. Oh, that the entire church would hear His voice, and understand that it is one thing to be redeemed, another to be purified, and another to be zealous of good works. John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, *that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.*" Too many of us are afraid that we shall be peculiar. It is the purpose of God that His people should be peculiar in holy life and conversation, and in bringing forth fruit. How many of us have these distinguishing marks? We have a fearfully suggestive passage in Neh. 13:23, 24, "In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and

could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people." Contrary to the commandment of God, the Jews had ceased being a peculiar people, but had formed alliances with the nations about them, and, as a consequence, could scarcely be distinguished from those nations except in name. And how fearfully they reaped what they had sown! Their children knew nothing about the Jews' language, nothing about the holy conversation of God's people, but were entirely conversant with the world. The fruit of such alliances was all for the devil, and none for God. Why are there so many skeptical sons and daughters of the church? Why are there thousands who can not speak at all the language of Canaan? Can we not find the answer in these verses from Nehemiah?

God has called us out from the world, and consecrated us to a holy conversation, that we should bring forth fruit and that our fruit should remain. "So shall ye be my disciples," John 15:8. If we are not bringing forth fruit both in holy lives and in souls saved, how are we the Master's disciples, and how can we expect our sons and our daughters to know Him?

Our position before God, then, is that of a people chosen by Him, peculiar in a holy life and conversation, zealous of good works, and especially marked as the disciples of Christ by bringing forth fruit.

2. Notice certain special offices to which we are consecrated. We can not consecrate ourselves, that is the work of God. We can offer ourselves willingly and gladly, He alone can set us apart and enable us to do His holy calling. Turning to Lev. 8, we find an example of consecration in the setting apart of Aaron and his sons to the office of a priest. God chose them for the office. He delegated Moses to perform the cer-

emony of consecration. We read all through this chapter what Moses did, but only in a few places, what Aaron and his sons did. Moses washed them, Moses put upon them the priestly robes, Moses sacrificed the burnt offering, the sin offering and the peace offering, Moses anointed them with oil, etc. Aaron and his sons were simply obedient and did what Moses directed. All these ceremonies were outward symbols or object lessons of the inward working of the Spirit of God. We are taught by it to be obedient, and to do those things which are laid upon us by God. We learn in His Word that He has set us apart to do His will in several special capacities. These I shall simply indicate together with the Scriptural references.

1. Priests,—I Pet. 2:5-9; Heb. 13:15, 16; Rev. 1:5, 6.
2. Witnesses,—Acts 1:8; 4:33; 5:32.
3. Servants,—I Cor. 6:19, 20; Eph. 6:5, 6; Rom. 1:1. (Paul placed at the head of the mightiest epistle ever written, “Paul a servant (slave) of Jesus Christ.”)
4. Soldiers,—II Tim. 2:3, 4.
5. Friends,—John 15:15.
6. Brethren,—John 20:17; Heb. 2:11-13.
7. Bride of Christ,—Eph. 5:23-33.

In these special relations to God we are to serve Him as His peculiar and purified people, in our growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Christ and in saving souls. By reading, studying and *heeding* the Word and by prayer, we shall be led by the Spirit into a full consecration. Remember, the church of God,—the bride of Christ,—has no right to be anything else than consecrated fully to His service.

CHAPTER XII.

WITNESSING FOR CHRIST.

WE have tried in the light of the Word to obtain a correct understanding of such of its teachings as will enable us to intelligently meet the wants of the inquirer. We shall now turn our attention more directly to the way of getting at the hearts of those with whom we have to deal. In the first place, then, what is our position before God in relation to the work of saving souls? Acts 1:8, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." John 15:27, "And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." According to the statement of these texts, the Master gave to His disciples the office of a witness. We are to stand in the relation of witnesses before God to the unsaved.

1. What are the necessary qualifications for a witness? Personal knowledge of the facts concerning which we are to witness. What are the facts? "And ye also shall bear witness of *me*," said Christ. But you and I have never seen the Christ as His disciples saw Him. How, then, can we testify of Him? Though we have never seen Him with the physical eye as John records, (I John 1:1-3) yet we who are His can testify of His power to save the soul from sin; we have seen

Him with eyes that are spiritual. We are to testify concerning the facts of the Gospel as they have been demonstrated to us in our lives. The essential qualification, then, for a witness unto Christ, is a personal knowledge of the facts concerning which we are called to testify. This necessitates a personal revelation of Christ to us in conversion. Unless you have been saved, and realize that you have passed from death unto life, you can not bear witness unto Christ with power. That which is demanded of you as a witness in a civil court is also demanded of you as a witness to the Gospel, namely, a knowledge of the facts.

2. How are we to witness? In our lives. Matt. 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 7:50, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." It would be useless for you to testify concerning the power of any physical remedy, unless you had yourself been saved by that remedy. Suppose you were to go through the country, testifying to the power of a certain remedy to cure paralysis, while your own arm hung lifeless by your side from that same disease. "Physician, heal thyself!" would be the cry of the populace. So first of all we are to testify by our own transfigured lives, to the transforming power of the Gospel. It has been said that every minister's life is the introduction to his sermon; so your life will be the chief argument as a witness to Christ.

3. "But my life was a wretched failure until the Master saved me, must I wait for the years to pass, before I can testify of that power? Must I wait until the whole world can see in a period of time that there has been a transformation?" No! Suppose Peter had waited until a year or more had passed after

he had denied his Lord, before he had testified to the power of Christ to save, he would never have preached that Pentecostal sermon, through the agency of which so many were saved. The longer the time which transpires after your conversion and through which you stand faithful the greater will be your influence among the unsaved. But begin at once, by word of mouth, to bear witness unto Christ. We are to testify with our lips as well as by our lives. Ps. 51: 15, "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise." Matt. 10:32, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." The very word translated witness, in the two passages of Scripture quoted at the beginning of this chapter, is a word borrowed from the old Greek court, where witnesses were to testify by word of mouth concerning things which they knew. Let us not think that it is sufficient to testify by our lives. If the Christ is in our hearts with power, the lips must be forced apart.

4. In what way are we to bear testimony? It is not sufficient to testify concerning the power of the Gospel, in a general way, of its influence in the advancement of civilization, of the elevating power of the church in society. All this is well in its place, but make your message definite and personal: what Christ has done for you, what Christ will do for the sinner. When inviting the sinner to Christ, do not think you have done your duty by inviting him to church. Invite him to come to Christ.

5. To whom shall we bear witness? At Acts 1:8, we read "both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Here we find at least two things taught: the place and

the order. The disciples were to bear witness unto Christ at home, and in the neighboring countries, and then unto the uttermost part of the earth. No position in any country, be it at home or in foreign lands was to exempt them from the office and duty of a witness. Again (in this connection see Luke 24:47), they were to begin at Jerusalem, then carry the Gospel message into all Judæa, then into Samaria, and from thence the world over. One other thought in this connection. The Samaritans were the deadly enemies of the Jews, but such enmity was to be no barrier and no excuse for the disciples not to carry the Gospel thither. Here we have our directions. We are to testify of Christ at home, among our neighbors, to our enemies, and wherever God in His providence may call us; no place, however remote, exempts us from the office of a witness. The order which we should follow in our work is plain. First, the unsaved of our households, then those intimately connected with us by ties of friendship or place, then among all people with whom we are brought in contact. Then "why stand ye here all the day idle?" The harvest is great, the laborers are few. Not only pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into the harvest but go thou, and bear witness unto the Christ. II Cor. 3:5, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God."

CHAPTER XIII.

ENDUEMENT OF POWER.

INTO this great work for the Master we are not to go alone. In the commission given in Matt. 28:20, we read, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." At John 14:23, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." As we think of the greatness of the work and the hardness of the sinner's heart, we wonder how it will be possible to lead such to Christ. There is a special fitting for this work implied in the Master's promise of His presence; namely, the enduement of power. At Luke 24:49, we read how Christ commanded His disciples that they should not depart out of Jerusalem on their mission of witnessing for Him, until this special enduement came upon them: "But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Again at Acts 1:4, 8, we read that they should wait for the promise of the Father, and that they should receive power after that the Holy Ghost came upon them. Turning to John 14:12, we read the astonishing promise: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." Turning now to Acts 2:32, 33, we read, from the wonderful Pentecostal sermon of Peter, how it is possible for the disciple to do more works than his Master.

Peter says, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." It was because of the exaltation of Christ that the descent of the Holy Ghost came, and because of the descent of the Holy Ghost, the enduement of power upon the disciples, and because of the enduement, it became possible for the disciples to do greater works than did Jesus. The disciples won more for the Master on the day of Pentecost than He did in His life.

Let us examine a little more closely into the character of this enduement of power.

1. It is not a special endowment. There is a vast difference between an enduement and an endowment. Our endowments God has given us in the natural way at birth, and we have developed them more or less according to our efforts in this direction. But the enduement is a special gift from above. The word itself signifies "to be clothed in." "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be clothed in power from on high." An external power by which our natural endowments are made effective. So that it is no excuse for anyone not to witness for Christ, because he has not the endowments of some one else. Let him ask God for the enduement and he will outdo "for His sake" the most brilliantly endowed without it.

2. The word "power" in Acts 1:8, comes from a word which signifies "to be able," it means ability. No doubt, as Christ toward the latter part of His life, unfolded the greatness of the work which lay before the eleven, and that He should not be present with them as He was then, that they exclaimed, "Who is sufficient for these things?" "But the work that I do

ye shall do also, and even greater works than these shall ye do, for ye shall receive the ability to do them, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. Indeed, it is expedient that I go away, for if I go not away the Holy Ghost will not come upon you, for it is only on my exaltation at the right hand of the Father that the Holy Ghost will come with power. So tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, after my ascension, until ye be clothed in this ability."

"But I am so weak I can not work even with this ability." Turning to II Cor. 12:9, we read, "For my strength is made perfect in weakness." The word translated "strength" here is from the same word from which comes the word "power" in Acts 1:8, so that you can read "For my ability is made perfect in weakness." The enduement of power may be defined as the presence of the personal Holy Spirit, working in conjunction with the witnesser unto Christ, and furnishing the message with power. I Cor. 3:9, "For we are laborers together with God."

Let us notice some of the offices of the Holy Spirit, that we may see the more clearly how He aids us as witnesses unto Christ. We will pass by the offices of the Holy Spirit in applying the work of redemption to the sinner, and notice how He complements our work in witnessing of Christ to the sinner.

1. It is His office also to witness of Christ. John 15:26, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." Whenever you go on an errand of witnessing for the Master, know that the Holy Spirit has gone before you, and is with you testifying of Him.

2. It is His office to convince the world of sin. John 16:8, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world

of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." It is not stated that you are to convince the world of sin, that is His work. You may present the truth, or the Spirit may work through you,—the means,—but He will not leave you to convince men of sin: He is here for that purpose.

3. He is here to reveal the truth unto us more and more. John 14:26, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 16:13, 14, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he will not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

4. He is to furnish you with the ability to do your work. Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8. Not with the ability which you have, or can have of yourselves, but the Divine ability which is necessary to make the best there is of you effective.

5. He gives us courage. Acts 4:13.

Note first, The promise of this enduement is to all who believe. Acts 2:39; 5:32.

Note second, The willingness of the Father to bestow it. Luke 11:13.

Note third, We can do nothing without it. John 15:5.

Note fourth, With it we can do greater works than did Christ. John 14:12.

Then "tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

CHAPTER XIV.

THOUGHTS ON INQUIRY WORK.

BEING now somewhat familiar with those teachings of the Word which are essential for dealing understandingly with the inquirer, let us notice a few things relative to this work.

First of all, as to the necessary qualifications and instruments, a portion of which have already been noticed or implied in the preceding chapters.

1. A knowledge of your own conversion.
2. A sufficiently clear understanding of the Word as shall enable you to have a clear idea of its most practical and primary teachings.
3. A sufficiently clear understanding of the Word in relation to the needs of the inquirer.
4. A Bible with which you are so familiar that you can turn rapidly to those passages necessary to meet the immediate demands of the inquirer.
5. The enduement of power.
6. A pencil and card with which you can take down the address of the person with whom you are dealing, for future reference. Be very careful about this, however. Do not let them think that all you care for, is to add one more name to the list of those with whom you have dealt. When you ask for an address be sure you make the purpose for which it is taken, plain.

The following is a specimen of the card generally used :

<p><i>Name,</i>.....</p> <p><i>Address,</i></p> <p><i>Church Preference,</i></p> <p><i>Remarks,</i></p> <p>.....</p>
--

When asking for the church preference, be sure you convey the correct idea that you wish it, that you may place them under a pastor's care, and not that they must join the church.

Thus equipped, you are ready for the work.

Second, The nature of the inquiry meeting. The inquiry meeting is usually held after some popular gospel service. Be present at such service, and keep praying that God will arouse the unconverted. After the popular service is over, invite all you can to go into the inquiry room, especially such as may show some signs of being moved by the sermon. Better be sure, however, of getting one into the inquiry meeting than not sure of many. When in the inquiry room, find some one you think you can reach. If there are two or more unconverted sitting side by side, get the one with whom you desire to talk, separate from the rest if possible, by taking him to some unoccupied place, where you can converse with him alone. Find out just what his difficulty is. Then be ready as the case is stated, to apply the Word understandingly.

Be as wise as serpents, and as harmless as doves. Do not quote the passages, unless you see you can not find them, but turn to them and let him read them for himself. Never leave the person with whom you are in conversation, without praying with him, if it be possible. Always have him pray, if only to repeat a short prayer after you, as, "God be merciful to me a sinner." On leaving him, take his name and address, and tell him you will pray for him as you go home, and have him promise to pray for himself.

Be patient. Remember that eternal destinies are in your hands. Do not argue, but be ready with a "thus saith the Lord." The more you argue with most inquirers, the more difficult it will be to reach them, as it is the devil's way of fortifying them in error. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets," etc. Luke 16:31. The main point for you to look after, is to get the inquirer to decide for Christ. Do not leave him without such a decision being made if possible.

If you can not find any unconverted one with whom to converse, sit down and pray that God will give light and power to those who have been more successful in finding some one with whom to deal. Above all things, in such a place, do not talk with Christians who are idle like yourself, about anything but Christ and the work.

Remember, you are standing in Christ's stead, to do His work, (II Cor. 5:20,) and that your efficiency is of God. II Cor., 3:5, 6.

Special qualifications for the work :

1. Faith. Matt. 9:2.
2. Courage. Joshua 1:8.
3. Enthusiasm. Gal. 4:18.
4. Love. Ps. 51:1 ; John 3:16.
5. Compassion and sympathy. Matt. 9:36.

How to meet the unconverted :

1. Personally and privately. Examples : Christ with Nicodemus, and the woman of Samaria. John 3rd and 4th chapters. Philip with the eunuch. Acts 8:26-40.

2. Keep at it. Luke 11:5-10 ; 18:1-7.

3. Get close to the sinner. Contrast, Matt. 8:1-3, with Mark. 10:49.

Give the inquirer some passage of Scripture to read suitable to his case, before you leave him. "He that winneth souls is wise."

CHAPTER XV.

CLASSES OF INQUIRERS.

DOUBTING CHRISTIANS AND BACKSLIDERS.

WHILE there are very many classes of inquirers which you will meet in the inquiry room, nearly all of them will come in one or more of the following five classes, namely, doubting Christians, backsliders, those not thoroughly convinced, those thoroughly convinced, the honest skeptic.

With the first class mentioned we have already pointed out the course to be adopted, in the chapter on Assurance, so we will pass at once to the second class, backsliders. At Jer. 2:5, we read "Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity?" At Is. 59:1, 2, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it can not save; neither his ear heavy, that it can not hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." It seems unnecessary to make the statement, and yet over and over again, you will have to direct the backslider to the fact that his cold religious state is due entirely to himself. The above tests will render the statement emphatic. His iniquities and his sins have come between him and his God. At Mal. 3:10, we find the remedy: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in

mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." He has been robbing God of his tithes in some way, and just as soon as those tithes are restored to the storehouse of God, the blessing will be forth-coming. What are the tithes, and how shall they be brought? Remember you are dealing with one of God's children who has gone astray, and he needs different treatment than an unconverted person. At I John 1:9, we read, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This text was written to those who had made a profession of religion. It was the rule John gave for getting back to God,—to confess our sins. At Jer. 3:13, we read, "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the Lord." So we see that John was only quoting the direction given by God to His people in Old Testament times,—to confess the sins, and acknowledge the iniquities, which have separated between us and our God. At Rev. 2:1-7, we read the message to the church of Ephesus which had left its first love. At verse five we read the direction given for their return, "Repent," *i. e.*, turn from your transgressions toward God, "and do the first works." We can sum up the above testimony in three words,—repentance, confession, works. Whenever the backslider is ready to comply with the above direction, God is more than ready to receive him, for at Mal. 3:10, He says, "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing,

that there shall not be room enough to receive it." At Jer. 31:3, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." At Jer. 29:13, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." For the process in coming back to God, read the fifty-first Psalm; and in Luke 15, the story of the return of the prodigal. In the return of the prodigal, you will perceive God's willingness to forgive the wanderer, in that the father *ran* to meet him. The cause for the backslidden state of every wanderer, may be stated under two general heads; first, sins of omission; second, sins of commission. A failure to do to the works which are the means of christian growth, and an active continued transgression of God's law.

1. Sins of omission. At conversion, under the impulse of the new life, the convert is often zealous of good works, he is much in prayer, gives his testimony at every opportunity, reads his Bible, establishes family worship, and becomes a missionary of the cross in trying to save his friends and neighbors. But when the first impulse of the new life is past, he gradually leaves these various lines of christian activity, and finally is no more active than before his conversion, and his old sinful life returns. This process is seldom swift, nearly always gradual.

Now what is the remedy? If the only difficulty is a neglect of duty, let the duties be taken up where they were laid down. Confess your negligence before God and the people, and begin the work anew. That is the way to get the tithes into the storehouse, and the blessings of Heaven will surely follow.

There is a large class of people who accept Christ, but never become active. The only way for such to

get an experimental love of God, is to follow out the leading of the Spirit in the way of christian activities.

2. Sins of commission. The young convert starts out with the idea never to sin. The determination is good, but under some temptation, sin against God is committed, discouragement follows, and the battle is given up. The failure is quite liable to be along the line of the old besetting sin. As an illustration, often brought before us in the lives of hundreds, take that of the reformed drunkard. He stands well for a season, but under some strong temptation of the devil, often through some old unconverted associate who should have been forsaken as an associate, he falls into his old sin. When he comes to himself he becomes discouraged, and instead of confessing his fault and fleeing to the Refuge of the tempted, he forsakes the active service of the Master and becomes worse than ever.

What is the remedy here? We have already pointed it out. It lies along the avenue of these words, repentance, confession and works. He must turn from his transgressions again, toward God, make a confession of his sins, and begin anew the activities of a christian life.

Very many begin their backsliding by wronging a neighbor when under some provocation. To such, bring up the idea of restitution. This is brought out in Ex. 22; Matt. 5:23, 24; 6:14, 15. The wrong may have been done in one way, and it may have been done in another, but in whatsoever way the wrong has been done, in just that way must it be righted, before there can be experienced again the favor of God. Sometimes such restitution is not in the present power of the transgressor, but let him show his willingness by making confession of his wrong, and then whenever

complete restitution becomes possible, let it be made. Confession of our faults should always be made to God first of all, and then, if the faults have been public, the confession should also be public, but if the faults have been private, let the confession be private. And through the avenue of repentance, confession and doing the works of the Christian, we shall receive the kiss of forgiveness and the blessing of God. "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him." Hosea 14:1,4.

CHAPTER XVI.

TO THOSE NOT THOROUGHLY CONVINCED.

It is well to bear in mind in dealing with those not fully convinced, that they need, and ought to seek, the Saviour at once. That in reality the number of those who can be said rightly to come under this head, and whom you will succeed in getting into the inquiry room, is comparatively small; while those who will profess to be not thoroughly convinced will be much larger. It is one of Satan's most seductive methods to make the inquirer think that he is not sufficiently convinced that he is a sinner and that he needs salvation. The chief difficulty with this class is that they are putting the motive for moving toward God on the wrong ground, namely, that of feeling instead of oughtness. They have heard some one relate his experience in which mention has been made of some terrible burden and an awful struggle to get into the light of God; they think that some such burden and struggle is necessary. This is a real difficulty, and how shall it be met? In the first place it is well to get the proper motive for seeking salvation before the inquirer. It is not because there may or may not be any weight of feeling this way or that, but because it is right and God demands it. There is no man but knows and feels that he ought to do right. If he be convinced that it is right for him to seek his salvation, he is sufficiently convicted of sin and con-

vinced of his duty. Make it clear to him that repentance does not consist in feeling, but in action,—turning away from sin toward God. The feelings will be more or less involved, but sorrow for sin alone is not repentance; one may have such sorrow for a life-time, and if it do not lead to “turning from sin to God,” he will go down to the grave unsaved. Then show him that the manly way is to do right whether we feel like it or not. I remember a certain young man, who is now a faithful minister of the gospel, sitting night after night through almost an entire series of meetings. Whenever he was approached and asked to seek the Lord, he invariably responded, “I do not feel like it.” One night in the midst of an inquiry meeting he arose and said, “I have been waiting for many days for a sufficient amount of feeling to cause me to seek the Lord. I do not feel any more like it tonight than I did at first, but I know it is right and I am going to walk out on my manliness and serve the Lord, and let the feelings go.” Of course he found Christ, and he has ever been His steadfast follower. It is always manly to do right. It is right to seek God. It is the only way. Turn toward Him because *you ought*. Use the passages already given under Faith and Repentance to prove the above points. A good illustration of this is the prodigal son. “I will *arise* and *go* to my father.”

The above method or something parallel, you can use with such as think they are not fully convinced, but are really waiting for feeling. A few skillful questions will reveal the fact. But you will meet some who are willing to converse with you, but who are, as far as you can see, entirely unmoved, and unconvinced of their duty in seeking Christ. Right at this point there are three passages which you must

bear in mind : John 16:8 ; Heb. 4:12 ; Luke 16:31. All you can do is to apply the Word, and leave the result with God. I know of no better passage in dealing with this class and no one which furnishes less ground for objection than Rev. 21:27, "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie : but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." The majority of people, at least of those outside the ark of safety, associate salvation with gaining Heaven. A correct idea of the character of Heaven and the necessity of conforming with it, that it may be experienced, will throw much light on many of the doctrines of Scripture. The character of Heaven is that of absolute purity, and into that holy Heaven nothing of sin can enter. If we have sin in our hearts we cannot enter there, for without holiness no man shall see the Lord.—Heb. 12:14. We are all sinners (Rom. 3:23,) and, therefore, none of us can enter Heaven without being made pure. God's goodness or His love can not place us in a holy Heaven without our being made absolutely pure in heart. We can not do this work (Prov. 20:9). The question is not "Are you a great sinner?" If your heart is in any degree sinful, you can not enter Heaven. Its character would soon be changed if you should. The only way to perpetuate Heaven is that this requirement shall be rigidly enforced. All our efforts alone are unavailing to meet the demands of that Heaven (Is. 64:6), but God, in His great love for us, has provided a way of escape from sin, and of preparation for Heaven. In John 3:3-5, 7, He says we must be born again, *i. e.* we must have a change of heart. What other way could there be of our entering Heaven ? and how entirely reasonable ! At Ez. 36:25;

26, we read the promise concerning the new heart and what it means. Because we are all sinners we need just this, and God in His great love for us has provided it. All He asks of us is that we turn from all our transgressions to Him, and yield ourselves to Him that He may purify us. That is just the meaning of Mark 1:15, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." He asks this of us because He can not purify us except we "repent and believe." If we will meet these demands, He can and will transform us by regeneration and sanctification, so that when we come to enter the gateway of Heaven we shall be permitted to enter, although "there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth." If the inquirer is not sufficiently convinced of the fact that he is a sinner, let the Word flash the truth upon him at Jer. 17:9; Mark 7:21-23; Gal. 5:19-21. These are pen pictures of the natural heart as seen by the Holy Spirit. Always emphasize over against these pen pictures the demands made upon us,

By the character of heaven, Rev. 21:27;

By the character of God, Hab. 1:13;

By the character of the ten commandments as summed up by Christ, Matt. 5:48.

Then turn to John 1:29, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." On leaving such an inquirer, if you have not brought him to a decision, gain a promise from him if you can, that he will read a certain portion of Scripture (to which you will call his attention), and pray for himself when he reaches his room. Rom. 1:18-32, John 5, and Matt. 5, are good selections for this purpose.

CHAPTER XVII.

THOSE FULLY CONVINCED.

IT is most refreshing to sit by the side of an inquirer who is fully convinced that he is a sinner and that he needs the Saviour, and who is determined to give himself to Him. To make him see Christ is the great point. Sometimes the way is very easy. By a little conversation you see that the person with whom you are dealing needs but little direction. He has already yielded his will, and all he needs is a confession of Christ, to go on his way rejoicing. Turning to I Peter 2:24, point out that our sins are already laid on Christ, and that He will answer for them. Then to John 3:36, or 5:24, or 6:47, and point out that by believing on Christ, and not by any effort of our own, we have everlasting life. Then pray with him and have him pray for himself, and if the opportunity is given, have him confess Christ. Sometimes in just the act of confessing Christ, the joy of Heaven enters into the soul. Before you leave him be sure you give him some suitable Scripture to read, as the 103d Psalm, or Luke 15, or John 3, or Isa. 53.

Very often you will find among this class those who, while they have seemingly yielded their will, do not catch a glimpse of their Saviour. I have met more than one in the inquiry room, who have been sincerely seeking Christ, and yet had not seemingly found Him. Turn to Luke 19:10, and point out the fact that the

Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost, and that He has been seeking them all their lives, and that He certainly will not forsake them when they turn to Him. The difficulty, for the most part, with this class is, they do not understand, first, *how salvation is obtained*, and second, how they obtain the *evidence* of their conversion. So, having shown them that the Son of man is seeking them, and consequently they are not forsaken, turn to John 3:16 and let them read it. Then ask them if God does not mean what He says; if they are not a part of the world; why He gave His only begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" if they are not of the "whosoever." Then have them read the text, putting in their names in place of the words "world" and "whosoever," *i. e.* if the name of the inquirer should be Marshall Green, he would read the text, "For God so loved Marshall Green that he sent his only begotten Son, that Marshall Green, believing on him, should not perish but have everlasting life." This makes the text as definite as it would have been if there had been no one but Marshall Green in the world. Point out that the only condition given upon which is based everlasting life, is the one of believing, and if he is believing on Him he has a right to claim it. Very often by this simple process, I have seen the light of Heaven come into the countenance as the mind grasped the good news, that Christ died for the inquirer personally, because God loved him personally, and that he might have everlasting life.

But the trouble is not so often a failure to grasp the fact that salvation is obtained by simply believing, as a wrong conception of how the knowledge of their being saved is obtained. They have heard some per-

sons relating their experience at conversion, tell about the wonderful light that came into the soul and the great change experienced ; they have been looking for just such an experience. To only a few does such an experience come at conversion : to the majority the inner light comes like the dawning of the day, but in every instance the revelation by way of an inner experience comes through believing on Christ. Teach them to look away from their feelings to Christ. Show them that already they have a witness of their acceptance in the Word if they are believing on Christ. Turn to John 3:36, and let them read “ He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” It is by *believing* and not by *feeling*, that they have a knowledge of their salvation. By believing on Christ they have salvation ; by believing His word they have assurance. It is faith all around. Turn to John 5:24, and let them read it emphasizing that he that believeth *hath* everlasting life, *shall not come into condemnation, is passed from death unto life.* The fact of how we are saved by faith, is brought out in the following illustration. You are on the ocean. In the middle of the night some one comes to your cabin and tells you the ship is on fire, that the life-boat is being lowered, and if you will arise and come to the boat you will be saved. Suppose you believe the messenger, what is the result ? You immediately arise and flee to the boat and are taken in it from the burning ship and are saved. But if you disbelieve the messenger and the message, you will lie still and perish. In case you believed the message you would be saved by the life-boat, through faith in the message and through faith in the boat. Such a fact might be chronicled in the next morning paper in this language : “ A friend so loved A. B. as to risk his life in going through the

burning ship to A. B.'s cabin door to warn him of his peril, that A. B., believing him and his message, might be saved." Now how does the case stand in regard to our salvation from sin? We are lost; God alone can save us; He has sent His Son to save us; the messenger has come to our door; we have been warned of our danger, and the way of escape has been pointed out: now he that believeth the message and the messenger, will arise, and turn from his danger toward deliverance (that is repentance), and he will trust Him who is the deliverer, and who alone can save (that is faith). Faith saves us in the one instance as well as in the other. It is faith that causes us to flee from the burning ship and trust the life-boat for deliverance; it is faith which causes us to flee from the wrath to come, and to trust Christ for deliverance. It is faith which causes us to trust the life-boat, it is the life-boat which saves; it is faith which causes us to lean on Christ, it is Christ who saves. Unbelief would cause us to perish in the one case, so also it is unbelief which causes us to perish in the other.

The way is easy.

We are in the ship;

The ship is on fire;

The life-boat is at hand;

A messenger comes and tells us of the circumstance;

We believe him;

We flee to the life-boat;

We trust it and are saved.

Faith in the messenger or message,—not feeling,—causes us to flee for safety. Faith,—not feeling,—causes us to trust the life-boat for salvation. The greater our faith in the power of the life-boat to deliver us, the greater our joy when in it.

We are in sin;

Christ, our salvation, is at hand;

The messenger comes and tells us the circumstance;
 We flee to Christ;
 We trust Him and are saved.

Faith,— not feeling,— causes us to trust Christ for salvation. The greater our faith in the power of Christ to deliver us, the greater our joy. *Action, salvation, assurance*, are the results of faith. Unbelief in either case would prove disaster. Some such illustration as the above will give the convinced sinner a correct idea of how faith saves and how it gives assurance.

Often you will find among this class those who realize their sinfulness so much as to lead them to doubt the willingness, if not the ability, of Christ to save them. Here your Bible has a wealth of passages to meet the objection, with which you must make yourself familiar. The application of these passages is very easily seen. I will simply indicate them.

Ps. 103:11, Mercy outmeasures sin.

Rom. 5:20, Grace is greater than sin.

I Peter 2:24, Sin is laid on Christ.

Ps. 103:12, The measure of the removal of sin.

Is. 1:18, Scarlet and crimson, hard colors to remove.

Is. 37:17, Sin cast behind God.

Is. 43:25, Blotted out and not remembered.

Is. 44:22, A cloud dissipated can not be found.

Mic. 7:18, 19, Pardoned, passed by, cast into the depths of the sea. Not depths of a river that will dry up, but into the sea that never dries up.

Heb. 7:12, Forgotten.

God could say nothing more than He has said to the sinner, that He saves to the uttermost *all* that come unto Him through Christ. Heb. 7:25.

“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” John 6:37.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HONEST SKEPTIC.

THERE is a large number of professing skeptics in the world;—men who profess to disbelieve almost everything a Christian believes. They are divided naturally into two classes:—those who are sincere in their skepticism, and those who are insincere. The former are seeking after truth; the latter for self-vindication, for an excuse to continue in sin, or for notoriety. The sincere skeptic you can reach by proper reasoning and the Word; the insincere, seldom if ever; it needs some special dispensation of Providence. Often in the inquiry room you will meet the insincere skeptic, who is present for the sake of argument and for showing his knowledge (always borrowed from Celsus, Paine and Co.). It is scarcely to any purpose whatever to converse with this class. You can soon find them out, and when you have, the best thing you can do is to leave them with some sharp text of Scripture, like John 3:18-20, and perhaps a brief prayer. You can easily drop your head and offer a short prayer that God will open their eyes, and then, find some one who is willing to listen to you. Above all things, never show the least impatience.

You will find sometimes those who are honestly skeptical and sincere in their views. These can often be reached. I look back over a record of ten years' work for the Master, and find many of this class whom God has permitted me to lead into the light. The first

step to take is to get them alone by themselves. If you do not, the temptation will be very great for them to show off their skepticism and attempt to silence you before their companions. Alone, this temptation will be greatly lessened. Often after a short conversation, you will see that you can not accomplish very much at one meeting. If such be the case and you are so situated as to make it possible, make an appointment to meet them at their own rooms, or your room, at some time in the immediate future, then give them some suitable scripture to read, and if you can, offer a short prayer with them that God may show them the error of their reasoning. Do not expect to accomplish everything in a moment. I remember one such case which took me three or four months to reach, and another one which took me over a year. But the results would have been worth every effort, though it had taken ten times the time. Go at the time appointed, praying for divine wisdom. There is in every instance a reason of some character and depth for skepticism. Often it comes from inattention to the Word. Many times, from a misconception of the Bible's demands upon us that salvation may be obtained, and such misconception arises often from the complicated creeds of differing denominations;—often from the effects of christianity, judged from the imperfect life of some weak Christian or hypocrite. The first thing to find out is the reason from which springs his skepticism. Probe for this. It will come to the surface in conversation. If he is disposed to do the talking, let him talk. In the meantime listen, that you may discover the true difficulty; and keep praying that God will aid you. Remember, that there is very often but one principal difficulty, although the skeptics may state several. It is useless for you to attempt, or to expect to answer

them all, but “watch and pray” that you may discover the real difficulty, and when you have met that, you have met them all. Another thing to be kept in mind is, that the skeptic himself may not know what the real reason for his skepticism is. When you have reached the difficulty, meet it, if possible, by calling his attention to himself and to the Word,—to himself that he may lose sight of all grossly imperfect or hypocritical Christians; to the Word that he may be convinced by it of his own duty.

I can best bring out what I mean and the way to accomplish the work, by a leaf from my own experience. When supplying a church in one of the northern counties of the state of New York, I met a physician who was a notorious skeptic. He was upwards of seventy years of age, and had practiced medicine in that region successfully for over forty years. A grand man as the world goes, with no outbreking vices. When I first went into that section he was pointed out to me as an Ingersol infidel. I soon met him and learned to love him. I immediately began to pray that God would teach me how I might bring him to Him. In conversation with him subsequently I found out his difficulty. It was ignorance of the Word and a confused idea of God’s demands upon him, through certain misunderstood church creeds. Although well read in his own profession, he knew scarcely anything about the Bible. The way to proceed in his case seemed plain.

1. Show him how little he knew of the Scriptures, that he might see how little ground he had for finding fault with them.

2. Take his eyes from the creeds of Christendom and set them on Christ.

3. Having seen Christ he would soon forget the faults of others and look to himself.

The opportunity soon presented itself. While seated in conversation with him one evening he made mention of some fact concerning Noah which I knew was not true to the Scripture statement. The family Bible was lying near and I handed it to him, saying, "Doctor, that statement is not quite correct; find the passage, please, and see the difference." He took the Bible and for at least fifteen minutes, turned the leaves while I carried on a conversation with his wife, who was a grand christian woman. Finally, the turning of the leaves stopped. I asked him if he had found the passage as he had stated it. He said he had not found it at all; his eyesight was not very good. I asked him to let me take the Bible, and said that I would find the passage, if he would tell me where to look. He said he did not know just where it was. I asked him to tell me in what book of the Bible to find it. He said after some hesitation that he did not know. I then asked him if it was in the Old or New Testament. He said he thought it was in the New. I then told him where it was, found it and read it to him, pointing out his mistake. Then I told him frankly that I was ashamed of him. That he had been going all over the country talking against a Book of which he knew absolutely nothing. I then asked him what he would think of me, if I should set myself up as a critic of medicine, when I knew not even the first principles. He said he should call me a fool. I then asked him if he had anything better than the Bible and christianity to offer those from whom he would take them. He said no. Then I asked if he would not desist from talking against them until he had something better to put in their place, or until he had studied the Bible sufficiently to prove himself right or wrong. He made no reply, but I had gained my first point.

This may be an extreme case as to ignorance of the Bible, but by making the objector prove his statements every time by the Word you will discover more ignorance than you now realize can be the case, and you will put the skeptic to silence and shame.

A few evenings after the above conversation had taken place, I had another opportunity for conversation with the doctor. I asked him what the Bible said he must do to be saved. He said he did not know exactly, but he supposed for one thing one must believe that the Bible was inspired, and that he could not do that as there so many hard things in it he could not believe. I then asked him if the Bible said anywhere that, he must believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures, or that we all sinned in Adam, or that Noah and his family were saved in the ark, or that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, etc., etc., that he might be saved. He said, he did not know as it did, but he supposed it did. I then turned and read the answer of Paul and Silas to the jailor, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," and said, "Believe on Christ; that is the only condition, doctor." "But," said he, "do you not believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures?" "Most emphatically I do," I answered, "but this is not essential to my salvation according to the statement of the Scriptures themselves." I then showed him how Christ was the door through which we must pass, not only to our salvation, but also to a correct knowledge of the Bible (I Cor. 2:14), and how God was so good that if we could not believe at once in the divinity of Christ, we might believe on Him for the works' sake (John 14:11). "But," said the doctor, "why did not God open many doors instead of one?" Said I, "If you were in a burning building and there was only one way out

would you sit down and perish because you could not get out some other way?" "Of course not," he replied. "Then why will you do it concerning your eternal salvation? Doctor are you a sinner?" "Yes: but how did I sin in Adam? If I did I can not be responsible." "Doctor, are *you* a sinner?" "Yes." "Can you save yourself from your sins?" "I do not know as I can." "Are you not willing Christ should save you?" "Why, yes, every one ought to be willing to be saved." "Will you trust Him then, with all your doubts, as far as you know?" His chin dropped upon his breast, the lips quivered, the tears gathered in his eyes, as he said scarcely above a whisper, "I will." It was nearly a year from that time before I could get him to confess Christ in public, but from that night, over hills and through valleys he preached Christ, and no one ever heard him say ought against the christian religion. The strange part of such a conversion is, that immediately at conversion skepticism almost always vanishes.

I have placed this example here simply as an illustration of how to get at the honest skeptic. This does not meet all the difficulties; their name is legion. But such cases are to be reached, and I want to make it emphatic. The chief objections of the honest skeptic are against the non-essentials of Bible teachings, and the misunderstood and complicated creeds. What I mean by non-essential Biblical doctrines, is not that they are not essential, they would not be in the Bible if they were not, but that, *for conversion, there is only one thing essential, namely, to believe on Christ.* Lead the soul to Christ first: He will lead him on by opening his understanding, that he may understand the Scriptures. We are apt to forget that it is made most emphatic in the Bible that its teachings can not be made plain to the natural man, in their entirety.

The above illustration and statements may open up the way for us to reach many of this class.

Thoughts.

Never give the skeptic a chance to think you do not believe the Bible entirely.

Never get in the least impatient.

If you can do no other way get them to test the religion of Christ by putting themselves in the way of it.

Do not get discouraged if you do not succeed by once trying to reach the skeptic.

“Haley’s Discrepancies” is an invaluable work for those who want the seeming difficulties and contradictions of Scripture to vanish. Nelson on Infidelity is a grand book to read and to lend to the skeptic.

Often this objection is made that the Word of God is too hard, frequently accompanied with the statement by the objector, that he will trust Nature instead. Find out how much he has *studied* the Bible, and then ask him how much difficulty he has met in the study of Nature. Such an objection is most absurd, when seen in its true light. It is far more easy to understand all of the Bible than a part of Nature. Who among specialists, understand the ultimate truth of the sciences, —Geology, Biology, Astronomy, Botany, Psychology, etc.?. These sciences are all books of the one great book of Nature. It is decidedly simple for any one to claim, on the ground of its difficulties, that, instead of the Bible, he will trust Nature.

CHAPTER XIX.

EXCUSES AND DIFFICULTIES.

THERE are numberless excuses for not coming to Christ *now*, which are given by the inquirer. A few of them we will notice. The most common ones are, "I do not feel like it," and "If I start, I am afraid I shall not hold out." The first one has been sufficiently noticed elsewhere. The second one is singularly foolish. The idea that in the face of the awful consequences of sin, and the way of escape offered, any one should hesitate on the threshold of safety, is almost beyond comprehension. No one would ever think of offering such an excuse when in any physical danger. The question would then be, not "will I ever be in the way of danger again," but "can I escape?" We are not to keep Christ; He is to keep us. The following texts of scripture are most appropriate to such an objector: Deut. 33:27, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." John 10:28, "And I will give to them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." We are not to stand in our own strength. With a new heart and a new life it does not seem so difficult to continue in the way. It seems hard as we look at it from the outside, but inside the fold it is easy. II Tim. 1:12, "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Also I Pet. 5:10, 11; Jude 24, 25; Heb. 7:25; Eph. 3:20, 21.

Another excuse sometimes offered is, "If I am to be saved I suppose I shall be saved, and if I am to be lost I suppose I shall be lost." This objection is based upon a misunderstanding of certain Scripture statements, or a misapplication of a portion of the creed of certain denominations. I have sometimes wished I could take such objectors and throw them into a pond of sufficient size with the remark, "Now if you are going to drown you will be drowned, and if you are going to be saved you will be saved." If they were saved it would be because they made some effort, and if they were drowned it would be because they put forth no effort. Some such illustration will be adequate to bring out the point that if the objector be lost it will be because he puts forth no effort to accept Christ, and if he be saved it will be because such effort is put forth. The responsibility rests with us. In every instance, with the exception of the one concerning our eternal welfare, common sense teaches humanity that salvation from danger rests upon our using the means at hand. Why is it that when we come to things religious, common sense deserts us?

"Not just now," is another excuse often heard. No one is sure of a moment of time, and the longer one waits the less is he apt to accept the Christ. At least one-half of all those who seek Christ, do so before the age of twenty. I have tested this with many audiences and I have found the following mathematical statement quite applicable here. The probability of a soul turning to Christ decreases as the square of the distance from youth to old age increases. The very process of delaying the acceptance of the Saviour hardens the sinner in his ways. Analyze the above excuse and show the inquirer its true meaning.

It is right to accept Christ.

It is wrong not to accept Him.

“Not just now” means I am not just ready to do the right thing. I want a little more time in which to do wrong. Eccl. 12:1, “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.”

Sometimes you will meet with an inquirer who thinks he has committed the unpardonable sin. Whatever may be the nature of that sin, you can assure the inquirer that no one who has a desire to be saved is among that number who can have no forgiveness here nor hereafter. At John 6:44 we read, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” It is the office of the Holy Ghost to convince of sin, to bring about repentance and a desire for salvation; and whenever and wherever that desire is found, it is a sure evidence that the Father is drawing that soul by the Holy Spirit, and God mocks no man by creating desires for salvation He will not satisfy. Those whom God has forsaken will have no desire for salvation, at least no deep and earnest desire. Having pointed out this fact, turn to John 6:37 and let them read, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” Christ said that, and whenever any one desires Him sufficiently to come to Him he will not be cast out. The above applies equally well to the backslider who is troubled with Heb. 6:4-6 and other kindred passages. If such desire to return let them be assured they will be received. They have only to comply with the conditions,—Jer. 3:13; 29:11-13.

Many times you will find those who seem to understand perfectly well the conditions of salvation, and as far as you can see have yielded themselves entirely to the Saviour, and still they find no joy in His service. You will find that there is some hindrance in the way. The joyful cry of the servant of Abraham

who went in search of a wife for Isaac, on his arrival at the home of Rebekah (Gen. 24:27), teaches us a good lesson. He exclaimed, "I being *in the way*, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." If we expect the Lord to lead us we must put ourselves in the way. The way in which the Lord will lead us at and after conversion, is the way of obedience. In such cases as these the difficulty is doubtless along this line. They have not been obedient to the leading of the Spirit. The inquirer may have wronged a friend in some way. The Spirit has indicated clearly that they must go and make restitution, if within their power, and if not, to make suitable confession, and this they have not done. They need never expect the joy of the Lord will be theirs until this is done. There is great danger right here. One of the saddest cases I have ever known was that of a business man who was led to put himself in the way of salvation. If ever a man was sincere he certainly was. But the Spirit made known to him what he must do, if he became a Christian, by way of restitution. He rebelled against it and would make no such attempt. Very soon he was a worse sinner than ever and at length died a horrible death. I knew another man in the same town, who came face to face with the same duty, and who was obedient, though it cost him hundreds of dollars. The result of his obedience was, he became a man of power. The trouble may be a failure to confess Christ. The promise is to those who are willing to confess Him. Luke 12:8, 9. Unless we are willing to make an open confession, we need not expect Him to confess us. I remember a man nearly fifty years of age who had been very profligate,—who was seeking the Saviour for two weeks and found no peace. Finally he arose in despair and stated to the

young men present that he wanted to warn them against doing as he had done. He had been very wicked and had resisted the Spirit's influence so long that there was no farther hope for him. He plead with them not to put off seeking Christ until it was too late. In that very act of confession joy came to him, and although seven years have passed by he is one of the most faithful and sweet-spirited Christians I know.

These objections and difficulties might be multiplied many times, but I have mentioned the most common. Always bear in mind that you can have no set rules, which you can apply to the cases you meet. These suggestions are for help and not for rules. Put your whole faith in these passages,—John 14:26 ; 16:13 ; James 1:5,—when you go into the inquiry meeting, and although you have prepared yourself to the best of your ability in the knowledge of the Word and in method of work, look ever to that God who is equal to every emergency, and who is ever ready to help us.

CHAPTER XX.

THE RESULTS OF UNBELIEF.

VERY much has been said and written concerning the fact that salvation hinges on so simple a thing as believing, and the statement has often been made that God would be very unjust if he should reject any man for unbelief.

Let us see first of all the disastrous results of unbelief in the church. At Matt. 13:58, we read, "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." At Matt. 17:19, 20, "Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief." Unbelief in the two instances mentioned, prevented in the first case, Jesus from doing much among his own countrymen, and in the second case, his disciples from having power over the demon. Jesus has surely ascended now and is at the right hand of God;—but the devils still are more powerful than many in the church, and for the same reason, unbelief.

Faith removes mountains for the church; unbelief builds them. What we need to-day is a faith that the everliving and omnipresent Christ can and will cast the devils out of the hardest and most vile of sinners, even as He did centuries ago. The risen Lord lost none of His power in the resurrection. Unbelief makes the church of God powerless. Let us plead for that faith whose measure is the grain of mustard seed.

While unbelief prevents the church from exercising that power which is its heritage, and while it hinders the Master from working among and through those who have no faith, it is sure destruction to the unconverted. John 3:18, "But he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." He that does not believe on the name of the Son of God, is already under condemnation. Sin has ruined him, but unbelief leads him unto judgment. Whosoever perishes will not perish because of sin, but because of unbelief. At John 3:36 we read, "And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." This text speaks of the unbeliever as dead ("shall not see life"), and as under the wrath of God. To believe or disbelieve seems at first thought a very little thing, but under the blazing light of the truth there is a chasm between them, which can not be passed. They differ in their results as much as light and darkness differ. Everlasting life to the believer; everlasting death to the disbeliever. No judgment to the believer; condemnation already to the disbeliever. Death behind and eternal joy before the believer; death upon the unbeliever and eternal night before. A resurrection of life to the believer; a resurrection of damnation for the unbeliever (John 2:29). Everlasting life to the believer; everlasting punishment for the unbeliever, (Matt. 25:46.) Who, with the light of the Word shining upon them can say, "It makes but little difference whether we believe or not." *In the eyes of God it makes the difference between life and death!* Let us see if we can, how belief can save us and why unbelief works such terrible results. In the first place, belief is of no avail unless it brings about a line of action. Unbelief

proves destructive only so far as it breeds inactivity. The two statements are no more true in religion than they are true in every thing else. And they are no more true in things secular, than in things religious. No man of any wisdom in the commercial world will engage in any business enterprise unless he *believes* that enterprise will prove successful. His unbelief in a business scheme which has success in it, and his neighbor's belief, will make the difference of failure and success, between them. Four men were sleeping in as many different rooms in the third story of a certain hotel. A messenger came in the night to the door of each room, and cried out that the hotel was on fire, and that every avenue of escape was cut off except through a certain window, from which access to the ground and to safety was to be obtained by a rope. The first man rose immediately, ran to the window, swung out on the rope and slid in safety to the ground. The second man rose from his bed and ran to the window, but did not slide down on the rope and he perished with the building. The third man simply opened his eyes, and then shut them again, turned over and went to sleep and perished. The fourth man did not move at all. Why was there such a diversity of action and such difference in results? The first man heard the message; he sprung from the bed because he believed; he slid down on the rope because he trusted it, and yielded himself to it for salvation. The second man heard the message; he believed it; he ran to the window because he believed it; but he did not dare trust the rope and he was lost. The third man heard the message; he did not believe it; he went to sleep and perished, because of his unbelief. The fourth man did not hear the message. Now let us transfer the case from things earthly to things

heavenly. The message has come to the world that man is lost through sin ; that God through love for us has opened up a way of escape ; that He has sent His Son to lead us to safety. The only thing required of us is to believe the message and trust the messenger, who is our way of escape, *i. e.*, we are to believe the message sufficiently to cause us to flee to the means of escape and trust Him for deliverance. Whoever believes the message and trusts the means of escape will be saved. Whoever believes the message but will not trust the means of escape will be lost. Whoever does not believe the message will be lost. Whoever does not hear the message will be lost. As the men perished in the building through *distrust, unbelief and heedlessness*, so those who perish under the condemnation of God will perish because they do not trust Christ, who is our way of escape ; or because they do not believe the message that they are in danger and need to be saved ; or because they will not listen to the message at all. Belief and unbelief differ in their results by celestial diameters in things pertaining to this life, and not less in those things which pertain to the life eternal.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ sufficiently to trust Him to save you, or you must perish through unbelief.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE JEALOUSY OF LOVE.

THERE is one point which needs special attention, and that is the dark line which runs through the experience of man, and which, according to the Word, if he continue in his sins, does not stop with this life but continues through eternity. How is this consistent with a God of love? There are many who claim to reject the Bible because it teaches that there is, and that there is to be, such a dark line. They say that they reject the Bible and accept the God of nature as their guide. In such cases you have only to point to the fact, too plain to be denied, that that dark line is found in nature, in the experience of man, just the same as it is in the Bible. The Bible is a faithful representation of the experiences of certain individuals. The same experiences have taken place and are taking place outside the realm of Bible history, and under the direction of the God of nature. It is exceedingly foolish to reject the Bible, and flee to nature for safety because of this dark line. The only alternative for one who rejects the Bible, is to go clear over to atheism and deny the existence of any intelligent power whatsoever; and even then it will not change the fact of such an experience one iota. Take the one fact of sin, which is the father of all evils; not the problem of sin, which is a vain speculation outside of the Scripture statement; but the fact of sin. It will

make no difference with the facts, whether we deny the Bible on the ground of its statements concerning sin and the results of sin, or whether we believe it. Sin is a universal fact, as far as this world is concerned, and the results of sin, with the one exception of the duration of these results, are more plainly seen outside of the Bible than in it. To deny this is to deny our very experiences. Let us notice in a general way some of the Scripture statements concerning this dark line. We read of the destruction of the earth's population, with the exception of eight persons; of the destruction of an entire nation by the edge of the sword; of the visitation of plague, of pestilence, and of famine; of the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of a nation to the four corners of the earth; and, finally, that the persistently wicked are to go away into everlasting punishment. If God is a God of love, why is all this? But do not lose sight of this one fact, reject the Bible, and all these facts which I have enumerated remain facts just the same, unless it be the one statement concerning the flood, and that is found in the traditions of every nation on both continents. Nations have been wholly extinguished by barbarous tribes; plagues, pestilence, famine, and drought, have swept off thousands upon thousands; Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, many thousands of the Jews were crucified, and the remnant scattered to the four corners of the earth; besides every life is a book which contains a record of suffering, which, if written out on parchment, the world could not contain. The God of nature and the God of the Bible, who to every believer of the Word are one and the same, have made the same footprints along the track of history. Write the history of the suffering by accident, by pestilence, and war, which

has occurred in the past twenty-five years in these United States alone, and put before the statement "God brought it to pass because of sin," and you will have a record more fearful than that of the Old Testament. Turn which way you will, the dark line is plainly visible. Fly from the Bible because of its dark line, to nature, and you will find the dark line there also. But nature offers no explanation, she gives no refuge; but, while she exhibits this dark line, the Bible puts upon it the silver lining of explanation and causes it to vanish, if we will, in the sunlight of God's love. There are two texts of Scripture which I desire to put side by side, Ex. 20:5, "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me," and John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." These two passages from Scripture both tell of the love of God, though from a different standpoint. The latter from the standpoint of entering into the sufferings of the world that He might redeem it from its sins, and therefore from its sufferings; the former from the standpoint of protecting the object entrusting itself to His love and care. Love manifests itself not only in suffering to the utmost to save, but also *in protecting the object saved*. Jealousy at its best is love protecting the object loved; that is what it is at the throne of God, and along this line is found at least one of the explanations for the dark line in human experience, past, present, and future. Let us illustrate this point.

A certain widowed mother had five sons. The two older sons had become exceedingly wicked, the others were pure and innocent. The mother's love went out

doubly strong to the wayward ones. By manifestations of her love she succeeded in winning back to purity of life one of her boys, but the oldest boy became more wicked than ever. He not only did more wickedly on his own part, but he tried in every way to lead the redeemed boy back into the way of sin, and also to contaminate the three innocent boys. The mother expostulated and pleaded with him in vain. Finally she said, "John, I have done all I can to save you. I love you from the depths of a mother's heart; but now if you will not reform and do rightly you must never cross my threshold again. Your sinful ways will contaminate your brothers, and I can not see them led astray. Until you are ready to live as you ought you must go." Did that mother do rightly? Did she cease to love the wayward boy because she drove him from her home to save the other boys? Ask the gray hairs which crept prematurely into her hair. Ask the deep lines of suffering plowed in that patient face. Ask the pillow wet nightly with her tears. Ask the broken heart, the languid step, the trembling hands. The mother suffers more than the wayward son because of that son's sins. It is one of the awful facts of sin that the innocent in love suffers more than the guilty one loved. This fact made the bloody sweat in the garden of Gethsemane possible *while the disciples slept*. It made the atonement possible, and the death on the cross amid the jeers of the soldiers. *To banish the loved cost more pain on the part of the loving than on the part of the loved one banished*. That mother banished the guilty son to protect the innocent children. She suffered to save the boys, she suffered in banishing the boy.

So this dark line runs through the history of man. It is God's voice warning, entreating, inviting, pro-

protecting the objects loved. God loves the world, *not part of the world, but the world*. He gave of Himself to the uttermost to save the world from its sins because He could not make the world happy in its sins. He suffers to the uttermost in banishing those who will not come to Him that they may have life. Hear the wail of anguish which burst from the lips of the Christ, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" (Luke 13:34.)

Over Heaven's gate the jealousy of the love of God has written, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie," (Rev. 21:27).

For two reasons that is written there :

1. God can not make the impure of heart happy, even though they be in Heaven.
2. He must protect from sin those who have accepted His love, and have yielded themselves to Him, that they might, through regeneration and sanctification of the Spirit, become pure in heart.

These two facts have caused all the suffering of the Son of man. It brought Him from the throne to the manger, and caused Him infinite sorrow.

It is not hatred, but love, such as we see at its best on earth, that banishes the persistently sinful from Heaven, love protecting those objects loved, who have accepted heavenly love and have washed their robes and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE EVERLASTING WORD.

IN Luke 21:33, we read the Master's promise concerning His Word: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Having finished our course of Bible study, it is my purpose to present certain reasons outside of the Word which seem to substantiate the above text. Not that the text needs such proof, but it may furnish us encouragement to glance at those facts outside of the statements of Scripture which demonstrate its everlasting character.

1. The Word of God is everlasting because it has stood centuries of the severest of tests, and has come through them all unharmed. If I could show you a fortress which had stood for nineteen centuries under the fiercest attack of every manner of weapon and every method of warfare which mind of man or devil could conceive, and which still stood without a mar upon its surface or a crack in its foundation, you would at least say that it bade fair to stand the test of centuries to come. Here is a fortress which has stood such a test. Each and all the forces of man or demon have made no impression upon it. It stands; it will stand! Let shell screech and cannon roar; let earthquakes shake and lightning smite, God's Word is everlasting.

The answer to infidelity is the present popularity of the Word to-day. No age has seen it greater. The

Bible is the text book of 300,000,000 souls, and until infidelity can write a better book, its popularity will increase.

2. The Word of God is everlasting simply as a classic. There is but little great classic literature. There are but few productions which have stood the test of centuries. Such are the following: Homer, Plato's "Laws" and "Republic," the writings of Aristotle, Virgil, Cicero, Dante, Schiller, Gœthe, Kant, Bacon, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Wordsworth and Milton. When I have mentioned these, according to the best judges of literature, I have mentioned the world's best. But the catalogue is not yet complete. According to the same judges I must also mention the five books of Moses, the Psalms of David, the Prophecy of Isaiah, the Gospel of St. John and the Writings of St. Paul. These in the judgment of scholars, judged purely on their literary merits, are to be placed, not on the same level with the other classic authors named, but above them. I am amused when I hear some infidel saying, "the Bible will some day be forgotten." As a classic it is everlasting, and preserved as a classic, *its doctrines will be preserved forever.*

3. It is everlasting because it has had, and has to-day, the approval and endorsement of the very best minds,—Clement, Origen, Jerome, Chrysostom, Huss, Luther, Calvin, Milton, Isaac Newton, Franklin, Edwards, McCosh,—but it is useless to attempt to mention the thousands of illustrious men, the stamp of whose approval is upon the Book. It is sufficient to say that the eminent men of today above all other days, are most emphatic in their adherence to it. Thomas Carlisle pronounced the Book of Job "the sublimest poem of all the ages." Guizot declared his firm belief in the history of the Old Testament, as well

as the evangelical christianity of the New Testament. Locke died listening to the music of the Psalms he loved. Ruskin and Webster attributed their literary merits to it. Emerson who wrote,

“ Out of the heart of nature rolled
The burden of the Bible, old,”

said the Bible was the best read book in his house. Wendell Phillips, who asked no man's praise, and who never said anything because others liked or disliked it, said, “The Bible is a book of facts as well authenticated as any heathen history ; a book of miracles incontestably avouched ; a book of prophecy confirmed by past as well as present fulfillment ; a book of poetry pure and natural and elevated even to inspiration ; a book of morals such as human wisdom never framed for the perfection of human happiness.” But enough has been said to confirm the point stated. The Word of God is everlasting because it meets the approval and has the endorsement of the best minds.

4. The Word of God is everlasting because the investigations of science are showing that it is in harmony with the nature of things. I will not stop to specify, but refer to such eminent authorities as Dawson and Dana and Young and Beale for confirmation, only stating that at least eighty per cent of the scientists of today are firm believers in the Bible, which would not be the case if their study of nature disproved its statements.

One thing further is worthy of mention in this connection. While the Bible is not a text book for science, while it does not teach that the earth is a spheroid, and that it travels round the sun, it is marvelous, that it does not contain any of the false ideas concerning the earth and the heavenly systems, etc., etc., though composed during that period when the world

held most preposterous ideas concerning them. It would take as much inspiration to steer clear of the mistakes of mankind in this direction, as it would to state the whole truth. The Word is everlasting, because its teachings are in harmony with nature when it speaks, and though it is often silent on those points which man can discover by his own investigation, it does not contradict nature.

5. The Word is everlasting because it is more popular today than ever. Voltaire prophesied its entire overthrow long ere this. But more Bibles are printed and read today than ever. Its popularity has grown with the centuries. People by the millions are gathered together every week to study it. The more they study it the more they love it. Those with whom the Bible is not popular, never *study* it.

6. The Word is everlasting because it touches the deepest needs of the human heart. As long as there is a burdened heart, the "come" of Jesus will have an audience. As long as there are friends and loved ones leaving us in death, the twenty-third Psalm and the fourteenth chapter of St. John will be remembered. As long as there is a sinner anxious to be freed from sin, the Son of man who came to seek and to save the lost will be loved and followed.

7. The Word of God is everlasting because Jesus said it. We can lay aside all other facts and trust the testimony. We have spoken about man endorsing the Word. It needs no such endorsement. It carries in itself the reason for its being given to man, and its own power for perpetuating it. Listen to the words of God, troubled soul! Harken to His promises and find rest of mind and peace of soul, "O that thou hadst harkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of

the sea.” Eternity looks down upon us through the pages of the Word. Hundreds of generations have read its promises, have obeyed its commandments and have believed its prophecies. Centuries ago the words of the law, which we now hear, Moses recited to the wandering Israelites in the desert. Centuries ago the curses and blessings we now read, were uttered from Mounts Ebal and Gerizim. For centuries, humanity burdened with sin, has sung the Psalms of David, read and loved the Sermon on the Mount, studied the life of the Great Master. And “the oaks of the mountains shall fall, the mountains themselves decay with years,” but the last head of the last man will be pillowed upon it; and though the heavens are rolled together as a scroll, and the earth melt with fervent heat, through the cycles of a never ending eternity, immortal spirits who have loved the Bible here will love it there. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the Word of God shall endure forever.

THE END.

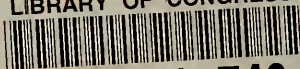
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