

The
Gospel Magazine

And Protestant Beacon :

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

The British Protestant

EDITED BY THOMAS HOUGHTON

(74, Church Road, Redfield, Bristol, 5).

C O N T E N T S

	Page		Page
The Family Portion :		Protestant Beacon:	
The Door of the Shepherd of the Sheep - - -	225	The Absent Gospel - -	248
Magazine Notes :		Miscellaneous Papers :	
Parental Responsibility -	231	A Man Who Becomes a Christian - - -	230
Pilgrim Papers :		Only Once - - -	235
Wellsprings - - -	236	" It Is I " - - -	245
Sermons and Notes of Sermons :		The Bible Idea of God -	246
Tempted of the Devil - -	238	The Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society - - -	247
Our Young Folks' Page :		Heaven's Day - - -	249
The Lost Child - - -	242	Precious Things - - -	250
In Memoriam:		Standardising Repentance -	254
Mr. F. W. Bird, of Pasadena, California, U.S.A. - - -	244	Cost of Sex Equality - -	255

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THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE

"COMFORT YE, COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE, SAITH YOUR GOD."
"ENDEAVOURING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE."
"JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER."

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The Family Portion :

OR, WORDS OF SPIRITUAL CAUTION, COUNSEL, AND COMFORT.

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 CORINTHIANS i. 4.

THE DOOR OF THE SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP

"I am the Door : by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved."
"I am the good Shepherd : the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep."—JOHN x. 9, 11.

THE tenth chapter of John's Gospel contains a great deal of truth concerning Christ and His sheep. It speaks of Him as the Door into the sheepfold, as the Shepherd of the sheep. The chapter opens by the Lord saying, "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." These words have reference to an under-shepherd of the sheep, for our Lord goes on to say, "But he that entereth in by the door is a shepherd of the sheep" (R.V.). Our Lord is speaking to Pharisees (chap. ix. 42; x. 1). His words have reference in the first place to *Jewish* sheep. In Old Testament times the true sheep of Christ had many under-shepherds whom our Lord describes as thieves and robbers. They did not enter by the door into the sheepfold, but climbed up some other way. Christ, both in Old Testament times and in New Testament times, is the Door of the sheep. He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the Door of the sheep" (verse 7). Then He adds, "All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers : but the sheep did not hear them." Those whom He describes as thieves and robbers climbed up into the sheepfold some other way. They did not enter by the door. They did not recognise Him as the Door. They did not believe in Him. All such were thieves and robbers. Mercifully, however, the true sheep, the true believers, did not hear them. They had experienced

the Spirit's regenerating, sanctifying and justifying operations in their hearts. Hence they did not hear these false shepherds. Only a true shepherd is heard and followed by the sheep. Christ is both the Door and the good Shepherd, and all the true sheep are associated with Him.

1. FIRST, LET US THINK OF HIM AS THE DOOR.

He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the Door of the sheep." There is no other door into the sheepfold. Anyone who climbs into the sheepfold some other way is a thief and a robber. A thief enters by some other way to steal, to kill, and to destroy. Anyone who claims to exercise shepherd functions and who does not own Christ as the Door into the sheepfold is an enemy to the sheep, and really seeks to destroy them. Christ says, "I am the Door, by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." He is the only way into the sheepfold. He is the only way to the Father. Only through Him may we approach the Father for His pardoning mercy. Only through Him can we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. He was born a Saviour. He came to save His people from their sins. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came into the world to save sinners. Those who enter the fold by faith in Him are saved and they find pasture under His guidance and teaching. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters" (Psalm xxiii. 2). "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come (*i.e.*, Christ) that they might have life, and may have abundance." He gives to *all His sheep eternal life*, and they shall never perish (John x. 10, 28). Let us hold fast the truth that Christ is the only door into the fold. Let us also give careful heed to Christ's teaching about false shepherds. "Beware," He says, "of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. vii. 15). We are bidden to "try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John iv. 1). It matters a great deal what place of worship we attend. There can be no doubt that there are many false teachers in the professing Church, and we are to beware of them, for our own sake, and for the sake of our children.

2. SECONDLY, LET US THINK OF CHRIST AS THE SHEPHERD.

He is "the *good* Shepherd." He is good to His sheep, concerned about their well-being and safety. A mere hireling, who does not own the sheep, careth not for the sheep, but is concerned for his

own safety. He sees the wolf coming and fleeth, and the wolf comes and scatters the sheep. Christ is the Owner of the sheep, and so loves them that He giveth His life for the sheep.

(1) *His goodness is pre-eminently seen in His laying down His life for the sheep.*

When the sheep are convicted of sin by the Holy Ghost, they are impelled to say, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." They have gone astray from God. They have, every one of them, turned to their own way. "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. . . . Destruction and misery are in their ways. . . . There is no fear of God before their eyes." All the world is guilty before God (Rom. iii. 12-19). Hence no flesh can be justified by nature, in His sight. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The wages of their sin is death. All are in danger of hell. Christ, God's eternal and beloved Son, however, is the *good* Shepherd. He loved His sheep and He came into the world "to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28). Hence He says, "The good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." Every member of His flock is enabled to say, "He loved me and gave Himself for me." It was His love to me, a poor, unworthy, hell-deserving sinner, that led Him to lay down His life for me. He hath "once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Peter iii. 18). "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. . . . The Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all." And "He bare our sins in His Own body on the tree" (Isa. liii. 5, 6; 1 Peter ii. 24, 25). Thus it can be said to all His sheep whom He has brought back to the fold, "Ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."

The good Shepherd laid down His life *voluntarily* for the sheep. He says, "No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father" (John x. 18). Being absolutely sinless and good Himself, He had no sins of His Own, but the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of others and He bare its full penalty in His Own body on the tree. But He did all this voluntarily. Neither Herod, Pontius Pilate, the people of Israel with the Gentiles could have touched Him without His Own permission. He had power to lay down His life for the sheep, and He

had power to take it again. This commandment He had received from the Father. Voluntarily He said "It is finished," and voluntarily "He bowed His head, and gave up the Ghost" (John xix. 30). And, let us never forget, *He laid down His life for the sheep out of love to them—eternal love.* "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10, 11). "Beloved, if God so loved us, we (*let us not forget*) ought also to love one another."

Truly the Lord Jesus is indeed the *good Shepherd*.

3. THIRDLY, LET US THINK OF WHAT CHRIST SAYS OF HIS SHEEP.

(1) *First He speaks of "the sheep" and "other sheep."*

Speaking in verse 8 of the false shepherds who were before Him as "thieves and robbers," He says "the sheep did not hear them." These sheep were Christ's sheep in Old Testament times. They were divinely preserved from taking heed to those shepherds who entered the fold, not by the door, but by climbing up some other way. These sheep belonged to the House of Israel. They were Jews, but they were true sheep of the good Shepherd. But he had other sheep besides the Jewish sheep, Gentile sheep no doubt. The great majority of these "other sheep" were yet unborn, but Christ had them in His mind. They, along with the Jewish sheep, were Christ's sheep, and He was their Shepherd and was about to lay down His life for them.

(2) *He speaks of His concern for these other sheep.*

They did not belong to the Jewish fold. "Other sheep I have which are not of *this* fold." Yet they were His sheep and He was their Shepherd. "Them also I must bring," He says. They had wandered away, or would later on be amongst the sheep who had wandered away. Millions of them in countries all over the world would be born away from God and from their predestined Shepherd. But He says, "Them also I must bring." He was about to lay down His life for them. His death would be followed by His resurrection and ascension to heaven. Even so, these sheep would be the objects of His concern and love. However far they had wandered away, He felt He must bring them back. True, He would give the command to preach the Gospel to every creature, but He Himself would go with His messengers the missionaries, and would operate upon the minds of the sheep who would hear their Gospel message, and bring them into the experience of His saving mercies. He would speak to them through His Gospel Word and through His servants who preached it. "They shall hear My voice," and they shall become *one flock, one Shepherd*. (See R.V. John x. 16). Thus the

salvation of all Christ's sheep is guaranteed by the promise and power of the good Shepherd. He alone is the Saviour of the sheep. Not by chance are they saved, nor by human decision to bring about their own salvation. Christ brings them. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost" (Luke xix. 10). Let us not forget that He is *now seeking the lost sheep* in all the countries of the world, and He means not only to seek the sheep, but to save them. The sheep thus saved become *one flock*. There is really but *one flock, one body, one Church*.

(3) *He speaks of His relationship to these sheep.*

They were all given to Him by His Father. He says, "My Father which gave them Me" (John x. 29). Yet though the Father gave them to Him, He still retained them, for Christ says, "I and My Father are one." The sheep given to Christ are in Christ's hand. They are also still in His Father's hand. Christ says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, *neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.*" He also says, "My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and *no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand.*" Thus all the sheep are ever secure, and they shall never cease to be safe in the hand of their Shepherd, and in the hand of His Father.

(4) *Christ speaks of His knowledge of the sheep and their knowledge of Him.*

He says, "I am the good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine" (John x. 14). He knows those whom the Father has given Him. Wherever they are and whosoever they are He knows them. There is no danger of His failing to discover them whom He is seeking to save. "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). All the sheep shall come to Him and He will welcome all who come. He knows the sheep whom the Father hath given Him. He seeks them and He certainly finds them. (See Luke xv. 4). The good Shepherd goeth after that which is lost until he finds it. Let us repeat the truth that Christ both *seeks and saves*.

How much we need to take full heed to what Christ says of His sheep in this chapter. He will not be disappointed in His work for, and His eternal love for, the sheep. There is no uncertainty in regard to the salvation of all the sheep. They will all come to Him. He will welcome them all. He will seek, find, and save them all, and He will keep and preserve them all. By all means let us preach His Gospel to every creature. Let the Gospel sound over all the

world, but let us preach it in faith and in dependence on the power of His Spirit. Let us beware of resorting to evil methods and worldly means. His Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and He intends that they shall believe, and has said, "*Them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and they shall become one flock under one Shepherd.*"

What a mercy there is no mere chance in regard to the eternal salvation of the company of Christ's sheep.

THE EDITOR

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A MAN WHO BECOMES A CHRISTIAN

A MAN who becomes a Christian is a man who has come to realise his own utter helplessness. We were dealing with that last time. He has come to realise his need of mercy, his need of forgiveness. He is the man who has said, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." He is a man who has come to see that he cannot get rid of the sense of guilt himself, he cannot find peace and rest for his heart and mind as the result of anything he does, and he is a man who in desperation turns to God, the God Whom he has offended, and says to himself, "My only hope is in God, the only One Who can give me peace is the One I have offended most of all." So he casts himself upon His love and compassion and mercy.

There, I say, is the point at which we have arrived, that no man is a Christian until he says in some shape or form:—

"Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come."

The man who does not realise he needs forgiveness is not a Christian. You can call him a moral man if you like, call him an ethical person, call him anything you like. I do not deny he may be all those things; but I say a man literally cannot be a Christian unless he realises he is a sinner and needs forgiveness and mercy and compassion from God, and cries out for it. It is one of those essential things without which one has no right whatsoever to the great and exalted name of Christian.—DR. B. MARTYN LLOYD-JONES.

Wayside Notes

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”—DEUTERONOMY vi. 6, 7.

IN this chapter Moses is continuing his address to all Israel, which he began in the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy. In that chapter he repeated to them the ten commandments of the Decalogue. In the sixth chapter he goes on to refer to the commandments, statutes and judgments which the Lord commanded him to teach them. He reminds them that if it were to be well with them, and if their days were to be prolonged, they needed to keep God's commands and to walk in His ways. He exhorted them to “love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their might.” Our Lord, later on, said, “This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matt. xxii. 36-40). Thus Moses specially enjoined obedience to the ten commandments on the children of Israel, and to the parental heads of families he enjoined, “Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.” Here was one of the great duties of parents to their children.

Later on, Solomon was inspired to say, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Prov. xx. 6).

In Apostolic times Paul enjoined the children of the Ephesian church in these words: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long upon the earth.” This teaches us that the ten commandments are binding upon Christians, though they are not justified or saved by their own obedience to the law. Then the Apostle adds, “Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.” (See Ephes. vi. 1-4, R.V.). These verses show that “no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral” (Article vii.).

Thus when Moses said to the parental heads of households in Israel, "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart : and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children," he was saying words which in effect Paul said to the fathers belonging to the Church in Ephesus. The words of Moses, said hundreds of years ago, may rightly be applied to Christian parents today, though we rightly add to them the whole of the teaching concerning the Gospel of the grace of God. The children of Christian parents today need to be increasingly taught, parental responsibility for the godly upbringing of children needs to be more abundantly realised. Godly homes need to be kept up and the tendency to let them die out needs to be firmly and jealously resisted. Parents need to be jealous for their children's spiritual welfare, and children need increasingly to honour their fathers and mothers.

Let us ponder the teaching of Moses the prophet in regard to parental responsibility.

1. WE ARE TAUGHT THAT DIVINE TEACHING NEEDS TO BE IN THE HEARTS OF PARENTS.

"These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." Ye, who are Christian parents, need to be well-versed in the Scriptures. It ought to be possible for it to be said of your children, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. iii. 15). How came Timothy to know the Holy Scriptures from being a child? He had a godly mother and a godly grandmother, and "unfeigned faith" dwelt in them both (2 Tim. i. 5). No Christian should marry an unbelieving woman, and no Christian parent should be content to be otherwise than "mighty in the Scriptures." How can Scripture truth be taught to thy children if thou art ignorant of it thyself? Perhaps, however, you will say they will be taught Scripture at school. Can you really trust the kind of religious teaching now given in large numbers of schools, whether public schools, or day schools, or secondary schools? Do you not know that sacerdotal and modernistic teaching abounds in a large number of schools today? Hence your children's religious education mainly depends on yourselves.

2. SECONDLY, NOTICE THAT DIVINE TEACHING NEEDS TO BE GIVEN BY PARENTS THEMSELVES.

Of course, we fully recognise that no human teaching can regenerate and save either children or grown-up people. It is of the

Holy Spirit that our Lord says, "He shall teach you all things." But God in His mercy uses the teaching of His Word given prayerfully by godly parents to their children. Of such teaching the prophet says, "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children." We know of two godly parents who kept their children back from the so-called Scripture lesson at school and divided their children into two classes after breakfast, and then the father taught Scripture to one of the classes and the mother taught it to the other class for twenty minutes, and then the children, either at home or at a school, engaged in their secular lessons. Let us remember the words of Moses to the parents: "*Thou, thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.*" Let us remember *the responsibility of the parent to teach*. Beware of handing the teaching of religious knowledge to those who teach error. This applies also to the place of worship to which you take them on the Lord's Day. It also applies to the public school to which you may send them, if you do send them away from home. It also applies if you send your young men to a University. In many University towns today there is often no really definitely Evangelical church to which your sons can go on the Lord's Day. There is so much spiritual danger today that there is danger if we think too much of what is called a good education. The best education is spiritual education under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, and through the Scriptures which He has inspired. We do not decry secular education, but we feel it is absolutely *secondary*.

3. THIRDLY, NOTICE THAT DIVINE TEACHING NEEDS TO BE GIVEN WHEN THE PARENT IS SITTING IN HIS HOUSE.

"Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and *shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house.*" The godly parent is out at work or business a large part of the day, but he is not to neglect his wife and family. Sitting at home with his family is part of his duty. Where we are living now we are much impressed with the existence of tap-rooms in public houses. At 10 p.m. men and women, presumably fathers and mothers, instead of being at home, come out of tap-rooms where they seem to have spent hours. The parent has not been at home sitting in his house with his wife and family. In some cases no doubt the wife has been at work in the house all day, and in the evening, instead of having the joy and pleasure of her husband's presence he has been in the tap-room away both from his wife and children. Then, where are many of the children? We read much of *youth clubs* in these days. Moses assumed that the children and the parents would be sitting together

in their homes. Paul the Apostle seems to have assumed the same thing when he said, "Ye fathers, nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." Solomon, too, when he enjoined the parent to train up children in the way they should go, must have assumed that the parent would have stayed at home with his children when he had finished his outside work. But, as things are, home life is dying out. Parental responsibility is ignored. Tap-rooms, cinemas and youth clubs, dancing and ballrooms are taking the place of home life. Family prayer and family instruction are either being shelved altogether, or pushed into a corner, and hurriedly given. The Apostle John says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John ii. 15, 16). Ye people of God, your Lord has chosen you *out of the world*. You and your families have no business to be of the world. You should be amongst those of whom it is said, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world" (1 John v. 4). Can you honestly believe that the Lord smiles upon you if you encourage attendance at balls, worldly entertainments, cinemas and theatres? Can you kneel down and ask the Lord to go with you to such places? You know that crime is increasing among children, and it is thought that the films at cinemas have an evil effect upon children and even affect their nerves. You know that many owners of cinemas open them on the Lord's Day where the people of a town or city agree to their doing so. Is not that enough to convince you that neither you nor your children should attend such places? We personally have never attended a cinema nor a theatre in our long life, and we have never felt the need of doing so. Oh, whatever the world may do about home life and family life, let us not be guilty of substituting youth clubs, tap-rooms and worldly amusements for happy, bright and godly homes. Can we say in reference to our own homes, "The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous"? (Psalm cxviii. 15). We really need to make time to sit down in our homes with our families.

4. THEN, WHAT ABOUT THE TIME WHEN "THOU WALKEST BY THE WAY, AND WHEN THOU LIEST DOWN, AND WHEN THOU RISEST UP"?

Here is more parental responsibility. Look again at Deuteronomy vi. 7. The words of Moses suggest that parents, occasionally at

least, should take a walk with their children, and that when they walk by the way with their children they should make reference occasionally to spiritual matters, as well as when they are teaching them at home. The whole teaching of Moses in this passage emphasises the importance of home life, and that in the walks of parents with their children, God's Word should have a place. Further, the prophet teaches that the whole family needs to be largely together both when the parent lies down and when he rises up—so that in some degree Divine truth may be talked about to the children. In other words, family life should be encouraged. We commend this passage to the consideration of godly parents everywhere, and we would warn them that much that is now becoming popular needs to be avoided.

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ONLY ONCE

SOME parents esteem it to be the best policy to let their children go to a theatre or circus *only once*, to gratify their curiosity, or to get rid of their importunity. Why so? If it is right to visit such places at all, why not let them go more frequently? but if wrong, why countenance them in sinning *only once*? Why not, on the same policy, permit them to gratify themselves once in other sins? Let them get drunk or visit a gambling house *only once*, that they may have personal experience in the matter. We have sometimes said to such parents: "Are you sure that *only once* will satisfy them? May not the first experiment excite in them a taste which *once* will not satisfy?"

If you put your children fairly on the road to ruin, is it certain that after one step they will voluntarily turn back? If they go *once* with your permission, may they not be inclined to go often without it? If they see you have no fixed uncompromising principle on the subject, can you expect them, in their experience, to have any? It is false reasoning to urge that if young people are not permitted to indulge themselves occasionally in this way, they will do it by stealth; for this is as much as to say, that if children will sin, it is better for them to do it with their parents' consent. No; let parents be resolute and immovable in their principles, and their example and authority will go far to restrain the children from vice; and if they should fail in this effect, the parents will at least have the consolation of reflecting, that they never, by word or act, encouraged their offspring to run in the way of temptation.—*Presbyterian*, and reprinted in *The Friendly Companion*.

Pilgrim Papers.

WELLSPRINGS

“And He said to them all, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.”

—LUKE ix. 23.

THE Lord had been performing some of His mighty works and uttering some of His powerful words in this chapter. He had been calling out His twelve disciples and giving them their instructions as to how they should walk before men whilst they were doing as He had commanded them. Theirs was to *preach* and look to God for their daily needs and provision. In verse 10 we have a lesson on humility; in verse 12 a miracle is performed by their Lord and Master; in verse 17 a question is put to them as to Whom He was as regards the people; and then the heart-rending words, “But Whom say ye that I am?” and how following Him would mean cross-bearing and suffering, so that it would be no light nor easy thing to follow their Lord and Master. “Let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me,” and if not borne, and that with suffering, such an one “is not worthy of Me” (Matt. x. 38). All the living family of Zion know, some more and some less, that following their Lord means endurance and suffering. It is as David said, “My soul followest hard after Thee” (Psalm lxxviii. 8). It is as Paul warned the early Church, “Ye *must* through much tribulation enter the Kingdom.” If God’s family did not suffer, where would be the need of the promised help and strength and grace from on high? It is His Word that has promised it and it is He Who has pledged Himself to keep the weakest, feeblest and meanest of His flock. And a faithful Keeper is He indeed! “Of them that Thou hast given Me I have lost none”—not one. When they stray, He goes after them “until He find it.” He keeps His eye upon the wandering one until the poor silly sheep has come to the end of all its resources and, torn and bleeding, he is brought home upon the shoulder of the Great Shepherd with rejoicing.

“But none of the ransomed ever knew

How deep were the waters crossed,

Nor how dark was the night which the Lord passed through

Ere He found His sheep that was lost!”

Now we see, then, how our text contains a solemn warning that His followers must expect suffering in a witnessing life. God’s people must not expect a rosy and smooth path. “Ye *must* through much tribulation enter the Kingdom.” The end is reached only after heavy and long endurance. “He that endureth to the end shall be saved.” Poor Peter had to go through his great and Divine testings until the spirit of humility was attained in God’s end. He

who had in his zeal and warm love for his Master just declared "If all men deny Thee, yet will not I," was soon caught in the snare and awful fall. And not one of us know how weak and frail we are until put to the test. I recall a very solemn and telling reply of an aged servant of God many years ago. I refer to the Rev. W. Adams, near Leicester, on whom the saintly Rolleston went to call. The Rev. W. Rolleston, of Scraftoft, had the joy of seeing one of his young hearers brought to a saving knowledge of Jesus, and in his zeal and Christian love he took his young friend over to introduce to the aged servant of Christ. All that Mr. Adams did was to take her hand as he said solemnly, "He that endureth *to the end* shall be saved." Dear "K.B.," so well known in the pages of our magazine, did indeed "endure to the end," and by the exceeding grace of her God glorified Him in a pathway of trial and sorrow and acute suffering at the end.

Ah! each dear child of God who reads these pages knows full well that theirs is a daily cross to be taken up. The trials of faith vary much, but they are apportioned by heavenly wisdom and He knows exactly with what weight and measure to try by cross and cup. The eye of the Heavenly Father is always on *the end* of the trial or sorrow which shall bring His child most blessing and to Him the glory. It was Stephen Charnock who wrote so truly of how "Afflictions make the beginning sad; whilst patience will make the success glorious. The more we trust God, the more is He concerned for our welfare. God hath always an eye upon them that fear Him, not to keep distress and affliction from them, but to give them new fruit from the rod. God brings us into straits, that we may have more lively experiments of His tenderness and wisdom." Ah! cross-bearing is no light matter, nor easy thing—self is not denied readily; nor is the ear glad when it has to hear the solemn words, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God," to lie low at His feet until that due season when He will see fit to exalt. Oh, dear readers, it is a lesson beyond us, except as He teaches and imparts His all-sufficient grace. We are least humble when we think ourselves most humble. Humility is a precious grace and fruit of the Holy Spirit. When the Lord would use us, it is when we are in weakness that the power of His strength may be known. He chooses the weak things, the despised things, the base things, the foolish things. That the vessels of His mercy may learn "it is not of might, nor of power, but by His Spirit," and that *all* the glory shall be His. There is always need and room for humbling. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time," and the call is to take up our cross, deny ourselves and follow Him, however difficult and hard the way, and however much we are despised by the world and its professors. Yet the end has always God's glory in view, and we shall be "satisfied."

R.

Sermons and Notes of Sermons.

TEMPTED OF THE DEVIL

A SERMON PREACHED AT ST. MARY-LE-PORT CHURCH, BRISTOL, BY
THE LATE REV. JAMES ORMISTON, RECTOR.

PART II.

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil."—MATTHEW iv. 1.

THEN if we consider for a few moments the nature of the temptation to which the Son of man so graciously and condescendingly subjected Himself—what was it? I take it the whole Man was tempted, body, soul, and spirit. Further, I take it, the temptation was a most real one. You know there was no principle of sin, of course not, in Jesus to which Satan could appeal. And therein the temptations of Jesus, the Son of man, differ from our temptations. Our temptations because we are already sinners in nature are appeals from without to simply manifest ourselves as to what we are. In the Lord Jesus there was no sin unto which Satan could appeal. "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me"—*hath nothing in Me*. In you and me he has a nature something like his own to which he can appeal, and to us as fallen ones sin is a natural thing. I repeat my words, to sin is natural, a natural thing, with us. We only bring forth fruit according to our kind when we sin. We *are* sinners and therefore we sin, whereas in the Lord Jesus there was no sin. What then? Why, as I have remarked at the outset, Satan was *permitted* to call forth the character of Jesus, the holiness, the purity, the spotlessness of Jesus, His devotion to His Father's will. He would not lift a finger though all power was His to relieve even His bodily necessities, seeing that it was His Father's will that He should pass through those forty days and forty nights. There, was the *body* of Jesus tempted. Jesus really hungered. It was no simulation as to hunger in His case. It was real hunger. I was thinking in connection with this address of the exhausted condition of that human frame, that sinless human frame, at the end of those forty days and forty nights of exposure and fasting, day and night without shelter. At the first, as a Babe, He was laid in the manger, and now He is found at thirty years of age practically an outcast in the wilds of the desert, amongst the wild beasts that found their prey there. Also I was thinking how His Father watched over Him, protected Him from harm, just as Daniel in the den of lions was preserved by Him in Whom the prophet trusted. So the Son of man trusted Himself fully into His Father's hands, and was preserved from all bodily hurt during those forty days and nights in the waste howling

wilderness. And so when the devil came and said, "Now relieve Thy bodily necessities. It has just been declared from Heaven that Thou art the Son of God, how then is it thus with Thee that Thou shouldest be where Thou art? That Thy surroundings should be what they are? That Thou shouldest not be provided with even the necessaries of life? If Thou art the Son of God relieve Thyself, stretch forth the hand of Thy power, convert these wilderness stones into bread, satisfy Thyself." Now His Father's will was otherwise, was the opposite of this, and therefore He refused at Satan's dictation to violate His Father's plan, His Father's commandment. His words implied, No, there is something better than bread. Though bread be a human necessity here, see, there is something better than bread. The words that come out of My Father's lips are to Me better than bread. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Jesus knew what words His Father had spoken to Him, and Jesus had meat to eat that the devil knew not of. He was living on His Father's faithfulness and love. He was trusting His Father's promise to deliver Him. Great promises and precious had the Father spoken to His dear Son when He sent Him forth from His bosom. And then He had so recently given Him this assurance, there was heard "a Voice from Heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased," and Jesus would not by any independent act of His mar the pleasure of His Father. The Father had just said, "I am well pleased in Him," and Jesus would say in His heart, "I will do My Father's pleasure. I will go where My Father would have Me go, I will bear what My Father would have Me bear, and I will do what My Father would have Me do. And so Christ, I repeat it, had meat to eat in the wilderness that the devil knew not of. He could only judge of His outward circumstances. And, I think, dear friends, this is a comfortable thought for the Lord's people that the devil cannot in any way whatever touch, and so defile, the portion of blessing that our Heavenly Father vouchsafes to us in the presence of temptation and under the burdens appointed us, and in the conflicts and the cares that upset us. The devil cannot, I repeat, touch, and so pollute, what the Lord gives us in our souls. He can only judge of the outward circumstances, and as he taunted our blessed Master, so he will taunt us and say, "How is it that it is thus with thee, seeing that thou art a child of God? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Has He shut up His bowels of tender mercy, and turned His face away from thee?" And there is an answer of a good conscience toward God granted in such a case. The child of God has a reserve, if I may so say, within the heart that Satan knows not of and which the Lord will not suffer Satan to steal away. There is in the heart a witness of the Spirit, I am God's child, therefore I leave to my Heavenly Father the

disposal of my person and the disposal of my circumstances, the disposal of my events, all that has been, is, or shall be let me confess the hand of the Lord in it all. *There* is the secret of the Lord which is with them that fear Him. It is thus that He keeps His covenant that His people may know it, and therefore their times of persecution at the hands of the great tempter are not necessarily their worst times, they may by sanctifying use be made far otherwise, even very profitable times.

In the fourth chapter of Hebrews, the 15th verse, it is said of Jesus, "He was in all points tempted," *in all points*. It is a very strong original in that place—"every way." In all things that you can conceive Jesus was tried, He was proved, and "yet without sin," without the principle of sin in relation to the temptation, and without sinning under the temptation. And so the original implies "*apart from sin*," not only without sin, not only without sinning—that was quite true, that was the root of the matter, but *apart from sin altogether*. Sin had no *part* in it, sin had *no place* in it, *no concern* in it. Just when Satan was at his worst in malignity Jesus stood unmoved, unchanged in His holiness, in His purity. Just as Jesus could touch a leper and receive no defilement from the touch, so, dear friends, Jesus received no defilement from Satan's attacks, no defilement in His soul. His spirit remained as pure as ever though He hearkened, for He knew it to be His Father's counsel to hearken, to the words of the devil. Oh, I think it must have been during those moments when Satan was actually quoting Scripture, mis-quoting it, the Scriptures of God's Truth, it must have been a profound degradation to the Lord Jesus to have to hearken to the words of Truth garbled in the lips of the devil. Oh, how He must have shrunk during those moments at hearing these things because He did so love His Father's Word. You know, I love to think that the 1st Psalm belongs to Jesus, that He is *the blessed Man*; that it is Jesus Who speaks through the 119th Psalm with its 176 verses which so magnify God's Word above all His Name, and that the devil should bring the Bible under his arm when he came to attack Jesus was, to my mind, of all things the most abhorrent in our Redeemer's sight. Satan, dear friends, is well acquainted with the Bible. It was to Satan that Jehovah, in Paradise, spake the word, to Satan the tempter, "Thou shall bruise His heel, He shall bruise thy head." Satan never forgot. During the ensuing four thousand years he was waiting the time when he should be able to bruise just the holy heel with the inevitable result that his own head should be bruised and his kingdom destroyed. And for this purpose was Jesus manifested, that He might destroy, or, as the original is, *undo*, the work of the devil—undo it. Satan did it; Jesus came to undo it. The Lord Jesus undertook to meet Satan single-handed. Now, said Satan, is my hour. Now let me bruise Thee. And so immediately Jesus was baptised into the work Satan appears on the scene

to begin the conflict. There was in a sense a bruising of the holy heel in this first experience of the baptised Redeemer in the wilderness, for the whole subsequent career of Jesus was conflict with the devil, not as here face to face in his own proper person, for Satan, defeated at the end of the forty days and forty nights, departed for a season, it is said, from Jesus. But he returned, not however as he had departed, Satan after this worked through men. He uses media through which to attack the Lord Jesus, less face to face than circuitously. Sometimes he used wicked men. Sometimes it was the Pharisees, the Sadducees, or the Herodians, for his attacks; or the Jews as a body, or the high priests and the Levites, or the common people. At other times he used slander. Think, dear friends, how they all who were His Own disciples forsook Him and left Him in the hour of His greatest distress. Think how Peter with oaths and curses denied all knowledge of Jesus. Think of Judas the traitor, numbered with the twelve, who had part and lot in the ministry apostolic, and yet you see he was a devil from the beginning. And thus it was Satan continued his attacks though he varied the instruments, varied the methods of assault; he set his heart upon bruising the holy heel and, I say, he never relented. But the victory belonged to the Lord Jesus. At the end of those forty days, Jesus having repeatedly resisted the devil at the point of the sword, the sword of the Word, Satan for a while left Him.

Now what had Jesus—may I use the word—profited as Son of man? Oh, He had learned by such an experience and He had hereby been qualifying Himself to become a merciful and faithful High Priest. Oh, it was by the love, first, He bore His Father, and next by the love He bore His brethren, that He thus submitted to be tempted of the devil, that he thus submitted during those forty days and forty nights to meet the devil single-handed and face to face, was in all points tempted like we are yet apart from sin that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest. "We have not a High Priest Who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," we have *not* such a High Priest, but in Jesus we have a High Priest Who is touched compassionately with a sense of our infirmities, "Who knows what sore temptations mean," as the hymn says, "for He has felt the same." And so we come to Him, not only for sympathy, *that* we are assured of, but we come to Him for succour, *for succour*. As Son of man He suffered in temptation, as Son of God He can succour the tempted. But then there comes in this beautiful element of human sympathy. It was *the Man* Christ Jesus Who was tempted and we are men, tempted men, and because we are thus tempted He can enter in sympathy into all our conflicts, internal and external, and supply all need according to His Own riches in grace.

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil."

Our Young Folks' Page.

THE LOST CHILD

My friend and I were looking at books and cards in the fancy department of a large shop, when our attention was called off by the wailing cry of a little child. In the space between the counters where pictures were sold on the one hand and handbags on the other, stood a little girl, about three years old. She was prettily dressed in a green coat and white bonnet, with long brown curls hanging down; but the fair little face was puckered with crying and tears were streaming down her cheeks. The handbag girl and the picture girl were trying to find out what was wrong; I could not hear what the child said, but from the comments of the shop-girls it was plain to be seen that the little mite had lost her mother. "Is she downstairs?" said the picture girl—for this department was on the first floor, above the main stores. No response, only louder wails, came from the little girl. The girl in the white overall seized her hand. "Come on, we'll go and find Mummy," said she, and she drew the child towards the stairs. The pitiful wailing continued, and there was no reply at all to the well-meant enquiries of the attendant as to what her mother was like—as if the poor babe could possibly describe "Mummy" to anyone else. We followed down the stairs. Hasty steps came rushing up, and round the first corner came a young woman, her face a picture of anxious concern. Of course it was "Mummy," and in a moment all was well again. I suppose in the crowd downstairs the little one got separated from her mother, and probably in the first bewilderment of her loss mistook someone on the stairs for the beloved figure. Following eagerly, she soon found her mistake, and overtaken by blank despair, the poor mite proclaimed her sorrows in loud crying to the world around. Meanwhile, I suppose the mother had made a hasty search downstairs when she first missed her child, and then started anxiously upstairs. The whole thing only took a few minutes, and then all was well again; the wailing stopped, the tears were dried, and everybody was happy—including ourselves, for it really was heartrending to see the little one's plight!

It was a very small happening to notice, but it was impressed on me, because one of the verses in "Daily Light" that morning had been, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Here was an illustration, and I felt that the verse I had read from Isaiah was underlined (as it were) by the little incident I had seen. How wonderful that He Who made the round world and all that is in it, the sun and the moon, and the stars, should be ready to liken Himself to a mother, comforting her little child! I think it is lovely that the great and almighty Creator should explain Himself to His

people by showing how in one way or another He is like some human being whom we can know and understand. So here He says He is like a mother giving comfort to her little one; in another place He says He is like a father pitying his children. Elsewhere He likens Himself to a shepherd leading his flock, carrying the tired lambs; to a great commander, directing his troops in battle; to a kind and sympathetic High Priest of the Temple, having compassion on the ignorant; to a physician, healing and binding up; to a great king, ruling in splendour; to a rescuer, lifting someone out of a deep pit where he is stuck fast in the miry clay! Thus He Who dwells in the heavens, Whose ways are past finding out, makes us learn something of His love and pity, His skill and power, His saving grace.

This promise of giving comfort like a mother was made at first to Jerusalem and her people. No nation has ever been through such troubles as the Jews have had to bear. "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow," said Jerusalem in the time of Jeremiah; and since then what agonies of trouble the nation has endured! But when her last and worst time of trouble is over with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, then God says, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you"!

But Paul tells us that those who have been made the children of God through faith in the cleansing blood of the Lord Jesus, may count themselves heirs of the promises made to the children of Abraham. And so I think each child of God may take this promise for his own. If *you* have been brought out of darkness into light, if *your* sins have been forgiven and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus has been put to *your* account, then *you* may look for the Lord to comfort you, as one whom his mother comforts!

And how did the mother whom I saw in the shop comfort her little one? First, by her presence. That was all that was needed; one sight of her mother was all that the little girl wanted to put an end to her distress. She saw her coming round the corner, and before her mother spoke to her or touched her, she knew that all was well. God is always there, but we cannot see Him with our eyes, only with the eyes of faith; and when our faith is weak and poor, it seems as if He has withdrawn Himself. But the Lord *never* forsakes His people; it is only that sometimes He lets them walk in darkness.

But the little maid could have known that her mother was there, even if it had been pitch dark! For she heard her voice; she felt her touch. The voice of God is recorded for ever in His Holy Word; there we may hear what He has to say to us, there by the power of the Holy Spirit, wondrous things may be shown to us out of His law, there the Spirit takes of the things of Christ, and shows

them unto us. And sometimes the Lord's voice seems to speak directly to the heart of one of His children; then indeed that one knows what it is to be comforted of God, even as a mother comforts her children. And as the little weeping girl felt her mother's hand, so do the children of God feel the touch of His hand, in providence, in chastisement, and in healing power.

DAMARIS.

In Memoriam.

MR. F. W. BIRD, OF PASADENA, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.

THE very sad news reached us this morning (June 30th) of the death of Mr. F. W. Bird, of Pasadena. Many years ago, he was on a visit to England and we received a telegram, sent by him from London, to know if we were preaching on the following Sunday at our church at Whittington, Norfolk. The result was he came and spent the week-end with us at the Vicarage. Ever since, he has kept up a regular correspondence with us.

He lived in London in his early life, and eventually settled in Pasadena. He crossed the Atlantic many times over for business purposes, but he had retired from business for many years. In the year 1948 he and his dear wife spent a happy week with us in our Vicarage in Norfolk. At the time of his call Home he and his wife were again on a visit to England, and they hoped soon to pay us a visit in Bristol. Illness, however, made a stay in hospital necessary, and the Lord unexpectedly called him to his eternal Home to be for ever with the Lord.

He much valued the *Gospel Magazine* and had been one of its readers for many years. His dear and devoted wife daily visited him in the hospital. She was on a visit to him on the morning of June 29th and read to him a letter of sympathy from us, and he said, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace." Shortly afterwards he collapsed and died, and then, as his dear wife wrote, "he is now with his Lord Whom he loved and served." Naturally his departure has made his wife grief-stricken and she feels the need of the prayers of God's people.

We understand that sisters of his dear wife used to attend Mr. Popham's ministry at Brighton. Naturally our very tender sympathy goes out to Mrs. Bird and to all the other mourners. Yet what an infinite mercy it is that the dear friend who has been taken away is now with his Lord and Saviour, which is far better than any thing that this world can afford.

"IT IS I"

My friend Miss Hope (Hope is not her name, but she is saved by hope) told of a recent experience, much as follows. One day she went out—like Jacob's sons—"again to buy a little food." As soon as she shut the door behind her she perceived that she did not have the key. Her heart was moved spontaneously in opposite directions: it sank before the question as to how she was to get in again (she lives alone); it rose to the throne of grace where One waits ever, and waits there to be gracious to help to do all in time of need. The front window was bolted. The door at the rear of the house was ajar, but the garden was walled on all sides. On a previous similar occasion, the husband of the kindly neighbour had climbed over the wall, but he was now an invalid. Miss Hope made her purchases and returned. She found her neighbour at the gate, speaking to a boy. "Oh, here *is* Miss Hope," she was saying to him; then, turning, she explained that the boy was wondering how he could recover his ball which he had thrown into Miss Hope's back garden. The rest need not be told. The neighbour thought it was quite an ordinary affair: balls are always being tossed into the wrong place, and even if neither ball nor boy had been the question, there were other neighbours who would have helped very willingly; there was nothing remarkable about it. But Miss Hope knew that the whole incident was *of the Lord*, her Lord Who remembered her, and had sent a loving intimation that she was still His. The thought that it was *the Lord* Who did it, filled her with holy wonder. "*It is the Lord*," John said to Peter. That explained the draught of fishes; that explained the strength by which Peter (evidently by himself) drew them all to land. *The Lord* was his strength and song. Many of us have, no doubt, read the life of Sukey Harley, and how her poor cottage caught fire. But she cared little for her house while the *Lord* hid Himself. She wanted *Him*, her All in all. He heard her cry, saw her broken heart, and bound it up with words of His Own love. Then the weak said, "I am strong." Not afraid of flame and fire, she went into the cottage and pulled out the furniture. The people scarcely believed it, but it was no marvel in her eyes. *The Lord* was with her, as He was with Daniel who said, "When He had spoken unto me, I was strengthened. Let my Lord speak, for Thou hast strengthened me." That is a beautiful verse in Isa. lii. 6, "Therefore My people shall know My Name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am He that doth speak; behold, it is I." "In that day"? Is that the day when all will be confirmed that He ever said; when, as He Himself said to His disciples, He would speak plainly and tell them of the Father? The words and texts that have come into their hearts have perhaps been repeated or confirmed;

they will know in that day that it has indeed been Himself that spoke them. How quietly He speaks. His still, small voice is not above a whisper. But if such words have really been from *the Lord*, how can they estimate the unspeakable mercy that has given them ears to hear. "It is the voice of my Beloved," my Saviour, my Intercessor, my Comforter, Who says that as the Father has loved His only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, so He has loved me. If listening ears can hear such heavenly words, blessed are they. "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." FOLLOWER-ON.

THE BIBLE IDEA OF GOD

"TAKE the idea of God, such as the Bible gives us. So spiritual, and yet so simple. God is infinite and incomprehensible, dwelling in light inaccessible, and full of glory; high above all that is created and finite; Whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, and before Whom even the angels veil their faces as they adore Him. And yet He is presented as being near unto us, even unto all that are of a broken and contrite heart; as listening unto the sighing of every humble child, and condescending to reveal Himself unto babes. How spiritual and sublime is the Scripture teaching of God! How homely and simple its revelation of the Father! Scripture reveals to us God as the great Creator of the universe, the Governor and Upholder of the world, the adorable King of angels, who obey His commandments; and at the same time we are assured that not even a sparrow can fall to the ground without His will, and that the very hairs of our head are numbered. We are taught that we may commend to His guidance the minutest duties of our life, and expect His answer to our prayers on behalf of our daily troubles and difficulties. Scripture reveals Him as a God of holiness, justice, and truth, Who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and Whose throne is established in verity and righteousness; and Scripture unfolds to us the mercy, the compassion, the tenderness of God—His delight in blessing, His glory in His wonderful grace. Whence this idea of God, so sublime and yet so simple, so spiritual and yet so tangible, so pure and holy, and yet so gracious and loving? Do we find anything to be compared with it among the Greeks and Romans? It has come down from above. God revealed Himself."—*Christ and the Scriptures*, pp. 42-44 (DR. A. SAPHIR).

EXTRACTS FROM OUR CORRESPONDENCE

From Cambridge: "My *Gospel Magazine* arrived this morning. It always comes as a cup of cool water to a weary traveller in a desert under a tropical sun."

From Bristol: "I find great help from the *Gospel Magazine* and 'The Family Portion.' Thank you very much."

From Bristol: "I very much enjoyed and found helpful your articles in the *Gospel Magazine*."

THE AGED PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY

Two coach parties of friends of the Society, one from Horley on May 1st, and the other on May 25th from Haywards Heath and Scaynes Hill, gladdened the hearts of the residents in the Camberwell and Hornsey Rise Homes by the pleasure which their visits brought to those in the Homes. Some of the visitors were seeing the London Homes for the first time, and some of the pilgrims who rarely have visitors of their own had the pleasure of contact with a number of sympathetic friends. In one case a visitor from Haywards Heath and one of the pilgrims had the unexpected pleasure of meeting again after the lapse of many years.

The idea of such visiting parties is welcomed by the Committee in the knowledge that to see the Homes is an experience which increases interest in the work and cannot fail to extend practical sympathy. For this and other reasons visitors are free to see over the Homes of the Society any day except Lord's Day.

An effort is being made for a party to travel by coach from the Brighton area to be present at the Hornsey Rise Home on the occasion of the Seventy-ninth Anniversary of the Hornsey Rise Home on July 7th, when at 6.30 p.m. the Rev. John Raven, of Horley, will preach the Anniversary sermon, and in the afternoon at 3 p.m. Mrs. J. Wallace, of Hampstead, has kindly promised to open the Sale of Work in the Hall of the Home.

The above Sale and the one arranged for September 7th in the quadrangle of the Camberwell Home, which Mrs. J. Dolbey, of Farnborough, has kindly consented to open, are held for the benefit of the Home Benevolent Funds. These Funds help to defray the cost of nursing, and of comforts for those in the Nursing Sections of the Homes, and the entire proceeds of the above sales are given to them. To the friends who have so kindly sent acceptable parcels of handwork and goods for these sales, the Committee's hearty thanks are expressed, and the help of any others who can assist in this way is invited. In these days there are ready buyers for the smaller articles of needle and fancy-work which are well within the capacity of many to produce. A few additional contributors in this connection would at once increase the comforts available for those afflicted or aged pilgrims in the Society's nursing care.

A visit of the pilgrims of the Camberwell Home to Smallfields, at the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. John Raven, has been arranged for June 29th, when all who can undertake the journey will be conveyed by coach arranged by the Lady Visitors of that Home. This day has been eagerly anticipated by the pilgrims, who have looked forward with pleasure to meeting again the friends who travelled to see them on May 1st.

Protestant Beacon.

THE ABSENT GOSPEL

THE great Apostle to the Gentiles was pre-eminently a preacher of the Gospel. He did not undervalue the two sacraments, but he said, "Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel." Baptism was always to take a subordinate place. The great central truth of the Gospel which the Apostle Paul preached was "Christ crucified." He says, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." "The preaching of the cross," he says, "is to us which are saved the power of God." He was convinced that "it pleases God by the foolishness of preaching (Christ crucified) to save them that believe." The Gospel which he preached was the good tidings that Christ was delivered to death on account of the offences of His people, and raised again on account of their justification having been secured by His obedience unto death. Christ, His person and work, was the great theme of his preaching. "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Necessity was laid upon him. He said, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel." He had no desire to gain popularity for himself. He avoided all "enticing words of man's wisdom." He exalted Christ, and pointed to Him alone as the way to heaven. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." He was also jealously concerned lest "another Gospel" should take the place of "the Gospel of the grace of God." "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." The Gospel which he preached is "the everlasting Gospel." Like the Word of God, it abideth for ever. It changes not, and it is suited for all times, and for all sorts and conditions of men.

It is evident that our Reformers desired that the ministers of the Church of England should follow an example of the Apostle in preaching the Gospel. Delivering a Bible into the hand of every one about to be ordained as a presbyter, the Bishop says, "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the holy Sacraments in the Congregation, where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereto." Previously the ordained had been expected to declare that he "unfeignedly believed all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament." The whole Bible (including Genesis), whose great theme is Christ, was to be the basis of his preaching. Doubts as to its truth were to have no place in his testimony.

If we may judge by the newspaper reports of sermons preached by many of the leading men in the Church of England today, the Gospel is conspicuous by its absence. Years ago we read a report of a sermon preached before a University. The preacher said, "We have emerged . . . from some group of anthropoid apes," and "the gorilla and the chimpanzee are literally our cousins." The doctrine that Adam fell through eating the forbidden fruit, "and that through this fall, sin and death came into the world" was said to be "old error" and teaching which "is now incredible." Other parts of the sermon were occupied with the need of birth-control and under some circumstances the sterilisation of the mentally deficient. The report of the sermon, however, contained no Gospel. Yet even the learned members of a university need the Gospel no less than the poor and uneducated. Another sermon reported in the press speculated on the probable condition of England 50,000 years hence, and suggested that the low-lying parts, including London, might be under the sea, and the hilly parts covered with glaciers. Such speculations, however, would hardly be helpful to a sinner who was asking "What must I do to be saved?"

It is to be feared that even Evangelical men fail sometimes in preaching Christ. Romaine once said, "Persons wonder that we are always preaching Christ; but the truth is that we have nothing else to preach about." Preaching the Gospel allows of an infinite variety of treatment, and we are never free from the obligation to preach it to every creature.

HEAVEN'S DAY

Psalm 89, verse 29.

Whatever be the splendours of that day,
However bright shall be eternal walls
Built with chalcedony and amethyst,
However splendid be the gates of pearl,
And whatsoever magnificence is meant
By "streets of gold," yet sum and substance all
Of that eternal citadel shall be
Fast centred in the Person of our Lord.
The Lamb shall be that city's lasting Light.
When His fair Bride puts on her wedding dress,
Adorned with costly jewels, Christ shall be
Her glory and the sum of all her charm,
She sits to reign, to reign upon His throne;
She feeds, but it shall be upon His bread,
She triumphs, and it is because His might,
Who is the Rock of Ages, lives in her.

T. PITTAWAY.

Rodden Rectory, Frome, Somerset.

PRECIOUS THINGS

I.—THE PRECIOUS WORD.

WE propose, God willing, to draw our readers' attention to six precious things. These are : the Precious Word, a Precious Christ, the Precious Blood, Precious Faith, Precious Ointment, Precious Promises. Let us first think of the precious Word. We read in the First Book of Samuel that "The Word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision." In reference to the time when Samuel was a child this statement was made. It was a rare thing at that time to hear the Word of the Lord from the mouth of a prophet. There was no frequent or widely-spread vision. The Word was precious because it was rarely heard. The godly of those days valued the Word all the more, because they so seldom heard it. We are not now dependent upon inspired and living men in order to hear the Word of the Lord. The canon of Scripture is complete, and in the Books of the Old and New Testaments we have a complete and sufficient revelation of all saving truth. We have a plenary-inspired library which is our only rule of faith and practice. There are many reasons why we may still speak of the Word of the Lord as being precious.

First, it is precious because of its origin. "God's Word written" is so called because it was given by inspiration of God. The holy men who wrote its contents did so as they were "moved by the Holy Ghost." "God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." He hath also spoken to us by His incarnate Son. A message varies in value according to its origin. The more important the person from whom it comes, the more valuable and precious it is regarded. A letter from an ordinary friend might be torn up. A letter from the king would be treasured up. The Bible is unique. It is precious, because it comes from "the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth."

Secondly, the Word of God is precious because it is now rarely preached. The great business of a minister is to preach the Word, but in a very large number of churches and chapels the old-fashioned exposition and unfolding of the Word of God cannot be heard. There is a famine, "not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the Words of the Lord." When the Lord's people go away for their holidays they can rarely find a church where they can hear the Word of God preached. Men who are ordained to the ministry of the Church of England have a Bible put into their hands, and the Bishop says to them, "Take thou Authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the holy sacraments in the congregation." The preaching of the Word is put first, and this

is truly Apostolic. The Apostle Paul said, "Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel." Baptism and the Lord's Supper were secondary, and they should always be secondary, if we follow Christ and His Apostles. The Apostolic injunction is, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ . . . preach the Word."

Thirdly, the Word of God is precious and valuable because it is able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Like a mirror it reveals to men their moral defilement. It brings home to them, when their hearts are opened by the Spirit, their sinfulness and desperate wickedness. It shows them that even "all their righteousnesses are as filthy rags." It reveals to them their inability to save themselves. When its truths are really received they come as poor, helpless sinners to Christ and say, "Thou must save, and Thou alone." They realise that He bare their sins in His Own body on the tree, that He hath redeemed them from the curse, being made a curse for them, and trusting in His blood and righteousness they go on their way rejoicing.

Fourthly, the Word of God is precious, because it is the daily food of the believer. It is milk while he is a babe, and by its means he grows and develops. It is also strong meat for his spiritual manhood. All its truths are needful, if we are to become mature Christians. There are no truths which are not needful for our spiritual establishment. We need "all the counsel of God." The prophet Jeremiah said, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." The Psalmist said, "How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." The believer needs to feed upon the Word every day, and he needs a good meal on the Lord's day when he gathers with others for public worship.

Fifthly, the Word is precious because it is the believer's daily light. He is walking through a dark world. He is living in a dispensation of night, and he feels that the Word is precious because it is a lamp unto his feet, and a light unto his path. How can he cleanse his way, but by taking heed to the light of God's Word? That Word is "a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn."

Lastly, the Word is precious because it is a most valuable weapon in the conflict with sin and error. The believer is a soldier, and he is to fight the Lord's battles. He is to be valiant for the truth. To this end he is bidden to take "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." This is the weapon which brought about the Reformation and the Evangelical Revival. It is the weapon which we need to use today against all the errors of Sacerdotalism and Modernism.

II.—A PRECIOUS CHRIST.

THE Lord Jesus Christ is called "precious" both in the Old and the New Testaments. In the prophecy of Isaiah He is called "a precious corner stone." In the Book of Proverbs, He, under the name "Wisdom," is declared to be "more precious than rubies." In the New Testament the Apostle Peter, quoting Isaiah, speaks of Christ as "a chief corner stone, elect, precious." He is the "living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious." The preciousness of Christ is our theme. First, observe that He is precious to His Father. He is His Father's Elect in Whom His soul delighteth. He is precious to His Father as the sure Foundation and Corner Stone of His Church. The Church of God is "elect from every nation." It is His called-out people. It is the spiritual house or temple of the living God. As the Father purposed to erect a spiritual house, He must needs have a foundation and corner stone on which the whole building could rest in safety. It must be a foundation sufficiently strong to bear the whole superstructure which would be erected upon it. There was but one Stone which would answer that purpose. The Father Himself selected that Stone, and announced through the prophet His purpose and choice concerning it. "Behold," He said, "I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." As there is no other stone in the whole universe suited for this great purpose, it may rightly be described as rare, costly, and precious. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Christ, as the Foundation Stone of the Church of God, is precious to the Father.

He is also precious as the only-begotten Son of the Father. It was because Isaac was Abraham's only son that Abraham's virtual offering of him as a burnt offering was a remarkable exhibition of faith; for he virtually offered to God one who was specially precious to Him. Who can estimate the preciousness of God's eternal Son to the Father's heart? Yet he spared not His only Son, but delivered Him up for all His people. Infinitely precious though He was to His Father's heart, "it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him," and deliver Him up to the death of the cross to secure the eternal salvation of all who should trust in Him. Let us never forget the infinite grace of God in giving up His inestimably precious and only-begotten Son, to die the Just One for the unjust, that so they might be brought nigh to God, and saved by His grace.

Secondly, notice that Christ is precious to His people. "Unto you therefore which believe is the preciousness." That seems to mean, as Fausset says, "To you believers belongs the preciousness of Christ just mentioned." He Whom God regards as precious is

also precious to His people. They hold Him in high honour, and esteem. They value Him greatly. He is precious to their hearts. He is precious to them as believers. To them alone He is precious. Others despise and reject Him. They see no beauty in Him. To them He is a stone of stumbling. Instead of leaning on Him as the foundation of their hopes, they stumble over Him, with the result that they are broken and ruined. Going about to establish their own righteousness, they stumble at the great truth of a Divinely provided righteousness imputed by faith. They stumble at the word which tells of the righteousness of God which is "unto all and upon all them that believe." Christ, Who is "the end of the law for righteousness," is therefore not precious to unbelievers. Art thou a believer in Christ? If so, He will be precious to thee. His believing people regard Him as precious, because of all that He has done for them. They were arraigned at the bar of Divine justice, found guilty, and condemned to eternal separation from God, and from the blessedness of heaven. But He came down and stood in their place, and voluntarily and willingly bore the death sentence in their room and stead. Thus He freed, delivered, and redeemed them from the curse of the law. How then can they do other than esteem Him as precious?

They regard Him as precious because of what He is now doing for them. He has entered into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for them. He ever liveth to make intercession for them. He is now their Advocate with the Father. He lives to bless them. He dispenses His Spirit to comfort, assure, teach, and guide them. He, by His Spirit, is with them always, to save them daily from the power of the world, the flesh, and the devil. He is precious to them, because of His constant sympathy, and because of the power which He constantly puts forth to keep the feet of His saints.

They regard Him as precious because of what He is going to do for them. He is coming again to receive them unto Himself, to welcome them all into the heavenly mansions, to deliver them forever from sin, death, sorrow, and pain, to wipe away all their tears. Thus He is everything to His believing people. His names—Jesus, Emmanuel, Shepherd, Husband, Friend—are precious. His person is precious. He is at once "the mighty God" and "the Man Christ Jesus." His offices are precious. They rejoice in Him as their Prophet, Priest, and King. Are they asked, "What is thy Beloved more than another beloved?" They answer, "My Beloved is the Chiefest among ten thousand."

EDITORIAL

RECEIVED by the Editor, with many thanks: Mr. Denman; Miss J. Alexander; Miss R. Cowell; Dr. L. M. Houghton; Mr. B. S. Taylor; Miss L. Ormiston; Rev. Donald Hill; Mr. F. Naylor; Rev. T. Pittaway; Mrs. E. C. Stock.

STANDARDISING REPENTANCE

No man can become a Christian without the work of the Holy Spirit in his soul, and as it is always the work of the Holy Spirit it is not surprising that He tends to do the same things in all cases. He leaves certain marks, and they are very definite. Yet having said that, I am anxious to say this. We must be careful lest we standardise the Christian experience in a wrong way and insist upon certain particular details in every case. Now I say this by way of warning, because I have found people in trouble about this whole matter because somebody has attempted to standardise the Christian experience in detail as well as in big principles. Let me give you one illustration of what I mean. Anybody who has ever read John Bunyan's "Grace Abounding" will know that in that book John Bunyan tells us that he passed through an agony of repentance that lasted for eighteen long months, and during those eighteen months he lived a life which was nothing but a sheer agony. He tells us that there were times when he felt so miserable and so unhappy that on one occasion, having lifted up his eyes, he looked and saw some geese, and he wished he was such a being—he wished he was something like those geese so that he could not experience this agony of repentance. Another day he tells us that he saw himself, as it were, swayed over the open jaws of hell and he could smell brimstone in the air. Now I have met people who have said something like this to me. "You know my greatest desire in life is to be a Christian; I have been trying for years." When I have asked, "What is your hindrance?" they say, "I have never repented." "On what grounds do you tell me that?" I ask. They say, "I have never felt like John Bunyan and wished I had been a beast and that I lacked the quality of human nature; I have never felt or seen myself suspended over the open jaws of hell, I have never smelt the brimstone in the air." And because they have not had these particular experiences that John Bunyan had, they feel they have not repented. I once knew a man who was a Christian himself and who expressed great concern about the state of his son. He was quite satisfied in his own mind that his son was not a Christian, and when I asked him why, he said that his son had never had "the Damascus road experience." He had had something like that himself, his conversion had come rather suddenly, and because his son had not had some sudden experience, he said his son was not converted. That is what I mean when I say that we must be careful not to standardise this common experience in the matter of particular details. There are many saints in heaven tonight who have never had the particular feelings that John Bunyan had, but they repented as certainly as John Bunyan repented.—DR. B. MARTYN LLOYD-JONES.

COST OF SEX EQUALITY

WARNING BY LORD JUSTICE DENNING

LORD JUSTICE DENNING, in an address to the National Marriage Guidance Council at Rustington, Sussex, last night, said the fact that women had gained equality with men had tremendous potentialities for civilisation, but whether it was for good or bad had yet to be seen.

Freedom for women proved disastrous to the Roman society. Morals decayed, the marital tie became the laxest the western world had seen, and that decay of morality was a factor in the fall of the Roman Empire. The loose practices of Rome accounted in large part for the attitude of the Christian Church on those matters.

Speaking of the traces of a wife's former servitude still to be found in the law, Lord Justice Denning said that actions for enticement and breach of promise of marriage were now an anachronism; they treated betrothals and marriages as if they were legal contracts, whereas they were in truth solemn promises which were more a matter for the honour and conscience of the parties than a subject for money claims.

GREAT INDEPENDENCE

It could now be said of the Englishwoman, as Sir Henry Maine said of the Roman female, that her situation, whether married or unmarried, had become one of great personal and proprietary independence. There were few inequalities left, such as in regard to savings on housekeeping allowances and joint effects, but those might perhaps properly be left to be decided by agreement.

Against all this independence, the husband still remained under great obligations in law. He was liable to maintain his wife; he must go out and work to support her, but she was not bound to work to support him. She could still pledge his credit for necessities, but he could not pledge hers, no matter how rich she was and how much she earned. She could sue him in the courts for protection of her property, but he could not sue her. If it came to separation or divorce the courts would enforce his obligation to maintain her, unless she had sufficient means of her own or had forfeited her right by her own conduct, and he was, as a rule, compelled to pay the costs.

"She is now indeed the spoilt darling of the law, and he the patient pack-horse," Lord Justice Denning said. "By putting these obligations on the husband, however, the law recognises the natural state of affairs whereby the man's proper function is to work to provide for his wife and family, and the woman's proper place is to look after the home and bring up the children. If a wife is to do these things properly, she has usually to withdraw from the money market and find her reward in the home—a reward which is much more worth while."

"DISRUPTIVE FORCES"

Of the "disruptive forces resulting from the change in status," he continued: "When women are independent and able to earn their own living, they are not so disposed to put up with the monotony and drudgery of housework. They seek the greater interest of the world outside. This is no bad thing in itself, but when mothers go out to work and leave their young children to the care of others, or send them to nursery schools, it does not strengthen the bond between mother and child, and may tend to weaken it.

"When a wife takes work which throws her much into the company of another man, she may run into the temptation which she could not meet at home. It is not perhaps a mere coincidence that, with the emancipation of women, there has come a great rise in divorce. A good deal of it is no doubt due to the fact that women are no longer prepared to put up with the cruelty and misconduct of husbands as they did before, and seek divorce instead.

"It is possible—but I hope it is not the case—that, with greater freedom, there has been greater laxity on the part of women. Freedom had that result in Rome and we ought not to ignore the possibility of it here. I believe, however, that that is not true as yet. The moral standards of the average woman of to-day are as high as those of her great-grandmother; but it is important that this should remain so. The morality of the race depends on the morality of the womenfolk."

 THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE FUND

The Trustees of "The Gospel Magazine" gratefully acknowledge the receipt of the following donations to the Fund: Miss O. Sadler (in memory of Mr. Edward Sadler) £1; Dr. L. M. Houghton £3.

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